



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: BJ Iacino

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
(303) 285-5223

biacino@coloradocoalition.org

DENVER COMMUNITY JOINS THE MAYOR AND THE COLORADO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS IN A CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL VIGIL

*5:30 pm – 6:00 pm
1437 Bannock Street*

DENVER (Thursday - December 20, 2007) – Several hundred people will gather on the steps of the Denver City and County Building this evening to attend a Homeless Persons' Memorial Vigil. Hosted by the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless (CCH), together with Mayor John Hickenlooper, the candlelight, name-reading ceremony recognizes 104 people who lived on the streets of the Denver metropolitan area and died during 2007. Twenty-eight were women, seventy-six were men; they ranged in age from 20 to 77. For some, this will be the only memorial service held in their honor. (*Note: the Memorial List of Names is attached to this news release.*)

The program will include remarks by Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper; CCH President John Parvensky; homeless advocate and jazz vocalist Rene Marie; Dr. Tom Melton, member of the Mayor's Clergy Council; and Randle Loeb, member of the CCH Board of Directors.

Scheduled on the eve of the first day of winter and the longest night of the year, the Vigil pays tribute to those who lost their lives as well as to those men, women and children who continue to survive against great odds. Homeless persons are 3-4 times more likely to die prematurely than the general population.

The consequences of restricted access to comprehensive health care are reflected in extremely high rates of both chronic and acute health problems among people experiencing homelessness. Overall, the average life expectancy for Americans is almost 80 years of age; yet, for those that experience homelessness, the probable life span is somewhere between 42 and 52 years. And the

burden of early death is especially high in younger women (ages 18 to 34); they are 4-31 times more likely to lose their lives than their housed counterparts.

“These conditions are unacceptable. In almost every case these deaths could have been prevented,” explained Mr. Parvensky. “Housing is the first form of treatment.”

Although there is no official tracking of homeless deaths in Colorado, CCH conducts the count through a coordinated process involving more than twenty-five homeless service organizations, in the seven-county Denver metropolitan area, representing medical clinicians and other healthcare professionals; case managers; outreach and social workers; hospice, shelter and emergency service personnel; housing managers; chaplains; volunteers and others who provide direct assistance for those that are homeless. Causes of death include exposure, vehicular accidents, violence, but most frequently, illness due to chronic diseases.

“This Vigil is a vivid reminder of the tragic toll that homelessness has on so many lives in this community – it underscores the urgent need for each of us to join with Denver's Road Home, the city's ten year plan to end homelessness,” said Mayor Hickenlooper. “Together, we can protect and care for the less fortunate in our own backyard and help prevent tragic, unnecessary deaths such as those we are recognizing tonight.”

For more than a decade CCH has sponsored this event in conjunction with the National Coalition for the Homeless Campaign: National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day. Last year at least 100 other U.S. metropolitan communities also participated, including: Atlanta, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Seattle and Washington, DC.

The mission of the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless is to work collaboratively toward the prevention of homelessness and the creation of lasting solutions for homeless and at-risk families, children, and individuals throughout Colorado. CCH advocates for and provides a continuum of housing and a variety of services to improve the health, well-being and stability of those it serves.

***Homeless Persons' Memorial 2007
Master List of Names***

Michele Baccarella
Patricia Barnes
Silas Bearpaw
Phillip “Frank” Bitter

Debra Ann Blea
Gennie Britnell
Betty Bridges
Stanley Brown
Twyman Brown
Paul Left Hand Bull
Roy Burns
Craig Caston
Larry Donell Charrot
Johnny Chavez
Sonny Chavez
Timothy M. Cochran
David Gerard Donaldson
Norris L. Drake
Danny Dunn
Dana Duquette
Henry Ellington
Henry Endbody
John Eutzy
Leonard K. Falen
Jimmy Farr
Kevin Faulke
Joe Fister
Cynthia Fournier
Deadra Fox
Todd Furlow
Michael Gallegos
Nathan George
James Gibson
Michael Gilbert
Robert Giles
Stephan C. Grammer
John Guruley
Reggie Hennesy
Joseph Michael Hess
Lila Hess
Boyd Higginson
Crystal Hinkle
Daniel Horn
Veona Hudson
Frank "Zap" R. Iowa
Reggie Jackson
Anthony Jones
Ronald Kelly
Ed Kinney
John M. Kraft
William Krug
William R. Kohoutek
Anthony Losi
John Love
Joe David Lucero
Kent Lynn
Kurt Gerald Martin
Henry K. Mazurek
Bridget McCloud
Michael McFarlane

Paul Moilanen
Christian Monahan
Cheryl Monroe
Leroy Moore
Phillip Morgan
Robert R. Moyer
Ryan Murray
Jill Nichols
Bridget Ann O'Hara
Paul Olin
Anthony Pedraza
Terry Pettit
Roby Phillips
Samuel Preston
Michael Price
James Pursley
Adolfo A. Ramirez V.
Rito Ramirez
J.C. Ranson
Joe Rodriguez
Elizabeth Romero
Terrance "Terry" Romero
Ricardo Santa Maria
David Schriener
John Seagrove
Mark Seitz
William J. Shumski
Candy Smith
Larry Marvin Smith
Susan Snell
Sourideth Sayamath
Wayne Sovlansky
Ronnie Taglieri
Lisa Taylor
Joe "Buffalo" Trujillo
Carrol Trump
Debbie A. Vigil
Rebecca Ward
Norma J. Wilkinson
Larry Donell Williams
Norma Wilson
Barbara Winnegar
Peter Wren
Carroll Ziegler

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