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America's Homeless Population Is Getting Older

By Nicole Kiser

The global population is aging. According to the **United Nations**, the number of people aged 60 years or over doubled between 1980 and 2017, and it is expected to double again by 2050. By 2030, those 60 or over are projected to outnumber children under 10.

These demographics are mainly a result of the improving modern world. According to Max Roser, Esteban Ortiz-Ospina and Hannah Ritchie on **OurWorldInData.org**, in 1980, the global life expectancy was 61.2 years. In 2019, it was 72.6 years, and it is only expected to increase due to global improvements in health care and a **reduction** of people living in extreme poverty.

Additionally, the global fertility rate is **decreasing**. As the availability of education and careers for women grows, women tend to begin having children later in life. Combined with better access to birth control and a lower mortality rate, these changes lead to people, on average, having less children. And many developed countries now have fertility rates below the replacement rate; people are not having enough children to replace themselves in the population.

However, the improving modern

world hasn't quite caught up to the demographic changes. As the population gets older, more older people are experiencing homelessness. According to the **American Society on Aging**, the percent of homeless single adults 50 or older has increased from 11% in the early 1990s to approximately 50%, with the population of homeless adults 65 or over expected to triple by 2030.

The aging of the global population is far from the only thing to blame for the increase in elderly experiencing homelessness. In the 1960s, Richard Easterlin, an economist from the University of Southern California, formulated the **Easterlin hypothesis**, which predicted that those born during population booms would face more competition and therefore have a harder time becoming successful.

This means that the back half of the baby boomers faced **more competition** for jobs and housing, as well as facing **challenges** such as the back-to-back recessions, the deinstitutionalization of mental health services, the AIDS epidemic and the war on drugs. These baby boomers have continually made up the **largest part** of the American homeless population, and now they are entering their 60s.

Another contributing factor is a lack of affordable housing. According to the **U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics**, the average hourly wages of employees increased by 3.2% in 2018. Comparatively, rents increased by 3.5% on average, and housing process increased an average of 6.7%. Social Security only received a cost-of-living adjustment of **2.8%** that same year. According to the **National Coalition for the Homeless**, there are at least nine seniors waiting for each unit of affordable elderly housing.

Health care can also play a significant role in senior homelessness. Elderly Americans are at an **increased risk** of dementia, heart disease, Type II diabetes, arthritis, cancer and many other chronic conditions. According to the **U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics**, households led by a person 65 or over, on average, spend \$6,668 per year on health care, over \$1,000 more than the overall U.S. average. Even



A tent used as shelter on the streets of Austin, Texas. Courtesy of Adam Thomas on Unsplash.

with the help of Medicare, these costs are the leading cause for seniors declaring bankruptcy, a rate that has **more than doubled since 1999**.

Continued on page 5

INSIDE

Getting Older, Getting Wiser - 6

A View from the Street: Seniors on the Street - 7

WHAT SHOULD WE COVER NEXT? TAKE OUR SURVEY:
<https://bit.ly/2WbMRsg>

STREETZine

STREETZine is a program of
The Stewpot.



The **STREETZine** is a monthly newspaper published by The Stewpot, a ministry of the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas. The Stewpot provides services and resources for people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of being homeless. The organization also offers opportunities for a new life.

As part of this ministry, the **STREETZine** seeks to raise awareness about the issues surrounding homelessness and poverty. The monthly publication also offers financial opportunity for Stewpot clients who sell the paper to Dallas residents. Vendors are able to move towards economic self-sufficiency by using the money they receive from selling copies to purchase bus passes, food, and necessary living expenses. Clients also receive stipends for contributing articles to **STREETZine**.

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The Pastor's Letter: God's Larger Story

By The Rev. Meagan Findeiss

Seniors experiencing homelessness is a sad reality for many. Rather than being able to retire and enjoy grandchildren and long vacations, this group of individuals combats healthcare crises, a lack of reliable care and the need for a consistent place to rest their head. They are sojourners on a journey that should have a destination, but often is a death sentence.

On November 1, we celebrated the Christian holiday of All Saints, in which we recognized those who have died and honored their lives. We held an interfaith service and named 254 people who died this year on the streets of Dallas. That averages out to five people each week who died while experiencing homelessness.

Our neighbors who have died on the streets are part of a larger story. God is at work, and homelessness can and will be eradicated. The deaths of these individuals serve as an impetus to end homelessness. Where do we begin in solving this issue? We must take one step at a time.

In the Old Testament of the Bible, we learn the story of Moses, one of the great patriarchs of Christian and Jewish faith. In his story, he leads the Israelites out of oppression and wilderness and into the land God had promised. The story of Moses is like all of our stories — there are ups and downs; beautiful moments as well as very difficult moments. When we hear about the death of Moses, we learn that he brought the Israelites to the edge of the promised land and then died. Moses died on the precipice of what was to come.

I was at a conference a couple of years ago, and we were talking about injustice. Someone asked, "How can we make a difference when the systemic issues are so pervasive?" I will never forget the response given: "God has been at work before I was born, God is at work now, and God will continue to work long after I am gone."

Moses knew this. Moses came to the realization that he was an instrument of God. He knew that the reign of God was unfolding, and we all have a choice to be or not be part of its telling.

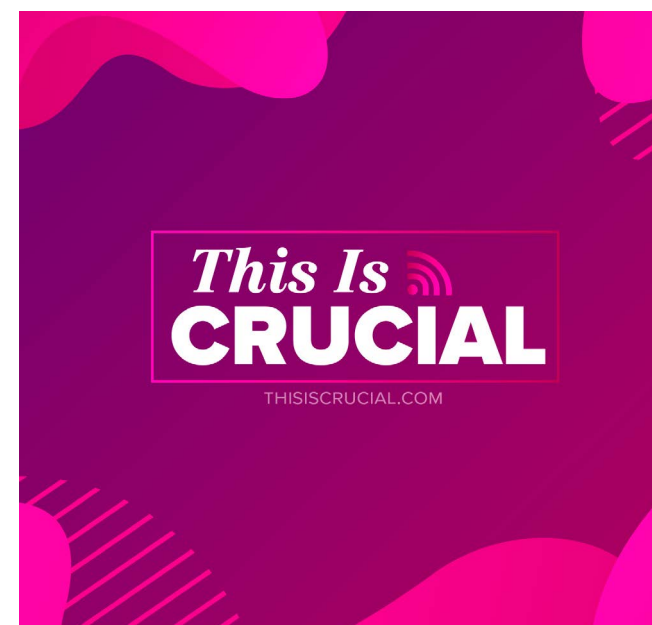
I challenge you to ask yourself a question:

What would you love to see before you die? Perhaps it is your children or loved ones happy and successful; perhaps it is meeting grandkids or great-grandkids; maybe experiencing new generations in leadership; an end to hunger; an end to poverty; a clean and well-cared for planet; a woman as president of our country; affordable and great health care for all people; justice in education and housing; equity across races; bipartisan work in politics; a unified country; a peace-filled world; or an end to homelessness. What is your answer?

Moses' story illustrates that the narrative of God is bigger than we can see. The lives lost while living on the streets of Dallas will be redeemed! Moses was able to pass on his leadership role to another faithful servant of God. Our neighbors who have died likewise pass on their torch to end this solvable crisis. God used Moses, then Joshua, Samuel, David, Naomi, Ruth, Jeremiah, Micah, Mary... the list goes on and on... God uses you!

As the reign of God continues to unfold, know that you are part of its telling!

The Rev. Meagan Findeiss is associate pastor for care and belonging at the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas.



This is Crucial is a podcast with live and interactive recording sessions focused on healing justice and racial equity. It is an opportunity to learn from a rotating guest list of experts as they sit down to discuss these important, timely, and sometimes uncomfortable topics. *This is Crucial* is hosted by Rev. Amos J. Disasa (Senior Pastor of FPC Dallas) and Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell (Senior Pastor of FPC Berkeley).



A Letter from the Executive Director

By Brenda Snitzer

The closer I get to senior citizen status — AARP, senior discounts, Medicare — the more it becomes real to me personally. I've always felt that age is mostly in our minds: "How old do we feel?" As I have gone past middle-age, though, I realize there are more aches and pains than I used to have and more doctor's visits than I used to have to keep healthy. I know I'm not alone in this. Friends the same age and older discuss these things.

Yet, for those who are experiencing homelessness, things associated with aging are even tougher. Lack of access to regular health care and other challenges means that folks age faster. Homeless persons between ages 50 and 62 often have similar healthcare needs to housed persons who are 10 to 20 years older.

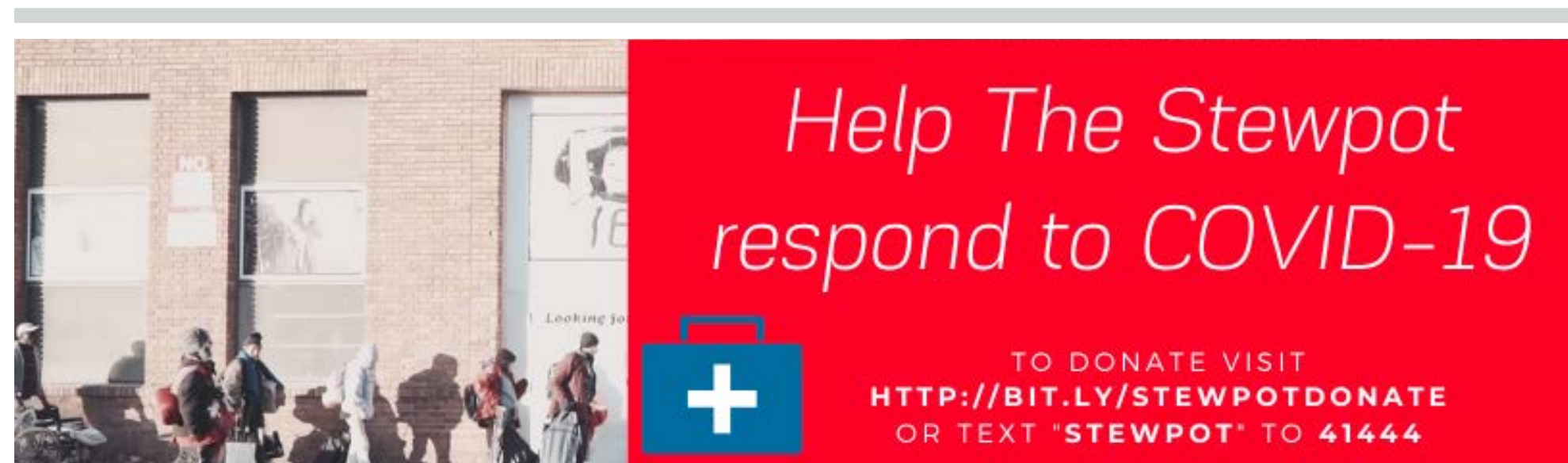
Studies from organizations like the National Coalition for the Homeless show that older homeless adults have higher rates of geriatric syndromes. That includes problems performing daily activities, walking, seeing, hearing, falls and general frailty. Isolation and cognitive impairments also contribute to more challenges for older adults who are homeless compared to younger homeless adults. And I know when I am talking to someone at The Stewpot who has been homeless for some time, they are generally not as old as I assume them to be due to their weathered appearance or chronic health conditions.

It's a shame in this country, where so many are so privileged, that there are people who are basically the age of our parents and grandparents living on the streets or in shelter. The biggest reason for increased homelessness among elderly persons is poverty and the declining availability of affordable housing. We know many seniors are on a fixed income. For those who have Social Security benefits or pensions, that income isn't enough to afford housing.

The biggest obstacle for getting homeless seniors housed is not enough affordable housing. We must advocate for our city to continue to prioritize affordable housing and housing homeless seniors. Getting seniors housed must be a priority, and then helping them with connections for benefits and other resources can be part of that plan.

Having seniors on the Dallas Real Time Rapid Rehousing Initiative is critical for Dallas. If you or someone you know needs housing, have them go to a shelter, such as Austin Street Center, The Bridge or Salvation Army, to get sheltered and receive a case manager for housing. Or contact The Stewpot or Our Calling for assistance in getting on the housing list. In fact, if you want to help get more seniors housed, give me a call at The Stewpot at 214-746-2785, or send me an email at info@thestewpot.org. I will tell you how you can support our efforts.

Brenda Snitzer is executive director of The Stewpot.



The Need for Senior Care for People Experiencing Homelessness: A Conversation with Daniel Roby

By Bill McKenzie

Daniel Roby is CEO of Austin Street Center in Dallas. Among other services, his organization provides respite care for clients, including seniors. The on-site service with Texas Health Resources and CitySquare allows seniors and others to receive medical care without having to go to an emergency room or another provider. Roby, who previously operated a shelter in Portland, Oregon, spoke with STREETZine's Nicole Kiser and Bill McKenzie about seniors experiencing homelessness.

Are seniors you see generally new to homelessness, or have they experienced it for a long time?

We see both. I will say those who are older and homeless do take longer to get housed. Our average length of stay for people 65 and older is 83 days. If you are 45 to 64, the average length of stay is 75 days. If you are 25 to 44, the average length of stay is 62 days. If you are 18 to 24, the average length is 40 days. The younger you are — the facts are that we can get you into housing easier than if you are older.

We saw 165 individuals who were 65 or older from August 2020 to August 2021. We served 264 people in that category from August 2019 to August 2020. We had COVID ramping up during that 2020 to 2021 period, so we had reduced capacity to shelter people in need. That's why we had that reduction in numbers.

What impact does experiencing homelessness have on the health of seniors?

It is substantial. Most of our folks have disabling conditions. Typically, they will have more than one disability. You

I will say those who are older and homeless do take longer to get housed. Our average length of stay for people 65 and older is 83 days. If you are 45 to 64, the average length of stay is 75 days. If you are 25 to 44, the average length of stay is 62 days. If you are 18 to 24, the average length is 40 days. The younger you are... we can get you into housing easier than if you are older.

may have a physical disability, which is about 25 percent of our population, on top of a mental health condition, which is about 50 percent of our population, and that is on top of a chronic condition like Type II diabetes, which is about 60 percent of our population.

Our seniors have three or four conditions that pile on top of each other and happen at the same time.

How hard is it for seniors to get back into housing?

We don't have adequate senior housing in Dallas. When I operated a shelter in Portland, there were a number of specific providers of housing for seniors 55 and older. The closest I see in Dallas is Austin Street's prioritization of people who are elderly and homeless. That is great for shelter, but it doesn't end their homeless experience other than getting them access to a case manager, who can help them find housing.

We are transitioning a number of people into assisted living, nursing homes and senior housing when it is available. Sometimes folks have to wait a year or longer to get senior housing. Some may be able to get it sooner, but we don't think it is in the client's best interest to be in a housing situation that is not stable and could end up with them back on the streets.

If we don't do it right the first time, they may end up being chronically homeless.

How does being homeless and a senior affect end-of-life care? For example, how do you handle situations

where people don't have money for their burial costs?

It's difficult. We have had occasions where we have worked with hospice organizations to provide end-of-life care. That is by far the exception. We do have a number of memorial stones. And, when I got here, we worked with Restland Funeral Home to provide a crypt for people whose ashes had been unclaimed.

What impact has the pandemic had on seniors your organization serves?

We all have experienced an increase in levels of stress. People in homelessness already are in crisis. You put, on top of that, an aging population, and those stressors cause people to be more symptomatic and show signs of trauma. People have trouble coping, and adapting to their environment, and going through the process of getting into housing. That process is complicated, highly administrative and requires a lot of follow through. If you miss a step, it can be quite problematic.

You have a respite care center. Can you explain how that impacts seniors experiencing homelessness?

We serve a variety of patients in partnership with Texas Health Resources and CitySquare. That might be an individual who may have a problem with a wound and doesn't need to go to the emergency room. Or it could be someone with frostbite, as we saw during this winter's ice storm. And we see a lot of older folks who have increased medical needs. The service fills a void in health care delivery.

Often, someone experiencing homelessness might go to the ER, be dismissed back to the streets and then return to the hospital. Typically, when you discharge someone from the hospital, you think of them going home to a loved one or a neighbor. That's not the same for our friends on the street. The respite care center helps provide a continuum, where people go from the street to the hospital to a shelter to housing.

Bill McKenzie is a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas and the STREETZine Editorial Advisory Board.

Continued from page 1

Of course, COVID-19 has only worsened the problem. As the pandemic led to layoffs and furloughs, many older Americans lost their income, and they're less likely to find another job than their younger counterparts. They're also **more likely** to catch and experience more severe effects from COVID-19, which can cost thousands in health care or prevent them from returning to work.

And shelters **aren't really equipped** to care for the elderly. Some clients may need constant medical care; some may even need help with going to the bathroom and showering. These aren't services that shelters were designed to provide; typically shelters require regular activity, such as standing in line and carrying possessions, in order to run smoothly.

The biggest way to prevent senior homelessness is improving housing affordability. However, improving affordability is not a simple matter of increasing supply to meet demand. According to *Curbed*, the high cost of labor and construction materials has made creating housing expensive.

Restrictive zoning laws can also make construction more complicated and costlier, and, combined with rising housing prices, has pushed those with lower incomes farther and farther from city centers. Urban sprawl extends commutes and forces workers to use unreliable public transit, purchase a car or utilize ride-sharing services, often **offsetting** the lower cost of housing with the higher cost of transportation.

According to the **Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis**, even eliminating regulatory barriers wouldn't be enough to fix the affordable housing crisis. The housing crisis is, at its root, an income issue.

The federal minimum wage hasn't kept pace with inflation. According to the **Economic Policy Institute**, "The real value of the federal minimum wage has dropped 17% since 2009 and 31% since 1968. Workers earning the federal minimum wage today have \$6,800 less per year to spend on food, rent, and other essentials than did their counterparts 50 years ago." Social Security benefits have also stagnated. In most of the country, Social Security benefits

require the recipient to live at 75% of the federal poverty line.

For seniors already living on the streets, **experts seem to agree** that Permanent Supportive Housing is the best option. Permanent Supportive Housing provides affordable housing linked to supportive services such as care management, transportation to medical appointments, counseling, connections to mainstream services and other support. This housing approach has been successful with housing chronically homeless individuals; the Veterans Administration saw significant reductions in the population of veterans experiencing homelessness while using the model.

The consequences of failing to help the aging homeless population could be dire. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, "homeless people die at a rate of 25 per 1,000, which is more than three times the rate of the general population." Homeless individuals 50 or older have a mortality rate **four times** that of the general population.

And it could cost the rest of us, too. **Dennis P. Culhane**, a professor of social policy at the University of Pennsylvania, found that "the aged homeless population could cost the nation \$5 billion on average annually in health and shelter use over the next decade." Much, if not all, of that cost could

be offset by implementing a comprehensive housing strategy that would prevent the need for future shelter and health costs.

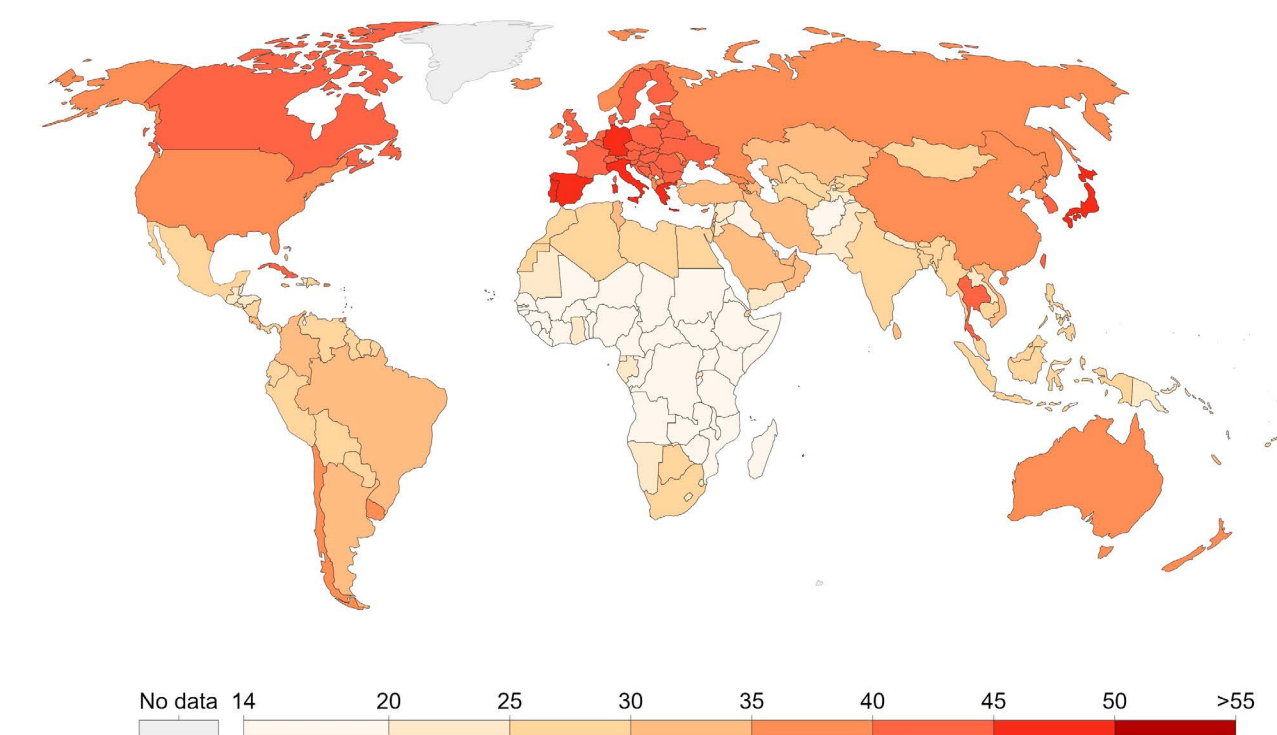
The contributions of individuals and service providers like The Stewpot, Austin Street Center, Our Calling and others moves the needle in the right direction, but permanently helping the aging homeless population requires large scale change on a national, if not global, level.

In 1938, in a **letter** to the Social Security Board, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt wrote: "The enactment of the Social Security Act marked a great advance in affording more equitable and effective protection to the people of this country against widespread and growing economic hazards... However, it would be unfortunate if we assumed that it was complete and final. Rather, we should be constantly seeking to perfect and strengthen it in the light of our accumulating experience and growing appreciation of social needs." The improvements of the modern age haven't quite caught up to the demographic changes of our world; it's our responsibility to ensure they will.

Nicole Kiser is a grant writer at The Stewpot and the managing editor of STREETZine. Links and sources can be found on our online version.

Median Age, 2020

The median age divides the population in two parts of equal size: that is, there are as many persons with ages above the median age as there are with ages below the median ages.



Source: UN Population Division (Median Age) (2017)
Note: 1950 to 2015 show historical estimates. From 2016 the UN projections (medium variant) are shown.

Courtesy of Max Roser, Esteban Ortiz-Ospina and Hannah Ritchie (2013).
"Life Expectancy" on OurWorldInData.org.

Getting Older, Growing Wiser

By Poppy Sundeen

At 55, Eunice finds her footing

Eunice was just 15 the first time she left home. “Back when I was young, I was into a little bit of everything — running away, living on the street.” The chaos in her life was related to her medical conditions, but Eunice didn’t know that at the time.

“I came to Dallas in 1999, got involved with the wrong people and had to do a little time. After I got out, I didn’t have a place to go.”

Life continued its chaotic path until Eunice’s release to a halfway house after her last arrest. “They had me talk with a doctor.” Eunice was diagnosed with major depression and psychotic episodes. “I was hearing voices, and the voices would tell me things.”

For a long time, Eunice believed the voices that told her she wouldn’t amount to anything and that she was destined to be out on the street. But once her conditions were diagnosed, and she began receiving help, everything started to change for the better.

Medical care and financial support

Getting a handle on her health problem was a good first step. It meant her conditions could be treated with appropriate medication and monitoring through Medicaid.

The diagnosis also helped her qualify for Social Security disability payments

— money that could that could help her get off the street and into an apartment.

“The problem was I couldn’t handle my money,” Eunice explains. “I needed to have someone oversee that and make sure my rent was paid on time.”

The missing piece: a representative payee

Managing money can be a difficult task. That’s why millions of Americans rely on representative payees, authorized by the Social Security Administration to help them budget and handle their government benefits.

When Eunice found herself unable to juggle her expenses and get the rent paid on time, she knew she needed help, or she’d risk losing the apartment that meant so much to her. “I never imagined I could have an apartment. I love my place.”

She credits The Stewpot with helping her keep it. “I chose The Stewpot off a list of payees and got in touch with them.” Eunice has relied on Stewpot staff members Courtney Ray-Riddle and Jamaal Coleman ever since. “I don’t have to worry about having my rent paid late. They’ve been real good to me. It’s a lot easier to have someone help me like that.”

With age comes new medical problems

A couple of years ago, Eunice had what she describes as a slight heart attack. It may be slight by comparison to some, but it was serious enough to require a stent procedure and medication she’ll need for the rest of her life. “I take my medicine every morning.”

She was also diagnosed with Type II diabetes. “I was on the wrong food, but I made some changes. My A1C used to be nine, but it went down to six, so I think I’m doing something right.”

Someone to share challenges and rewards

With her two brothers hundreds of miles away in Memphis and no family in Dallas, Eunice is happy to have a stable relationship with her boyfriend of several years.

They met when both of them were living at the halfway house. The two now share her Garland apartment. “He’s 63 and has Type II diabetes, too. We help each other eat right and remember our medicine.”

Taking one day at a time

Eunice spends her days cleaning the apartment, cooking, watching a little television and reading. “I read the Bible,” she says, “Matthew. Revelations. The whole thing.”

Religion plays an important part in her life. “I believe in praying.” She found a Baptist church in Garland near her apartment and attends services there on Sundays.

All in all, Eunice feels that life is easier at 55 than it was when she was young. Asked what she hopes for in the future, she says, “I just take one day at a time.”

Poppy Sundeen, a Dallas writer, is a member of the STREETZine Editorial Advisory Board.

A View from the Street: Seniors on the Streets

By Vicki Gies

(Editor’s Note: Sarah Disasa, a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas and the STREETZine Editorial Advisory Board, helped with the editing of this column.)

I was born in Little Rock, Arkansas on February 26, 1952. We were relatively poor back then. My mother was working in the hospital, and my dad was a musician in gospel music. We lived in a boarding house until they could get enough money to rent. We rented two houses in Little Rock before we moved. My dad’s company first moved us to Knoxville, Tennessee, but then we ended up living in four states and five cities. I was never around long enough to make lifelong friends.

I finally came to Dallas in 1964 when I was 12 years old. We moved to Oak Cliff near I-35 and Saner Avenue. It was the first house that my parents ever owned. I attended W.H. Adamson High School. Out of 243 people, in 1970, I graduated seventh in my class. I enjoyed it. I was on the drill team.

After I graduated from high school, I married very young. That lasted three-and-a-half years, and I moved back in with my parents. My mom died of bone cancer, and my father died of colon cancer. Once my dad died, I was lost. I got the house, but I was very financially insecure. They didn’t really teach me how to live. I had to leave the house when

I couldn’t afford to live there anymore. The taxes, of course, got too high. And I couldn’t afford to keep up.

Over the years, I’ve lived in a variety of places with different people. I thought they were friends, but I didn’t have any guidance. These friends, who were not really friends, introduced me to drugs. At the time, I depended on my friends, and all my friends used drugs. Nobody on the clean side wanted to help me.

Over the course of my life, I’ve had two careers; my first was with Dallas County Government offices. I worked there from 1970 to the end of 1997, with a two-year break when my mother died. My second career was in food and beverage. I worked Reunion Arena, Grapevine Mills Mall, Texas Stadium, Majesty Hospitality Corporation, and private poker parties.

I was in my 40s when I first experienced homelessness. I’m 69 now, and I’ll be 70 in February. I’ve been through a lot. As I’ve gotten older, I’ve become a little more apprehensive at night, but not scared.



Oak Cliff in Dallas. Courtesy of Gabriel Tovar on Unsplash.

I am so ready to get out of homelessness. I’ve been homeless off and on for like 15 years. I know that I’m a child of God, and I talk to God all the time. With God’s help, I just take it one day at a time.

Vicki Gies is a STREETZine vendor and Stewpot client.

...one day at a time.

MAY 7, 2020. As homeless shelters slashed capacity to prevent COVID outbreaks, many who typically slept in shelter beds turned to the street. In the San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood, the number of tents on the street increased by almost 300 percent. San Francisco temporarily allowed unsheltered people to set up tents next to the Asian Art Museum on Fulton Street, as pictured in this image.



COVID's Impact on People Who Live Outside

Text by Alastair Boone; Photos by Mark Leong

Since March 2020, photographer Mark Leong has been documenting how the coronavirus pandemic has impacted people who live outside. These images span the time period between April 2020 and March 2021, bringing us from the very early days of the pandemic into the present.

Thus far, we have seen much less viral spread on the street than many expected. This comes as cities across the country have paused encampment sweeps and poured money into housing homeless people in shelter-in-place hotels and testing folks on the street; as rent strikes have kept many housed who lost their jobs; and as community members filled in the gaps where aid was needed.

However, now that the vaccine rollout has begun, certain facets of pre-pandemic life on the street have started to creep back in. Encampment sweeps have ramped back up; the closure of shelter-in-place hotels is looming; and the federal eviction moratorium was struck down by the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the Delta variant has started to spread, and health officials are seeing an uptick of COVID cases on the street. These developments remind us that the book is far from closed on how COVID will impact unsheltered communities.

Mark Leong's photos have appeared in National Geographic, Smithsonian, and The New Yorker. You can find more of his photography at www.markleongphotography.com. Courtesy of Street Spirit / INSP.ngo



DECEMBER 5, 2020. A "Cancel Rent" rally in Oakland. The rally was organized by various Oakland tenants' unions. Tenant organization blew up during the pandemic, as renters banded together to coordinate rent strikes and housing justice for renters.



JUNE 7, 2020. Eric, 41, gets a COVID test in the Bayview neighborhood of San Francisco. Eric is one of thousands of houseless people who have been tested for COVID in the Bay Area to date. In Alameda County, the Healthcare for the Homeless department has coordinated or administered over 11,000 COVID tests for unhoused people since the start of the pandemic.



APRIL 15, 2020. Leon and another resident of a Bayview encampment in San Francisco wash their hands with a bar of soap. As the pandemic set in, unsheltered people became increasingly conscious about sanitation, using the resources they had to keep clean. They get their water from tapping a fire hydrant. Leon hopes to make a filter system to better clean the water.



MARCH 11, 2021. Michael salvages his belongings as city workers sweep the encampment at Oakland's Union Point Marina. Early in the pandemic, many Bay Area cities slowed or halted encampment sweeps, in accordance with CDC guidelines, which cautioned that breaking up encampments could be a catalyst for viral spread. However, in recent days, city and state officials have resumed encampment sweeps — there were a large number of encampment closures in Alameda County in the month of August.

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Around The Stewpot: Representative Payee Services

By Nicole Kiser

In 2021, approximately 65 million people per month will receive Social Security benefits; over 8 million of those recipients will need a representative payee.

A representative payee manages an individual's benefit payments, using the money to pay bills, buy food, purchase clothing, save for the future, and any other activities that serve the individual's best interest.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) can decide a recipient needs a representative payee for a variety of reasons. Common reasons include mental illness, chemical dependency, cognitive decline, physical disabilities, or being a minor under the age of 18.

While the SSA tries to select a representative payee that the individual knows, such as a family member, friend, legal guardian, lawyer or other caregiver, not all recipients have someone to care for them. If someone close to the recipient isn't an option, the SSA may appoint nursing home (if the recipient resides in one) or nonprofit organization to handle the recipient's benefits.

That's where The Stewpot steps in. As a social services hub for those at-risk or

experiencing homelessness, The Stewpot is able to step in as a representative payee for clients who need one. The Stewpot receives referrals from mental health and other social service agencies, and one-third of new client referrals come from the local Social Security office.

As the representative payee, a case manager meets with a client once a week to discuss the client's needs and desires. The client and the case manager work together to create a monthly budget that can support the client's needs while allowing a portion to be set aside for discretionary spending. The case manager then assures that all bills, debts and other necessities are paid in a timely manner.

The case managers at The Stewpot also provide additional support. They help clients find affordable housing, assist with accessing medical care, and guide the client to other support services, such as SNAP. Clients with representative payees often lack other support systems, so The Stewpot's support can be essential to accessing necessary resources, preventing homelessness and maintaining independent living. And unlike some other organizational representative payees, The Stewpot pro-

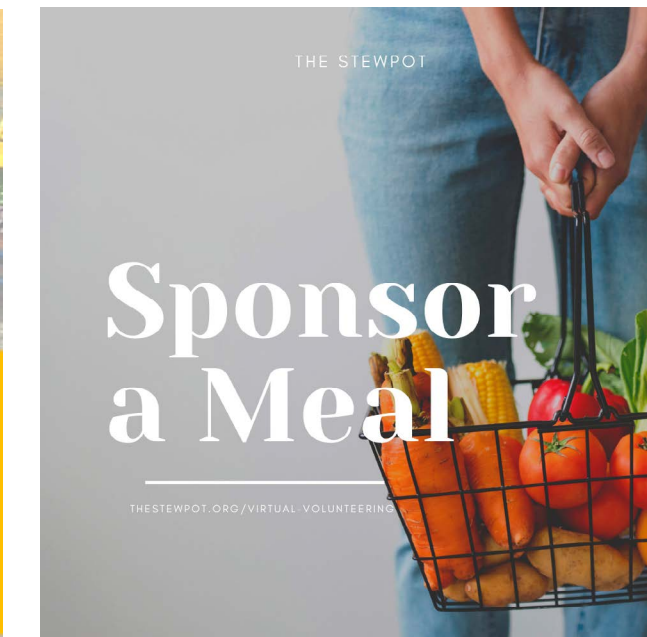


Jamaal Coleman, a Stewpot case manager of the representative payee program, working at his desk. Courtesy of Nicole Kiser.

vides representative payee services free of charge.

Currently, The Stewpot's representative payee program serves approximately 45 clients using two case managers. As in-person volunteer opportunities continue to expand, the program expects to see a return of previous volunteers, which will allow more clients to be served while creating and sustaining the in-depth connections needed to help participants thrive.

Nicole Kiser is a grant writer at The Stewpot and the managing editor of STREETZine. Links and sources can be found on our online version.



DIAL 211

For help finding food or housing, child care, crisis counseling or substance abuse treatment.

ANONYMOUS

AVAILABLE 24/7, 365 DAYS A YEAR

2-1-1 Texas helps Texas citizens connect with state and local health and human services programs.

Street Newspapers - A Voice for the Homeless & Impoverished

What is **STREETZine**?

STREETZine is a nonprofit newspaper published by The Stewpot of First Presbyterian Church for the benefit of people living in poverty. It includes news, particularly about issues important to those experiencing homelessness. **STREETZine** creates direct economic opportunity. Vendors receive papers to be distributed for a one-dollar or more donation.



**Advertise in
STREETZine**

Support **STREETZine** and its vendors with your business or personal advertisements and announcements.

Email:
streetzine@thestewpot.org

Distributing **STREETZine** is protected by the First Amendment.

STREETZine vendors are self employed and set their own hours.

They are required to wear a vendor badge at all times when distributing the paper. In order to distribute **STREETZine**, vendors agree to comply with Dallas City Ordinances.

If at any time you feel a vendor is in violation of any Dallas City Ordinance please contact us immediately with the vendor name or number at streetzine@thestewpot.org

CHAPTER 31, SECTION 31-35 of the Dallas City Code PANHANDLING OFFENSES

Solicitation by coercion; solicitation near designated locations and facilities; solicitation anywhere in the city after sunset and before sunrise any day of the week. Exception can be made on private property with advance written permission of the owner, manager, or other person in control of the property.

A person commits an offense if he conducts a solicitation to any person placing or preparing to place money in a parking meter.

The ordinance specifically applies to solicitations at anytime within 25 feet of:

Automatic teller machines; Exterior public pay phones; Public transportation stops; Self service car washes; Self service gas pumps; An entrance or exit of a bank, credit union or similar financial institution; Outdoor dining areas of fixed food establishments.

Want to be a vendor?

Come visit us at The Stewpot!

1835 Young Street, Dallas, TX 75201
Mondays at 1 PM or Friday mornings,
or call 214-746-2785

Want to help?

Buy a paper from a vendor!

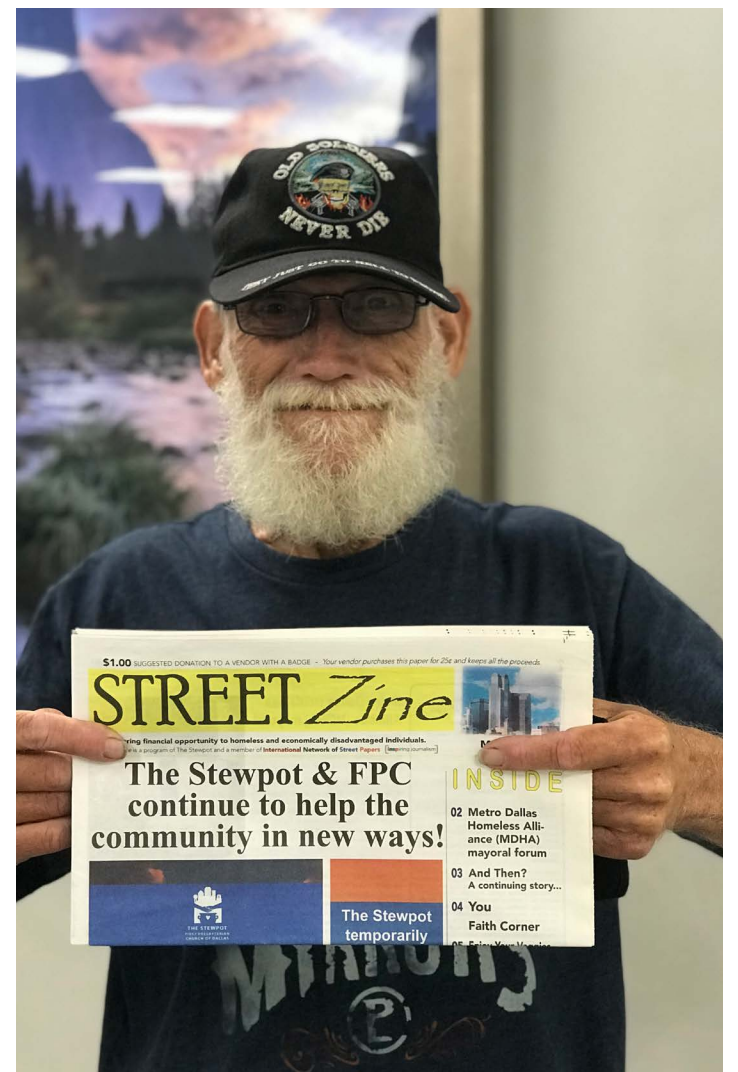
*Buying a paper is the best way to support **STREETZine** and our vendors.*

Make a donation!

thestewpot.org/streetzine

Write for us!

Contact us at streetzine@thestewpot.org



Any other ideas? Take our survey:

<https://bit.ly/2WbMRsg>

VENDOR #