

## MLK DAY MARCH AND CELEBRATION 19TH

# HAPPY NEW YEAR!



## HI! HOW ARE YOU?

DANIEL JOHNSTON DAY JANUARY 23  
MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

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**Mission:** The Challenger Street Newspaper advocates, informs, and connects diverse people from all walks of life. We empower street dependent campers with economic opportunity and get their viewpoints heard.



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Contributors:

- Thom the World Poet
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- Web Host: DreamHost
- Web Updates: Val

Our partners:

- Mobile Loaves & Fishes
- Treasure City Thrift
- Austin Public Library
- JP's P.L.H. Fndn
- Hogg Foundation
- Richard R. Troxell-N.H.C.



95% Street Reporters

Leslie Cochran wrote for the Challenger our first 6 months.

Clip Art used from MS Publisher

We use century gothic font cause it uses least amount of ink.



To subscribe or make a donation  
www.challengernewspaper.org  
Venmo Cash app Square or



THANKS TO ALL OUR

ADVERTIZERS,  
DONORS,  
CONTRIBUTORS AND  
DISTRIBUTORS  
YOU MEAN A LOT!

Editorial Policy

Material in the paper reflects the opinion of the author. Submissions determined to be libelous or that encourage discrimination, sexism, or violence will not be published. We ask you to proof read your article. Grammar is edited only for understanding. Editor doesn't edit your voice.

Deadline is 2nd Sunday or the 15th.

Should you come into contact with an individual you believe could benefit from outreach, call the Sunrise Hotline

512-522-1097  
M-F 8a-8p

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This is a good time to get rid of old blankets, hats, gloves, scarfs. Just hand them out your car window or donate to a shelter.



BUS PASSES

By Val Romness

Supply & demand has routes changing soon! Paper passes with a magstripe on the back will continue to work on the fareboxes, which are not changing. Participants will receive paper passes throughout 2025. (Local fare only) Once paper passes run out, it will move to the **new reloadable passes**; There are enough paper passes for the year, change coming in 2026.



Time for a discussion  
Challenger Will Visit  
Your Org/Hood

Zoom or in person

Understanding Homelessness and building empathy.

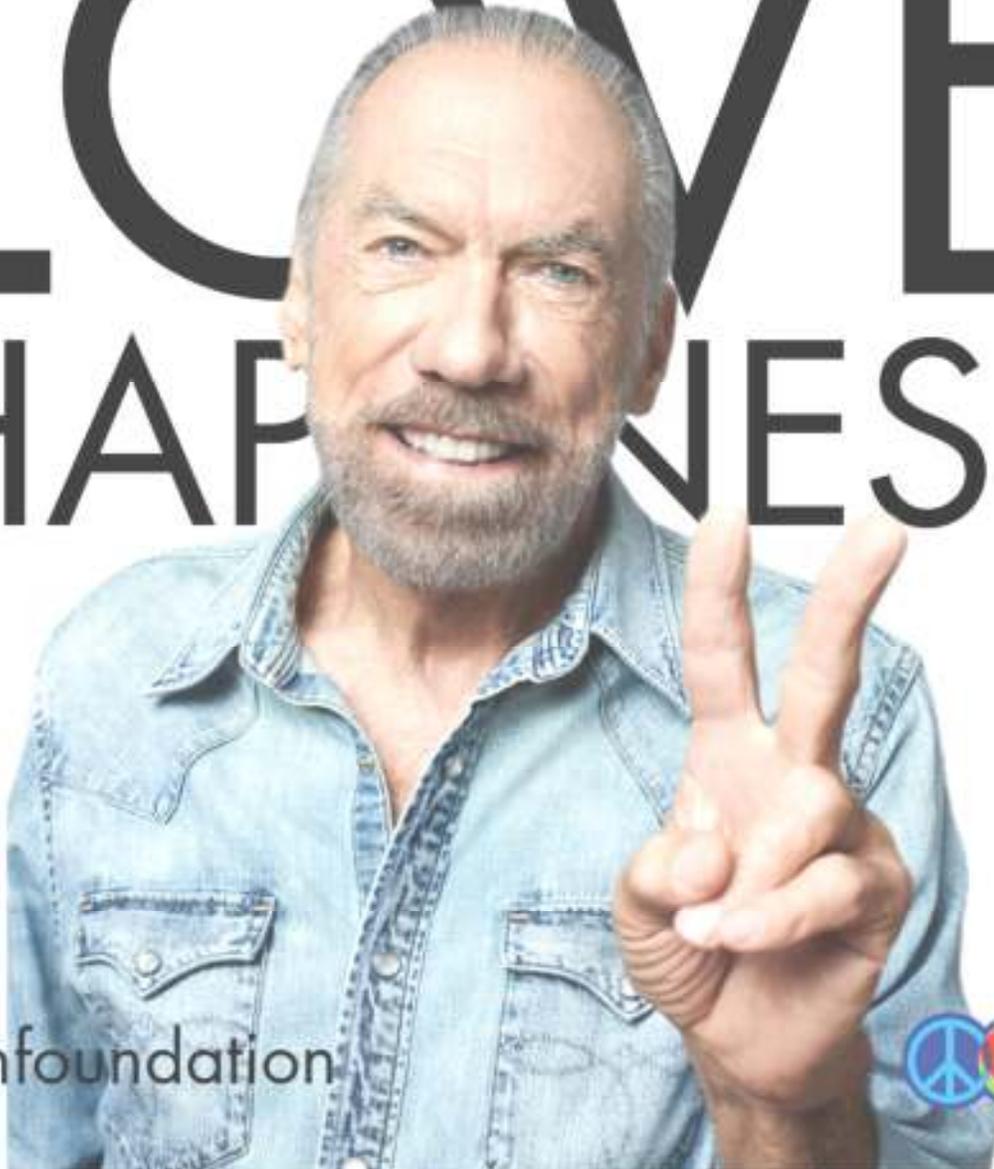
Goals

- 1 See the whole person
- 2 Meet them where they are
- 3 Recognize that there may be invisible disabilities
- 4 Use cultural competence
- 5 Never take your eyes off the person's humanity



Contact 512 560 4735 or challengernewspaper@yahoo.com

PEACE  
LOVE  
HAPPINESS



@plhfoundation



## MY FAVORITE DE-ESCALATION TOOL

BY RYAN DOWD

“Listening” is my favorite de-escalation tool.

Listening is EASY.

Just stop talking.

Genuinely, listen to what they are saying. Try to understand the other person’s perspective

Listening is EFFECTIVE.

By my estimate, 30% of upset people can be calmed down with nothing but listening.

They simply want someone to hear their pain or frustration. Once they get that, they’re good!

Listening is ESSENTIAL.

If you can’t listen, then you can’t de-escalate.

Every other aspect of de-escalation assumes that you can listen.

A few “pro tips:”

Listen for where the person feels disrespected. It might not be obvious in what they say, but there is usually a feeling of having been disrespected behind anger.

Reflect back to the person what you think is their issue. “If I understand you correctly, you are upset because...” You will be surprised by how often you misunderstand why someone is upset.

Don’t believe the darkest corners of the human spirit:  
Cynicism is not wisdom. Hope is not naïve.  
Cruelty is not strength. Compassion is not



[ryan@homelesslibrary.com](mailto:ryan@homelesslibrary.com)

## RESPECTING OUR SHELTERLESS BY THOM WORLD .POET.

DO NOT ISSUE THEM CITATIONS (71 Council)  
Rather ,charge those workers who destroy their possessions  
DO NOT ARREST THE SHELTERLESS(Council 22,State 24)  
Especially when saying you are "assisting "homeless humans  
ALLOW RESCUE ANIMALS IN SHELTERS(All)  
Especially in weather emergencies.All companion animals  
are "Rescue'Animals..  
DO NOT CLEAR OUT HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS(669 Council,48 State)  
You endanger their lives when you destroy their only spaces  
DO NOT GENDER-SEGREGATE COUPLES IN HOMELESS FACILITIES  
Love between shelterless needs to be strengthened and

supported  
HOMELESSNESS IS A STATUS(not a crime)-like POVERTY  
Punishing the poor by pretending to "help"them is the real crime  
LISTENING TO OUR SHELTERLESS &ASSISTING THEIR REAL NEEDS  
Requires a level of trust in City and State officials  
Which is(at present)wholly undeserved..  
Simply put-HOUSE ALL HOMELESS...

Also see Song for Shelterless pg 18

Time to spend money on mental health yet?

# GONE HOME

BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

*Please let the paper know if someone has passed;  
We want to remember them. A picture is nice  
Call 512-560-4735 challengernewspaper@yahoo.com*



**JESSICA NAIRNS CHAIN  
DIED 12-27-25 BADGE #484**

**SEE HER LETTER TO THE CITY ON  
PG 16-17**

**NEXT MONTH HER PREVIOUSLY  
PUBLISHED ARTICLE.**



**JOANN KOEPKE  
12-28-1947—11-24-2025**

**ADVOCATE WITH HOUSE  
THE HOMELESS**

**ARTIST WITH ART FROM  
THE STREET**

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
SURVIVOR**



**BOB BONES  
DIED 11-2025  
BURIED IN ILLINOIS**

**ALSO ED IN THE SHED  
W/DOG NAMED GREG**

**NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US! F THE OPPRESSOR**



# Mobile Loaves & Fishes

Serving Goodness.™

Empowering communities into a lifestyle of service with the homeless since 1998.

**WE PROUDLY SUPPORT**

*The Challenger Street Newspaper*



[mlf.org](http://mlf.org) | [@mobileloaves](https://twitter.com/mobileloaves) | [#ServingGoodness](https://twitter.com/ServingGoodness)

PLEASE DONATE TO MLF'S *Community First! Village* PROJECT



# Indoor/Outdoor Code of Conduct

## For Businesses & Housed People

- ◇ Choose to practice empathy over fear
- ◇ Give compassion
- ◇ Don't hate
- ◇ **Safety:** Don't provoke street people, you will cause them to behave like you. You get back how you treat people.
- ◇ Smile, but say, "sorry, no cash"
- ◇ Give cold water, burgers, protein snacks, socks or a Challenger
- ◇ Donate to a charity of your choice, ie. Challenger Newspaper, Community First! Village, Foundation Communities.
- ◇ Don't quawk as you drive by
- ◇ Give a blanket or tent out your car window
- ◇ Don't call their stuff trash, just becuz it's in a trash bag: It may have family photos, meds, import papers, etc.
- ◇ Stop worrying about their pets; they are well cared for. Puppies learn early how to behave. They have more dog food than people food! Everyone deserves unconditional love!



## For Campers

- ⇒ Respect the rules. No troublemakers.
- ⇒ Each is responsible for their own belongings
- ⇒ No display of products or substances that are socially unacceptable. (If you come back in a socially unacceptable state - Go to bed or leave! No talking!)
- ⇒ No display of weapons. Watch out for children!
- ⇒ Self-monitor behavior or you get probation or 24 hrs out or 1 week out. (can be left up to group)
- ⇒ Pets if allowed must be controlled (with or without leash)
- ⇒ Volunteer 10 hours/week or what group consensus.
- ⇒ No bad isms (sexism, classism, racism, religiousism, ageism)
- ⇒ Prevent frenzy (rushing) (No monopolizing)
- ⇒ Use composting toilets or cardboard (Don't shit where you sleep)
- ⇒ No fires. Cook with a small campstove
- ⇒ Clean up after yourself! Take your trash out
- ⇒ Listen to each other. Respect quiet time.
- ⇒ Use consensus to be fair; do a gather in to deal with baggage.
- ⇒ Check your ego at the street!

## SPILLING SECRETS PART 3

BY VAL ROMNESS

### MORE SPILLING SECRETS ABOUT APD

I was host on a live TV show called Dialogues About Homelessness on ACTV in 1995 on Friday nights 4:30 PM. After the camping ban started in 1996, I went to the drag on UT campus to get a few young unhoused guests for youth views.

So I got 3 young women that told stories about why they were on the street. I also asked if they'd had any trouble with APD. Yes, they said one short officer would give burgers for sex, boys or girls. These young women were not afraid to talk about this cop. They recognized the injustice. They called the officer by name.

After the show I took them back to the drag. Next week I went back & they were frantic. Two younger

kids had been gutted like deer behind the 7-11 on MLK Blvd. They spoke up & told the cop they were going to report him.

After that I only let guests say Officer "S". I never again let them say the cops name till now I'm spilling secrets: Officer Santiago.

*The reason I haven't spoke up until now, is that I feared being silenced by death. Now there is public oversight, and people believe these outlandish events more openly. Anyway, I'm old and don't need to keep these secrets any longer. No me gusta!*

*More next time about where the 2 young bodies went, to the MEDICAL EXAMINER.*

# Pullout—Directory of Resources

See inside

## Distributors Wanted!

**BE YOUR OWN BOSS \* CHOOSE YOUR HOURS!**

**We're a quick, no barrier income**

*get paid the same day*

**Start with a free paper, sell it to get a \$1.00 starter kit.**

**The kit comes with ID Badge & 10 papers to sell on a donation basis**

Strike up a conversation & offer our paper on a donation basis. After you sell the 10, future papers costs you \$1 each and YOU keep the profits.

The Challenger is written & published monthly by 95 % un-housed people. The paper operates from a mobile office with 2 suitcases & a backpack. Our Director/Editor, Val, prints the paper at home, then we fold them when we meet.

We take Venmo, Cash app & PayPal. Make sure they put your name or badge number. It might take a couple weeks to build your business. We are also digital online,

If you submit an article, poem or art, you get 10 copies of the issue that you're published in.

We meet

**Sundays 1-3 pm**

Central Library Rm 471

We're a 501C-3 non-profit

Challengenewspaper@yahoo.com

www.Challengenewspaper.org

Challenger Newspaper  
PO Box 151574 Austin, TX 78715  
512-560-4735

**It Works!**



## JAIL MAIL PROGRAM

We want you, and anyone you know who is incarcerated, to write your voice in our paper. Writing, art or drawings send by email. Yes, we will publish you! Please write neatly.

We don't have free subscriptions, but if you're published we will send a copy.

Challenger Newspaper PO Box 151574 Austin, TX 78715 [challengenewspaper@yahoo.com](mailto:challengenewspaper@yahoo.com)



**Tues-Thurs 1-7 PM**  
**Fri-S-S-Mon 11am-7pm**

**Moving soon**  
**5201 Cameron Rd**



**Treasure City Thrift**  
Clothes, Housewares,  
Books and more!  
5201 Cameron Rd.  
[www.TreasureCityThrift.org](http://www.TreasureCityThrift.org)

**REALLY REALLY**  
**FREE MARKET**  
**LAST SUNDAY**  
**2-5 PM**

# Challenger Directory of Resources Updated 12/2025

## Please notify

[Challengernewspaper@yahoo.com](mailto:Challengernewspaper@yahoo.com)  
if you notice changes to the directory

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: Call 988

## DOMESTIC / SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

LASSA TX Hotline: 844-303-7233

SAFE 512.267.7233 [www.safeaustin.org](http://www.safeaustin.org)

VINE 512-936-1200 [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com)

Kind Clinic .833.937.5463 [www.kindclinic.org](http://www.kindclinic.org)

If this is insufficient or you need help reporting or treating an event, email Challenger ATTN: Jenny

**NAT'L SEX ASSAULT HOTLINE** 1-800-656-HOPE

**HUMAN TRAFFICING** 1 (888) 373-7888

**NAT'L HUMAN TRAFFICKING Resource Center** Text "HELP" or "INFO" to 233733 English, Spanish and 200 more, [traffickingresourcecenter.org](http://traffickingresourcecenter.org)  
<http://stopthetrafficking.org>

## NAVIGATIONS CENTERS:

**Sunrise Homeless Navigation Center** (M-F 9-1) . 4430 Menchaca (Ben White) Hot meal, mail, showers, hygiene, ltd clothing, laundry, computer lab, triage referral/navigation: Service Point ID, Coordinated Assessment, MAP/Food stamp sign-up; Medical clinic (Th only), Integral Care; job resources, recovery support. **Hotline: 512-522-1097** NARCAN VENDING MACHINE [sunrisenavigationcenter.org](http://sunrisenavigationcenter.org)

**Trinity Center:** 304 E. 7th St. Navigation/service center, meals, case management, ID docs, Coordinated Assessment; MAP, SNAP, Food Stamp sign-up; bus passes, ltd travel assistance, clothes/showers (women only on Mondays), mail, phone, computer access, housing referrals. M-F 9a-1p, Sun. 3-4:30p Come in person/no appts. [TrinityCenterAustin.org](http://TrinityCenterAustin.org)

**Charlie Center-Mosaic Church Navigation Cntr** 2675 Research Blvd. (McNeil/183) 512-922-8954 Tues, Wed, Thurs 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. ID's, Social Security Cards, Vital Records, Meal Served Daily, SNAP Sign-Up, Coordinated Assessments, Housing Info & Referrals, Case Management, Mail, Packages, Medication, Secure Document Storage [theCharlieCenter.org](http://theCharlieCenter.org)

**Austin Community Court**— 505 Barton Springs Rd. Help navigating the system, mail, phone, storage of vital records, help fill out forms, case management. Monday through Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. Mailing address: Downtown Austin Community Court P.O. Box 13464 Austin, TX 78711 (512) 974-4879

**First Austin Baptist**— Case management, Resource navigation, Call for appt. 512-476-2635, 901 Trinity St. [fbcaustin.org](http://fbcaustin.org)

## BATHROOMS:

-Public Restroom 4th & Trinity  
-Public Restroom 6th & Brazos  
-Portapotti 7th & Trinity  
-Portapotti 6th & IH35  
-Downtown Austin Community Court / 505 Barton Springs Rd / 8-5 Monday – Friday  
-Libraries  
-Near city trails

## Shower and bathroom:

Rec Centers  
Mon-Sat, 10a -3pm:  
Bartholomew Pool  
1800 E. 51st St East  
Barton Springs Pool  
2131 William Barton Dr Central  
Springwoods Pool  
13320 Lyndhurst St. Northwest  
Balcones Pool /closed for season  
12017 Amherst Dr. North

## Showers:

M-F Sunrise Homeless Navigation Center 8:30 -11am  
M-F— 7th & I-35 / 9:30 AM-1:30 PM  
M-F— Burnet and Hwy 183 / 9:30 AM-1:30 PM  
**The Other Ones Foundation** A mobile hygiene truck (showers, sink and toilet)

## Barton Springs Pool

Shwrs available/**New Bath House is now open!!**  
Swim at your own risk 5-8 am & 8-9:50 pm daily  
8 am to 8 p (fee charged)  
Closed Mondays & Thurs  
VETERANS are always in free

## LAUNDRY:

### Mission Accomplished

Mobile laundry, (must have voucher) care packages and connections to assist in transitioning to stable, self-sufficient and healthy lifestyles.  
Each location 9am-12N  
Unscented soap available.  
M— Sunrise Navigation Ctr—4430 Menchaca Rd  
Tu-Violet Storage—700 E.. 7 St (parking lot)  
W, F, Sat-The Other Ones - 780 S. Hwy 183  
W-The Charlie Center at the Mosaic Church  
12675 Research Blvd.

## FOOD:

**Angel House / Austin Baptist Chapel** Soup Kitchen Food Pantry/breakfast/lunch - daily 9:30-10a, 11a-12:30p, 512-643-2327, 908 E. Cesar Chavez St

**Bread For All: Food Bank** Faith Presbyterian Church at 1314 E Oltorf St, 5-6:30 pm Mondays. We also sponsor a mobile distribution with the food bank at Parker Lane United Methodist (2105 Parker Lane) second Monday of the month from 9-10 am. All are welcome. <https://austincitylutherans.org/food/>

**Caritas of Austin:** Housing, food, educ, employment, veterans assistance. Housing programs require referral via Coordinated Entry system. Daily Lunch 11a. CENTRAL: 611 Neches NORTH: 9027

Northgate Blvd. Lobby hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8-11AM & 1-4:45PM. Tuesday 8-11AM & 1-6:45PM. Friday 8-11:45AM [caritasofaustin.org](http://caritasofaustin.org)

**Central Presbyterian** (200 E. 8th, corner of 8th and Brazos) Breakfast Thursdays 8-9 am, limited space, clothes and toiletries. 512-472-2445 [cpcaustin.org](http://cpcaustin.org)

## El Buen Samaritano Episcopal Mission:

Community Health Worker Training, Adult Educ, Youth Progs, Vaccines and Health Literacy. Office hours: M-F 9a-5p, Food Help: T/Th 8a-10a 7000 Woodhue Dr, 512-439-8900, [ElBuen.org](http://ElBuen.org)

**Foundation Communities'** Prosper Health Coverage program provides FREE help for all people to find and use affordable health insurance or other health coverage programs. We have phone and in-person advice available. Call 512-381-4520, email [enroll@foundcom.org](mailto:enroll@foundcom.org), book an appointment online (<http://prosperhealthcoverage.org/>), or visit one of our community Prosper Centers at 5900 Airport Blvd. or 2900 South IH-35 from 9am–5pm, Monday–Friday

## Foundation for the Homeless / Feed My People

Tuesday/Thursday breakfast 5:30-7 am.. First United Methodist Church, Family Life Center, 1300 Lavaca St. Showers, AA meetings, a clothing closet (Thursday only), showers, and haircuts (every other Thursday).

**Gateway Church** - Feed the Community Food Pantry, 7104 McNeil Dr. Wednesdays 9-11am

**Green Doors'** veterans (transitional housing) and affordable housing residents (affordable rental or PSH with vouchers) until capacity is full. They may require a brief hotel stay for folks seeking to join the transitional housing program (and Green Doors would cover the cost); affordable rentals are immediate admission because they are single occupancy. [info@greendoors.org](mailto:info@greendoors.org) or 512-469-9130 for information or applications.

**Mobile Loaves & Fishes** For locations and schedules, visit <http://www.mlf.org/truck-schedules>.

**The Other Ones Foundation** Work opportunities, out of town transportation assistance, emergency shelter. 512-568-7557 780 S. Hwy 183. [toofound.org](http://toofound.org)

**University Presbyterian Church/Micah 6** Food Pantry Thursdays at 5:30-7 pm and Saturdays at 9:30-11 am. 2203 SanAntonio St., [micah6austin.org](http://micah6austin.org)

**University United Methodist Church/ Open Door Ministry:** breakfast & clothing every Saturday from 8-9 am. 2409 Guadalupe St.

**Victory Ministries** (2300 Canterbury St) supplies are VERY LOW. People being served outside only. If able, PLEASE CALL 512-480-9628 to check status before coming.

**Westover Hills Church of Christ** Providing food (non-perishable groceries) for everyone Saturdays 9-11 am. Drive-thru style. Located at 8332 Mesa Dr., Austin, TX 78759. Food for Seniors

Resource Directory con't

Updated 12/2025

**STORAGE/LOCKERS:**

**Violet KeepSafe Storage** 700 E 7th St. (Indoors/ bathroom available) 96 gal barrel with long-shank lock. 7 days 7 am - 7 pm. To apply for a storage bin, call first to check bin availability. If you have a Photo ID, that will help. 512-974-1294

**EMPLOYMENT:**

**Challenger Street Newspaper**

Sign up 1-3 pm on Sundays Rm 471 Central Library.. Low barrier self employment. Make money today and every day you work. Distribute the paper on a donation basis, you keep all profits. [Challengernewspaper.org](http://Challengernewspaper.org)

**Workforce First:** Offers individuals experiencing homelessness opportunity to work cleaning parks. Also offers case management. The program is on a waitlist that can take several months to get through. Must be 18+ and currently unhoused. Call 512-568-7557 or email [brian@toofound.org](mailto:brian@toofound.org)

**Skillpointalliance.org** Job training: plumbing, HVAC, electrical, manufacturing. Women & Men 512-729-4922

**Fair Living Wage Calculator:** enter zip code [www.universallivingwage.org](http://www.universallivingwage.org)

**City Resources App:** <https://opennow.maps.austintexas.gov/>

**REFERRALS:**

**First Call for Help :** 211 or 988  
Free, bilingual information & referral service about food, clothing, housing, child and youth services, job placement assistance, education, recreation, support groups and other programs and services.

**Arcilinc.org**  
CASE MANAGEMENT 512-832-6349

**VETERANS**

▲ **VETERANS** ▼

**American Veterans Crisis Line**  
1-800-273-8255 Text to 838255

**Texas Veterans Commission**  
[www.tvc.texas.gov](http://www.tvc.texas.gov)

**V. A.** 512-823-4100 7901 Metroplis Dr) 78744  
Outpatient Clinic: Primary healthcare, specialty care and hospitalization. Contact Andrew Miller  
Transitional housing for single veterans.

**Caritas of Austin:** 7th & Neches. Community Kitchen is serving lunch M-F 11 AM-12:30PM. Our clients receive case management/housing stability services and groceries through our food pantry. The lobby has public access to water, bathrooms, phones and info on community resources. Lobby hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8-11AM & 1-4:45PM. Tues-

day 8-11AM & 1-6:45PM. Friday 8-11AM

**Green Doors** 512-469-9130 1503 So IH35  
Housing First- Transitional, affordable, permanent housing.

**Strike Force** Help with VA benefit claim, denial or appeal, call 254-299-9950. See [www.tvc.state.tx.us](http://www.tvc.state.tx.us) for even more resources and links. 877-4AID-VET

**Center Point Texas** Veterans Program 512-297-2990  
outreach, assessment of needs, vocational readiness training, housing assistance, job placement and referrals to job skills training programs for homeless Veterans . 2101 S. Interstate 35 Suite 219 Austin, TX 78741 Up to \$800 housing/car repair

**Barton Springs Pool**

VETERANS are always in free  
Shwrs available/**Bath House is now open!**  
Swim at your own risk 5-8 am & 8-9:50 pm daily  
8 am to 8 p. Closed Mondays & Thurs

**SHELTER:**

**ARCH** Austin Resource Center for Homeless  
500 E. 7th St. 512-978-9920

**8th Street Shelter-** Emergency shelter for single women & transwomen 501 E. 8th St ( Neches ) (referral only) Contact Sunrise Navigation Cntr 512-522-1097 8am-8 pm M-F On site case management

**Marshaling Yard:** Appointment only.

**Esperanza** is expanding, they got more land adjacent.

**Esperanza Community** 780 S US Hwy 183 (Old Bastrop Hwy) between Briggs Equipment and Palm Harbor Homes. Contact the Other Ones Foundation for a space (512) 568-7557. Pets are welcome. Charging station, . Shower trailer Bus Route #217

**Safe Alliance** Call for locations, 512-267-SAFE (7233) Emergency shelter, counseling, transitional housing and case managers for women escaping domestic & sexual violence. children & men welcome.

**YOUTH:**

**Lifeworks** Under 27 yrs. 835 N. Pleasant Valley Rd. Mon-Thurs 12-4 pm Bus routes 300 & 493. Food, hygiene, bus passes, Wifi, gear, charging, mailing address, coordinated assessment.

**American Youth Works** 216 E. 4th St. High School Diploma Program, ages 16-20 Also has a first-time home buyer program.

**Street Youth Ministry** 2008 Justin Ln

**SAFE CARES** a program of The SAFE Alliance, YOUTH 12-22 experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or human trafficking. Case management, advocacy, therapy, and Drop-in services. Call 512.267.7233(SAFE)

**SENIORS/ELDERS:**

**Family Eldercare** Outreach and in-home care for those over 60 years old. M-Th 8-4, Fri 8-12  
Call for locations. 512-450-0844

**Safelink** for 60 yrs+ FREE cell phones and service

1-800-Safelink (1-800-723-3546)

**So. Austin Senior Center** 3911 Menchaca Rd, Austin, TX 78704 (512) 978-2400 M-F 8-5

**Conley-Guerrara Senior Center** 808 Nile St 512) 978-2660 M-F 8-4;30 Sat 8a-12:30p

**No. Lamar Senior Center** 2874 Shoal Crest Ave (512) 978-2480 M & W 8:30 A-8:30 P, TU & TH 8:30 A-4 P, F 8:30 A-1:30 P

**MEDICAL, DENTAL:**

**Dell Seton Medical Center at UT** (formerly Brackenridge ) 512-324-7000 1500 Red River St. Emergency care-911

**ARCH Clinic-Community Care**  
500 E. 7th St. 512-978-9920 Mon-Fri 7-11 am & 12-4 pm. walk-ins and appointments

**MAP cards** 512-978-8130 1313 Red River Ste. 217A Mon. - Fri. 8am or 1 pm Homeless get right in. Screening and enrollment done on a walk in basis. appts preferred. Full coverage medical services with reduced or no copay. Must meet a set criteria.

**CARE CONNECTIONS CLINIC** Walk in. 3706 S. First St.

**C.D. DOYLE CLINIC** operates at Esperanza Community,, we do see non-Esperanza residents with permission from The Other Ones Foundation. Acute, safety-net care rather than longitudinal medical home services. Sundays, 2:00-5:00PM.; 780 S Hwy 183, Austin, TX 78741 (409) 571-9362 <http://www.cddoyleclinic.com/>.

**Tuberculosis Elimination Clinic** 15 Waller St., TB testing. Also Community Care-Hancock Cntr

**BREAST CANCER ADVOCACY AWARENESS CENTER**  
1704 EAST 12TH ST 78702 512-965-6950  
[drduncan924@gmail.com](mailto:drduncan924@gmail.com)

**KIND CLINIC** Austin-Koenig Suite 200 Free HIV/STI walk-in testing No appt Mon-Fri 9 am-12pm & 1:30-4:30pm 1-833-WE-R-KIND (1-833-937-5463) [kindclinic.org](http://kindclinic.org)

**THRA TX Harm Reduction Alliance** 512-893-3237  
Drop in 1803 E. Cesar Chavez St. Mon-Thurs 11:30-2:30 pm Wed 3-5 pm. We offer support for people who use drugs, including tools, resources, and overdose prevention.

**RecoveryATX.org** Peer recovery/support 512-553-2683

**Manos de Cristo Dental Clinic** ([wait in line or appt](http://www.manosdecristo.org))  
4911 Harmon Av 78751 512-477-2319  
Emergency dental care for people who are working and don't qualify for city, state, or federal programs. [Manosdecristo.org](http://Manosdecristo.org)

**STD Clinic** 15 Waller St., 512-972-5430  
not anonymous, but confidential STD testing. Must have photo ID.

**AIDS Services of Austin** 7215 Cameron Rd., 512-458-2437 case management, testing, & a variety of financial services available. The Jack Sansing Dental Clinic is a part of AIDS services of Austin and operates on a sliding scale for all HIV positive clients.

**MENTAL HEALTH:**

**MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES**

Call 988 For Police w/mental health training, don't call 911, call 512-472-HELP.

## Directory continued

**Mental Health Information HelpLine**

1 (800) 950-NAMI (6264), M-F, 9-5, CST

**Healthcare for Homeless HUB** *co-located with Lonestar Circle of Care* 3000 Oak 512-532-9961 for appt.**Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES)**

1165 Airport Blvd Walk in M-F 8a-10p and Saturday/Sunday and holidays from 10a-8p.

East 2nd Street Clinic (Central Austin)  
1631 E 2nd Walk in M-F 8-5Stonewall Clinic (So. Austin) 2501 W. William  
Cannon Dr, Bldg 4 Walk in M-F 8-5St. John Clinic – (North Austin)  
6937 N. IH 35 Walk in M-F 8-5

Www.aayhf.org

**African American Youth Harvest Foundation**  
6633 Hwy 290 E. Ste 307 (512) 428-4480  
ContactUs@aayhf.org**H.O.S.T** Homeless Outreach Street Team  
512-804-3720**We Can Now** Street Outreach  
**Sunrise Navigation** Outreach**Suicide Lifeline 800-273-TALK**(8255) IF YOU TEXT 741741 WHEN YOU  
ARE FEELING DEPRESSED OR SUICIDAL, A  
CRISIS WORKER WILL TEXT YOU BACK  
IMMEDIATELY AND CONTINUE TO TEXT  
WITH YOU!**Integral Care.org** Crisis Helpline 512-  
472-4357 (HELP) 24/7 Immediate emo-  
tional support. 24 hr/day, 7 days/week. or  
you may call them and an outreach worker  
will come to you.**Austin Mental Health Community****(S.H.A.C.)** Self Help and Advocacy Center  
Drop in. M & Tu 11:30-4:30 W-F 9-4  
3205 S 1st St. 512-442-3366**Austin Clubhouse** community of mutual  
support and recovery for adults living with  
mental health diagnoses[www.austinclubhouse.org](http://www.austinclubhouse.org)**Applicant must:** Be 18 yrs, be following a  
treatment plan (doctor, psychiatrist, thera-  
pist, case worker, or peer specialist, etc.).  
We do not require Doctor's referral letter.  
To become a member call 512-925-5877  
to schedule a tour. 610 E. 45th St  
(Inside Hyde Park Christian Church)**Coalition of Texans with Disabilities**corner of 18th & San Antonio, 1716 San  
Antonio St. Austin, Tx**LEGAL:****Legal Aid Survivors of Sexual Assault****1-844-303-SAFE** free legal assistance to  
survivors of sexual assault.**Austin Tenants Council** 512-474-1961 (M-F  
9-12 and M-Th 1-4 PM)**Camp Ban Tickets** TX Fair Defense Project  
512-637-5220 Press 0 Mon 12-5 pm & Thurs  
10 am-1pm or if in jail: Austin Lawyers Guild  
hotline 512-817-4254**Community Court** 505 Barton Springs Rd first

floor. Bus 1, 3, 7, 10, 20, 801

(1700 Guadalupe St) is the current,  
Travis County Civil Law Court House,  
which gets confused with old courthouse,  
11th & Guadalupe & causes tardiness if  
you're not in the know. At the Current & old  
Court houses the cops do mag wand &  
scan your bag, coat, & belt & there's barriers  
to leaving the *building too*. But, at new  
*courthouse they have a law library* on 2nd  
floor, where law books & computers with  
internet access, and law clerk librarians can  
help you research forms & methods for  
filing legal & business forms. All available  
for anyone wanting to study law or research  
what are common civic expectations, not  
taught or explained in public school.**UTILITIES:**Baptist Community Center Mission  
2000 E. 2nd St Elect, water, gas,  
meds, birth cert, food**CLOTHING:**Mobile Clothing TRUCK:  
Thrift-ish.org Contact for your group to  
have a free shopping experienceReally Really Free Market  
Last Sunday 2-5 PM  
Treasure City Thrift Camron Rd**FREE HAIRCUTS::**Supercuts Training Academy call  
ahead 512-481-8900.  
Ron King Academy call ahead 512-  
596-5000. (tip expected)  
**Foundation for the Homeless-** hair-  
cuts (every other Thursday). First  
United Methodist Church, Family Life  
Center, 1300 Lavaca St.**FOOD STAMPS, HUMAN SERVICES,  
MEDICAID:****Texas Dept. of Human Services**  
Moved to Capital Plaza 512-929-7330  
Women, infants & Children (WIC)  
Call for closest location, 1-800-942-3678**HOUSING****VA** 7901 Metroplis Dr 78744 (512) 823-  
4000  
Transitional housing for single veterans.**Blackland Community Development  
Corp.** 2005 Salina St., (512) 220-8751  
Transitional housing for families and single  
persons.**American Youth Works** 216 E. 4th St.  
High School Diploma Program, ages 16-20  
Also has a first-time home buyer program.**Green Doors** 512-469-9130 1503 So  
IH35 Housing First-Transitional, afford-  
able, permanent housing.**Project Transitions-Roosevelt Gardens**  
HIV Housing Complex  
5606 Roosevelt Avenue  
The 40-unit homeless or unstably housed**Austin Housing Authority** 1124 S. IH-35  
ATX, 78704. 512-477-4488 6 month to 2  
year; waiting list depends heavily on indi-vidual circumstance. [www.hacenet.org](http://www.hacenet.org)**Travis County Housing Authority**2200 E. MLK Jr. Blvd. 512-480-8245  
Similar to Austin Housing Authority.**Foundation Communities**Affordable housing for individuals and families  
with low to moderate incomes: 512-447-2026**Community First! Village** Micro homes, trail-  
ers, canvas tents. [mhf.org](http://mhf.org) Hogeye Rd. Be  
prepared after a few years you may consider  
moving to typical apt.**Victory Homes Austin** Greater Austin area as  
well as the surrounding cities. Lodging, food, and  
clothing is provided. Majority of people providing  
assistance are former addicts and gang members  
who at one time found themselves trapped in the  
same cycle.For more info: Director Gus Celaya (512) 920-  
8708 or Admin office 512-822-9182**Excellence & Advancement Foundation (EAF)**  
provides programs, services and advocacy to  
break the school-to-prison pipeline by coordinat-  
ing prevention and intervention programs to  
support children at risk of becoming involved in  
the criminal justice system. Below are some of  
the programs. For more info:  
<https://breakthepipeline.org/programs/>Awesome Activist Leadership Program, Black  
Leadership Academy, SPARK change, The Wrap  
up, The Excellence Resource Center (this is the  
advocacy, case management program), Parent-  
ing with a purpose**ART FROM THE STREETS STUDIO**"Canopy" 916 Springdale Rd Bldg 2 Rm105  
Mon & Tues 10am-1pm Thurs 12-3PM  
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vided for FREE! Participation allows each artist  
to be in the annual show in October!**PET CARE:** [www.emancipet.org](http://www.emancipet.org) offers free  
days for pet care**WARMING CENTERS:**Regular hours at Rec Centers &  
Public Libraries. Sorry, no pets.**NO FREEZE SHELTER:**35' Dry, wet or windy. . HOT coffee! Call  
for status 512-972-5055 Free busMen and women, leashed pets welcome & will  
stay in a crate near you. Register at 505 Barton  
Springs Rd 6-8 PM or till flow stops. Rides to  
locations. Or go directly to location. Families  
with children, arrive by 6pm.**City Resources App:**<https://opennow.maps.austintexas.gov/>**Government phones:**<https://lifewireless.com/>Want text alerts from City Homeless Strate-  
gy Office? Text to 737-980-1321**Notify Challengernewspaper**  
**@yahoo.com if you notice**  
**changes to the directory**

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suspended if it continues.****We need to  
police ourselves or the  
police will.**



## Homer The Homeless Goose's Demands

By Challenger Newspaper

- More mental health care. TX is 47th in spending on mental health.
- Stop scraping camps and stop throwing all of ppl's things away! It's illegal & immoral.
- Pay social workers a living wage!
- 8th St. Women's shelter: Current one has appointments only. Must be able to walk in for safety.
- Make phones easier to get
- *End oppressive ordinances. No more criminalizing the poor!*
- *Increase funding for homeless services (increase private sector funding).*
- *Austin Living Wage \$24/hr*
- *Get past Moral Bankruptcy and be fiscally responsible. It can cost 35 to 80 thousand/year/person to ticket, court, jail, police, hospitalize, ER, ambulance rides. When a person is housed \$18,000 (w/a social workers guidance) they stand up and walk back into society and possibly go back to work.*
- *Take the boards off vacant homes.*
- *Cold weather shelter Now allows pets; must be leashed and will stay in a crate near you.*

## ULTRA-FINALIZED OP-ED DRAFT FOR GROUNDCOVER NEWS

# THE 12/21 WALK FOR THE HOMELESS: END THE CRIMINALIZATION OF SURVIVAL ON THE LONGEST NIGHT

BY ERICK BROWN, A.K.A. "ERIC THE DREAM GIVER"

On December 21st, the Winter Solstice—the longest, coldest night of the year—I will once again organize our annual protest, the 12/21 Walk for the Homeless. We march to honor Homeless Remembrance Day and to protest the constant, unjust criminalization of poverty and survival.

For over a decade, this walk has been a national call to action, launched by Eric the Dream Giver and supported by a network of advocates, including Groundcover News here in Ann Arbor and Real Change in Seattle. Our core message remains: Poverty is not a crime. Yet, Michigan, like communities nationwide, continues to implement policies designed to punish the poor and strip rights from all but the wealthiest.

**The Economic Crisis: How the System Creates the 99%**

The roots of homelessness are not individual failures, but catastrophic economic forces that have engineered a universal threat to the majority:

\* **Financial Instability is Universal:** Even if you feel like you are in good health and with a good job, your health and your job could be stripped away at any moment. The economic system has made the entire 99% vulnerable to falling into poverty.

\* **The Attack on Housing Security:** Soaring inflation, unstable markets, and stagnant wages threaten every working family. More dangerously, rising property taxes are forcing people who have paid off their houses to face foreclosure and eviction, stripping away equity and security from seniors and long-term residents.

\* **The System is the Criminal:** This failure of capitalism to provide basic human needs is creating an economy where survival is a privilege, not a right.

A significant portion of our unhoused neighbors struggle with mental health conditions.

We demand that cities across Michigan shift resources from punitive policing to dedicated mental health crisis.

Editors note: Same applies in Austin, TX and every where there is homelessness!

Erick The Dream  
Giver on Youtube  
Badge # 489  
Photo by Val Romness



# OUR TEAM

## SOME OF OUR DISTRIBUTORS & CONTRIBUTORS



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Door to Door  
Photo by Val Romness



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Photo by Val Romness



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John Hopkins .  
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Erick The Dream  
Giver on Youtube  
Badge # 489  
Photo by Val Romness



Gregory Bordelon  
Badge # 492  
Photo by Val Romness



Joe Nichols  
Badge # 267  
Around town  
Photo by Val Romness



John Robbins  
Badge # 498  
Photo by Val Romness



Ardeh Lewis Jr.  
Badge # 499  
Photo by Val Romness



Joel Robert Dixon  
Badge # 509  
Photo By Val Romness



Twinkle Toes  
Badge # 490  
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Badge # 500  
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Michelle Kleber



Chrystal  
Badge #289  
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Sabrina Oberg  
Badge #443  
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Kaye Lee  
Badge # 434  
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Patricia Rose  
Badge # 358  
Around town  
Photo by Val Romness



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# CARTOONS

BY ANDY STECKEL



# OPEN LETTER TO THE CITY OF AUSTIN

BY JESSICA NAIRNS    BADGE # 484

Open Letter to the Austin City Council and Community Partners on the FY 2026–2027 Budget for Homeless Services

From Jessica Nairns, Advocate and Consultant with Lived Experience

To the Austin City Council, city departments, and agencies working with our unhoused community:

My name is Jessica Nairns. I write to you as someone with lived experience of homelessness, a long-time community advocate, and a person who works directly with unhoused neighbors every week. I also have served as a consultant to Austin Mutual Aid (AMA), Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO), Austin Area Urban League (AAUL), and Austin Justice Coalition (AJC) and Hands Off Central Texas Mutual Aid (HOCTX). I am writing today to urge the City of Austin and its partners to take bold, urgent action in the upcoming FY 2026–2027 budget cycle.

I respectfully ask that you not only preserve the current homeless services budget—but significantly increase it. In fact, we urge you to double it or more.

Our city's needs are not just greater—they are escalating. And in light of widespread federal cuts to critical housing, outreach, and support programs, local investment is not just necessary—it is the last line of defense for many. We cannot continue at status quo levels while more Austinites fall into homelessness, hunger, and despair.

□□Why this matters to me—and to thousands of others

My own story reflects what happens when systems fail people trying to do everything right.

I didn't become unhoused because I was lazy or irresponsible. I was a working pastry chef, living paycheck to paycheck—like so many others in Austin. A breakup

during my pregnancy, followed by the loss of housing and transportation, spiraled into crisis. I found myself without a safe place to stay with my infant son—and ultimately lost custody because I had nowhere to bring him.

I entered programs hoping for stability. The only offer: a \$600-per-month group home where I'd have to share a room with three other women. No children allowed—not even for visits. I couldn't accept that. My time ran out, and I became unhoused.

When my name finally came up for housing through Foundation for the Homeless, I didn't qualify—because I didn't have custody of my son. But I had lost custody because I was unhoused. The system created a closed loop. I was grieving my child while being locked out of the very resources that claimed to help families like mine. Today, I still haven't seen him in over six years.

And I am not alone. This is not an exceptional story—it is one of thousands in Austin. Our current infrastructure is failing people not because of individual choices, but because of systemic cracks and chronic underfunding.

□□Where change is possible—and proven□□

Eventually, I became part of Austin Mutual Aid, helping lead mobile outreach, coordinate ID and housing efforts, and co-manage emergency hotel programs during enforcement sweeps. Of 13 people we placed in hotels, at least half remain housed to this day. That is what happens when we meet people where they are.

□□Mobile outreach is not optional. It is essential□□

Outreach works—especially when it includes people with lived experience. It works when teams bring food, hygiene supplies, connection, and consistency. Many unhoused neighbors live with trauma, disability, or severe anxiety that makes traditional service centers inaccessible. But when we

**OPEN** cont on page 17

**Open** cont from page 16

show up in their communities with care and respect, trust is built. And trust becomes a bridge to housing, healthcare, sobriety, and self-worth.

Right now, food is just as urgent as shelter. We serve people who haven't eaten in days. Food must be a core part of outreach services—not an afterthought. People cannot engage with case managers, complete paperwork, or even hold conversations when their most basic hunger is unmet.

□□What we need from the City of Austin and its partners□□

We don't just need more of the same. We need smarter, more humane, and community-rooted solutions. Specifically, we call for:

- A doubled budget for homeless services to meet actual community need
- Integrated food support as part of mobile outreach and shelter programs
- Expanded mobile outreach with trauma-informed, peer-led teams
- Transitional housing options that allow families to stay together
- A formal Unhoused Advisory Council composed of people with lived experience
- Mandatory lived-experience consultation for city-funded service providers
- A watchdog mechanism for accountability and community feedback
- Hygiene and sanitation access (mobile showers, water, and toilets)
- 24/7 emergency shelter beds with no punitive rules or barriers
- Volunteer and life skills training programs that lead

to stability

- Business incentive programs to support creative solutions like safe camping, food partnerships, and property-based harm reduction

Austin has a multi-billion-dollar budget. Allocating even a few more percentage points to this humanitarian crisis is both reasonable and right. It is what any just and ethical city should do—especially one that prides itself on innovation, inclusion, and compassion.

□□A call to act

I missed the opportunity to speak during public comment. But the people most affected by these decisions miss much more: opportunities for safety, dignity, family, and healing.

I hope this letter serves as a clear message: do not underfund the response to homelessness. Do not let federal cuts become local catastrophes. Do not allow another budget cycle to pass without bold, compassionate investment.

Please double the City's commitment to mobile outreach, transitional housing, and lived-experience-led initiatives—and ensure that no one in our city has to starve or sleep on the sidewalk simply because systems are under-resourced.

When we invest in people, we give them a chance to recover. When we build systems informed by lived experience, we build ones that actually work. This is our chance to be the kind of city that doesn't just manage homelessness—but ends it, one real solution at a time.

With hope and determination,

Jessica Nairs

Austin Resident, Community Advocate, Peer Leader, Consultant for the most vulnerable, those without housing

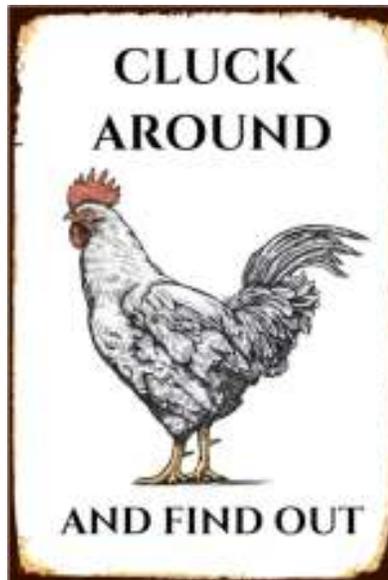
# YOU'LL GET NOTHING & LIKE IT

BY ANONYMOUS

Popeye's Chicken, on Ben White next to Randall's and the bingo place, has been a gracious friend to the unhoused for some years. Every night at 11:30pm when they're closing down the restaurant, they offer out the leftover chicken, biscuits, dessert pies...to the local homeless people. Typically a few people wait behind the building, an employee hands out the food bags and then it's shared amicably, as people are too hungry & tired to quarrel over food when there's plenty. In that area people knew if everything else went bad that day and they hadn't eaten, at least they count on Popeye's. It was a good thing.

Just how all good things must come to an end, so did Popeye's Chicken's kindness. This past September 2025, they stopped giving ice cubes and water on horribly hot summer days. They installed a new, staunch Hispanic manager woman, "no more!" was her m.o.

So then one night a few of us were there sitting on the curb, waiting for food to be served, per se. We wait-



ed, and waited and about 12:45 a.m. one of the male employees who knew everyone came out and in broken English told us "no more."

We were a little surprised. No one knew what the hell went wrong, why they were shunning us. That very same night, one of the girl employees drove her little red car around the drive thru entrance, popped the trunk and she and the others loaded up bags and boxes of chicken, etc. She slammed the trunk down and sped away. Bad enough they hoard the leftover chicken, but they take it for themselves. And after that night, Popeye's with their new, evil manager has been that way ever since.

Austin traditions have all been mangled, newfangled and put to death. And now the chicken as well. Leftover chicken won't eliminate the issues; either way the old chicken was going to be thrown out regardless. But starve the needy people. Jesus would be so proud. (placating).

Introducing the haughty fast food chicken managers, she's making Austin shine immaculately. Is shame shiny?

## SONG FOR THE SHELTERLESS

BY THOM WORLD POET

How do you hold a guitar in the cold?

When even the shelter won't let you take your dog in

Your dog is your companion, your guardian, your friend,

But even the shelter won't let your dog in

....And then again you are split apart

If you are a couple -males in one shelter, females in another

There are thieves on the streets.They,too,seek shelter

When habitats displaced ,destroyed,made derelict

How dangerous it is to be shelterless in the cold of Texas winter

When even shelters are not what they seem

Good intentions devolving into dispossessed dreams

EDITORS NOTE:

HOWEVER, APPARENTLY ADVOCATES AND UNHOUSED HAVE BEEN SPEAKING UP ON HOW TO SAVE EMBARRISMENT TO OUR CITY & HOW TO MAKE FUNDS GO FURTHER. TO PREVENT FREEZE DEATHS, THEY NOW ALLOW LEASHED PETS TO STAY IN A CRATE NEXT TO YOU. PLUS THIS YEAR THEY ARE ADDING PARTNER FRIENDLY STAYS. THEY ARE RECOGNIZING THAT COUPLES WON'T COME OUT OF THE COLD IF THEY'RE GOING TO BE SEPARATED.

SLOW BUT SURELY THEY ARE WAKING UP TO REALITY!

# ART

By Zebra



# BLACK CROW

{ NO. 1 } BY ANNETTE R. KOVAC

Black Crow calls his flock  
He recognizes the mask  
They count rocks, see you.



# ART

By Annette R. Kovac

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Martin Luther King Jr.  
August 13, 1967



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