

THE HOMELESS VOICE

FLORIDAS LARGEST STREET NEWSPAPER



COSAC Foundation | PO Box 292-577 Davie, FL 33329 | 954-924-3571

The 6 Scary Ways You or Your Children Can Become Homeless

Braus

Why should we have homeless services? Because you or your children could very well become homeless.

Here's 6 ways normal, hardworking folks and their children can and do become homeless in America. Along with each one comes one or more solutions.

Cause #1- A Physical Illness: Serious physical illness and accidents strikes at random like lightning, and when they do they can destroy finances, leave lasting emotional and physical debilitation, and stress family and friendship bonds to the breaking point.

If you are one of the 40 million American's without health insurance, you could be seriously financially sideswiped by a serious physical malady. But even if you have health insurance, the emotional and physical debilitation that comes along, part and parcel, with illness often slashes income and even makes you unable to work in your former career.

Cause #2- A Mental Illness: Mental illness, like physical illness, also strikes at random and like lightning.

The National Institute of Mental health says that 1 out of 20 people have a mental illness and 1 out of a 100 people have schizophrenia—a debilitating and degenerative mental illness that emerges in adolescence and young adulthood.

A mental illness does not just harm the person afflicted, it also takes the time and income away from their family members and caretakers. These stresses can push families over financial and emotional thresholds.

The history of mentally ill services in the US is characterized by an initial identification of poor mental illness institutions in the 1950's and then a series of waves of "deinstitutionalization." If the first or second few waves of deinstitutionalization were improvements on bad institutions, arguably subsequent waves have gone too far and left mentally ill people unsupported. Now 1/3 of homeless people are mentally ill as well as a disproportionate number of prison inmates.

Cause #3- A Drug or Alcohol Addiction: Drug and alcohol addictions come about by accident and can afflict anyone at any age. Is little Billy or Jane going off to college next year? Or maybe had a bout of underage drinking already in high school? What if an addiction developed? What would be the cost to your child, to you, and to your family?

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental



Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), in 2009 1 out of 10 people needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol abuse problem.

Addiction can destroy income while simultaneously putting enormous financial stress on the individual and their family or support structure. Moreover the poor judgement around addiction can lead to alienation from family and friends and can enormously raise the risk of homelessness. It is not surprising, then, that 1/3 of people who have become homeless have a drug or alcohol addiction.

Cause #4- Caught between Economic Cycles: The economy is like a force of nature, it can knock down your house and put your family on the street.

CNN reported last year that 76% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck. If the market moves against your family's bread winner, if any bad things from the above list happen to you OR

A LOVED ONE, you or a family member could be out on the street.

Cause #5- Be a soldier: As depressing as it is—and it is depressing—often those among us who have served our country in the armed forces end up homeless. 1/3 of homeless people are veterans.

To this someone might say: but they aren't homeless because they are a vet, they have other problems (even problems on this list such as mental illness and drug

or alcohol addiction). This is true. But soldiers have these problems in much higher rates than non-soldiers.

Cause #6- Most likely- a mixture of these: As you might have guessed, the most likely cause is a mixture of the above 5 causes.

In fact, the homeless population can be broken into two. On the one hand there are people who lost their homes with no other maladies except that they were caught between economic cycles. On the other hand, there are what could be called the Five Thirds.

1/3 Mentally Ill, 1/3 Ex-convicts, 1/3 Drug or Alcohol Addicts, 1/3 Minors (<18), 1/3 Veterans

There are more than 3 thirds because people are a mixture of them. In a population of homeless people, you might meet a drug addict minor, or a mentally ill veteran, or a mentally ill, ex-convict, alcoholic veteran.

Over all there is no silver bullet to "solve" or "prevent" homelessness. However, since any of us or our children might become homeless during our lives, it is important that we demand that communities and policy makers make homelessness a priority. It is also important to try and take care of our mental health and to try and have a "paycheck" in savings just in case.

Our Purpose: To Help the Homeless Learn How to Help Themselves

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About the COSAC Foundation

The COSAC Foundation was originally established in May 1997 to partner with other social service agencies, in the area, that provided help to the homeless population. COSAC also independently feeds the homeless or anyone in need of food. The COSAC Foundation opened its first homeless shelter in 1999 and named it



COSAC Quarters (the shelter money was raised by spare change). We have grown into a multifaceted agency that feeds, shelters, and arranges for each homeless person to receive the necessary access to social and noncompulsory religious services to enable a return to a self-reliant lifestyle. And for the small percentage of people incapable of living independent lives, we provide a caring and supportive environment for their long-term residency.

Our vision is to end discrimination against the homeless population and to develop such an effective network of services that we greatly reduce the time a person or family emerges out of homelessness back into self-reliance.



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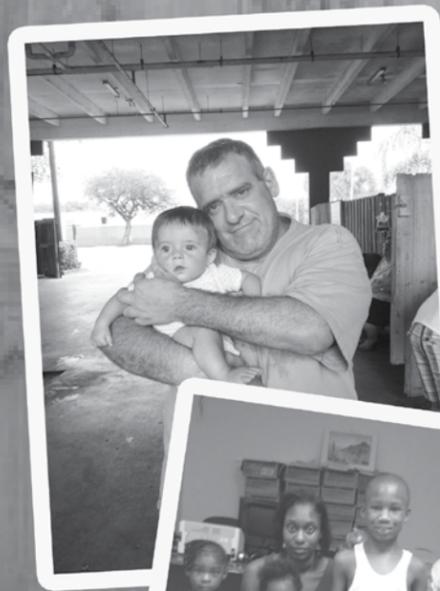
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Buy a night in an emergency hotel accomodation for a homeless family



Photo by Design Dorm

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~Pope Francis

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Homeless in Paradise

Carmel Cafiero

Fort Lauderdale got a lot of bad publicity when it banned feeding the homeless on the streets a few years ago. The city has backed off the ban, but it's still trying to deal with the homeless problem. Investigative reporter Carmel Cafiero is on the case.

Stranahan Park is a beautiful green space in Downtown Fort Lauderdale, but it has an ugly problem.

Imagine strolling through the park and seeing a man defecating and then stripping leaves off of a plant to wipe himself.

Jo Ann Smith, Fort Lauderdale Women's Club: "And they use the butterfly garden at night, and it's just full of feces and bugs and maggots."

Jo Ann Smith is the president of the Fort Lauderdale Women's Club, which is located in the park. Despite a \$100,000 plus renovation, the park has become a toilet for homeless people.

They line up along the park's eastern fence. This man didn't even stand up to urinate — just unzipped and aimed into the park.

Jo Ann Smith: "We understand that it's hard to be homeless, but you don't have to be disrespectful."

But life on the street is unimaginably difficult.

Jeff Weinberger, homeless advocate: "What homelessness defines is a situation where everything you do of necessity is in full view."

Jeff Weinberger is an advocate for the homeless. He blames government for failing to provide better options. And so does Gloria Lewis.

Gloria Lewis, Care in Action USA: "These are good people. The majority of them do want help, but they can't move to the next step."

You'll find her a couple of days a week feeding the park people and praying with them.

She's a waitress, and on her days off, she cooks and delivers food based on her belief we should all help each other.

Gloria Lewis: "I am on the city's side, but I'm saying you can't put problems on top of another problem. Come up with a solution."

That's easier said than done.

The park was renovated to try to move the homeless out of the area. They just moved to the sidewalk. The park is locked at night, but the



fence was broken so they could climb over. And nearby business owners have complained about the homeless keeping customers away.

The mayor's been dealing with it for years.

Jack Seiler, Mayor of Fort Lauderdale: "Carmel, it seems to be a lot of them don't want the assistance that we offer."

He says everybody should be able to use and enjoy the park.

Jack Seiler: "And right now, the volume of the homeless people here is having an adverse impact on others using and enjoying this park."

Recently, the police department tagged and threatened to confiscate bags of belongings. That cleaned things up some, but generated criticism from advocates.

Jeff Weinberger: "We need to stop demonizing people because they are homeless."

Carmel Cafiero: "Do you think that's what's happening here in Fort Lauderdale?"

Jeff Weinberger: "It's happening in Fort Lauderdale, and it's also what's happening across the entire country."

Meanwhile, good Samaritans continue to deliver food and clothing and offers of help to the homeless.

The mayor says he wishes all this help could happen inside existing agencies and not outside on the city's streets.

Amazon helps Homeless

Maggie O'Neill

The tech giant bought in 2014 what was originally a hotel and had most recently been used as a college dorm. The now empty building is located on Amazon's downtown Seattle campus.

Amazon is planning to tear down the building in 2017, but before demolition begins will work with Seattle non-profit Mary's Place to use it as a shelter for 200 homeless people.

"Over the last few months we have worked with Mayor Ed Murray's office and Mary's Place ... we saw a unique opportunity to help hundreds of homeless women, children and families," Amazon said in a statement.

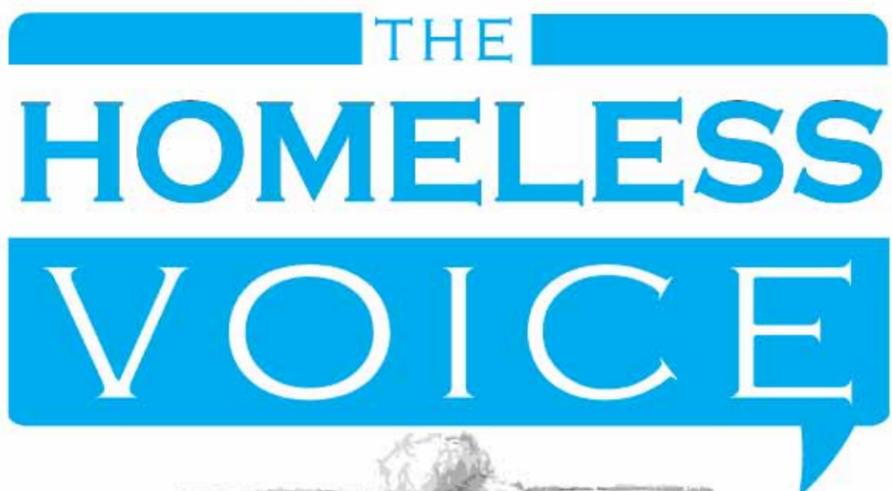
People are scheduled to begin moving in on Monday.

However, the space is only temporary, and Amazon plans on turning the lot into office space in the spring of 2017.

This isn't the first time Mary's Place and Amazon have joined forces. Last month the nonprofit announced that Amazon customers had the option to order items off Mary's Place's wish list on the site.

"We distribute hundreds of diapers, bras, socks, and more every week. Your help filling our shelves will make a huge difference in the lives of moms, dads, and kids who are experiencing homelessness," a statement from the company said.

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Old and on the Street: The Graying of America's Homeless

Adam Nagourney
They lean unsteadily on canes and walkers, or roll along the sidewalks of Skid Row here in beat-up wheelchairs, past soiled sleeping bags, swaying tents and piles of garbage. They wander the streets in tattered winter coats, even in the warmth of spring. They worry about the illnesses of age and how they will approach death without the help of children who long ago drifted from their lives.

"It's hard when you get older," said Ken Sylvas, 65, who has struggled with alcoholism and has not worked since he was fired in 2001 from a meatpacking job. "I'm in this wheelchair. I had a seizure and was in a convalescent home for two months. I just ride the bus back and forth all night."

There were 306,000 people over 50 living on the streets in 2014, the most recent data available, a 20 percent jump since 2007, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. They now make up 31 percent of the nation's homeless population.

The demographic shift is mirrored by a noticeable but not as sharp increase among homeless people ages 18 to 30, many who entered the job market during the Great Recession. They make up 24 percent of the homeless population. Like the baby boomers, these young people came of age during an economic downturn, confronting a tight housing and job market. Many of them are former foster children or runaways, or were victims of abuse at home.

But it is the emergence of an older homeless population that is creating daunting challenges for social service agencies and governments already struggling with this crisis of poverty. "Baby boomers have health and vulnerability issues that are hard to tend to while living in the streets,"

said Alice Callaghan, an Episcopal priest who has spent 35 years working with the homeless in Los Angeles.

Many older homeless people have been on the streets for almost a generation, analysts say, a legacy of the recessions of the late 1970s and early 1980s, federal housing cutbacks and an epidemic of crack cocaine. They bring with them a complicated history that may include a journey from prison to mental health clinic to rehabilitation center and back to the sidewalks.

Some are more recent arrivals and have been forced — at a time of life when some people their age are debating whether to retire to Arizona or to Florida — to learn the ways of homelessness after losing jobs in the latest economic downturn. And there are some on a fixed income who cannot afford the rent in places like Los Angeles, which has a vacancy rate of less than 3 percent.

Horace Allong, 60, said he could not afford a one-room apartment and lives in a tent on Crocker Street. Mr. Allong, who divorced his wife and left New Orleans for Los Angeles two years ago, said he lost his wallet and all of his identification two weeks after he arrived and has not been able to find a job.

"It's the first time I've been on the streets, so I'm learning," he said. "There's nothing like Skid Row. Skid Row is another world."

The problems with homelessness are hardly uniform across the country. The national homeless population declined by 2 percent between 2014 and 2015, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Some communities — including Phoenix and Las Vegas — have declared outright victory in eliminating homelessness among veterans, a top goal of the White House.

But homelessness is rising in big cities where gentrification is on the march and housing costs are rising, like Los Angeles, New York, Honolulu and San Francisco. Los Angeles reported a 5.7 percent increase in its homeless population last year, the second year in a row it had recorded a jump. More than 20 percent of the nation's homeless lived in California last year, according to the

housing agency.

Across Southern California, the homeless live in tent encampments clustered on corners from Venice to the San Fernando Valley, and in communities sprouting under highway overpasses or in the dry bed of the Los Angeles River. Their sleeping bags and piles of belongings line sidewalks on Santa Monica Boulevard.

Along with these visible signs of homelessness come complaints about aggressive panhandling, public urination and disorderly conduct, as well as a rise in drug dealing and petty crimes.

"There is a sense out there that some communities are seeing a new visible homeless problem that they have not seen in many years," said Dennis P. Culhane, a professor of social policy at the University of Pennsylvania.

Beleaguered officials in Los Angeles, Seattle and Hawaii have declared states of emergency, rolling out measures to combat homelessness and pledging to increase spending on low-cost housing. Honolulu has imposed a prohibition on sitting or lying on sidewalks in the neighborhood of Waikiki. San Francisco has cleared out some encampments, only for them to sprout up in other parts of the city. Seattle has tried to create designated tent camps that are overseen by social service agencies.

The aging of the homeless population is on display in cities large and small, but perhaps in no place more than here on Skid Row, a grid of blocks just southeast of the vibrant economic center of downtown Los Angeles, where many of the nation's poor have long flocked, drawn by a year-round temperate climate and a cluster of missions and clinics.

Outside the Hippie Kitchen, which feeds the homeless of Skid Row three mornings a week, the line stretched half a block up Sixth Street on a recent day, a graying gathering of men and women waiting for a breakfast of beans and salad. Garland Balacad, 55, scooping food from his plate, said he had more to worry about than his next meal, where to hide his shopping cart or which sidewalk to lay his sleeping bag on after dark.

"I'm getting old," Mr. Balacad said, lifting himself to his feet with a cane. "I don't want to go into one of these shelters. I don't want to get some disease."

Kin Crawford, 59, said he had fallen out of the job market long ago as he battled alcohol and drug addiction. "Right now, I'm sleeping in someone's garage," he said. "My biggest challenge out here? Access to a bathroom. It's really crazy. That and finding a place to keep your stuff."

This is a fluid population, defying precise count or categorization. Some might enjoy a stretch of stability, holding down a job for a while or finding a spare bed with a friend. But more than anything, these are men and women who, as they enter old age, have settled into patterns they seem unwilling, or unable, to break.

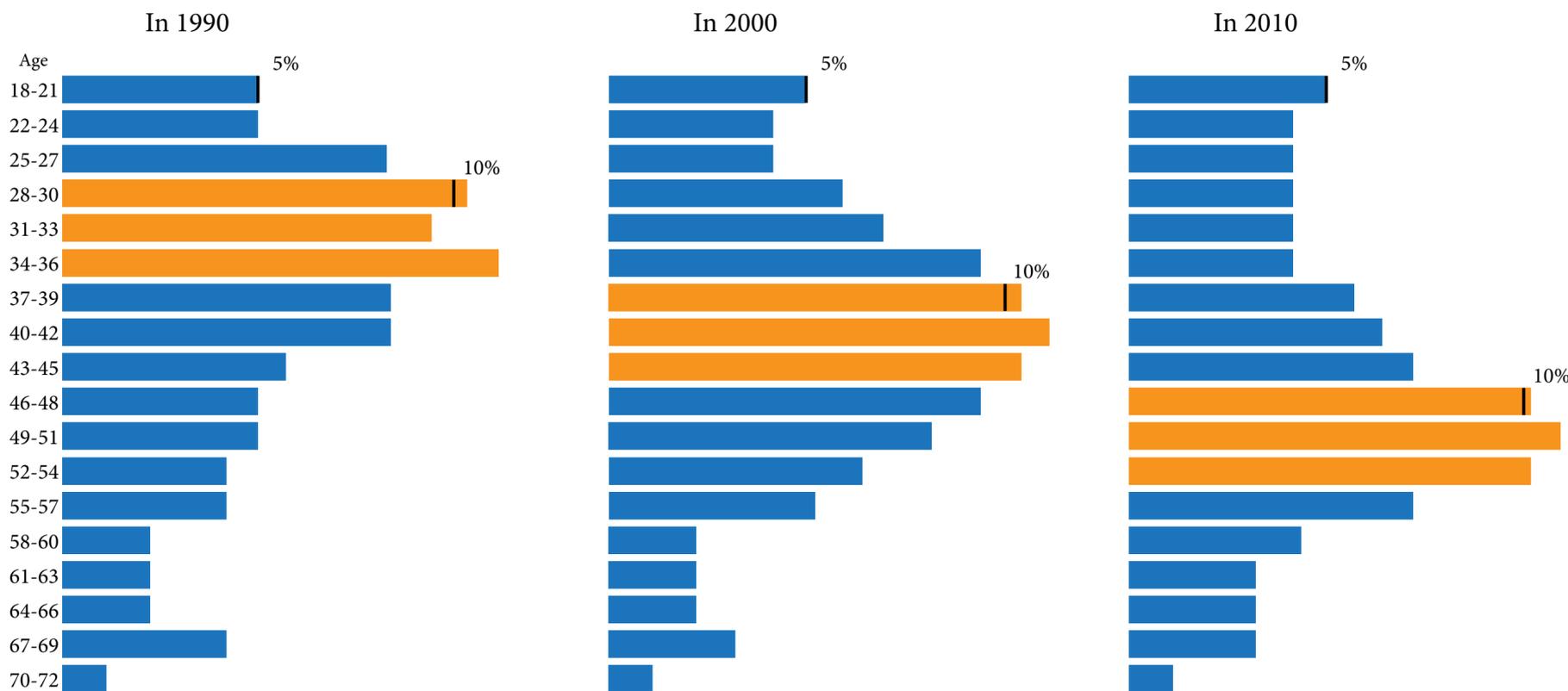
"We are seeing people who have been on the street year after year after year," said Jerry Jones, the direc-



Monica Almeida/The New York Times (photo Cred)

Nation's Homeless Growing Older

The surge in older homeless people is driven largely by a single group — younger baby boomers born between 1955 and 1965, according to an analysis by Dennis P. Culhane, a University of Pennsylvania professor who studies homelessness. This group has made up a third of the total homeless population for several decades.



tor of public policy at the Inner City Law Center in Los Angeles.

Mr. Sylvas said the lines at the Hippie Kitchen were growing longer, and there were more tents on the sidewalks. "It's getting worse," he said. "You can see it. A lot more old ones."

Sylvia Welker is 70, but she maneuvers her electric wheelchair around the obstacles of her world — the lurches in the buckling sidewalks, the sharp curb drop on Crocker Street, the piles of clothes on the pavement, the tourists rushing through Skid Row on the way to the Arts District — with confidence and precision.

For Ms. Welker, who has been divorced and on her own since 1981, this is the latest stop in a tumultuous journey. She lived in Lancaster, in California's high desert, until she was evicted about five years ago, unable to pay the rent. She tried to sleep on the streets, shivering on the sidewalks at night, until she finally pleaded for a room in the home of a daughter. "I told my daughter I'm not going to make it because of my handicap," she said, referring to her right leg, which she said she almost lost after she was hit by a car.

Her daughter put her up for a few years, but Ms. Welker said she eventually left, ending up on Skid Row a year ago. She said she had since lost touch with all three of her children. "They don't even know how to reach me," she said. "They are probably going nuts. I didn't want to interfere with their lives."

Home for Ms. Welker is now a room at a center for the homeless on San Pedro Street, but she has been told, she said, that her program is about to end. She has no idea what she will do next. "I don't know how much longer I'll be there," she said.

"Skid Row is sad," Ms. Welker said. "It is as sad as you can imagine. You literally have to live here to see how sad it is."

Ms. Welker, chatty with a wide smile and white flowing hair that falls over her shoulders, has her routines. She knows the staggered schedules of the soup kitchens. Her bad leg and wheelchair usually entitle her to a spot at the front of the line, and she brings a plastic baggie to collect extra food to pass on to friends on the streets, or to eat when she returns to her room.

She passes the days riding her wheelchair, waiting for the battery to run down so she can return to her room and

charge it up for the next day.

"You have to wait until it goes down to two or three dots," she said, flicking her finger at the battery indicator. "So I just ride up and down the street and say 'hi' to everybody. And when my chair goes down enough, I go back in. I have to charge my chair. And I have to elevate my leg, otherwise I could end up losing it."

The challenges faced by people like Ms. Welker have forced advocates for the homeless and government agencies to reconsider what kinds of services they need: It is not just a meal, a roof and rehabilitation anymore.

"The programs for baby boomers are designed to address longstanding programs — mental health, substance abuse," said Benjamin Henwood, an assistant professor at the University of Southern California School of Social Work. "But they are not designed to address the problems of

aging, and that is a big problem for homeless treatment in the years ahead."

So the older residents of Skid Row make do, and in the process, tax public services. There is the emergency room at Los Angeles County-U.S.C. Medical Center, or the ambulance

from Firehouse No. 9 on Skid Row, which brings a crew of medics who are by now well versed on the characters and medical ailments outside the station house.

Homeless veterans of all ages receive housing vouchers, and federally subsidized low-income housing projects give preference to the elderly. But few of the older homeless people have worked the time required to qualify for Social Security, much less put aside money for a 401(k) or employee retirement plan.

That leaves them to turn to Supplemental Security Income, or S.S.I., a program set up to help poor older people and the disabled that typically pays around \$733 a month. But S.S.I. is for people 65 and over, and Social Security does not start until age 62.

By then it might be too late. Experts say the av-

(Continued on pg 10)

More people fighting Mental Health Stigma

Colby Itkowitz

Jennifer Marshall, who suffers from type 1 bipolar disorder, is the co-founder and executive director of This is My Brave, an organization which seeks to end the stigma surrounding mental illness through various types of live performances.

For several years, she wrote about her bipolar disorder under a pseudonym. She described how she'd been hospitalized four times, twice since her first child was born. She explained how she went off her medication during both of her pregnancies and how each time — once as the mother of a newborn and then again weeks into her second pregnancy — she was escorted from her home in police handcuffs, defiant.

She blogged to connect and reach other mothers grappling with mental illness. Ultimately, however, she decided that hiding her identity was actually perpetuating the shame long associated with mental disorders.

So even as her parents urged her not to, Jennifer Marshall in 2013 typed her real name on a blog post, hit publish and waited for the reaction.

With those keystrokes, Marshall, who lives in Ashburn, Va., joined a growing community of people with mental illness who have chosen to out themselves.

Marshall describes a surge of strength as she shared her story. "It's human connection," she said. "When you find someone who has been able to overcome something that you're struggling with, it's really powerful."

Likened by some to the gay rights movement, with its beginnings in personal revelation, the groundswell to lift the stigma connected with mental illness has had a multiplying effect accelerated by social media. The more people who "come out" about their mental illness and are met with acceptance, the more others feel it's safe to do the same.

Since the beginning of this year, millions have tweeted about their mental illness, many using established hashtags. For example, the campaigns #imnotashamed and #sicknotweak were tweeted 75,000 times and 139,000 times, respectively, since Jan. 1, according to an analysis from Twitter.

The movement #BellLetsTalk, which began in Canada to "break down the barriers associated with mental illness," received 6.8 million tweets in January from all over the world.

While U.S. mental-health experts said there is not yet scientific data tracking the increase in voluntary disclosures of mental illness, social



media has been employed so much to that end that a former Johns Hopkins professor is studying behavioral trends by mining tweets in which people talk explicitly about their mental illnesses.

"Some of it is to end the stigma; some is an explanation of past behavior," said Glen Coppersmith, who recently started a company, Qntfy, to analyze mental-health data. He added that he "wholeheartedly" believes such disclosures have risen to the level of a movement.

The trend has been buoyed, experts say, by advancements in neuroscience that have enabled people to cast off stereotypes of mental illness as a personal failing and view it instead as the result of physiological changes in the brain that can be treated much like physical illnesses.

"We've become a much more sophisticated society about mental health," said Bernice Pescosolido, a professor at Indiana University and an expert in mental-health stigma. "As people, we are opening up more about issues of race, issues of gender, issues of health generally. This is intertwined with the

fabric of life."

But prejudice persists, particularly in the workplace, and Pescosolido and other experts say it remains to be seen whether the outpouring that is confined largely to social media will translate into advocacy and less discrimination in daily life.

The stigma "is still out there," Pescosolido said. "I think it's an opportunity. We've had a resurgence in the science; we've had a resurgence of people coming forward."

Since the beginning of this year, millions have tweeted about their mental illness

Practice for Self Love

Diana Lang

Life can be so overwhelming. We can get distracted, confused, and overwhelmed by the sheer volume of it. We are bombarded with information and stimulation. We are trying so hard to make money, raise kids, be a good person; we end up getting over-stimulated, over-amped, and finally overwhelmed!

What we are really looking for, though, is meaning self-love and understanding. We are looking for a way to get back to ourselves — to that part of us that is sacred.

The fastest, most direct route to self-awareness and learning to truly love yourself, is meditation. Meditation takes us straight to our true selves. It teaches us about forgiveness, compassion and acceptance. Meditation reconnects us. When we meditate we have the actual experience of inner peace and a deep inner calm. We learn to authentically love — everyone — including ourselves.

It's simple to mediate. You can try it right now.

First, make yourself comfortable.

Relax your attention a bit . . . even as you're reading these words.

Simply, let your attention become softer.

Then, take a deep breath.

Notice if it's full, or shallow, or held.

As you continue to observe your breath, notice if it feels stressed or calm.

Now, take another deep breath — through your nose.

Exhale slowly . . . Notice how you feel. Let your body relax. Let your mind relax. Then, take another deep breath and relax even more . . .

Within a meditation many things can happen: insights, understanding, forgiveness, resolution, and inspired ideas, all from this simple process.

There are no rules for meditation. The only thing to focus on is being present. When you are meditating, you are allowing yourself room for stillness and reflection — a vacation from the rushed flow of daily life.

When we meditate we begin to feel calm and sure. We begin to feel guided in every moment. We begin to know the love that is all around us — all the time. We realize that we are worthy beyond measure.

By meditating you are sending out a signal that you want to connect, that you want to open your heart to the universe and receive all of its gifts. There is no rush. Meditation is a healing process. It is supreme love in action.

Meditation is a return to love. It will teach you to respect yourself, forgive yourself, and finally love yourself. It creates a clear path to real peace and happiness. The place to start is exactly where you are - as you are. And the time to start is . . . now.

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Homeless commission CEO Andrae Bailey resigns

Kate Santich

Andrae Bailey — the one-time pastor who persuaded prominent government and business leaders to invest millions of dollars in housing the homeless — will step down as CEO of the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness in order to take its mission to a state and national level.

“It has truly been the greatest privilege of my life to serve my community alongside each of you the past three years,” Bailey wrote in his letter of resignation to the commission’s board of directors, delivered Friday afternoon. “Your passion, dedication and commitment to those on our streets has been what has caused our region to turn the corner on this important issue.”

Bailey, 39, said he will stay until year’s end to allow time for the board to choose a replacement. His announcement comes just four weeks after getting a hefty salary boost and generally glowing performance review from the board’s executive committee — and five months after being named Central Floridian of the Year by the Orlando Sentinel and its readers.

But in an interview, Bailey said he wants to launch a new organization — possibly a nonprofit — that will work both in Central Florida and elsewhere, using the lessons he learned with the commission.

“I want to see our progress on homelessness spread beyond Central Florida, and I need to have the time and flexibility to do that,” he said. “I can’t do that as a CEO for the commission on homelessness.”

Central Floridian of the Year 2015: Andrae Bailey acceptance speech

CEO of the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness Andrae Bailey gives his acceptance speech after winning Central Floridian of the Year 2015.

In the past year, Bailey said, his agency has received frequent appeals from other communities for guidance. He and Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer recently went to Lakeland for a presentation at the request of city leaders there, and next month Bailey is slated to speak to officials in Ocala.

When he took the lead of the commission in

March 2013, Bailey promised to stay two years, and he eventually agreed to stay one more. In May, the board’s executive committee boosted his annual salary to \$139,000, but the contract lasts only through December.

“We’ve always known it was a limited engagement,” said Dyer, who serves on the commission. “I think Andrae has done a tremendous job of moving our community forward on this issue, and we’re appreciative of the fact that he has agreed to stay as long as he has. He has been a great change agent and catalyst.”

Before Bailey, attempts to enlist local governments and major businesses in solving homelessness had foundered. Critics scoffed when, in 2008, a previous version of the commission published a 10-year-plan to “end homelessness,” and by 2011 that group was all but disbanded. It was reborn as a nonprofit in June 2012.

At the time, the metro Orlando area ranked No. 1 among the nation’s mid-sized cities for its population of chronically homeless individuals. The region also ranked high in homeless veterans and families.

Three years later, according to a census conducted in January, overall homelessness has plunged by 60 percent. That includes more than 1,000 homeless veterans who now have housing.

“We’ve had so much traction, and we’ve gotten so much done, that I think it has behooved all of us for him to stay on board as long as he could,” said the board’s managing chairwoman, Linda Landman Gonzalez, a vice president for the Orlando Magic. “People don’t often leave when things are going well, but we have to respect his wishes.”

The board will conduct a national search for a successor, she said.

I want to see our progress on homelessness spread beyond Central Florida, and I need to have the time and flexibility to do that

David Swanson, senior pastor at the First Presbyterian Church of Orlando and a longtime advocate for helping the homeless, said Bailey has brought progress he never thought possible. Before Bailey’s arrival, Swanson had tried for years to establish a downtown Orlando drop-in center for the home-

less and won the backing of a half-dozen churches. But when he took the plan to the former homeless commission, it went nowhere.

“So when Andrae first approached me to join the board, I told him, ‘Look, I tried that. It’s a dead end,’” Swanson said. “But he changed my mind. What he has been able to do is Herculean — pulling together the corporate, government and faith partners he needed, sometimes with charm, sometimes kicking and screaming.”

Bailey’s biggest accomplishment, his supporters said, is getting local leaders to embrace the federal Housing First



initiative, which calls for moving the homeless into independent housing first and then addressing their mental, medical and employment problems — rather than the other way around.

Bailey helped win a three-year, \$6-million commitment from Florida Hospital to combat homelessness, and JP Morgan Chase, Disney and local governments also have made substantial investments — funding that was largely nonexistent before Bailey began preaching that doing nothing about homelessness was more expensive to taxpayers than helping to end it.

But Bailey has his detractors, most often politicians and business leaders who find him too pushy — a trait he defends as the relentless pursuit of a worthy cause. He has no plans to let up.

“There’s so much more work to do,” he said. “There is youth homelessness. There is family homelessness.”

And there are still people on the streets.

Only a few months ago, he ran into a panhandler outside his office. Nick Corriere, 34, who suffers serious anxiety and depression, had spent nearly five years homeless in downtown Orlando. He asked Bailey for spare change.

“I had no idea who he was, but he started asking me about my situation, and he got me connected to people who helped me with my medications and then with housing,” said Corriere, who now has an apartment and a part-time job. “I’m very grateful to him.”

Tampa News

Naples treatment center suspected of ‘homeless dumping’ in Sarasota

Kimberly Kuizon

A man who found himself in Sarasota said he had never been there and never had plans to visit, but a substance abuse and mental health facility in Naples dropped him off and left him there.

With his small suitcase and a cardboard box, Chad Stacy told his disturbing tale to Sarasota police.

“They surrounded me, threatened to call the police if I didn’t get my stuff and go,” he told Sarasota Police Lt. Lori Jaress.

Photo Naples treatment center suspected of ‘homeless dumping’ in Sarasota

“Where did they tell you you were going?” she asked.

He responded, “Sarasota, to be homeless at the Salvation Army.”

According to a Sarasota police report, Stacy was a patient at The Willough at Naples. The Willough is a treatment center for adults with substance abuse and mental issues.

Stacy told police, when it was time to check out, he was taken two counties away and left in Sarasota.

“This individual was literally taken from a crisis situation and just dumped on the streets,” Sarasota City Manager Tom Barwin told FOX 13 News.

Barwin said rumors of “homeless dumping” have circulated in the past, but Stacy’s is the first case he’s heard about first-hand.

Police said a Willough staff member told investigators it is common practice to transport patients, at their request, to “Sarasota, Miami or Orlando” for various recovery programs, but Stacy said he never wanted to be in Sarasota.

Hed told police the Willough brought him to the Salvation Army in Sarasota because that was where services were offered, but once he tried checking in, he was turned away because he was a registered sex offender.

“The issue is, we can lose people like that on the streets for years. That’s one of our greatest concerns,” said Ma-

yor Ethan Frizzell with the Salvation Army.

With the help of the Salvation Army, Stacy returned home to Ohio, but for the city of Sarasota, this isn’t over yet.

“It isn’t fair for one community to dump on another, and it isn’t fair to the individuals. And we aren’t resolving these cases,” said Barwin.

The city filed a complaint against The Willough and promised to get to the bottom of Chad Stacy’s claims. After the first complaint was filed, another patient came forward with a similar story. A second claim has since been filed.

The Willough did not return FOX 13 New’s calls for comments on the story.

This individual was literally taken from a crisis situation and just dumped on the streets

Old and on the Street: The Graying of America's Homeless

(Continued from pg 7)

average life span for a homeless person living on the street is 64 years.

"We are dealing with the same issues with a 50-year-old that a housed person would have in their 70s, in terms of physical and mental health," said Anne Miskey, the executive director of the Downtown Women's Center, which provides services for 3,000 homeless women a year in Los Angeles. "It is extremely difficult. And women are affected more than men."

Many manage as best they can, living outside and maneuvering around the drug dealing, random stabbings and shootings, and crackdowns by the police.

Brenda Gardenshire, 66, who lives in a trim blue tent on a sidewalk she sweeps every morning, said she had learned not to venture out after dark in search of a bathroom, instead using a jar she keeps in her tent.

"You've got a lot of things out here wrong — everybody doing drugs and alcohol, friends and not friends," she said. Still, Ms. Gardenshire said she liked her life on the street, saying it was better, at least, than living in a shelter. Her only complaint was how people kept treating her as if she were frail.

"Everyone is like, 'You O.K.?' she said. "What do you mean, 'Am I O.K.?' Or, 'You want to sit down?' Why do I want to sit down?"

It is not the older homeless people whom Ms. Welker worries about as she surveys Skid Row from the perch of her wheelchair. It is the younger ones,

who are slowly changing the makeup of this world.

"I'm 70; I've done my thing," she said. "The younger people, they are losing the best years of their lives. This is not a place to be."

"You see things you wouldn't believe," Ms. Welker said. "Someone could be getting killed, someone could be getting knifed. And life goes on. Charities are still handing out coffee and soup."

There were 235,000 homeless Americans between 18 and 30 in 2014, making up 24 percent of the nation's homeless population. That was up from 226,000 in 2007, when the age group made up 20 percent of the total homeless population, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Some of them can be seen on Skid Row. But here in Los Angeles, these younger homeless people have staked out their own spaces to live — on the beaches of Venice, on the garbage-scattered scraps of dirt by the Hollywood Freeway.

Some were bustling on a recent morning through the cramped hallways of My Friend's Place, a two-story ramshackle storefront right up against the edge of the freeway, its entrance hidden off an alley. It is a former re-



cording studio that was turned 18 years ago into a center for homeless youth; nearly 1,500 people between the ages of 18 to 24 came here last year.

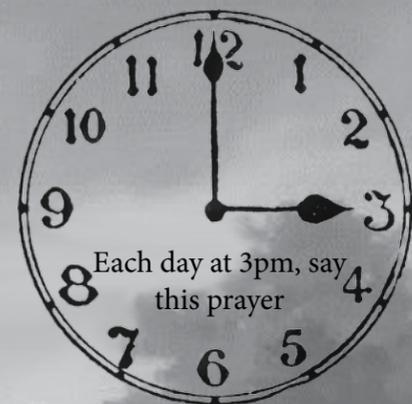
That morning, they were a blur of people in T-shirts, tattered jeans and sweatshirts, stopping by for a shower, a meal, job training — including circus schooling on the ropes and hoops in the Cirque du Monde room — or an undisturbed nap on an overstuffed chair in the main room. The center shuts its door at night.

"We are getting sandwiched by real old folks and real young folks," said Heather Carmichael, the executive director of My Friend's Place. "It's horrific."

...homelessness is rising in big cities where gentrification is on the march and housing costs are rising"

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It is our goal that this catches on and before you know it thousands will be praying each day for a world prayer to stop cancer and for there to be a cure for all cancers.

To my sweetheart, this is for you and know that I love you and thank you for helping me all these years making our shelter system grow and grow and not only helping me with the homeless but just being by my side all these years. I love you, you know who you are.

Love, Sean

Aloha and Welcome to Paradise. Unless You're Homeless.

Adam Nagourney

Anna Sullivan is prohibited from sitting on a sidewalk. She cannot wander off to find food without worrying that the police might seize her shopping cart. She cannot sleep on Waikiki Beach without fear of being roused.

Ms. Sullivan, 45, has been homeless for eight years since she got out of prison. But these days — after run-ins with the police over where she sleeps, sits or leaves her belongings — she tries to keep away from Waikiki, the bustling tourist district whose sidewalks and beaches she once used as her home.

“Tickets, tickets, tickets,” she said, already looking weary at the start of her morning, sipping a cup of iced coffee as she sat on a bench by the beach. “The cops give you a ticket to keep you moving. And then you have to pay the ticket for sleeping in the park. It gets to you.”

Two years ago, Honolulu, for all its opulence and appeal to tourists, was a nationally known hub of homelessness: people sprawling on benches and sidewalks, panhandling, guarding piles of tents and clothes, sleeping in doorways and moving around aimlessly. Business leaders described the atmosphere as a fundamental threat to the tourist-based economy.

But these days, the homeless who had crowded large parts of this city are, to a considerable extent, gone.

The change came after Honolulu responded with force to what the governor described as a state of emergency, passing tough criminal laws aimed at ridding sidewalks, streets and parks of the homeless. At the same time, the city sent teams of social workers out to help the homeless move into shelters. And the tourist industry put up money to cover airfare for homeless people who had come from the mainland and who said they were ready to go home.

Now it is possible to spend hours wandering Waikiki and Chinatown, two historic neighborhoods where hundreds of homeless people once settled, and encounter only the occasional reminder that Hawaii has the highest per capita homeless population in the nation.

A battery of laws that effectively criminalize homelessness is sweeping the nation, embraced by places like Orlando, Fla.; Santa Cruz, Calif.; and Manchester, N.H. By the end of 2014, 100 cities had made it a crime to sit on a sidewalk, a 43 percent increase over 2011, according to a survey of 187 major American cities by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. The number of cities that banned sleeping in cars jumped to 81 from 37 during that same period.

There have been laws outlawing panhandling and authorizing the removal of tent camps.

Honolulu's mayor, Kirk Caldwell, coined the phrase “compassionate disruption” to describe what the city is doing, because the measures are accompanied by outreach programs.

The crackdown comes amid the gentrification that is transforming cities like New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington and Honolulu, contributing to higher housing costs and increased homelessness.

In Honolulu, the most recent homeless law made it illegal to sit or lie on sidewalks, with criminal penalties if warnings are ignored in Waikiki, the tourist district, and in Chinatown. That followed laws that let the authorities seize the belongings of homeless people left in public spaces, and that closed down many parks and beaches at night.

“I would tell you emphatically that it's working really, really well,” said George Sziget, the head of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. “The No. 1 reason that people were saying they would not



come back to Hawaii was because of homelessness.”

While homeless people have largely vanished from the areas that were the focus of the crackdown, many have just gone elsewhere, into the dense greenery up Diamond Head Road, to out-of-the-way alleys and remote corners of public parks.

“We had to go from the state side of the street to the city property,” said Brian Bowser, 36, who has been homeless since 1995. “We just do our best.”

Hawaii has among the highest per capita living costs in the country; there are not many places where the indigent can afford to live. “You see tents going up everywhere,” said Victor Geminiani, the executive director of Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, an advocate of homeless people. “It's just a matter of Whac-a-Mole.”

Ernie Martin, the chairman of the Honolulu City Council, said he voted reluctantly for the sidewalk law, known as the sit-lie measure, and saw it as a stopgap. “At the end of the day it doesn't matter: We can sit-lie the whole island if we want,” he said. “The population has to go somewhere. We can't push them into the ocean.”

The sidewalk ordinance took effect at the end of 2014, and through March 1 of this year the police had issued 16,215 warnings and written 534 summonses, according to city officials.

“People moved because they were being harassed,” said Dan Foster, 49, who has been homeless since coming from Oregon more than a year ago. “Between dealing with cops and legal authorities, they'd rather just go so they don't have to deal with it. I think it's a violation of our constitutional rights, our right to sit places and sleep where we choose. But you know what? I understand. There's a lot going on out here.”

Last summer it became a flash point in Honolulu's campaign to rid the streets of the homeless. Sidewalks and patches of grass were covered with tents, sleeping bags, shopping carts, folding chairs and piles of belongings. Merchants and residents in Kaka'ako complained that the influx was a result of the campaign to push people out of Chinatown and Waikiki.

And so, a week after Labor Day, teams of city sanitation workers showed up, carrying brooms and shovels. They were followed by garbage trucks. As the police and the homeless looked on, the workers cleared the sidewalks and streets, throwing tents, blankets, clothing and refuse that had been left behind into the trucks.

The American Civil Liberties Union filed suit in the

United States District Court in Hawaii, charging that Honolulu was violating the constitutional rights of people struggling to survive. “We are very concerned about laws that criminalize the status of indigency,” said Daniel M. Gluck, the legal director of the A.C.L.U. of Hawaii. “We have seen some very aggressive laws here.”

The court agreed. In January, Honolulu signed a stipulation promising to wait 45 days before destroying the belongings it seized, allowing people a chance to retrieve them, and to guarantee 24 hours' notice, in most cases, before clearing sidewalks and parks.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development announced this year that it would steer homeless assistance funds away from cities that use various prohibitions that it says make homelessness illegal. “We are strongly against such measures,” said Matthew Doherty, the executive director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, which coordinates the federal response to homelessness. “By criminalizing people's lives as they experience homelessness, it makes it harder to get them out of homelessness.”

Still, enforcement is a fraught subject in Hawaii, whose allure is built in no small part on marketing itself to the world as the Aloha State, with a welcoming atmosphere. Mr. Caldwell recoils at the use of words like “sweep” and “confiscation.” Leland Cadoy, a police corporal walking the streets of Waikiki with a reporter, kindly addressed every homeless person he saw, and spoke only of “R.C.P.s.”

“Residentially challenged people,” he said, when asked about the acronym. “You call someone homeless, it sounds derogatory.”

Even as he applauded the changes in Waikiki, David Ige, the governor, said the crackdown was not the answer to the homeless crisis that

has become such a part of life here. He said that what Honolulu needed was affordable housing, a goal that has stubbornly eluded this island.

“Homelessness has reached every community in the island — in areas where you didn't see them

five years ago,” he said. “If you are just enforcing and moving people from location to location you are not really reducing or solving the problem. It's just making it someone else's problems. It's not like they can leave the state.”

Hawaii has among the highest per capita living costs in the country

The No. 1 reason that people were saying they would not come back to Hawaii was because of homelessness.

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