HOMELESS PERSONS’ MEMORIAL DAY

Homeless people die from illnesses that affect everyone, frequently without health care.

Homeless people die from exposure, unprotected from the heat and cold.

Homeless people die from violence, often in unprovoked hate crimes.

Health care is a human right.

Housing is a human right.

Physical safety is a human right.

Remember our neighbors and friends who have died without homes.

Remember why they died.

DECEMBER 21
The First Day of Winter. The Longest Night of the Year.

ORGANIZER’S MANUAL 2012
National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day  

December 21, 2012  

Homeless people will die in your community this year. 
Plan to memorialize them on December 21, 
the first day of winter, 
the longest night of the year. 

In 2011, 175 communities representing 44 states and the District of Columbia participated in the 22nd Annual National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day. As we enter the New Year, let’s make 2012 a year of increased awareness by organizing even more memorial events throughout the nation.
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Overview

Each year since 1990, on or near December 21, the first day of winter, the longest night of the year, the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) has sponsored National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness and to remember our homeless friends who have paid the ultimate price for our nation’s failure to end homelessness. Beginning in 2005, the National Health Care for the Homeless Council and the National Consumer Advisory Board joined NCH as cosponsors of this meaningful event.

To maximize the impact of the day, we encourage local and statewide organizations to hold memorials for those who have died homeless in their communities. In 2011, 175 communities representing 44 states and the District of Columbia held Memorial Day events on or around December 21 to honor the more than 1,963 people who died homeless.

What You Can Do

1. Determine how many homeless persons have died during the previous year in your community. There is no official tracking of homeless deaths in most communities, so start now to collect the names of those who die. Work with people who are homeless, service providers, and public officials to compile as complete a list as possible.

2. Organize an event to commemorate this day and raise awareness about homelessness and its severity.

This Manual

This manual should serve as a resource to assist you in your efforts. If you have any questions, contact

- Michael Stoops, National Coalition for the Homeless, (202) 462-4822 x234 or mstoops@nationalhomeless.org
- Brian Zralek, Consumer Advocate, National Health Care for the Homeless Council, (615) 226-2292 or bzralek@nhchc.org
Organizing an Event to Commemorate National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day

Your Event

Invite other organizations to participate in planning the event. Local and statewide coalitions for the homeless, health care for the homeless projects, shelters, housing programs, service providers and outreach programs may all wish to participate.

Decide what type of event you will sponsor. Past events have included these ceremonies:

- Candlelight marches
- Silent marches
- Vigils
- Graveside services
- Plays and performances
- Special religious services
- Public policy advocacy events

A few of the 2011 Memorial Day events are described in this manual. Please keep in mind that these are local events tailored to diverse communities. Local organizers are encouraged to think creatively about ways to honor the memory of those who have died in their own community, as together we work for a future devoid of homelessness.

Work with your local health department and/or health care clinic/program to identify the number of people who have died in your community without an address. Try also to obtain people’s names and ages.

A name-reading ceremony is a powerful component of many National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day events.

Please contact Michael Stoops at (202) 462-4822 x234, mstoops@nationalhomeless.org and/or Brian Zralek at (615) 226-2292 or bzralek@nhchc.org with the following information:

- What type of event you are planning
- The number of homeless people who have died in your community
Working with the Media

Media coverage of homelessness usually reaches its peak just as winter begins and during the holidays. National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day offers a great opportunity to work with the media during this time to raise awareness of the issue of homelessness. Media coverage is a great tool to emphasize governmental policies, or lack thereof, which can be a part of the problem for those people experiencing homelessness. As governmental policies can also be part of the solution for homelessness, make sure to give credit where it is due. Materials regarding current policy issues is always available at www.nationalhomeless.org or www.nhchc.org.

Your group should

• Issue a news release (see enclosed sample) announcing your event, giving information on the details and the needs in your community,

• Write a letter-to-the-editor of your local newspaper drawing attention to your event and to the issue of homelessness in general, and

• Invite local media to your event if you feel comfortable doing so. Some Memorial Day organizers prefer private gatherings to express their grief.

Working with your Local Government

To attract more attention to this year’s Memorial Day, work with your local city council, mayor, the state legislature, or governor. Encourage them to pass a proclamation/resolution that recognizes December 21 as National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day and describes homelessness as a continuing and serious issue that must be resolved (see sample proclamations below).

For Additional Homeless Memorial Day Resources:

Please visit www.nhchc.org/resources/consumer/homeless-persons-memorial-day/ to see resources and useful links from National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day.
2011 Memorial Day Event Locations

In 2011, 175 communities across the United States held National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day events.

Alaska: Wasilla

Arizona: Flagstaff, Phoenix, Tempe, and Tucson

California: Concord, Fairfield, Fresno, Los Angeles, Marin County/San Rafael, Modesto, Pasadena, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo County, Santa Clara County/San Jose, Santa Cruz County, Santa Monica, Shasta County/Redding, Vallejo, and Ventura

Colorado: Denver, Grand Junction, and Pueblo

Connecticut: Danielson, Hartford, Middletown, New Britain, Norwich, Putnam, and Stamford

Delaware: Wilmington

District of Columbia: Washington, D.C.

Florida: Brevard County/Melbourne, Charlotte County, Citrus County, Clearwater, Daytona Beach, Deland, Ft. Lauderdale, Jacksonville, Lake City/Columbia County, Live Oak/Suwannee County, Miami-Dade County, Monroe County/Key West, Naples, Orange/Osceola/Seminole Counties, Orlando, Palm Beach County/West Palm Beach, Palm Coast, Pasco County/New Port Richey, Pinellas County/St. Petersburg, Sarasota/Manatee Counties, St. Johns County/St. Augustine, Tallahassee, Tampa, Tarpon Springs

Georgia: Atlanta (November 1 & December 21) and Marietta

Idaho: Boise

Illinois: Belleville, Chicago, Palatine, and Rockford

Indiana: Bloomington, Evansville, Ft. Wayne, Indianapolis, Jeffersonville, and Kokomo
Iowa: Davenport and Des Moines

Kansas: Wichita

Kentucky: Louisville

Maine: Bangor, Lewiston, and Portland

Maryland: Baltimore and Harford County/Bel Air

Massachusetts: Arlington, Boston, Barnstable County/Hyannis, and Worcester

Michigan: Detroit, Farmington, and Traverse City

Minnesota: Duluth, Minneapolis, and Red Lake

Mississippi: Hattiesburg

Missouri: St. Joseph and St. Louis

Montana: Great Falls, Helena, and Yellowstone County/Billings

New Hampshire: Concord, Keene, Laconia, Lebanon, Manchester, Nashua, Newport, and Portsmouth

New Jersey: Atlantic City, Bergen County/Hackensack, Camden, Jersey City, Lakewood, Mercer County/Trenton, and Middlesex County/Edison

New Mexico: Albuquerque

New York: Albany, Buffalo, Chautauqua County/Jamestown, New York, and Rochester

North Carolina: Asheville, High Point, Raleigh, Southern Pines
The First Day of Winter.
The Longest Night of the Year.

North Dakota: Fargo

Ohio: Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Toledo

Oklahoma: Tulsa

Oregon: Albany, Coos County, Douglas County, Josephine County/Grants Pass, Lincoln County, and Portland

Pennsylvania: Erie, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Wilkes-Barre

Rhode Island: Providence

South Carolina: Myrtle Beach and Spartanburg

Tennessee: Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville

Texas: Austin, Caldwell, Corpus Christi, Harlingen, Houston, Lubbock, San Antonio, and Tarrant County/Fort Worth

Utah: Salt Lake City

Vermont: Bellow Falls, Brattleboro, and Burlington

Virginia: Charlottesville, Chesapeake, Fredericksburg, Norfolk, and Richmond

Washington: Marysville, King County/Seattle, Kitsap County, Snohomish County/Everett, Spokane, Vancouver, and Yakima County

Wisconsin: Green Bay, Kenosha, La Crosse, and Racine

Wyoming: Cheyenne
Sample Flyer

National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day

Tuesday, December 21, 2010
4 p.m.
The State House, Concord

PLEASE JOIN US

TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE DIED FROM HOMELESSNESS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

For more information, contact
Maggie Fogarty, American Friends Service Committee
(603)224-2407
mfogarty@afsc.org

Please bring a candle for the vigil and a food item for the Friendly Kitchen.
Sample Agenda

The Longest Night of the Year

Welcome to the Ninth Annual Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day Service in Central Florida.

This service commemorates the lives of the homeless members of our community who died in 2010. Participants will join community groups, service providers and individuals in more than 175 cities across the United States who are holding their own services today.

This candlelight service is held on December 21, the first day of winter and the longest night of the year. Our goal is to commemorate the lives of the mothers or fathers, sons or daughters who died on our streets or in our emergency shelters from illness or conditions directly related to their homelessness. In many cases, this service will be the only commemoration of their lives.

In Seminole, Orange and Osceola Counties, 33 people lost their lives while homeless in 2010. Advocates, friends, community leaders and service providers hope to bring attention to the need for more resources to provide affordable housing, emergency shelter and medical care for our most vulnerable citizens.

Thank you for attending this service. For more information about how you can help end homelessness, contact

Homeless Services Network of Central Florida
(407) 893-0133 www.hsncfl.org
MEMORIAL SERVICE

Opening Prayer
Pastor Case Thorp
First Presbyterian Church of Orlando

Welcome
Cathy Jackson
Homeless Services Network of Central Florida

Proclamation from the City of Orlando
Alana Brenner
City Clerk

Eulogy
Robert Stuart
Commissioner, City of Orlando

Reading of the Names
Bakari Burns
Chairman of the Board, Homeless Services Network

Jackie Dowd remembers George Crossley

Coworkers remember Steve “Rocky” Cook

Musical Selection/Poetry

Those We Honor
Adrian Acevedo
Connie Asbury
Teri Lee Brookshire
Albert Capps
William Phillip Capps
Brenda Davis
David Dotterer
Jonathon Wayne Duck
James Evans
James Fisher
Arturo Miguel Garcia
Timothy Giedlin
Jay Girard
David Glenn
Lois Ann Gyermoti
Keith Hess
(known as Stacey)
Heide Hewett
David Hills

“J.R.”
Bernard King
Daniel Martin Jacobs
(known as Chief)
Alan Martin
Joe Mitchell
Gerald Ramsey
Susan Roa
John Robicheaux
Michael Self
Phillip Tanner
Jerry L. Thomas
Sherry Tyner
Bradley Watson
John Handzlik
(known as Mohawk)
Wendell Wright
Heather Young

Closing Prayer
Candle Lighting

Pastor Case Thorp
First Presbyterian Church

HSN thanks the First Presbyterian Church of Orlando for hosting this memorial service
Philadelphians To Honor Homeless Persons Who Have Died, Call for An End to Homelessness

HOMELESS MEMORIAL DAY – TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21

PHILADELPHIA, PA — Hundreds of Philadelphians will gather to remember those homeless and formerly homeless Philadelphians who died in 2010 and to call for an end to homelessness. Homeless Memorial Day, an annual event commemorated in over 150 cities and counties across the United States on the first day of winter, will also be a call to action to end homelessness in our city and our nation. Speakers will include well-known homeless advocate Sister Mary Scullion, Council member Jannie Blackwell, as well as local religious leaders and several formerly homeless persons. Building on the theme of “Remember, Hope, and Heal,” the event will feature a ceremonial reading of the names of more than 85 persons, homeless and formerly homeless, who died in the past year. The event is open to the public.

WHO: Homeless advocates, service providers, homeless and formerly homeless persons, religious leader, concerned citizens, city representatives, … and YOU.

WHAT: Homeless Memorial Day candlelight vigil, performances, and call to action

WHERE: LOVE Park at the corner of 15th Street & JFK Boulevard

WHEN: Tuesday, December 21, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Advocates, service providers, homeless and formerly homeless people, religious leaders, and concerned citizens will honor the lives and dreams of homeless men and women who died this year in Philadelphia and will renew their commitment to end homelessness. More than 85 homeless and formerly homeless persons who lost their lives this year will be remembered.

Since 1990, the National Coalition for the Homeless has sponsored National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day on the first day of winter to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness and to remember our homeless citizens who have paid the ultimate price for our nation’s failure to address the issue.

Organizers of this year’s event are calling attention to this time of economic hardship for many Americans: “Unemployment and poverty are increasing, foreclosures continue at a record rate, and shelters and food pantries cannot meet the increased demand,” said Sister Mary Scullion, one of the speakers on Tuesday. “We use this occasion to call on all Philadelphians and all Americas to wake up and recommit ourselves to ending homelessness. While we seek economic solutions for our country, we cannot forget our most vulnerable citizens.”
After declining in the late 1990s, the number of homeless persons in Philadelphia has increased since 2000, though Philadelphia continues to make strides in creating permanent housing opportunities. The most recent street census — a quarterly overnight count of individuals sleeping on the streets — found 352 people in Center City. On that same November night, there were 2,600 people living in emergency shelter, approximately 1,000 of whom were children.


Sample State Proclamation

The State of New Hampshire

State of New Hampshire
By His Excellency
John Lynch, Governor

A Proclamation

HOMELESS MEMORIAL DAY
DECEMBER 21, 2010

WHEREAS, Adequate housing is essential for healthy families and communities; and

WHEREAS, Difficult economic times and a limited amount of both rental and single-family housing stock make it difficult for a number of New Hampshire residents to find adequate housing; and

WHEREAS, Last year more than 4,956 people received shelter in a stated-funded emergency shelter and more than 17 percent of them were children; and

WHEREAS, On a cold winter night in January 2010, 1,355 people were in shelters, and last year the average length of stay in an emergency shelter was 50.6 nights; and

WHEREAS, Untold numbers of homeless families are living with relatives or friends; and

WHEREAS, December 21, 2010 is the 20th annual National Homeless Memorial Day;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN H. LYNCH, GOVERNOR of the State of New Hampshire, do hereby proclaim DECEMBER 21, 2010 as HOMELESS MEMORIAL DAY in New Hampshire, and urge all citizens to work together so that all of our people have shelter.

Given at the Executive Chamber in Concord this 3rd day of December, in the year of Our Lord two thousand and ten, and the independence of the United States of America, two hundred and thirty-five.

[Signature]
John H. Lynch
Governor
Sample City/County Resolution

The City of Des Moines Resolution

Des Moines City Council Resolution Designating December 21 as National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day.

WHEREAS, the winter poses extreme hardship for unsheltered and inadequately housed low-income men, women and children in Des Moines; and

WHEREAS, the spirit of the holiday season of giving provides an opportunity for affirmation and renewal regarding the commitment to end homelessness; and

WHEREAS, December 21 has been designated National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day by the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council and is so recognized by cities nationwide: and

WHEREAS, in this season of generosity and sharing, citizens of Des Moines are encouraged to commit themselves to promoting compassion and concern for all brothers and sisters, especially those who are poor and homeless; and

WHEREAS, in remembering those who have died on the streets, the cause of ending homelessness is kept urgent as is the city’s and county’s collective commitment to preventing such deaths in the future; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DES MOINES, That we hereby declare December 21 as

NATIONAL HOMELESS PERSONS’ MEMORIAL DAY

in recognition of the people who have died homeless in and around Des Moines, and we hereby ask all citizens to take a moment of silence in remembrance and encourage our citizens to support all local efforts to eliminate homelessness in our community.
Highlights of 2011
Memorial Day Events

2011 Memorial Day Events

Memorial Day Events were held in 175 communities in 2011. Details for some of this year’s events are listed below. If you don’t see your event, please let us know what you are planning at www.nationalhomeless.org/projects/memorial/memorial_eventsform.html

A personal obituary for a homeless man

Dear Editor,


His name is unknown. He was survived by unknown family. He may have been a veteran. He once was someone’s baby, probably cherished and loved by someone for at least a brief part of his life.

He was a sinner, but aren’t we all? He was brilliant at being who he was; he was one of a kind. He had given up on life and life had given up on him. He was preceded in death by the loss of community.

His fate was determined by our inability to recreate the basic neighborhood concept of life in America. There will be no services.

Bob Orwig
Marinette

Image received and printed with permission from Bob Orwig
2011 Memorial Day Events

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Alaska

Wasilla

Arizona

Flagstaff
Event: Several local churches gathered in honor of the third annual Homeless Memorial Service. The service was at 6 p.m. at the Flagstaff Federated Community Church. Donations were welcomed. At the end there was a candlelight procession to Heritage Square. There was music, prayer, and songs dedicated to the memory or those who are now gone. At least 20 people were thought to have passed away due to homeless related issues in 2011.
Sponsor: Flagstaff Federated Community Church
Contact: (928) 255-5525   www.flagstaffshelterservices.org

Tempe
Event: In honor of a homeless woman by the name of Sandy who passed away in 2011, the Tempe community held a free concert, collected donations, and lit candles in honor of the homeless in the area.
Sponsor: The Tempe Community
Contact: Jenny Norton   Jenny@Starwest.us

Tucson
Event: In honor of the 3.5 million people who go without a safe place to call home in the United States, the Tucson community gathered to share compassion and kindness. The event also honored the 183 lives that were lost trying to cross the Arizona border. Special attention was paid to the importance of remembering the children who face the hardships of not having a safe home, or who worry of soon losing their home. The event was sponsored by the Primavera Foundation. The service was held in a local cemetery on December 19, 2011, and included music and speeches from loved ones.
Sponsor: Primavera Foundation & Evergreen Mortuary Cemetery Crematory
Contact: Joy Wilcox   520-882-5382 ext. 181   jwilcox@primavera.org

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Phoenix

California

Concord
Event: Project HOPE’s 7th Annual Homeless Memorial was held Friday, November 18, 2011, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Concord United Methodist Church. The Memorial was planned and hosted by the community-based nonprofit, Anka Behavioral Health, Inc. to remember the lives of the 45 men and women who experienced homelessness and passed away last year.
Sponsor: Anka Behavioral Health, Inc. & Concord United Methodist Church
Contact: Shayne Kaleo, Project HOPE   (925) 435-3650
Fairfield

Event: Mission Solano reminds us that sometimes to be homeless is to feel hopeless, and it is important for the community to instill a sense of home and hope. A personal story was read by Ron Marlette, executive director at Mission Solano. This was also made possible by Fairfield’s Healthcare Advisory Committee and the Christian Help Center. A eulogy was provided by Rev. Rey Bernardes. Donations were distributed after the event.

Sponsor: Mission Solano Rescue Mission
Contact: (707) 422-1011  www.missionsolano.org

Marin County/San Anselmo

Event: A small group of people congregated in honor of the life of Steven Emberson in the St. Vincent de Paul Free Dining Room in San Rafael. He passed away on the floor of the First Presbyterian Church while suffering from homelessness at the age of 57. He is estimated to be the eighth loss to the homeless community in the Marin County Area in 2011.

Sponsor: St. Vincent de Paul Free Dining Room
Contact: St. Vincent de Paul Free Dining Room  (415) 454-3303

Los Angeles

Event: Skid Row Housing Trust sponsored an event to memorialize those who passed away while experiencing the harsh conditions of Skid Row.

Sponsor: Skid Row Housing Trust
Contact: (213) 683-0522 ext. 122

Modesto

Event: People gathered at 6 p.m. at the Salvation Army’s Homeless Shelter for a candlelight vigil to remember the homeless who died 2011. The vigil was part of National Homeless Person’s Memorial Day, which since 1990 has called attention to homelessness on the first day of winter. The vigil is also a tribute to the homeless who are surviving despite the odds against them and those who volunteer to help them. The ceremony was sponsored by Stanislaus County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, Golden Valley Health Clinics, and The Salvation Army. Donations were accepted.

Sponsor: Salvation Army
Contact: Salvation Army Milda  (209) 525-8954

Pasadena

Event: At the All Saints Church in Pasadena, a homeless memorial was held. People lit candles in honor of the loved ones who have passed away. One man knew personally five people that passed away. The church service was entitled “A Celebration of Life: The Homeless of Our Community” and invited people of all faiths or no faith. The event was held on December 16.

Sponsor: All Saints Church
Contact: info@allsaints-pas.org

San Francisco

Event: In San Francisco, the 24th annual Interfaith Memorial Service for the Homeless Dead, cosponsored by San Francisco Network Ministries and the Coalition on Homelessness, was held on December 21, 2011, across from city hall. Led by representatives from six religious traditions,
people gathered to mourn those who died on the streets (approximately 100) and to recommit themselves to the works of justice, healing, and peace. Another Memorial is planned for December 22, 2012.

**Sponsor:** San Francisco Network Ministries & Coalition on Homelessness  
**Contact:** Rev. Glenda Hope  (415) 928-6209

**Santa Monica**  
**Event:** St. Monica Catholic Community and the Westside Shelter & Hunger Coalition Events held an event to memorialize the homeless who have passed. The event was an “Interfaith Celebration of Life,” Remembering homeless community members who have passed away during the past year was held on Sunday, November 13, 2011, at 2:30 p.m.

**Sponsor:** St. Monica Catholic Community and the Westside Shelter & Hunger Coalition Events  
**Contact:** Delis Alejandro, Director of Outreach and Pastoral Care, St. Monica Catholic Community  (310) 566-1500

**Santa Cruz**  
**Event:** In 2011, 24 people passed away due to the conditions of being homeless. Santa Cruz hosted its 13th annual Homeless Memorial. The service was attended by homeless people, advocates, and officials including Mayor Done Lane and Santa Cruz Police Official Chief Kevin Vogel. The service was punctuated by moments of tears and joy at the memories of those who passed.

**Sponsor:** Homeless Services Center Santa Cruz  
**Contact:** Homeless Services Center  (831) 458-6020

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**
- Fresno  
- Sacramento  
- San Diego  
- San Luis Obispo County  
- Santa Clara County/San Jose  
- Shasta County/Redding  
- Vallejo  
- Ventura

**Colorado**

**Denver**  
**Event:** The memorial event did not go as well as planned in previous years due to the high tensions of the political movement during the height of Occupy Denver. Normally, the occasion is a solemn event, but last year’s members of the Occupy Community saw reason for protest at the Denver Community’s event. 136 people passed away while homeless.

**Sponsor:** Colorado Coalition for the Homeless  
**Contact:** B.J.  (303) 293-2217  www.coloradocoalition.org

**Pueblo**  
**Event:** On Tuesday, May 29, 2012, about 150 people gathered to remember the lives of ten
homeless people who died last past year. Many people wept while others smiled as they remi-
nisced about the four men and six women at the seventh annual Pueblo Homeless Memorial. The
event was held at the Boettcher Outdoor Education Center on the eastern edge of the Historic
Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo.
Sponsor: Boettcher Outdoor Education Center
Contact: (719) 545-8776

Additional Cities Holding Events:

Grand Junction

Connecticut

Hartford
Event: The continuing injustice of homelessness was addressed in the Homeless Memorial
service and march. People shared their experiences of homelessness, poetry, eulogies, video
messages, photography, and a march. People collected winter clothing to pass out to the people
still forced to stay in the cold. The event took place at Charter Oak Cultural Center. Names of
deceased: (Last names were withheld.) Richmond C.; Les D.; William J.; Buhuro R.; Rafael R.
Rafael S.; Christine V.; Owen W.
Sponsor: Charter Oak Cultural Center
Contact: Carol Walter with Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (860) 721-7876

Middletown
Event: Church of the Holy Trinity sponsored a Memorial Service and Vigil for the Homeless on
National Homeless Person’s Day. Hundreds of people gathered for the event, many of the attendees
were currently experiencing homelessness. The event was sponsored by the Community
Health Center and speakers included Sen. Paul Doyle, Mayor Dan Drew, and Carol Walter on
behalf of Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness. The organization, Wherever You Are
Healthcare for the Homeless, also helped put on this event.
Sponsor: Church of the Holy Trinity
Contact: Agi Erickson with Community Health Center, Inc. (860) 224-3642 ext. 5551

Norwich
Event: As a reminder that those experiencing homelessness are someone’s mother, brother
sister, or father, Generations Family Health Center had an event to raise awareness on the plight
of homelessness. Five people in Norwich passed away in 2011. A crowd of people gathered on
Main Street to St. Vincent de Paul Place soup kitchen where there was a brief service before
everyone sat down to a dinner of spaghetti, salad, and fresh bread. For every person’s name that
was read in honor of the deceased, a bell rang in his or her memory.
Sponsor: St. Vincent de Paul Place
Contact: Jillian Corbin, Executive Director, St. Vincent de Paul Place (860) 889-7374 jcs-
vdpp@gmail.com
The First Day of Winter.
The Longest Night of the Year.

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Danielson
New Britain
Putnam
Stamford

Delaware
Wilmington

District of Columbia
Washington, D.C.
Event: In honor of Homeless Person’s Memorial Day, National Coalition for the Homeless and So Others Might Eat came together to celebrate the lives of the men and women who passed away while experiencing homelessness in Washington, D.C., in 2011. Wednesday, December 21, 2011, was the 22nd annual event. The service began outside at 6 p.m., and a free dinner was available inside at 7 p.m.
Sponsor: New York Avenue Presbyterian Church
Contact: National Coalition for the Homeless (202) 462-4822 ext. 234 info@nationalhomeless.org

Florida
Key West
Event: Everyone was invited to join with Florida Keys Outreach Center, Monroe County Social Services, and Southernmost Homeless Assistance League members last December 21, at 3 p.m. to pay respects to over a dozen individuals who had died homeless in Key West and Monroe County over this past year. The event was sponsored by the Florida Keys Outreach Coalition for the Homeless. Special attention was paid to those who served our country.

The Keys News points out: “What they all had in common were lives deeply affected by the scourge of poverty and homelessness,” said Braddock. “One out of four homeless men sleeping in an alley, a doorway, or in a box has put on a uniform and served our country.”
The sermon also painted a picture of how we are all interconnected in our lives. “We cannot separate ourselves even if we tried to do so...they reach out from their deaths into our lives with a message for us.” Key West had held memorials such as this since 1990. Deceased: Alfredo Balcells, 81; Charles Linwood Brown, 56; Jeffrey J. Hayden, 58; Michael Wayne Pierce, 51; Thomas Saviano-Finchum, 49; Arthur Dale Baker, 58; Daniel Clay Ratcliff, 50; Edward Botelho, 56; Charles Bruce Davis, Jr., 52; Herman Lopez Trigo., 67;
Lake City
Event: The second candlelight vigil was held on the steps of the Columbia County Courthouse for the homeless who have passed in the 2011. The event was possible because of Love in the Name of Christ of Suwannee County, the Columbia County School System, and the Homeless Services Network of Suwannee Valley. The event was to remind people of the children in school who are unsure of where they will sleep or where their next meal will come from. Food and blanket donations went to help support United Way. The vigils were held in Olustee Park in downtown Lake City at 6 P.M. and in Live Oak Millennium Park at 6:30 P.M.
Sponsor: United Way of Suwannee Valley
Contact: Jennifer Lee with United Way   (386) 752-5604

Melbourne
Event: With respect to the homeless who have passed, clergy from eight different denominations joined in prayers, readings from Old and New Testament, benediction, reading of names of those passed, taps, and lastly a wreath laying ceremony. This was sponsored by Daily Bread, Salvation Army, Brevard County Continuum of Care. Deceased: Richard Person, Henry J. Caron, Donna Parkins, Rob Shenarts, Joanne Sheafer, Carol Irby, Heidi Wheelden, Joni Preston, Bobby Spires, Camdon Powers, James Fitchett, David Brezec, Tony Keaton, Toni Jo Sarate, Wilbur Frye.
Sponsor: Daily Bread
Contact: Daily Bread   (321) 723-1060

Pinellas Park
Event: More than fifty people who died while experiencing homelessness in Pinellas County were remembered in memorial services held on Sunday, December 18, at 4:00 p.m. in three locations. Donations of warm clothing items were appreciated. Last year, the hour-long memorial services in Pinellas County featured scripture readings, music by local choral groups, eulogies on the theme “A Celebration of Life,” and candlelight remembrances of the deceased. Proclamations from local governments will be presented at the memorial services. Free hot meals were served after each service to provide opportunities for homeless consumers, service providers, advocates, community leaders and others to share a meal together in celebration of the lives of those who once walked among us. “Ditty” bags containing personal care products and warm clothing were distributed to homeless people attending the services. The primary service was held on Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 401 Fifth St. N., St. Petersburg. Gregory “G.W.” Rolle, a homeless advocate and publisher of St. Petersburg Homeless Image (a street newspaper covering homeless and related issues), eulogized those who died while experiencing homelessness in Pinellas County. Similar services were held in Clearwater and Tarpon Springs. Deceased: Angel Wade, Angel, Bill, Bruce Morse, Carlos Veras, Charles Jobe, Cleveland Burnham, Clinton Burns, Dag Anderson, Danny Rivera, Denver Grosse, Douglas Quick, Eddie Thompson, Eugene Murphy, Francis Barnacz, Fred Murray, Gary Floding, Jaime Martinez, James Delgado, James Powell, James Lennon, Jason Brooks, Jean Meyers, Jeffrey Kinzle, John Martin, Jr., John, Kevin Holda, Lloyd, Michael Ivy, Michael Sanders, Misty Jones, Randall King, Robert Wilson, Robin Scratchard, Ronald Holmes, Rose Jordan, Shannon Mulford, Shelly Thomas, Ted Lenox,
Teri Dawson, Thomas Sustacek, Thomas Byerly, Timothy Yandle, Tom DeHass, Tracy Adams, Unknown Man 01, Unknown Man 02, Unknown Man 03, Unknown Man 04, Unknown Woman 01, Unknown Woman 02, Victor Manuel Juarez.

**Sponsor:** Trinity Lutheran Church  
**Contact:** George Bolden  (727) 424-1325  webmaster@celebrateoutreach.org

**Saint Johns/Saint Augustine**  
**Event:** People gathered in front of the First United Methodist church to remember those who passed while homeless in St. Johns County in 2011. Jim Harden, president of the Emergency Services and Homeless Coalition for St. Johns County, spoke of the attempt to honor those who passed. Renee Morris read the names of the deceased, and she knew most of them personally. People remembered how some of the people died senselessly to acts of violence.  
**Sponsor:** First United Methodist  
**Contact:** Emergency Services and Homeless Coalition, 523 West King Street St., Augustine, FL 32084;  (904) 824-6623

**Tampa**  
**Event:** Christmas came a little early last year in Joe Chillura Park. Homeless men and women gathered to receive clothing collected by students on our campuses and sleeping bags provided through donations of individuals and corporations. A committed set of volunteers quietly sorted them into piles along a fifty-foot section of concrete retaining wall. Along with about 150 individuals from all backgrounds, the staff of the Tampa Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County gathered there to participate in the Homeless Memorial Day service, for the known 58 individuals who died during the past year on our city’s streets.  
**Sponsor:** Tampa Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County  
**Contact:** Synod House  (813) 876-7660  info@fbsynod.org

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**  
*Charlotte County*  
*Citrus County*  
*Central Florida including Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties*  
*Clearwater*  
*Daytona Beach/Deland./Palm Coast*  
*Ft. Lauderdale*  
*Jacksonville*  
*Live Oak/Suwannee County*  
*Miami-Dade County*  
*Naples*  
*Pasco County/New Port Richey*  
*Palm Beach County/West Palm Beach*  
*Saint Petersburg*  
*Sarasota/Manatee Counties*  
*Tallahassee*  
*Tarpon Springs*
Georgia

Atlanta (November 1 and December 21)
Marietta

Idaho

Boise
Event: For the 6th year, Boise joined with community groups and individuals in more than 150 cities across the United States on December 21 to commemorate the lives of homeless members of our community who died on our streets or in our emergency shelters from illness or conditions directly related to their homelessness. Individuals who were formerly homeless and homeless advocates who died in 2011 were also being remembered. The Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day began with a Vigil Walk to Interfaith Sanctuary leaving from the old Ada County Courthouse at 6 p.m. An Interfaith Service was held outdoors at Interfaith Sanctuary beginning at 7 p.m. Hospitality was provided at Corpus Christi Day Shelter immediately following the ceremony. Reception provided by Mosaic Street Ministry.
Sponsor: Interfaith Sanctuary, Corpus Christi Day Shelter, & Mosaic Street Ministry
Contact: Interfaith Sanctuary (208) 343-2630 Interfaithsanctuary.org

Illinois

Chicago
Event: Chicago Homeless Persons’ Memorial Service, sponsored by the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and the Ignition Spirituality Project, was held in honor of those who had passed while suffering from homelessness. Music by the Hope, Harmony, and Healing choir performed. This event took place Wednesday, December 21, 2011, from 6-7:30 p.m.
Sponsor: Chicago Coalition for the Homeless & Ignition Spirituality Project
Contact: (312) 641-4140

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Belleville
Palatine
Rockford

Indiana

Evansville
Event: In conjunction with the National Coalition for the Homeless, Aurora sponsored Evansville’s first public memorial service in 2000 to recognize individuals who have died while being homeless. Names were collected locally dating back to 1990. A total of 70+ names are currently memorialized.
Sponsor: Trinity United Methodist Church
Contact: (812) 428-3246 info@auraevansville.org
Fort Wayne
Event: The Fort Wayne Area Planning Council on Homelessness held a Memorial Walk and Service on December 21 at 6 p.m. There was a walk from the Rescue Mission to a local park, where a short memorial service was held, including the mayor’s proclamation and comments from local pastor.
Sponsor: Fort Wayne Area Planning Council on Homelessness
Contact: (260) 469-4011

Kokomo
Event: CAM Candlelight Service for Kokomo’s Fourteenth observance of the National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day was held on December 21. Candles were lit candles and remembered 15 people - 9 Clients, 6 Volunteers and Supporters of CAM, Inc. Of the 9 CAM Clients, the adults ranged from 46-74; one was a Veteran.
Sponsor: CAM, Inc.
Contact: Rev. Ruth Lawson, Executive Director, (765) 434-0687 caminc1993@sbcglobal.net

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Bloomingon
Indianapolis
Jeffersonville

Iowa

Des Moines
Event: A candlelight vigil was held for homeless service providers and people experiencing homelessness in honor of those who died while experiencing homelessness. Donations of warm clothing and financial contributions for propane were appreciated. The vigil was from 5:30 to 6:00. Mayor Frank Cownie of Des Moines and Governor Terry Brandstad were there and each shared their thoughts on homelessness
Sponsor: Joppa Outreach
Contact: (515) 288-5699 info@joppaoutreach.org

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Davenport

Kansas

Wichita

Kentucky

Louisville
Maine

Bangor

**Event:** The event was held on the winter solstice each year to remember the homeless and formerly homeless citizens who died in 2011 as a call to end homelessness. Estimate of six people died while homeless in Bangor. Affiliates were Hope House Homeless Shelter, Hammond Street Congregational Church, the Bangor Area Homeless Shelter, Shaw House, Spruce Run, the City of Bangor, Community Health and Counseling and the Bangor Police Department.

**Contact:** (207) 947-0092

Lewiston

**Event:** Lewiston and Auburn Communities held a vigil, December 12, 2011. The Lewiston/Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH) invited the LA community to its annual candlelight vigil remembering homeless people during the holiday season from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 21, 2011, in downtown Lewiston. People met in the courtyard of the Trinity Jubilee Center. After a few words and lighting of candles, vigil participants walked several blocks down Bates Street past the St. Mary’s Nutrition Center to Main Street. The procession turned right on Main and continued up Sabattus Street to the courtyard of Calvary United Methodist Church (in the triangle between Sabattus, College, and Bartlett) where the event concluded with hot chocolate and refreshments donated by Hurricane’s and the Bread Shack. Vigil participants donated nonperishable and canned food to the event, which was collected at both Trinity and Calvary. Participants joined the vigil at any point along the procession route; a warm indoor space will be available to gather when the vigil concludes at Calvary.

**Contact:** (207) 795-4077

Portland

**Event:** About 100 people turned out for the march and vigil which took place in the rain. The annual vigil was helped by OccupyMaine, and people gathered from the Preble Street Resource Center to Monument Square. For members of Occupy Maine, who shared Lincoln Park with homeless people and whose ranks include Portlanders who are homeless themselves, the issue effects their friends and loved ones.

**Sponsor:** Preble Street Resource Center

**Contact:** Preble Street Resource Center (207) 775-0026

Maryland

Baltimore

**Event:** A crowd of nearly 200 gathered at the Baltimore Harbor Amphitheater. They stood before a display of well-worn shoes, most holding a flickering candle. Each shoe was tagged with a name of one of the 111 people who died homeless in Baltimore. The services were held by Rabbi Martin Siegel and Reverend Brian Murray.

**Sponsor:** Health Care for the Homeless

**Contact:** Health Care for the Homeless, 421 Fallsway Baltimore, MD; info@hchmd.org aschneider@hchmd.org
Additional Cities Holding Events:
Harford County/Bel Air

Massachusetts

Barnstable County/Hyannis
Event: To honor the nine lives lost during experiencing homelessness, the community of Barnstable County remembered them through the Buddhist chant of the deceased, followed by a reading of the nine names and a candle lighting. The service was held at the Hyannis Federated Church.
Sponsor: Hyannis Federated Church

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Arlington
Boston
Worcester

Michigan

Detroit
Event: The annual Homeless Persons’ Memorial Program was held by Detroit Health Care for the Homeless Advantage Health Centers in collaboration with Cathedral Church of Saint Paul on the Winter solstice (the longest night of the year). In honor of National Homeless Persons Day, the service was held at the Cathedral Church and paid homage to individuals who lost their lives during the past year as a result of homelessness. An ecumenical service was held that includes a reading of the names, and was followed by a full holiday meal served by Advantage Health Center’s staff. All homeless persons in attendance received warming gifts (coats, blankets, thermal undergarments, socks, hats, gloves, and scarves) and gift bags containing toiletries.
Sponsor: Detroit Health Care for the Homeless Advantage Health Centers
Contact: Patty Flum, Executive Assistant  (313) 416-6223  pflus@advantagehealthcenters.org

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Farmington
Traverse City

Minnesota

Duluth
Event: The community of Duluth remembered the homeless, formerly homeless, and deceased. More than 100 people gathered to hear the names of 22 homeless people who passed away. Churches United in Ministry and the Human Development Center also reminded people of the three deaths that took place in just over a week.
Sponsor: Churches United in Ministry and the Human Development Center
Contact: CHUM (218) 720-6570
Red Lake

**Event:** There was a National Homeless Person’s Memorial Day, with a feast and fire, at Mishk-waa-ga-mii-wii-zaaga’i-ganii Giiwishiiwigamig (the Red Lake Homeless Shelter) on Tuesday, December 21. The memorial fire was from dawn until dusk. The eighth annual remembrance was held in honor of those whose lives were shortened by living without housing. About thirty people gathered to raise awareness on the tragedy of homelessness. This was the eighth year the Red Lake Homeless Shelter held the memorial.

**Sponsor:** Red Lake Homeless Shelter

**Contact:** (218) 679-3228.

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**

**Minneapolis**

**Mississippi**

**Hattiesburg**

**Event:** The Pinebelt Coalition on Homelessness held a candlelit vigil as a tribute to those who go without food, water, clothing, and shelter over the holiday season.

**Sponsor:** Pinebelt Coalition on Homelessness

**Contact:** (601) 554-1005

**Missouri**

**St. Joseph**

**St. Louis**

**Montana**

**Yellowstone County**

**Event:** For the 18th year in Yellowstone County, the Salvation Army, the Montana Rescue Mission, and RiverStone Health Healthcare for the Homeless hosted a vigil to remember the homeless persons who have died in 2011. The ceremony was at noon on the Yellowstone County Courthouse lawn County Commissioner Bill Kennedy read a homeless proclamation. Attendees were asked to bring gloves or mittens. There was an estimate of 38 deaths around Montana in the homeless community.

**Sponsor:** Yellowstone County, the Salvation Army, the Montana Rescue Mission, & RiverStone Health Healthcare for the Homeless

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**

**Great Falls**

**Helena**

**Nebraska**

**Lincoln**

**Event:** The People’s City Mission, the largest provider of homeless shelter and services in Lin-
coln, held an event at 7 p.m. to pay respect to the homeless men and women who died over the past year. This list included individuals who died while living on the street or emergency shelter. This year, eleven people passed away living under these conditions. The cause was not political, but a time to honor the lives of those who were our loved ones. Deceased: Michael S. Rismeyer, 52; Michael Bum, 41; Donald Summers, 61; Gary Kent Wilson, 47; Rico Valentino, 49; Kyle C. Clark, 43; Lynn Finney, 57; Peter Y. Hardy 29; Allen Lecus, 47; Wayne Jacobs; Dan Scott Huddleston, 57.

**Sponsor:** People’s City Mission Medical Clinic  
**Contact:** (402) 475-1303

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**

**Omaha**

**Las Vegas**

**Event:** The memorial service held in Las Vegas memorialized those who were lost due to the conditions of the streets. It was a reminder of the severe conditions and the brutality of life and death on the streets. The events were held in honor of the lives of a man who was severely burned in a trash fire, suicides, and other homicides. The service was also to serve as a reminder that somebody cares even when it seems otherwise. Deceased: Elgin Anthony Alcorn, Renato B. Alvarez, Johnny Lee Armstead, John Attakai, Vincent Michael Bartlett, Leo Daniel Baskas, Jr., Robert Allen Bernson, Buddy R. Bigelow, Steven Copenhagen, Charles Cushing, James Albert Daneau, Luke Emde Davis, Jimmy R. Dykes, Jodi Ann Fruitt, Julian Diaz Garcia, Richard Garcia, Jimmy Lee Getts, Marcus Wayne Goodman, Robert Gowan, Wayne Green, James Haughey, John Hicks, Patrick Huffs, Erick Charles Jordan, Howard David Kierstead, Joseph Klein, Peter A. Losby, Hubert Lee Newson, Metodi Nicolov, Leopoldo Armando Nunez, Michael Glynn Osborne, Jeffery Chandler Patt, Keith David Perkins, Drew Lamont Reading, Jesse L. Reeves, Daniel Edwin Rushwam, William Oscar Rye, Salvadore Vincent Scialabba, Gregory John Shaheen, Djarar Sho a ahar, David Sidden, Jeffrey Terrell, Peter Kraig Thompson, Name Phuc Vo, Sharon Lee Wagner, Sharyl A. Ward, Bert Stanley Williamson, Jimmy Wilson.  
**Sponsor:** HELP of Southern Nevada

**Concord**

**Event:** People joined at 4 p.m. at the State House Plaza to remember those who have passed while homeless in the Concord Area in 2011. The vigil was a reminder that ending homelessness is a responsibility of the community and a vow to renew strength. Attendees took turns reading the names of those who had passed along with singing songs and sharing thoughts.  
**Sponsor:** State House Plaza  
**Contact:** (603) 224-2407  infogarty@afsc.org

**Laconia**

**Event:** On December 21 at 5:30 p.m. at Veterans Square in Laconia, people took a few moments to remember those who died from homelessness in New Hampshire. The event was made possi-
ble by New Hampshire Catholic Charities. People were encouraged to bring a light for the vigil and an item of food for area food pantries. Songs included “We Shall Overcome” and “Amazing Grace.”

**Sponsor:** New Hampshire Catholic Charities

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**Lebanon**

**Event:** Everyone was welcome to come and share thoughts and memories and participate in the candlelight vigil. People were encouraged to bring their own candles or candle substitutes. Donations of nonperishables were welcomed. The event was held at the First Congregational Church in Lebanon New Hampshire. The event was held at 5 p.m. Deceased: Ray Sanville, Tom Hurd.

**Sponsor:** First Congregational Church

**Contact:** TCCAP Homeless Program (603) 443-6150

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**Nashua**

**Event:** In honor of the 24 people who had passed while homeless last year in New Hampshire, Nashua held an event to honor their lives. The event was to let the community know that the homeless do not have to be regarded as an “invisible issues.” Workers and other homeless people remembered the ones who have passed and miss their lived ones greatly. The event was held at 5 p.m. in front of the Church of the Good Shepherd.

**Sponsor:** Church of the Good Shepherd

**Contact:** Eileen Brady (603) 889-7770   Eileen@nsks.org

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**Newport**

**Event:** December’s Season of Celebrations and Sharing-Candlelight Vigil was hosted in Newport, New Hampshire. This was in order for people to remember that no matter what is going on in life, there are people who are experiencing harder things. This was an event to raise awareness of the plight of homelessness. The event was held at 5 p.m. in the gazebo of Newport Common followed by a soup and bread supper at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany.

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**Additional Cities Holding Events:**

**Keene**

**Manchester**

**Portsmouth**

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**New Jersey**

**Atlantic City**

**Event:** A Homeless Persons’ Memorial & Candlelight Vigil was held from 3 to 4 p.m. at the Atlantic City Rescue Mission. This was held by the New Jersey Advocacy Network to End Homelessness.

**Sponsor:** New Jersey Advocacy Network to End Homelessness

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**Camden**

**Event:** A Remembrance Event was held by Project H.O.P.E at 3 p.m. to honor those who have passed away while homeless.
Sponsor: Project H.O.P.E

Jersey City
Event: On Tuesday, December 21, at 1 p.m., the Hudson County Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day Commemoration took place. A coalition led by Jersey City Episcopal Community Development Corporation and Church of the Incarnation held an interfaith homeless memorial service, which included remembrances of homeless neighbors, friends & loved ones who have passed away, lost to the street.
Sponsor: The Church of the Incarnation
Contact: (201) 209-9301

Lakewood
Event: A candlelight vigil was held in the Tent City area to remember the homeless who have died. People from both the tent city itself and the outside community attended the service. Twenty-six peoples’ lives were remembered in the service.
Sponsor: Tent City Lakewood

Trenton/Mercer County
Event: Mercer County’s Homeless Person’s Memorial event was held at 10 a.m. along with a breakfast for the homeless at 8:30 a.m. at Turning Point Methodist Church, 15 South Broad Street, Trenton, New Jersey. Fourteen individuals died this year that experienced homelessness.
Sponsor: Turning Point Methodist Church
Contact: Tarry Truitt, Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness (609) 844-9301

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Bergen County/Hackensack
Middlesex County/Edison

New Mexico
Albuquerque
Event: A Homeless Memorial Service was held in honor of the estimated 60 people who died while homeless in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The vigil took place in the First United Methodist Church in downtown Albuquerque. People offered poems, songs, and commentary.
Sponsor: First United Methodist Church.

New York
Buffalo
Event: Matt Urban Hope Center held an outside vigil for homelessness, which is regarded as a social tragedy. This was sparked by the death of a man who was probably homeless who died in an abandoned house that caught fire.
Sponsor: Matt Urban Hope Center
Contact: (716) 893-7222
**Jamestown**

**Event:** The local event featured music, refreshments, and a candlelight vigil, with guest appearances by local politicians. Music selections were performed by Pat Post (formerly of Total Chaos) and Tara Eastman. Speakers included former homeless persons who shed light on the widely misunderstood topic, a pastor who works with those in his church to reach out and assist those in need. 2011’s event was dedicated to Cecilia Janson, a resident of YWCA Jamestown’s Transitional Housing, who died without any family by her side. Homelessness affects many lives and Chautauqua County.

**Contact:** Assemblyman Goodell  
goodella@assembly.state.ny.us

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**New York City**

**Event:** On Christmas morning in the Main Hall of Grand Central Terminal, Iraq War veterans who participated in the Doe Fund Veterans program joined the “men in blue” of the organization’s well-known Ready, Willing & Able Initiative along with community members and Doe Fund supporters to honor the memory of an elderly homeless woman. She was known only as “Mama”, and she died on a bench in the stations waiting room on Christmas. The Doe Fund is named after those who live anonymously. The event was also made possible by the organization “Picture the Homeless.” People gathered at the annual Interfaith Memorial Service for all of our homeless brothers and sisters who have passed away last year – some whose names we know, many whose names we don’t – but none were forgotten. Refreshments and fellowship followed the service. This event was made possible by the organization Picture the Homeless.

**Sponsor:** Judson Memorial Church

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**Rochester**

**Event:** At Unity Hospital’s St. Mary’s Campus, an uplifting service was held to memorialize those who have died while homeless in Rochester in 2011. The ceremony was hosted by Unity Health System and the Health Reach Health Care for the Homeless Program. The program included vocal performances, prayers, and greetings from local leaders. City council President Lovely Warren and Dr. Michael Nazar of the Unity Health System spoke at the event. Fran More, Director of the Dimitri House, told the story of a homeless woman she helped achieve one of her lifetime dreams before dying of AIDS; a fairytale wedding. Twelve people died in Rochester, and candles were lit in their honor.

**Sponsor:** Unity Health System & the Health Reach Health Care for the Homeless Program
Additional Cities Holding Events:

**Albany**

**North Carolina**

**Asheville**

**Event:** The event was cosponsored by Asheville Buncombe Homeless Initiative, the First Presbyterian Church of Asheville and the Haywood Street Congregation. Posters were provided to be printed in honor of the average of 20 homeless people lost within the Asheville community each year.

**Sponsor:** Asheville Buncombe Homeless Initiative

**High Point**

**Event:** Open Door Ministries located in High Point held a memorial dinner for the homeless community between 6 and 7:30. The loss of thirteen people who had experienced homelessness has greatly affected the community of High Point.

**Sponsor:** Open Door Ministries

**Southern Pines**

**Event:** St. Joseph of the Pines and Family Promise, Friend to Friend, and the Sandhills/Moore Coalition for Human Care sponsored an event in honor of the homeless. Attendees were asked to bring a blanket, scarf, coat, or hat to distribute to those who are homeless. People spoke, sang, and watched musical performances. The Reverend Carl Naylor, director of mission outreach at St. Joseph, questioned why society neglects the needs of those experiencing homelessness. People gathered in the Southern Pines Downtown Park with electric candles. The church has been doing research in Moore County to address the problem of homelessness starting in their own area, where many people are unaware that homelessness even affects their region.

**Sponsor:** St. Joseph of the Pines and Family Promise, Friend to Friend & the Sandhills/Moore Coalition for Human Care

Additional Cities Holding Events:

**Raleigh**

**North Dakota**

**Fargo**

**Event:** The Native America Center Project next to the First United Methodist Church honored the lives passed of those who were homeless. This was made possible by the Fargo Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons.

**Sponsor:** Fargo Moorhead Coalition for Homeless Persons

**Contact:** (701) 200-0855

**Ohio**

**Cincinnati**

**Event:** Homeless Memorial Day is a national day of mourning for the men, women, and children
who have passed away while homeless or having just exited homelessness. Last year the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless honored 35 Cincinnatians for whom they had names along with those who may not be known. The event featured a memorial fire in a barrel, the reading of names, and the lighting of candles for the deceased as well as singing, storytelling, and quiet reflection.

**Sponsor:** The Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless

**Cleveland**

**Event:** Last year’s candlelight vigil featured state Senator Nina Turner as the guest speaker along with three religious leaders. Media was welcome to attend and photograph the memorial/vigil. Joining with other cities throughout the state and country, the Cleveland vigil included an interfaith memorial service from the Jewish and Christian faith traditions.

**Sponsor:** St. Patrick’s Meal Site

**Contact:** (216) 432-0540

**Dayton**

**Event:** An event honoring the lost lives of those who were homeless was held on Courthouse Square at noon on December 21. It was a very moving memorial hosted by the Emergency Housing Coalition (EHC.) It is estimated that eighteen lives were lost due to lack of housing.

**Sponsor:** Emergency Housing Coalition

**Toledo**

**Event:** A memorial was held at Trinity Episcopal Church to recognize those who died on the street. Members of 1Matters helped make this possible along with the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio. It was an event to remind society that everyone who is in a rough spot is someone’s family member.

**Sponsor:** Members of 1Matters & Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**

**Columbus**

**Oklahoma**

**Tulsa**

**Event:** On December 21, 2011, the longest night of the year, the Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless hosted a Memorial Service and paid homage to those homeless individuals who had lost their lives while living on the streets. These real people with real stories often go unnoticed in their deaths. There were 46 names read that represented the people of the homeless community who lost their lives. One of the biggest reasons for holding the service was to erase the negative stigma associated with homelessness.

**Sponsor:** Tulsa Day Center

**Contact:** (918) 583-5588
The First Day of Winter.
The Longest Night of the Year.

Oregon

Coos County
Event: Donations of cash and bedding were collected during the Homeless Memorial at 6 p.m. on the Coos Bay boardwalk pavilion. Through the organization “Neighbors in Need,” the Homeless Memorial touched the surface of the issues surrounding homelessness. Coos County Commissioner Cam Parry and First United Methodist Church’s Reverend Laura Belleville spoke. Candles were lit while people sang “Amazing Grace.”
Sponsor: Neighbors in Need

Grants Pass
Event: A candlelight vigil was held on December 21, 2011, at 5 p.m. Bells tolled in remembrance of the lives of the homeless that were lost to the streets. The event was sponsored by Josephine County Homelessness Task Force.
Sponsor: Josephine County Homelessness Task Force
Contact: (541) 956-4470

Lincoln County
Event: The first ever Lincoln County Homeless Person’s Memorial Day was observed in Newport at a gathering at the gazebo in Don Davis Park on Olive Street at 3 p.m. The event blended Native American ceremonial prayers and music from the Judeo-Christian tradition with a focus on healing and hope. Refreshments were served, and people experiencing homelessness were highly encouraged to attend.

Portland
Event: In honor of the 1,000 Veterans who passed away while homeless, the community gathered to remember Navy Petty Officer known as 2nd Class Roy. The ceremony was held in Willamette National Cemetery where they played Taps, had a 21-gun salute, and where the flag was rolled with precision. This memoriam was possible thanks to Dignity Memorial Homeless Veterans Burial Program.
Sponsor: Street Roots
Contact: Dignity Memorial Homeless Veterans Burial Program (800) 34-DIGNITY
Street Roots (503) 228-5657    Rosecityresource.org

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Albany
Douglas County

Pennsylvania

Philadelphia
Event: On the shortest day and the longest night of the year, hundreds of Philadelphians gathered outside to remember those homeless and formerly homeless who lost their lives in 2011. We used this occasion to call on all Philadelphians and all Americas to wake up and recommit ourselves to ending homelessness. This was sponsored by Broad Street Ministry, Project H.O.M.E, and the American Red Cross. Warm beverages and ASL interpretation were provided. More than 120
names were read for the homeless who have lost their lives in 2011.  
**Sponsor:** Broad Street Ministries

**Pittsburgh**

**Event:** Every year on December 21, Pittsburgh Mercy Health Systems holds a homeless persons’ memorial service to recognize homeless people who have passed away every year. Pittsburgh held its memorial service at an intersection where they read the names of the deceased, said a prayer, and sang a song in remembrance. The city also has a wall of placards that has the names and dates of the homeless who have passed away.  
**Sponsor:** Pittsburgh Mercy Health Systems  
**Contact:** (412) 578-6224/Stephanie Chiappini (412) 246-2968

**Wilkes-Barre**

**Event:** At least 93 first names and nicknames were read one by one at St. Stephen’s Church on South Franklin Street. People also remembered and were saddened by the closing of REACH which helped provide resources for people in poverty. The service helped to ensure that people would not be forgotten on National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day. People gathered and sang “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” as well as “Amazing Grace”.  
**Sponsor:** St. Stephen’s Church  
**Contact:** 570-822-7118

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**

**Erie**

**Rhode Island**

**Providence**

**Event:** Homeless advocates in Rhode Island held a memorial for those who died while homeless in 2011. The service was held at Beneficent Church. Nearly 200 people attended the event. This was possible thanks to the Rhode Island Homeless Advocacy Project. For many people who died on the streets, this is their only memorial service. The event was held on January 25. 35 candles were lit, one for each person known to have passed while on the streets, and an extra in honor of those who may not have been known. Quilts were also made with pictures of those who have passed. The event was noted to have been very successful.  
**Sponsor:** Rhode Island Homeless Advocacy Project

**South Carolina**

**Myrtle Beach**

**Event:** Swash Park Ministry and the Community Kitchen of Myrtle Beach held a candlelight vigil at the Community Kitchen. Twenty-three people passed away the present year while homeless. Around 25 people attended the vigil, singing songs such as “Amazing Grace,” and reciting prayers with lit candles. A memorial is planned for 2012 on the last Thursday of December.  
**Sponsor:** Community Kitchen of Myrtle Beach  
**Contact:** Carol Stallings, Swash Park Ministries (843) 902-4846 Cstall1212@gmail.com
Additional Cities Holding Events:
Spartanburg

Tennessee
Knoxville
Event: Those forgotten in life need not be forgotten in death. The spirit of the Christmas season was an opportunity for compassion and concern for all, especially the homeless. Once again, the community prepared to observe Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day in Knoxville. All the speakers and planners were people who have experienced homelessness or found it to be their current situation. It is observed every year around the country on December 21, the longest night of the year, to give an opportunity to remember the passing of people who experienced homelessness and to bring awareness to the tragedy of homelessness. A candlelit walk and memorial service will be held to remember our homeless neighbors who died in 2012 as well. The public is welcome!
Sponsor: St. John’s Lutheran, Church
Contact: Nancy Douglas, Lost Sheep Ministry (865) 688-9636

Memphis
Event: Mt. Olive AME Church, located on 598 Linden Ave., held a service on Monday, December 19, 2011, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. to honor the homeless who have passed. There was a memorial prayer service and candlelight vigil, along with dinner. This was sponsored by the Memphis Health Center, Inc.
Sponsor: Memphis Health Center, Inc.
Contact: Sharon Hill, Homeless Case Manager (901) 261-2062 shill@mphshc.org

Additional Cities Holding Events:
Nashville

Texas
Austin
Event: For the 19th year, followers met on Auditorium Shores to acknowledge the men, women, and children who have died on the streets of Austin during the past year. Last year, newly elected City Council member Kathie Tovo was the keynote speaker. The Reverend Dr. Sid Hall led us in prayer. Our lovely Sara Hickman graced us with songs, and Armin Steege closed with “Taps”. The House the Homeless Memorial Sunrise Service started at 6:57am on Sunday, November 13, and lasted an hour. The event was held at the Homeless Memorial at South 1st and Riverside Streets. The memorial tree, bench and plaque that comprise the memorial rest 75 yards west of the Fanny Davis Gazebo and 75 yards east of the Stevie Ray Vaughn statue were honored. There was breakfast food and drinks.
Sponsor: Homeless Memorial
Contact: www.housethehomeless.org/contact-us/

Caldwell
Event: A homeless memorial took place at 2 p.m. on the Burleson County Courthouse steps. A table was set up with blankets, socks, food, jackets, and knit caps. Donations were welcomed.
Contact: Bruce Aspgren   (979) 219-2168   advocate@rockinga.org

**Lubbock**

**Event:** To honor the homeless who have died and to remember those who struggle to find a place to sleep, the Community Health Center of Lubbock has partnered with Salvation Army, National Coalition for the Homeless, local churches and community organizations to host Lubbock’s Homeless Person’s Memorial Day.

**Sponsor:** Community Health Center of Lubbock

**Contact:** (806) 765-2611 ext. 1024

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**
- Corpus Christi
- Harlingen
- Houston
- Fort Worth
- San Antonio
- Tarrant County/Fort Worth

**Utah**

**Salt Lake City**

**Vermont**

**Brattleboro**

**Event:** Warm Hands, Warm Heart helped to raise donations for those who could have gone without in the winter. Organizations, such as the Overflow Shelter and Morningside Shelter, are involved in the community. People carried sleeping bags to give to the shelters and sang on the way.

**Sponsor:** First Baptist Church

**Contact:** Drop-In Center (802) 257-5415

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**
- Bellow Falls
- Burlington

**Virginia**

**Charlottesville**

**Event:** A vigil was planned via Facebook to honor the lives of people who passed away in Charlottesville. Around 60 people came out to honor those who lost lives. There is not a certain number recorded of how many people have died in Charlottesville. Stephen Hitchcock from the Haven spoke of the importance of moving in the right direction regarding homelessness.

**Sponsor:** The Haven

**Contact:** Stephen Hitchcock, Day Haven Manager, Chaplain & Volunteer Coordinator

stephen@thehaven.org
Richmond

**Event:** A candlelit vigil was held on December 21, 2011, at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 815 E. Grace St. Richmond, VA 23219, at 5:00 p.m. The names of those who passed away were read aloud to honor their lives.

**Sponsor:** St. Paul’s Episcopal Church & Homeward

**Contact:** Kelly King Horne  kkhorne@homewardva.org

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**

*Chesapeake*

*Fredericksburg*

*Norfolk*

**Washington**

*Snohomish County/Everett*

**Event:** In honor of the Homeless Military Veterans, Snohomish County Veterans Homeless Committee, the Snohomish County branch of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People, the county of Human Services Department, the county Veterans Assistance fund board and the Salvation Army in Everett held a vigil. The first names and last initials were read in honor of the 27 veterans who died homeless in the area.

**Sponsor:** Snohomish County Human Services Department

**Spokane**

**Event:** Friday, November 19: Winter Wear Pickup and Memorial Service: At noon, there was a memorial service held to remember the hungry and homeless who had passed away this last year. The event was helped in part by the Spokane Mental Health Homeless Outreach Team.

**Sponsor:** First Covenant Church

**Contact:** (509) 624-2378

**Vancouver**

**Event:** Friends of the Carpenter and the Council for the Homeless held their second annual remembrance ceremony in honor of those who passed away from homelessness in 2011. There was music, lighting of candles, reading of names, and an ecumenical message of hope. The event took place at Friends of the Carpenter at nine in the morning and was open to everyone.

**Sponsor:** Friends of the Carpenter

**Yakima County**

**Event:** The longest night of the year, the official first day of winter, began with a candlelight vigil in downtown Yakima. The seventh annual Homeless Person’s Memorial Day was held Wednesday, December 21 at 5 p.m. in Millennium Plaza. This was supported by Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, Keith & Keith Funeral Home, Olive Garden, & Starbucks. The program had music by community volunteers, with a special selection from local children as a community service honoring the homeless. There was a litany written by David Hacker. Rev. Eric Anderson from the United Christian church offered the invocation. The service ended with a benediction by Rev. James Engel, Central Evangelical Lutheran Church. The average person who died while homeless in Yakima was 41, though the youngest was only 15. The memorial helped
the community remember the 34 people who passed away in 2011.

**Sponsor:** Yakima Neighborhood Health Services

**Additional Cities Holding Events:**

- Marysville
- King County/Seattle
- Kitsap County

**Wisconsin**

**Green Bay**

**Event:** In Green Bay, there was a memorial service to remember the homeless who have passed. A total of 12 shoes were laid out, each representing a person passed due to the conditions of homelessness. The event was hosted by the St. John Evangelical Parish. Scriptures were read and music was played and names of the deceased were read. A large candle was lit in honor of the homeless who are unidentified.

**Sponsor:** St. John the Evangelist Catholic Parish

**Kenosha**

**Event:** On the first day of winter there was a balloon releasing ceremony and a reading of names of the homeless who have passed in 2011. There was hot soup and coffee to keep people warm during the outdoor ceremony. Winter coats, sweaters, and etc were distributed to those who are experiencing homelessness. The event took place at 3 p.m. and lasted until 4 p.m.

**Sponsor:** Library Park

**Contact:** Walkin’ In My Shoes (262) 764-0214

**La Crosse**

**Event:** The La Crosse Salvation Army held its 4th Memorial Day Event on December 21, 2011. It included a candlelight ceremony along with the readings of four homeless and six formerly homeless individuals in La Crosse who died in the past year. Following the ceremony people gathered inside the shelter for dinner. After the meal from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on the Salvation Army playground, the Salvation Army held a “Bare the Cold” event to help aid the understanding of what it may be like to spend an evening outdoors as some of the homeless in our community do. There was a fire pit burning to help keep warm along with hot chocolate and coffee. Spread out around the fire pit were chairs with names on the individuals that we remembered in the candlelight ceremony. Deceased: Homeless: Stephen, 48; Carrie, 33; Christine, 47; James, 53. Formerly Homeless: Sarai, 31; Steve, 57; Becky, 51; John, 56; Nicole, 23; Gary, 40.

**Sponsor:** Salvation Army La Crosse

**Contact:** Kathy Bowling  (608) 782-6126

**Racine**

**Event:** The University of Wisconsin-Parkside students held an event to raise homeless awareness. The event, called The Longest Night, was held to remember homeless people who have lost their lives in the past year. The Longest Night was held Wednesday from 5:30 until 7 p.m at Saint Luke’s Episcopal Church. Speakers talked about homelessness, and some people who were formerly homeless shared their experiences. At least seven people died while homeless in Racine
in 2011.

**Sponsor:** Saint Luke’s Episcopal Church and the Homeless Assistance Coalition of Racine County

**Contact:** Homeless Assistance Coalition of Racine County (262) 633-3235

**Wyoming**

*Cheyenne*
“Bloggers Unite” on blogspot.com

Starting in 2008, blogspot.com launched a project called Bloggers Unite, where bloggers who participate in an online “event.” The purpose of the event is so that bloggers with similar interests and passions can unite and all write about a particular project on the same day.

An event to share stories about National Homeless Memorial Day has been set up for December 21, 2012. The page has already been created, stating the objective to be an event that “raises awareness about the high personal cost of homelessness with vigils in memory of those who have died while homeless.”

This is a great way for local organizers to share their ideas and experiences on a national level. This event provides a forum for organizers, advocates, and homeless or formerly homeless individuals throughout the nation to connect, and raise more awareness for the issue of homelessness and for National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day. Join the event today!

http://www.bloggersunite.org/event/national-homeless-persons-memorial-day-1
Homeless Lives Too Often Cut Short
“First Homicide of 2012” a Stark Reminder that a List of Homeless Dead is by Nature Incomplete
by Mary Otto, Editor-in-Chief; published January 11, 2012

A list of the homeless dead is by nature incomplete, steadily unfolding. The lives of the homeless are often cut two or three decades short due to exposure, easily treated chronic diseases, addiction, or violence. On December 21, the names of 67 homeless people who died in and around Washington over the year were read at a vigil marking the local observance of National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day.

And on December 31, the battered and strangled body of Street Sense vendor Leroy Studevant, 56, was found near a creek in Northeast D.C.

District police are calling their inquiry into his death the first homicide investigation of 2012.

At the December 21 vigil, as candles flickered in the sanctuary of New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, others who had gone before him were recalled. Phyllis Jackson was remembered for her deep spirituality; Luther Hill for his military service and Cliff Carle, Jr., for his work as a vendor and photographer for Street Sense.

The service was coordinated with National Homeless Persons’ Memorial Day vigils in at least 152 other communities, from Wasilla, Alaska to Palm Beach Florida.

Every year since 1990, the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) has organized the vigils. They are always observed on the winter solstice, which marks the longest night of the year.

Along with local advocates, this year’s event drew two top federal officials, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Sec. Shaun Donovan, and US Interagency Council on Homelessness Executive Director Barbara Poppe. They offered words of condolence but also stressed recent progress being made to address homelessness on local and national levels.

Both highlighted strides being made toward a national goal of ending homelessness among veterans by 2015. In 2010, over 76,000 veterans experienced homelessness. But since 2008, more than 32,000 have been housed with the help of federal rent subsidy vouchers. And efforts are underway to retrain veterans for peacetime work and to address the mental health and substance abuse issues that sometimes contribute to their homelessness.

“You and I cannot change that our brothers and sisters died homeless. What we can change is our future,” said Poppe. “We know what is needed and we know what works. We have decreased veterans’ homelessness by 12 percent in just one year. We can apply this wisdom to all populations.”

Donovan told the story of Clayton McGee, a formerly homeless veteran who managed to overcome addiction and turn his life around.

“Clayton’s name is not one of those we mourn tonight,” said Donovan. “Thanks to HUD and Dept of Veterans Affairs and thanks to his own determination Clayton now has a home to live in with the treatment and job training he needed to rebuild his life.”

Outreach efforts did not save the life of local Vietnam veteran Luther Hill, also listed as “Sarge,” on the memorial service roll.

His body was found on the cold morning of October 30, slumped in his wheelchair in the
doorway of the old Hecht’s warehouse on New York Avenue, not far from a city shelter.

A hypothermia alert had been declared in the city on the night of October 29 and Hill’s death raised questions about the adequacy of the city’s system intended to protect the homeless from the cold.

A report on Hill’s death by the city Department of Human Services concluded that Hill had not been turned away from the nearby New York Avenue shelter on the night he died. But some advocates wonder if more could have been done.

An official from the city office of the Chief Medical Examiner said January 3 that Hill had died of the effects of acute and chronic alcoholism. The manner of his death was deemed accidental, the official said with “part of that being hypothermia because of the cold.”