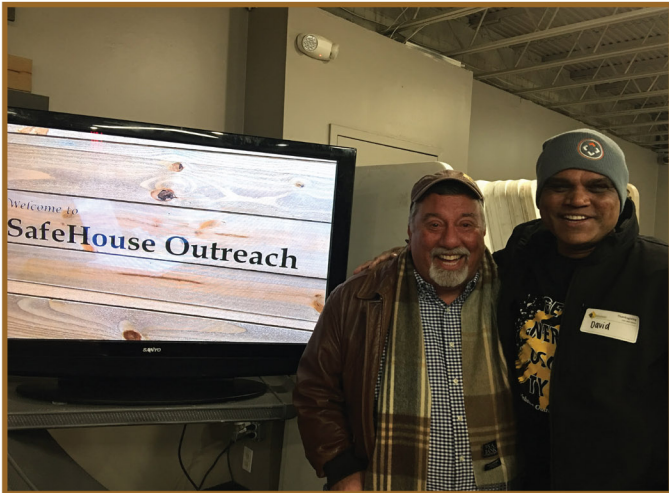


The Brown Report

Burdine & Brown | Workers' Compensation, Personal Injury, Disability Law | Gwinnett & Georgia

A small example of serving others in need



It seems like the homeless are everywhere. Organizations are formed all through Metro Atlanta to stop the spread of homelessness or at least to maintain the status-quo.

Who are the homeless? Are they only poor physically? I think not. For sure they seem to have only what they can put in a duffle bag, or a Publix or Kroger shopping cart that has drifted away from the store. A closer observation of this population finds there are genuine emotional and mental health problems as well.

To be sure, some of Metro-Atlanta's estimated 7,000 homeless¹ are career types, willing to ply the pockets of help around Atlanta, but I believe that the vast majority have somehow and tragically been separated from love and attention. They feel no one cares. They are totally and horribly disconnected.

The Saturday after Thanksgiving, every year, the Safehouse, a downtown Atlanta homeless shelter, provides a comprehensive day of help of all kinds for the homeless in downtown Atlanta. My spiritual small group (we were twelve strong) from Northpoint Community Church (Andy Stanley, Senior Pastor) wanted to lend a hand. This year it was called a chili cookoff.

Here are a few of the pictures of our lunch time chili dinner where we served about 200 homeless. The meal was very tasty and was served by about 50 volunteers from a number of local churches.

We set up about 30 tables to give away hundreds of used clothes in a generally well organized fashion as the people, who were mostly gentlemen, filed through to replenish their tawdry clothing.² I was pleased to be a part of this effort, handing out socks and gloves, winter coats, toiletries and supplies.

One especially touching and spontaneous example of complete unselfish serving took place during this service day. Two of our team began a conversation with a homeless person who appeared at this event who, upon further inquiry, was a former US Marine in his 50's. He was seeking a pair of "better" shoes. In fact, any shoes would have been a vast improvement over what he was wearing at the time. But he had a rather large shoe size (14 or 15). My two team members took him to a shoe store, since we had none his size at this event, that was about 5 blocks away. When they found the right size, it turned out to be a very expensive purchase. The Vet refused to allow my team members to buy the shoes for him. Instead, he said that he would just



buy a smaller, standard size, and cut out the heels of these shoes. He did not want these gentlemen paying for such an expensive pair of shoes. This touched the core of their being. The two men insisted on the correct size. The Vet was overwhelmed with the generosity and love of these two strangers.

Our group prayed before we headed downtown that we would be mindful of and endlessly grateful for what we have and that we are not only surrounded by love but most importantly by the Love of God as expressed through the life and example of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

I genuinely hope that serving the homeless on one occasion at Thanksgiving is just one reminder to us of the command of the Apostle Paul who said, "With goodwill render service, as to The Lord, as not to men." - Ephesians 2:7

1. According to Atlanta Mission's website, Nationwide 8% of homeless people are military Veterans and America's youth, which account for 50,000 homeless persons in the United States.
2. According to Atlanta Mission's website, the best things to give to help the homeless are blankets, gloves, socks, jackets, and to offer warm food and care packages of toiletries, soap, lip balm, etc.



About Tom Brown

Tom has been handling workers' compensation and disability claims since 1979. He is a founding member of the Workers' Compensation Claimants Lawyers



(WCCL) and an active member of the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association. He helps to change injured workers' lives by fighting for the best medical care possible, which ultimately produces the best settlement for the injured clients he and his team represent.

Tom and his wife also travel to Uruguay, South America, to help build and strengthen struggling local churches. He has been to Uruguay 24 times in the past 18 years and loves this work. They have made many wonderful friends over the years. See Asadoministries.com.

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