



**BROTHERS BROOKS**  
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**Special points of interest:**

- **Supreme Court ruling puts vulnerable population more at risk, say advocates for the homeless**
- **Sleeping on public property can be a crime if you're homeless, Supreme Court says**
- **Word on the Street**

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# WE CARE NEWS!!!

An Informative Newsletter regarding the Homeless, Stranded and Down & Out in America

## SUPREME COURT RULING PUTS VULNERABLE POPULATION MORE AT RISK, SAY ADVOCATES FOR THE HOMELESS

Joe Jackson knew things were not looking good after traveling to Washington, D.C., in April while the U.S. Supreme Court was hearing oral arguments that he knew could greatly impact those he serves as executive director of Hesus House in Aurora.

Nor did Colleen Boraca who, as director of the Northern Illinois University College of Law Health Advocacy Clinic, listened intently to those SCOTUS judges from her on-site office at the large homeless shelter on River Street.

The decision handed down a week ago in the case of Grants Pass v. Johnson confirmed their worst fears.

In a 6-3 ruling, the court determined laws that impose civil and criminal penalties on the homeless do not violate the Eighth Amendment prohibition on “cruel and unusual punishment.” Which both Jackson and Boraca view as a blow to some of society’s most vulnerable people because the ruling will allow municipalities across the country to outlaw the un-

sheltered from sleeping outside, even if they have no other choice on how to survive.

The ruling upended a 2018 appeals court decision that determined you can’t ban sleeping on public property if there is no available shelter. Writing for the court’s majority, Justice Neil Gorsuch said that while people may disagree on how best to address homelessness, the federal judiciary should not be the decider of those policies.

But Jackson declares last Friday’s ruling as “ominous” because it “opens the door for municipalities and states to take a punitive approach to homelessness,” which, he added, has “been proven not to work.”

Boraca, who was recently named the Hesus House 2024 Humanitarian of the Year, told me what she struggles with after the disappointing but not surprising decision is the fact that the people who could be penalized have nowhere else to go.

“They are not just deciding to

sleep in parks because they want to. There is no shelter available for them,” she declared. And this ruling has now made it clear we all have to make a choice on “what kind of society we want to be.”

Discussing these laws is important, both advocates insist, because homelessness is on the rise across the country, and our Fox Valley communities are no exception.

As of this week, there are about 70 people on the streets at night because there is no room at Hesus House, said Jackson, adding that “rather than pass laws and city ordinances to criminalize them, there needs to be more effort into housing them.”

Which makes far more financial sense, he and Boraca contend. For example, the median rent for a studio apartment in Illinois is \$989 a month — or \$11,868 annually — compared to the \$37,000 per year it costs



## SLEEPING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY CAN BE A CRIME IF YOU'RE HOMELESS, SUPREME COURT SAYS

Advocates for unhoused people warn the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in a major case on camping bans will make the homeless crisis worse, forcing more people into a cycle of jail,

debt and living on the streets.

On Friday, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Grants Pass, Oregon, a small city with a large homeless population. The

justices said the town can go ahead with its ban on sleeping in public with bedding, which will prohibit unhoused people from living in public parks, according to lawyers supporting Grants Pass

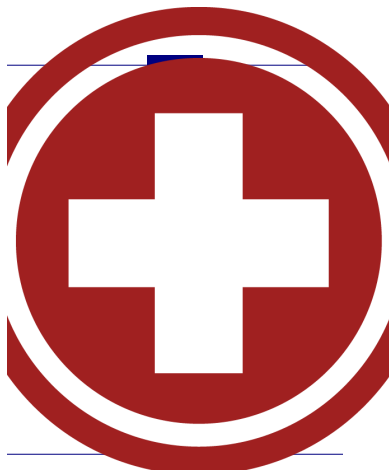
poverty, the research offers

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**SPOT LIGHT— STEWPOT**

The “Community Stewpot” was birthed in 1981 by seven Jackson congregations who were eager to provide a coordinated response to the increasing needs of their neighbors. Modeled after a soup kitchen in downtown Dallas, each house of worship committed both funds and volunteers to help serve lunch five days a week in an old gas station renovated for that purpose. The invitation was deep and broad; anyone could eat, no questions asked. Stewpot’s Opportunity Center day shelter is a “home base” during the daytime hours for people experiencing homelessness. The center offers

laundry service, showers, mail service, and computer and phone access, as well as toiletries, snacks, coffee, and community. Case management is available on-site to connect visitors with resources like housing, employment, mental health services, medical care, and other specific needs.

The Opportunity Center also operates, in partnership with the City of Jackson, as an emergency shelter during the cold winter months. When the temperatures fall below 35 degrees, the Center transforms into an overnight shelter with a max capacity of 31 people. Volun-

teers prepare and serve meals to our guests on these nights.

**Quick Facts**

- Showers are available to use each day from 7am-10am

- Monday is Toiletry Day-- clients fill out a form to request toiletry items that they need

- Clients can get their mail Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8am-10am

The Computer lab is open during certain hours for job applications, resume building, and more. Stewpot has met the qualifications to be Platinum seal rated. A Platinum seal status is the leading symbol of non-profits' transparency and accountability

**Street medics treat heat illnesses among homeless people as temperatures rise**

"It's a lot better than going to the hospital," Handley said of the team that provides health care to homeless people. He's been treated poorly at traditional clinics and hospitals, he said, more than six years after being struck by a car while he sat on a wall, leaving him in a wheelchair. Circle the City, a non-profit that works in multiple cities and hospitals and treats about 9,000 people annually, introduced its IV rehydration program as a way to protect homeless people in Phoenix

from life-threatening heat illness as temperatures regularly hit the triple-digits in America's hottest metro. Homeless people accounted for nearly half of the record 645 heat-related deaths last year in Maricopa County, which encompasses metro Phoenix. As summers grow warmer, health providers from San Diego to New York are being challenged to better protect homeless patients. U.S. Street medics treat heat illnesses among homeless people as temperatures rise

Circle the City, a non-profit that works in multiple cities and hospitals and treats about 9,000 people annually, introduced its IV rehydration program as a way to protect homeless people in Phoenix from life-threatening heat Circle the City.

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**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 SLEEPING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY CAN BE A CRIME IF YOU'RE HOMELESS, SUPREME COURT SAYS**

who spoke with USA TODAY. People who violate the ban will face fines and possibly jail time. In their 6-3 decision, justices said enforcing a camping ban is not equal to cruel and unusual punishment. The ruling overturned a lower court ruling that kept the ban from being enforced. “This is a pretty hard blow and it’s devastating,” said Helen Cruz, 49, who gives meals

to unhoused people in parks in Grants Pass and has advocated against the sleeping ban for years. Speaking after the ruling's release Friday, Cruz told USA TODAY the decision was the worst possible outcome the hundreds of people living outside in Grants Pass could have imagined.

“These people who have had nothing had one glimmer of hope, and now it’s been stripped from them. How far

down can you beat somebody who has nothing? I don’t understand,” Cruz said, speaking through tears. “We are incredibly disappointed and we’re worried about how quickly some communities will move to enact local ordinances that are now legal under this ruling,” said Ann Oliva, CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Story by Claire Thornton, USA TODAY

## THE MILLIPEDE EFFECT

Several years in the making, "The Millipede Effect" has been released by Authorhouse Publishing this past January. The book lays out BBV2M LLC founder and President Rodney Brooks quest to understand the homeless, stranded and down & out. From movies to our own perceptions, it all shapes how we approach this situation. Brooks looks at Government, Civic Organizations and religion (the Church) as all play a major part in finding ways to help the plight of the homeless. These different groups

display on a daily basis their commitment to service, financial giving and voluntary work. Like the millipede with its many body parts/ compartments (government, civic, religion) and its many legs (the people driving these various groups); there are many misconceptions about those that are homeless. The book looks at those various challenges as well hear from several of those that are homeless, stranded and down & out. Brooks introduces us to his spirit filled purpose and calling in helping the homeless, stranded and down & out

as well he walks us through what the various religions say about each individual of faith and their role in being a part of the solution. The book can be ordered through [Authorhouse Publishing](http://bookstore.authorhouse.com/Products/SKU-001092211/The--Millipede-Effect.aspx) at <http://bookstore.authorhouse.com/Products/SKU-001092211/The--Millipede-Effect.aspx> or [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/) at <https://www.amazon.com/>

### Word on The Street— Oklahoma City church launches shoe drive to help city's homeless

A local church is going a step above for those in need with its annual shoe drive. The Mayflower Congregational UCC Church is asking for public help and said you could help transform a life.

"It's so difficult for them to find shoes that fit, pieces that they truly need in their day to day lives," said Glenda Stansbury with the church. There is a saying, 'walk a mile in my shoes,' but some Oklahomans have been walking longer with-

out any. "I was driving down the street the other day and saw a gentleman standing there barefoot and thought ugh if only I had some shoes to give him," said Stansbury.

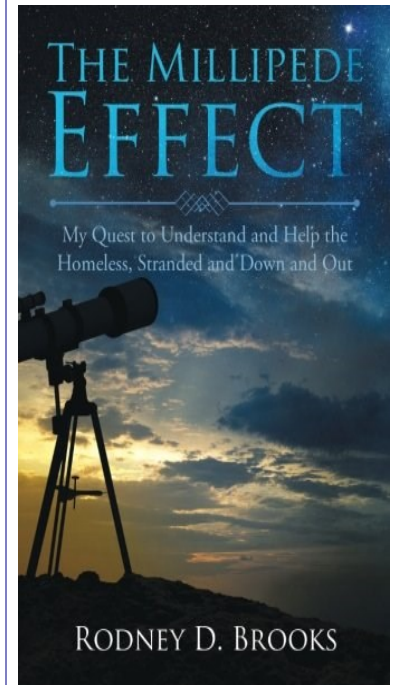
The "363 Group," based out of the church has a close tie to the homeless population and even has a special meaning behind their name.

"We're called the 363 group because one of the very first groups we worked with said a lot of churches are worried

about homeless on Thanksgiving and Christmas, and we're worried about them the other 363 days of the year," said Stansbury.

The annual shoe drive is held by the group each July, to help our homeless neighbors in need.

"Shoes and socks are two of the most important things that our homeless neighbors need," said Stansbury. "That's their survival so that they can get from one place to the other."



**HOMELESS**  
Give them a hand  
not the boot



### HOMELESS IN A HEAT WAVE. HOW ONE ELDERLY FRESNO MAN HOLDS UP IN SCORCHING TEMPERATURES

n the hottest day in Fresno so far this summer, with temperatures soaring to 110 degrees, an elderly man slouched up against a gas station wall and struggled to breathe.

He is homeless.

Rick Adams, the 65-year-old who once had a house in Clovis but lives on the streets in north Fresno for the past 10 years, is used to people ignoring and walking past him. How homeless people handle the extreme

heat can be the difference between life and death.

Adams doesn't necessarily think the heat will kill him.

He said surviving the cold weather or the occasional downpour in Fresno is just as challenging for a person in his predicament.

But being homeless amid the brutal heat makes Adams' life that much more difficult, he said.

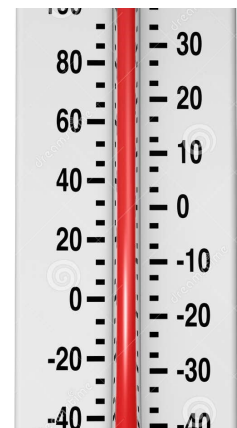
"Try to lay low when it's this

hot, don't get up too much," Adams said. "Don't move a lot."

Staying hydrated also is important, and getting access to drinking water for those like Adams is sometimes tough.

"Hot or cold," Adams said, "just try to figure out how to get by every day.

"But man, I do not like how hot it is."



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*A Heritage of Excellence  
in Helping Others!!!*



***WE ARE.....***

*At BBV2M LLC our vision is to help all people excel in all aspects of life. The challenges facing the homeless, stranded and down & out is such a daunting task. There are great organizations in both the public and private sector with many wonderful people who are on the frontline in ensuring that these individual are taken care of and have a voice. Our goal is to due our part by assistance , education and support. Although our organization was founded in 2015 our heritage stretches back over seven decades of assisting and helping others. The patri-archs of the family instilled the values and beliefs of helping others through the biblical teaching of God’s word. Our goal is to be the bridge that helps those in need that are homeless, stranded and down & out get to the proper resources to assist them in their endeavors. This has been spiritually rewarding for us as we truly look to fulfill our purpose of helping others.*

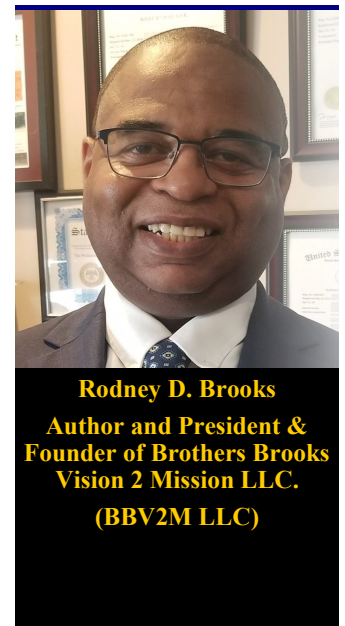
# You Can Help.



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

James says it best “If a brother or sister is poorly clothed or lacks daily food, and one of you say to them , “Go in peace, keep warm and eat well,” but does not give them what the body needs, what good is it? (James 2:15-16) Those of us who have been given the ability to practice our faith through our works should do so. The opportunity to help our brothers and sisters in need are tremendous. If you are already doing so then I salute you and ask as well as pray that you continue to do so. If you are not or have wondered how then let me give you a couple of suggestions. Your preference in helping is based how you feel in your heart assist.

There are many national and local charitable agencies that work with the homeless. Each of these organizations have a platform and plan on who and how they help those that are homeless. Most organization do take financial donations but they also look for volunteers and advocates. Your local Church or other places of worship also has various types of ministries that are deigned to help the poor and down trodden. Your local or national Wounded Warrior chapter that is designed to help our veterans who are homeless. Whatever your preference in helping; it all starts with you. Let’s each do our part in 2022 and be exceptional stewards of Love!



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