

## **“TAKIN IT TO THE STREETS” GOLD DOME ARTICLE 2012**

### **THE SHREVEPORT TIMES**

Article Title:

Charity groups take to the streets of Shreveport

Written by Michael Doughty

Thousands flocked to Centenary College’s Gold Dome to enjoy free food, clothing and other essentials many poor households often do without.

“Takin’ it to the Streets” is a charity event that brings faith-based nonprofits together to provide resources to residents in need.

“We want to be a blessing to over 3,000 people,” said Pastor Ron Hampton, who organized the annual event.

Hampton lived and ministered in Shreveport until he relocated to Washington, D.C., where he is the executive pastor of Urban Outreach for the New Vision Community Church, but that doesn’t stop Hampton from helping out back home.

He said he hopes to provide groceries, toiletries and clothing to community members in need.

“We’re a holistic ministry that deals with all aspects of life,” Hampton said. “We want them to have some fun while we deal with the mind, body and soul.”

Dozens of charity organizations set up booths inside Centenary’s Gold Dome arena. Among the free services they provided were health screenings and information, addiction recovery resources, entertainment and manicures.

Hampton said the Gold Dome is an excellent venue and provides much-needed relief from the heat, but it isn’t the only location used by the program.

“We always use the Gold Dome in the summer. This is the fourth time we’ve had it here,” he said. “During the spring and fall, we have the event at some of the churches.”

Some residents came out to enjoy free food provided by Earnests of Shreveport and Frontline Catering, while others visited for the charity groups.

“Anytime you can express the love of Christ, it’s worth doing,” said Leonard Koglin, who operates the not-for-profit Frontline Catering, along with Randy Spillers.

“I’m here for the food and fellowship,” said Beverly Paige, a member of Hampton’s former church.

“I like the program, I like what it stands for. I like the philosophy behind it,” Paige said. “It brings people together of diverse backgrounds to come out and enjoy fellowship in a Christian way.”

Paige said Hampton’s vision was something she would like to see other Christian community leaders mimic.

“They need to mark this on their calendar and participate,” Paige said.

Groups like Celebrate Recovery, the Shreveport-Bossier Rescue Mission and Serve Our Savior provided literature and opportunities for face-to-face communication with residents.

While musical guests such as White Chocolate entertained the crowds, children played in a designated Kid Zone complete with bounce castles and a balloon animal producing clown.

“It was really nice, the bands were good, and they are doing manicures and pedicures for woman and that’s just wonderful,” said Olivia Green, a local resident enjoying the festivities.

Green was particularly pleased to see Celebrate Recovery at the event.

“It’s good for the community, a lot of people need to get off drugs,” she said. “When people are coming out of jail, they may not have clothes or a place to stay and it’s a big help for people to go there.”