

Local services are available for the homeless

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A recent story on homelessness in Michigan City described a new task force of the Economic Development Corp. Although the task force is only addressing the unique problem of homeless men, readers may not realize that a rich variety of local services is already being provided to homeless women and families.

There is Sand Castle Shelter (run by Citizens Concerned for the Homeless, CCH), that provides not only room and board for homeless families, but also works intensively with them to solve the problems that have brought them to homelessness, serving 100 homeless family members in the last three months.

Then there is Grace Learning Center (also run by CCH) which, in the interest of increasing peoples' earning power, provides free training, tutoring, classes, GED-preparation, computer access, etc. to not only Sand Castle residents (required) but to anyone who walks through its doors. Over 300 folks walked through those doors this past year, with about 100 subsequently finding solid employment.

The night-only shelter referred to in the article services single men (which Sand Castle does not), but even these men have access to a variety of services, including case work, at the Salvation Army a few blocks away.

And there is the nearby Stepping Stone shelter, which provides a home and a variety of services to women who have suffered domestic violence.

On top of all this, there is the Home Team, a group of organizations and individuals loosely organized by the Unity Foundation, all working to reduce homelessness in the city, under a 10-year plan.

Providing real shelters for homeless men, who currently have only night-by-night sleeping facilities and two meals, would be a welcome addition to these programs. We wish the task force much success!

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