

110495 citizen comment
11/2/11
Willie Lewis

WE THE HOMELESS

Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, Police Officers, and members of the community...

My name is Willie Lewis, and I have before me a signed petition of 90 signatures from people who wish to deliver to you the following message:

~~WE ARE THE HOMELESS.~~ Homeless is not a bad word. Homeless is certainly not a good word. Homeless is a neutral term to describe a simple fact. The fact that we are homeless does not mean that we do not share with you the same needs, the same dreams, and the same hopes and fears. And like you, we make mistakes in our lives, and try to learn from them.

IN the last few weeks, we have been interacting with other people in this community who have come to Bo Diddley Plaza to gather and peacefully discuss various issues, chief among them, the very freedoms we often take for granted: freedom of assembly and freedom of speech, and in particular, the right to exercise these freedoms in our community plaza, which, since 1976, America's 200th birthday, has been understood to be our community's free speech gathering place.

We understand that there is a concern, that we, the homeless, might take advantage of the situation, if the plaza open through the late evening and early morning hours, and turn it into a campground or overnight sleeping area.

We, the undersigned, have made a commitment to respect the concerns of all of the people of Gainesville Florida, and abide by the consensus of our fellow citizens. And so we the homeless would like to show our support, and work together with everyone in this community. If we were dishonest people, we would be in gangs. To that end, we have chosen amongst ourselves people whom we trust who have volunteered to take turns each evening to stay awake and help keep this area a safe and welcome place for everyone, and we welcome and appreciate the help of the police officers when outsiders try to infiltrate OUR community and attempt to smear our reputation.

Please help us help you to keep Bo Diddley Plaza the place it has been understood to be through the years: a place of community, for the community, put here BY the community. A place to celebrate the freedoms that many of us have fought for, and some of us have watched their good friends give their lives for. Thank you.

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Signature	Phone #	Email
Kenneth Ben	352 575-4039	GARY WALLER
J D Scott	352 317-3903	PETER SMITH
Jane Bradley	Terrence Crippen	MIKE STRAGGUS
Debbie Hilliard	Message Sweepstakes	Wine wiser
Brian Scott		Alex. Duffy Alex Duffy
Samuel Kerney	Glenn Rapp	Wine Sandy
Jane Mason	Glenn Rapp	Shekeren Gay
Sonya Williams	Chenon Jackson	Michael Langford
Larry + + +	James Carey	Lawrence Bradley
DANIEL SMITH	Glenn Rapp	TEAR Washington
John H Roberts	N/A	William Tomson
Tamara Morton	(352) 311-1817	Charles Newell
Ashleigh Brown	N/A	Ron Rusk
Elizabeth Collins	M. Diffamy	Chad Mott
A. Russell		Michael W. Springer
Jeffrey Frontera	Richard Wilson	Christina Fulford
James Gault	Victoria Grehouse	Christina Fulford
Sharon Royal	Jim Reed	Termaine Climpson
Larry Lorette	Ed Gauthier	Steve Lupton
Arthur W. K.	Keith A. Mardenis	Patrick Brennan
James D. Sent	August Ben Ker	Samantha Ryan
RON ADAMS	Charmy G. G.	Sanjivan
Brian Archer	Max Cobb	Rachael Jack Sch
Felicia Hall	Felicia-Hall live.com	William J Wagner
Garth A. Joseph	Garth JOSEPH	William J Wagner
James Bryant	Debbie Sanner	Arthur E. Clarke
Willie R	Myrl Huffman	otis William
Jim Bahr		Mary Jacobs
Diamond McCain	352-575-5679	Will May
		Jeff Douglas


