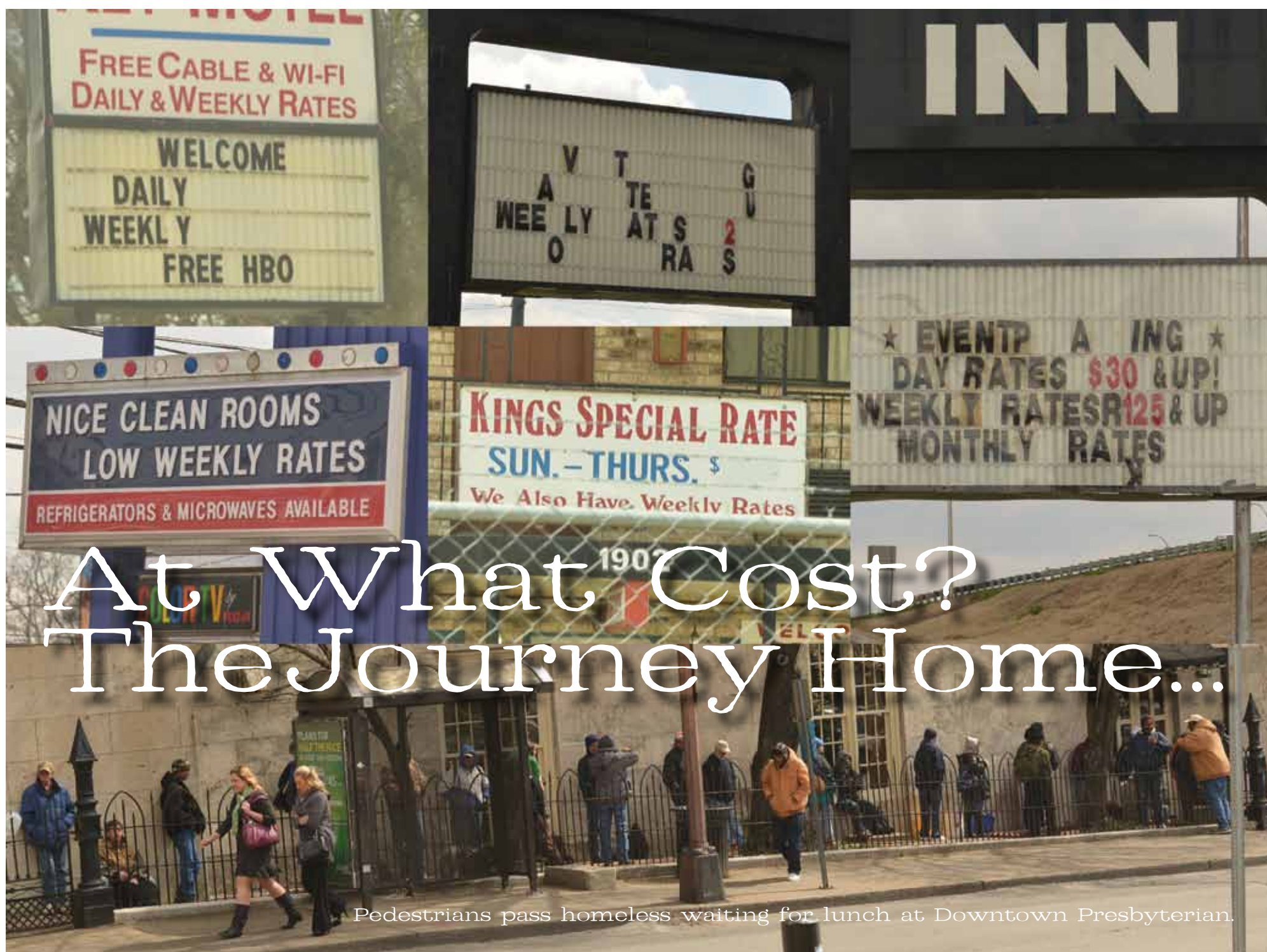




VOL. XI ISSUE 1  
SPRING, 2013

THE PARTICIPANT GENERATED NEWSLETTER OF  
ROOM IN THE INN'S CAMPUS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



Pedestrians pass homeless waiting for lunch at Downtown Presbyterian.



Every day our Day Room at the Campus is full of people who need the same things: food, shelter, work. . . . And even though their needs may be similar, their paths to fulfilling their needs are as different as each individual is unique. Some are trying to seek help with addiction or mental health problems while others have difficulty working because of chronic health conditions.

There is a clear path to finding food, shelter and work, but at what costs? Minor logistical problems can become insurmountable. Past bad decisions that have led to evictions or criminal records create even larger hurdles to be overcome before our participants can find work or rent an apartment.

Often, the effort to satisfy the larger needs of employment and housing are slowed by the process required for day to day living. Keeping a medical appointment may take the vast majority of a business day. Even getting lunch can be a problem. While Room In The Inn serves lunch at the Campus for our general population a minimum of three days a week, other days our participants have to walk up to an hour away.

Participants needing healthcare can use the United Neighborhood Health's Clinic on our Campus. However, the clinic opens for walk-in appointments at 8:00 a.m. and the line typically begins forming at 7:00 because of the large need for free healthcare. It's not uncommon for patients to wait until 2:00 p.m. or 3:00 to see the doctor.

There are so many examples like these that add hours and stress to the day-to-day tasks of working and living that it's easy to see how participants can become discouraged.

Once income is available choices are limited to subsidized housing or a small apartment. Most are on a fixed income such as (social security disability (an average of \$698/month or veteran's retirement benefits (an average of \$1000/month) so the only option is subsidized housing. And the waiting list can be up to a year, if a participant qualifies. If they secure a minimum wage full time job or better, there is market rate housing starting at \$400 per month. That leaves less than \$600 for food, insurance, transportation and childcare for the rest of the month.

The problems that lead an individual to homelessness are varied, but regardless of the cause, once an individual loses their housing the obstacles begin to multiply that bar them from regaining a roof over their heads.

### Costs Present Barriers to Housing

Some of the costs associated with moving into an apartment:

First and Last Month's Rent: approx. \$800

Utility deposits: approx. \$295

Truck rental: \$40/day

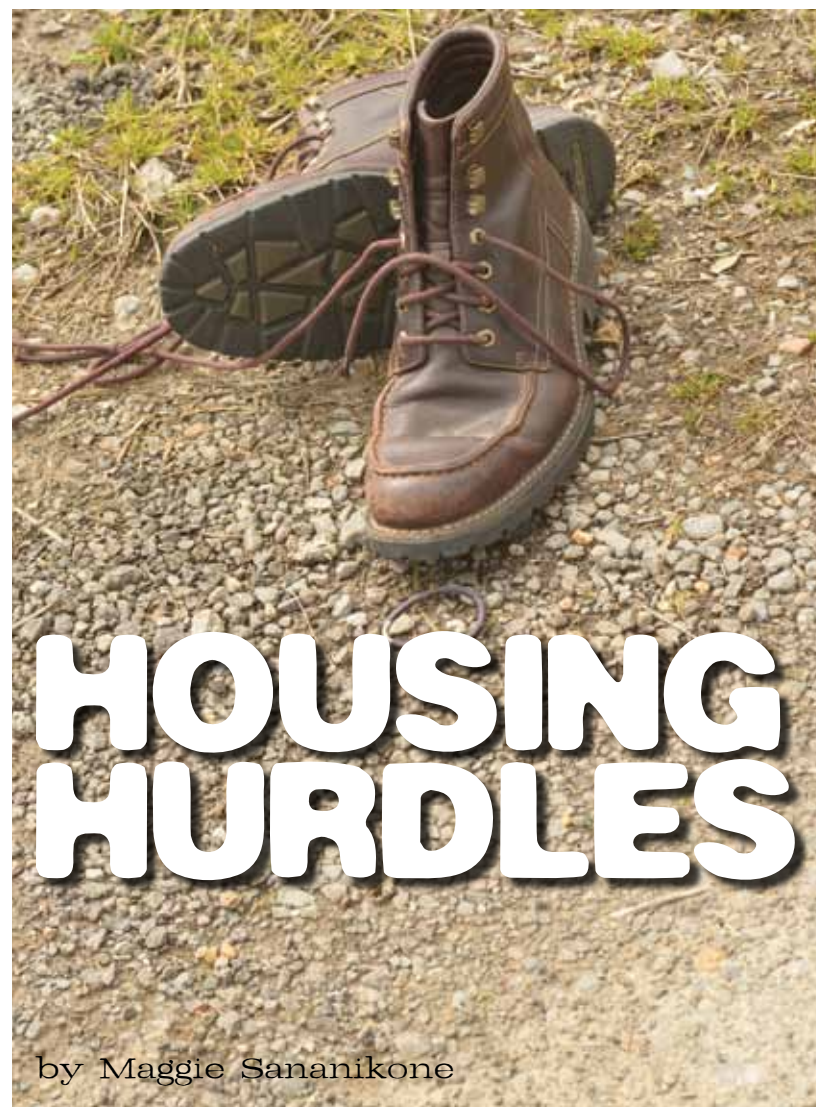
Birth certificate: \$25

State ID card: \$8

Round-trip bus fare per day: \$3.40



For a more detailed analysis scan QR Code.



Maggie is one of our housing case managers. She has been involved with Room In The Inn since her childhood when her parents would bring her down to volunteer. She began working here seven years ago and has been helping people find housing for several years now.



# COST SAVINGS

Often this newsletter reports and describes the generous outpouring of love that comes from the mutual interaction of folks who are without homes with our staff and volunteers. This particular newsletter however concentrates more on the cost of homelessness to the community.

Five years ago, the Homelessness Commission asked Vanderbilt to study the yearly cost of keeping a person alive on the streets with minimum emergency services. The study found that it costs \$17,000 just to keep one person alive. Multiply that number times the most conservative estimate of 2,200 homeless in the area and the cost is mind-boggling: \$37,400,000. These costs do not include the cost of human tragedy and loss that are incalculable.

From our beginnings in 1986, Room In The Inn has always been a cost savings to Nashville. For years we have estimated that just the winter shelter program alone hosted

by Charles Strobel, Founding Director

by our 176 congregations saves over a million dollars each year. An average night at the cheapest motel is \$30 times 30,000 nights of shelter = \$900,000, not counting the food, transportation, volunteer hours, etc. Add to that the other day-time, long-term services of medical respite, education, workforce development, and transitional/permanent housing and the cost savings are even more.

Altogether our services inspire us to continue to invest in every kind of life saving effort. Besides offering a compassionate response, our efforts in workforce development and permanent housing make great economic sense, as we move people from being a tax-drain to a tax producing citizen—thus creating a win-win for everyone.

So, whatever your motivation, we thank you for your support in helping us save lives while at the same time being a cost savings for the community.



## WE MOURN

The Memorial Tree at Room In The Inn's downtown Campus lobby is a memorial to the men and women who have died while living on the streets of Nashville.

Robert Brown  
James Fulmer  
Juan Lahera  
Wayne Potts  
Lawrence Watkins  
Rochelle Bigsby

Trina Carter  
Grant Boatwright  
Mr. Liebergen of  
Wisconsin (father of Todd  
Liebergen who teaches a  
class for VA residents)

### ROOM IN THE INN PROGRAMS & SERVICES

**CRISIS SUPPORT** Day Shelter and Emergency  
Winter Shelter • Veterans' Drop-in Center • Rent and utility assistance •  
Social detox in partnership with Metro Police

**Hospitality** Documentation • Meal Program  
• Transportation • Personal care/Laundry • Prescription Assistance •  
Address/Mail

**EDUCATION** Literacy/Library • Computer skills  
training • Job coaching • Creative expression/Life skills • Alcohol & Drug  
Education • Weekly spiritual services

**Shelter** Recuperative care for the medically fragile  
• Housing for those awaiting or in Alcohol & Drug treatment programs  
• Transitional housing for the chronically homeless and veterans • Short  
term and long-term storage • Secure document and medication storage

**LONG TERM SOLUTIONS** On-Campus  
permanent, affordable housing • Case management • Employment search  
and placement assistance • Long-term communities • AA/NA meetings



Karen was living in section 8 housing and employed, but when her health failed she had to stop working.

# HOME AGAIN

by MyRanda Wright, Respite Program Case Manager



Once Karen had no source of income she was allowed to keep her apartment as long as she completed monthly community service hours. But Karen's chronic health condition eventually led to her eviction. After several extended hospital stays, Vanderbilt Hospital (a regular hospital partner with Room In The Inn) contacted our respite program case management office when Karen was ready for discharge. Karen was placed in our three-bed women's respite facility (part of our larger Guest House program).

When Karen began her stay with us, she found the opportunity to address multiple issues:

- Stabilize her condition by taking her medications on a regular schedule
- Making and keeping all her related appointments
- Worked with Eckman Freeman to apply for disability with the Social Security Administration (she had been working with a national service by phone and making no progress on her application)
- Once approved, she began working with our housing case managers and Urban Housing Solutions to locate an affordable apartment
- She worked with our on-site Department of Human Services office for approval of a food stamp application.

Karen's seven-month stay in our Guest House was longer than average, but she was able to use that time to regain her health and avail herself of our other services.

"Let me tell you," Karen began, "I've never been homeless in my life except for these seven months. Being at the Guest House made it okay. I couldn't have been anywhere else and not been overwhelmed. Once I knew the routine I knew it was going to be better."

On the day she moved into her new apartment Karen was fully prepared to maintain her independence and manage her needs. There will always be "Room In The Inn" should Karen need further support. But for now Karen's journey has led her home.

MyRanda is the case manager at our Guest House. She has been at Room In The Inn for a year now and is working toward a Masters in Education at TSU. In the future she hopes to acquire more experience and education to provide more services for the homeless population of Nashville.



## COST OF STREET LIFE

**THE AVERAGE COST OF A DAY ON THE STREETS OF NASHVILLE FOR MEALS AND A CHEAP ROOM IS \$45.51. Contributor sales average \$30/day. Day labor pays \$7.25/hr (if you can get the work).  
\*\*\*\*\***

**MOST PARTICIPANTS DONOT HAVE \$45.51 AND ROOM IN THE INN PROVIDES MEALS AND HOUSING FOR FREE. THE COST TO OUR ORGANIZATION IS AROUND \$18 PER PERSON. THE COST OF HUMAN SUPPORT? PRICELESS  
\*\*\*\*\***

**A TYPICAL MID-INCOME WORKER IN NASHVILLE ON A SALARY SPENDS APPROXIMATELY \$129.69 PER DAY FOR A ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT AND THREE MEALS PER DAY.**

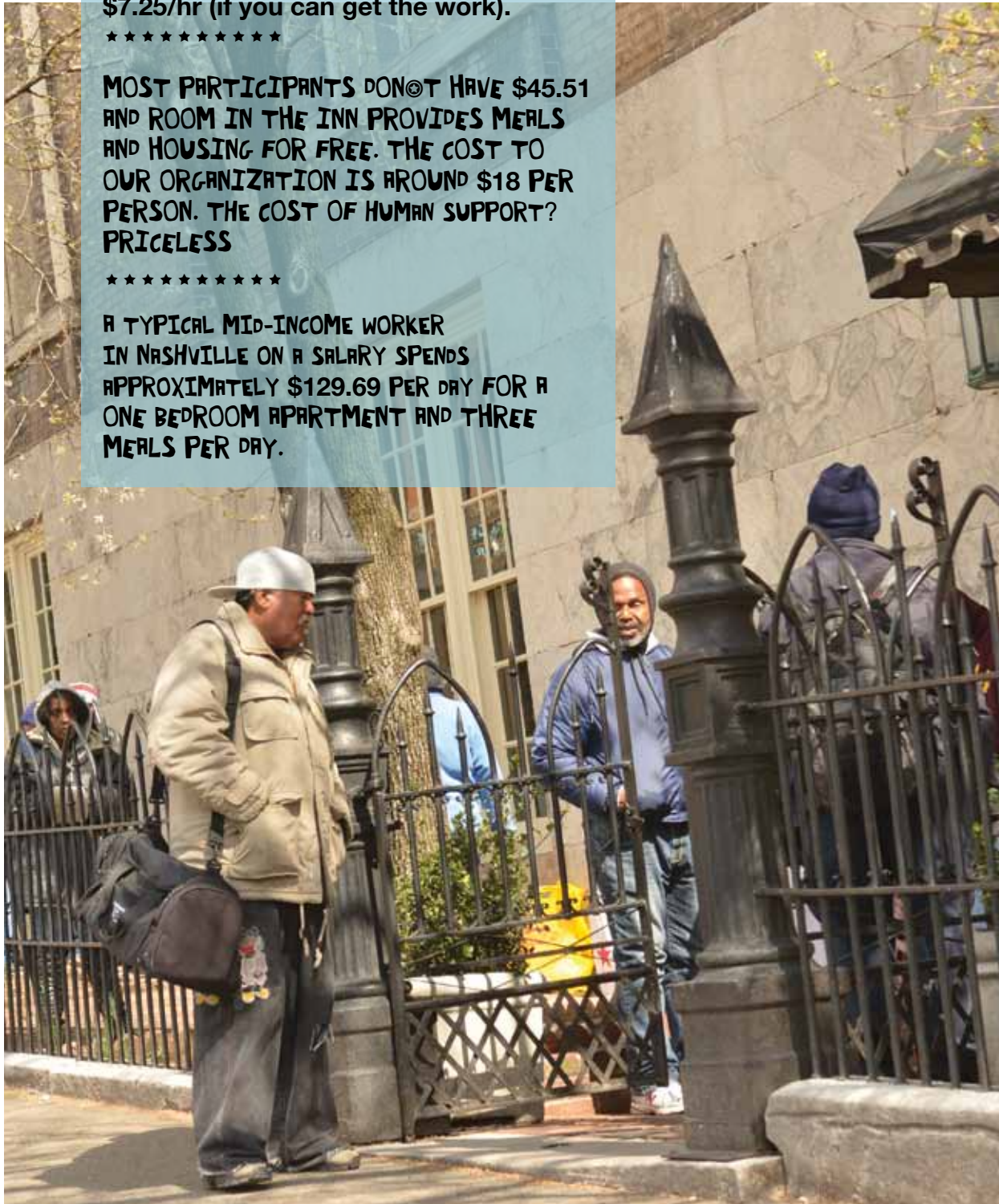


PHOTO: MICKEY DOBO

If you're working, you may be able to grab a cheap meal at a convenience store. Room In The Inn participants get a sack lunch from their host congregation or a lunch at a downtown program if they have time to stand in line.

## INSIDE

by Rachel Hester, Executive Director  
In May of 2010, Nashville experienced a catastrophic event. The flood effected everyone and was truly devastating. Lives were changed, communities impacted. Everywhere I went for the next few months I heard stories of neighbors helping neighbors, lives being rebuilt, and the slogan, "We are Nashville." Much like the devastation that day in May, many of those we serve have suffered catastrophic events in their lives leaving them struggling with homelessness. For some, those events are related to addiction, mental or physical disabilities, lack of workforce skills that allow them to compete in today's market, or even loss of hope. The scope of the problem can be overwhelming. But if we pull together to support our neighbors it is not impossible.

Only by coming together as non-profits, policy makers, religious communities, business and community leaders can we address the societal issues that lead to homelessness. It is equally true that only by coming together can we address each individual's needs. At Room In The Inn, it begins with the 176 congregations who night after night offer the grace of hospitality and accept their guests just as they are...at that moment. We also have over 35 community partners. These partnerships range from all four local hospital entities (HCA, St. Thomas/Baptist, Vanderbilt and Meharry) to provide healthcare for homeless individuals beyond hospitalization in our respite program to other non-profits like Luke 14:12 who provide thousands of meals each year. In collaboration with three other local non-profits we are able to offer mental healthcare, and Belmont University offers us the benefits of their occupational therapy program. Employment opportunities are possible because of the many businesses that partner with our workforce development team.

As you read this newsletter, our hope is that you will see the benefit to the whole community of Nashville when we all work together to help participants in life-changing long-term ways. As you read the stories of our guests like Randall and Karen, you will recognize that their stories highlight the importance of volunteers and community partners coming together offering support on their journey home. From a distance, much like the flood, homelessness seems more than anyone can begin to address. But together we can, and when we do lives will be changed and communities impacted..for the better. Will you join us?



**The Journey Home**

**705 DREXEL STREET • NASHVILLE, TN 37203**

**P: (615) 251-9791 • F: (615) 251-3274**

**WWW. ROOMINTHEINN.ORG**



# BREAKING

by Kristen Norris

Randall was born in Nashville. He will be 56 in May. At a young age he began abusing alcohol and drugs without any thought to the consequences. After all, he watched his father behave the same way, and nobody talked to him about “treatment” or “addiction.” He just didn’t know what he was doing.

Over the years Randall was in and out of Room In The Inn and the Nashville Rescue Mission. It was at the Mission that he discovered that Room In The Inn has funds set aside for helping people get state identification cards. While he was in our Day Room finding out about IDs, he heard other men talking about seeking addiction treatment at the United Neighborhood Health clinic located on our Campus.

He said, “I was listening to one guy tell the other about it. I didn’t join in, but after they stopped talking I followed the guy and asked him what treatment was about.”

Not long after, Randall began an out-patient treatment program at the UNH Downtown Clinic and began living in our Guest House dorm. In the Fall of 2006 Randall began a new journey. During his 90 day treatment program, Randall heard about the Odyssey program, our transitional housing program for chronically homeless men with addiction issues. Randall said, “I knew that 90 days wasn’t going to do it for me. I’d been doing this for too long. I signed right up for pre-Odyssey when I heard I could stay over a year if that’s what it takes.” He was looking



## A First Home

## For Andrew

by Quiana Jimerson

**Baby Andrew has yet been able to sleep in a bed of his own.**

**R**obert and Nicole came to Room In The Inn just a few weeks into our emergency winter shelter program season last Fall. The couple had recently been approved for an MDHA-Section 8 Voucher and needed help getting copies of their birth certificates in order to continue the process of obtaining housing. They were not aware of all the services provided by Room In The Inn, but had heard through several people that they could receive help with much-needed state identification cards, birth certificates (required documentation to sign a lease) and other needs.

They first met in Tent City a few years before it closed. Neither Nicole nor Robert were strangers to homelessness; both had experienced chronic homelessness for several years. But what made this time so different was that Nicole had recently given birth to their son, baby Andrew.

After talking with the support desk staff about their needs last Fall, not only were they able to send off for their birth certificates,

they were also provided shelter accommodations through our Room In The Inn congregations, and given a place to stay during the day. Even with a voucher, they still needed help working with housing providers for an acceptable apartment. Our housing case manager, Maggie, was able to shepherd them through the paper work for IDs and birth certificates as well as working with housing agencies. With a planned move-in date during March, what Robert is looking forward to most is “...being able to take my son home. He has never had a home and I am looking forward to being able to provide that for him.”

Quiana first volunteered with Room In The Inn in 2011 while still a student at Lipscomb. She came on staff to work with our volunteer team about a year ago. She is also part of the winter shelter staff and has worked with Robert and Nicole throughout the Room In The Inn season this year.

**By engaging with people, Room In The Inn is building a sense of community and emotional support—a value far beyond measure.**



# NEW GROUND



for reinforcement for what he had learned while at the clinic so he could continue living a new way.

On November 5, 2013, Randall will have 6 years of sobriety (and it has been 4 years since he stopped smoking). He has been living in a house for graduates of the Odyssey program provided in partnership with Belmont University.

For employment, he worked on the construction crew for our new Room In The Inn building. After that, he began full-time work at Goodwill as a forklift operator and has been there 2 years.

This March, Randall broke ground on a Habitat House and hopes to move in on his 56th birthday. He is excited about his granddaughters being able to visit, and you can see the pride in his eyes at having a home of his own. He claims his family is his strongest motivation to stay on the right path. Randall sums it all up by saying, "This is the way to live life. Sometimes things are better, sometimes worse, but there will always be a better day. Sometimes you feel older, sometimes younger, but on the day you feel bad you just need to remember - it will pass."

Kristen is in the Jesuit Volunteer Corp and has a one year commitment to work full-time for Room In The Inn. She works with our Odyssey program and lives in a community of 6 other Jesuit volunteers here in Nashville. Kristen likes seeing the changes in the men's lives as they progress through the Odyssey program.



On March 23, Randall was joined by Room In The Inn staff and other volunteers who worked on his Habitat House build.

# For it is in giving that we receive.

*Thank you to our 2012 – 13 Room In The Inn volunteers.*

*Your hospitality made a true difference in the lives of our homeless neighbors.*

*We pray it did the same for you.*



Want to share your Room In The Inn experience? Email us at [communion@roomintheinn.org](mailto:communion@roomintheinn.org)

This year, more than 6,250 volunteers devoted more than 167,000 volunteer hours, and congregations provided 30,000 emergency shelter beds.

[roomintheinn.org](http://roomintheinn.org) | 615.251.9791



Room In The Inn's  
Campus for Human Development  
P.O. Box 25309  
Nashville, Tennessee 37202  
[www.roomintheinn.org](http://www.roomintheinn.org)

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Nashville, TN  
Permit No. 4717