



SOCIAL SERVICES NEWS

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HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS WEEK ACTIVITIES PLANNED

HICKORY -- A week of activities highlighting hunger and homelessness in Catawba County will be held Nov. 10-17. The public is invited to attend any of these events. All events except for the Harvest of Hope Hunger Walk and 5K Run are free, although donations of money or supplies for the homeless are appreciated.

Suggested items to donate for persons experiencing homelessness include hats, coats, gloves, socks, backpacks, flashlights, batteries, rain gear, can openers, toilet paper, hand and feet warmers, sleeping bags and tents. For a complete list of supplies, go to <http://www.housingvisionscatawba.org/>.

Monetary donations may also be made to Catawba County United Way at United Way P.O. Box 2425 Hickory, NC 28603. When donating to the United Way, be sure to write "Homeless" in the memo line of your check. All designated donations received by the United Way will be used for initiatives benefitting persons in Catawba County who are struggling with homelessness.

The week's activities will begin on Saturday, Nov. 10 at 9 a.m. with the Harvest of Hope Hunger Walk and 5K Run to benefit the Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry. The walk will take place on the track behind Mt. Olive Lutheran Church on Highway 127. The address is 2780 N. Center St. Hickory. Registration is \$10 each with a minimum of \$5 in sponsorship for each adult. Awards will be given to the church, individual and community group that raises the most money.

On Sunday, Nov. 11, there will be a worship service on Union Square in Hickory offered by Our Father's Pavilion. Participants may arrive at 7:30 a.m. with the service beginning at 8:30 a.m. Corinth Baptist Church of Lincolnton will present a puppet show, and Exodus Homes Prodigal Sons and Daughters will provide music.

On Monday, Nov. 12 at 7 p.m., the Women's Resource Center and Safe Harbor will sponsor a showing of the documentary "The Line" at Carolina Theater in Hickory. This film chronicles real people struggling with poverty in America today. Those profiled include a banker in the suburban Midwest who used to earn six-figures a year and now, after the economic collapse, must go to a food bank to feed his three kids; a fisherman on the Gulf Coast of Louisiana who has watched his livelihood and his culture wash away in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and a devastating off-shore oil spill; a blue collar guy in North Carolina who worked hard his whole life but lost his job, became homeless, and started over as a restaurant bus boy; and a single mom in Chicago who battles daily to ensure that her son is safe, healthy, and has the opportunity to go to college. Immediately following the screening, a panel will facilitate discussion of the film and its applicability to the Unifour.

On Tuesday, Nov. 13 at 1-3 p.m., there will be a bingo game at the Hickory Soup Kitchen at 131 Main Ave. NE in Hickory. The public is invited to come and learn more about the soup kitchen.

On Wednesday, Nov. 14, at 3-4:30 p.m., there will be a forum and panel discussion at Catawba Valley Community College's East Wing Auditorium. The program will consist of interviews with individuals who are homeless or formerly homeless discussing issues of hunger and homelessness in Catawba County. Information will also be available about how individuals and groups can get involved in responding to this problem.

On Thursday, Nov. 15, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., the public is invited to a program at the Salvation Army, 780 Third Ave. Place SW, Hickory. You are invited to eat a meal provided by the Salvation Army and learn about issues of hunger and homelessness in our community and how you can make a difference.

On Saturday, Nov. 17, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., there will be a Block Party and Cookout at Grace House, 102 First Ave. NE, Hickory. A meal will be provided by Abundant Grace Church and Christ Church. The public is invited to learn more about Grace House (a daytime drop-in center for persons experiencing homelessness) and how you can be involved.

For more information about any of these events, contact the sponsoring agency or call Teena Willis at 828-323-8084. You may also go to <http://www.housingvisionscatawba.org>. Housing Visions partners include the homeless community, A Caring Alternative, ALFA, Catawba County United Way, Catawba Valley Behavioral Healthcare, Corner Table, CVCC, Catawba County Social Services, Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministries, Exodus Homes/Exodus Works, Family Guidance Center, Grace House, Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries, Hickory Police Department, Hickory Soup Kitchen, Homeless Veteran's Programs, Partners Behavioral Health Management, Our Father's Pavilion, Safe Harbor Rescue Mission, Salvation Army, Sipe's Orchard Home, The Shepherd's Heart.

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