

PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

NEWSLETTER

January 2018

PEACE TESTIMONY HELP WANTED

This important service has been ongoing since 2002 and has relied on two Quakers to cover every Saturday for the past three years. They need more people regularly involved so that they can pursue other projects.

WHO: 6-8 volunteers per month

WHAT: Display banner, "Seek Peace and Pursue it."

WHERE: US Capitol, West Façade

WHEN: One Saturday a month, noon-1:00

WHY: Engagement with passersby

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Patty Murphy, (301) 270 1105

WHY GRATE PATROL? 897 counted, unsheltered people live in our nation's capital.

How many more were not counted?

How do we know? This number is reported by the Community Partnership For the Prevention of Homelessness in conjunction with the DC government. **

Who counts? Each year on a night in the last week of January, as required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, volunteers conduct a "point in time" survey, searching out people living in tent cities, on public transportation, in parks, city streets, and alleys, under bridges.

What does FMW do? On the first Wednesday of every month volunteers prepare and deliver meals to hungry, homeless patrons. The Salvation Army, founder of Grate Patrol, provides transportation and beverages. 23 other churches participate. 120-150 people are served every night, rain or shine.

What's in the meal? Hot soup, turkey and cheese sandwich, chips, fruit, cookie/candy, bottled water, hot or cold beverage.

What do volunteers do? 1 volunteer shops for ingredients. 1-2 volunteers make 8 gallons of soup. 3-6 volunteers make sandwiches and assemble paper bag meals. 2-3 volunteers go out on the truck to serve the meals. FMW First Day School makes the cookies.

How much do the meals cost? \$300.

Who's organizes this effort? For the past five years it's been Steve Brooks. Salvation Army began Grate Patrol in 1983. FMW began participating decades ago.

Why get involved? The obvious answer is hunger. Interacting first hand with people who live with so little in our community is enlightening and humbling. Other benefits, which so often outweigh the good done, include becoming involved at FMW, making new friends, and participating in the happy camaraderie that arises during preparation and delivery.

PUT THIS NUMBER ON YOUR CONTACT LIST! (202) 399-7093.

If you see someone in distress who appears to be homeless, call the shelter hotline for the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness. Be prepared to describe clothing and exact location of person.

THE SHOEBOX PROJECT

The Shoebox Project is a joyous event at FMW. One weekend in December: Christmas music, pizza, comics, giving, sharing, laughing, hubbub, moms and dads, grandparents, excited little kids, teenagers, young adults, Friends and friends, working together, raising awareness, building community. Then, 1,000 boxes out the door.

Boxes are stuffed with important things like warm gloves and hats, necessary things like soap and toothpaste, and fun things like books and candy. They are wrapped in Washington Post-donated comics pages. They include an information card contact information for more assistance. They are assigned to a man, woman, or child and ready to go. What better feeling is there?

The project was started by dear Friend, Sara Satterthwaite. That first year 80 boxes were made with donated shoeboxes and wrapping paper. Then attendee Eric Nothman, an employee of the World Bank, took up fundraising through the World Bank Community Connections Campaign. The number of boxes skyrocketed to 2,000. This December we prepared 1,000 boxes.

"More fundraising is needed," say CJ Lewis and Steve Brooks, the coordinators. Each shoebox costs \$21.50. Today we rely heavily on WB support. Many generous people donate the pizza, books, information cards and envelopes for further assistance. Two years ago a Latin dance party was held to raise \$1,000. "More events like this would help. Individuals at FMW giving would help. There is such a need," say's CJ. "What if WB support vanishes?"

The Shoebox Project is a year long project, including CCC application; coordinating order with buyer in Baltimore who considers herself a Shoebox partner and finds the best products she can; confirming phone numbers and drop off points at recipient shelters; figuring out how many boxes for men, women, children are needed at each shelter; preparing receipts for shelters; getting drivers for deliveries; mapping out the routes to shelters; considering new requests.

** 7,473. The number of homeless men, women, and children in DC, counted on the night of January 25, 2017. 5,363 were living in an emergency shelter (during extreme weather), 1,213 were in short time transitional housing (3 mos-2 years), and 897 counted homeless who were living on the street. This "point-in-time" count is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for federal assistance to DC.

Thanks to all, we provided shoeboxes to 1 of 8 homeless persons this past year.