



LETTER: Going Back a Hundred Years for Trolley Cars Not Enough

In a Letter to the Editor in the Feb. 10 *Sunday News*, Fred Sherick of Lancaster suggests: "We should go back 200 years and only allow horses and buggies in the first two blocks of Penn Square in all directions. We

could take out all the macadam, bricks and cobblestones and have only dirt roads like a Wild West Show. Think about the tourists this would bring to the new convention center."

Soccer Moms' Corner: Exercise / Good Diet for Kids Prolong Lives

Valentin Fuster, MD, world famous medical researcher and head of the Cardiology Department at New York's Mt. Sinai Hospital, appeared on the Feb. 11 *Charlie Rose Show* on PBS.

When asked by Rose what can be done to reduce prevalence of heart disease, Fuster cited the importance of introducing exercise and good eating diets to youngsters between the ages of 5 and 10 years, when children are "modeling for future habits."

According to the doctor, only a small disposition to heart disease is genetic. "Two

centuries ago coronary heart disease was not common. It is an acquired disease of modern times."

Fuster pointed out six major risk factors: Blood sugar level, obesity, cholesterol level, smoking, lack of exercise, and a poor diet. He indicated: Only a 1% risk of a heart attack if a person is okay with all six. Twenty percent of people will develop a heart attack if they have only three of the six.

Fuster told Rose that exercise and a good diet can reduce risks by 25% to 30%.

Council of Churches Provides Winter Homeless Shelters

By Matt Henderson

A handful of churches are participating in the Cold Weather Overflow Emergency Shelter program for the homeless. They offer a warm place for the homeless to sleep on a rotating weekly basis from December through March.

Last week, that place was Covenant United Methodist Church at Orange & Mulberry Streets. There, at 7:30 pm sharp, the doors are opened to the crowd of homeless that has formed outside its side entrance.

George Bergey has been volunteering with the homeless shelter program for three years. "We have 32 cots," he explained, "and, as you can see, they come in here and turn in their tickets from the Community Homeless Outreach Center."

The Outreach Center, which opened in November on the premises of the Water Street Rescue Mission, helps coordinate the flow of homeless to the city's various shelters. (cont.)

After being asked to empty their pockets for security purposes, they enter a single, large, somewhat sterile, room with cots arranged in rows.

The cots were donated by the Red Cross, Bergey reveals, and the sheets by Lancaster General.

Some lay down immediately while others help themselves to the water, hot chocolate, coffee, and Goldfish crackers the Council of Churches has provided.

Many look very tired, dirty, and disheveled, while others are surprisingly well-dressed.

“It’s an emergency shelter,” Bergey explains, “and the hope is that they can start to become self-sufficient and get their own living arrangements.”

He relates that the shelter nevertheless rarely sees fewer than 30 people a night.

“See that man over there in the corner just hanging his head? He comes here a lot and just sits there – we think he must be in pain or something,” Bergey says.

Asked what compels him to volunteer, he says, “We all have different motivations for it. My motivation is that I consider it a Christian responsibility to see how far we can go to help folks out who are less fortunate than us.”

One resident of the shelter whose clothing appeared very well-worn and who had a number of missing and darkened teeth related that he became homeless after losing his ID cards for his previous job. Asked what he does during the day, he said he sometimes goes to the Duke Street

Library and uses the computers there to fill out online job applications.

Another somewhat older gentleman said he has been homeless for 7-8 months after having left his job because he had a stroke and continues to suffer from complications.

“I became homeless because of drinkin’ and druggin’ and just lack of responsibility,” a third admitted.

Yet another shared that he had previously worked for a printing company for a number of years, but lost his job after a verbal dispute with his employer. Now he’s finding it difficult to obtain another job.

“I’m a seasonal employee in a warehouse right now,” he said. “I couldn’t work third shift because the shelters aren’t open during the day. Right now I only eat one meal a day,” he admitted.

While these individuals were willing to talk about their experiences, many others remained quiet and at least one seemed psychologically disturbed, sharing his thoughts on ninjas and the apocalypse.

At 9:30, just before turning the lights out, Associate Pastor Don Zechman entered the room and offered a prayer for the well-being of his homeless guests, including a reading of the Ten Commandments from the Old Testament.

Many of the residents asked to be awoken at a particular time of the morning to get up and go to work or breakfast.

Tomorrow is another day.

**Break free from the monopoly press! Visit www.NewsLanc.com daily.
Suggestions and letters welcome at info@NewsLanc.com.**