

Monthly Newsletter

Hope for the Unhoused

Wheels of Blessings September newsletter

Dear sandwich makers, providers of fruit, potato chips, cookies, water, Gatorade, toiletry bags, tee-shirts, socks, shoes, shirts, pants, cash, and prayer:

Once again, our two Wheels of Blessings teams went out on their respective weeks. Here are a few snapshots:

Team 1 September 11

- We met a young woman on her bike, hungry, and needing clothing. She had insect bites and scars of such all over. She particularly moved Carolyn Bergman: "She's my granddaughter's age!"
- We gave sandwiches, Gatorade, water, and clothes to a woman looking very hot and tired. She said the police had just moved her on and we saw a parked police car in the Akers Center Shopping area, where Team 2 reported last month that store owners have asked police to traffic the area to keep the homeless out. We gave her food, water, and she badly needed clothes and shoes. She chose what she needed from our supply, and we put it all in bags for her. Our last image was of her walking away, struggling with all she had to carry...stopping to shift weight, readjust, etc.
- We were glad to hear that T. was finally able to scrape up enough money to afford a used car. In talking to her previously, she said if she had a car, she could at least have something to sleep in, rather than outside in the elements.
- We found J., living in her car. She recently got a part-time job and is looking for full-time work. She said she formerly worked for Amazon and is a survivor of domestic abuse. She received leave for domestic abuse; however, her mother died around the same time, and when she also tried to file for bereavement leave to attend her mother's funeral in New York and take care of family matters, she was told she could not file for both, so she had to quit her job.
- We heard from several more people that Gastonia police are throwing away their tents and other possessions when ordering them to move on. We also heard that fewer places are allowing people to charge their cell phones.
- A homeless, very hungry, and thirsty dog needed help. We gave her dog food and water. Her ribs outlined her and she had scars around her neck and ears. We hated to leave her to roam but didn't want to call animal control, as it looked like she was nursing puppies.

Team 2 September 25

- After the deluge of Tuesday, September 24, we told our unhoused friends about even more rain and wind approaching with Hurricane Helene. Most were not even aware of its coming.
- A. was soaked through to the bone from Tuesday night's storm where she slept under the eaves at Krispy Kreme in Gastonia. We supplied her with new clothes, shoes, a blanket and a lean-to.
- Our friends living near the McAdenville bridge in their van took four meals.
- We found a young man sleeping in the drive-through at the abandoned Chick-fil-A and gave him a meal.
- Two women were in their cars in the wooded area between Walmart and Best Buy. One of them was T., mentioned in Team 1's report. She is so happy that her car gives her a place to live. She is very positive but did tell us of drug activity in that area. She and the other woman parked next to her stay away from that.
- We then went to P.'s camp and were very disheartened to see No Trespassing signs posted. The owner of the area had also bulldozed. (See photo below). We went to V.'s camp and gave out meals; P. rode up on his bike and told us they had been forced to leave their now bulldozed camp, received trespassing tickets, and now all must go to court. He took us to his new place, but it is a matter of time until they have to move once again. 10 people are there now and were very appreciative of the meals and supplies. Jeanmarie's Panzica's oatmeal was a huge hit with everyone.
- Several folks asked if we knew where they could take a shower. S. in Belmont told us his stepson bought him five passes to use at the truck stop on Sam Wilson Rd. We asked P. what he did for showers and he said they all pitch in to get a hotel room to take showers. He said he has to be careful because he has had as many as 25 people in his room! Both teams usually give out cleansing wipes, which are very appreciated.

Both teams are always edified by the gratitude of the people we meet. Our gratitude, in turn, goes to you, our donors and supporters.

So many mutual blessings!





"I took this picture of 'the mayors' old camp. He told us the owners came in with a Bobcat and cleaned out everything they owned."

Mary Kane



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