

Subject: Re: [Fwd: Woodward's Squat eviction notice]  
Date: Wed, 30 Oct 2002 17:38:40 -0800  
From: "Susan S. Lindenberger" <slindenb@telus.net>  
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John

Heard on the news tonight that the eviction notice is expected to be enforced next week, not today, which buys some time.

I was invited to attend the squatters meeting yesterday, 40 people standing or sitting around in a circle on the sidewalk. High tension - battle fatigue, competing groups, people sick and tired (in literal & figurative senses) trying to run a democratic meeting: a facilitator (who quit shortly after meeting started) - a speakers list and some semblance of order. Concern that Mondays Van Sun stories may have misinterpreted the posture and goals of the Anti Poverty Committee, others that the APC radicalizes the posture and goals of the "real" squatters - reiteration from the latter that they are and intend to be non-violent, that their goal is homes for the homeless, not temporary shelters in inclement weather.

One chap who recently has found a cheap hotel room but has returned daily to cook at the squat, broke into tears at the conflict and blaming, and when I put my arms around him just sobbed his heart out. He said there was no food except bread and a few apples - so we went out and bought another \$222 worth of food supplies - he's never cooked for crowds before and is cooking for some 150-200 persons, and man, could he shop! Hamburger and cabbage soup for last night. I washed dishes for a while and am recognized by a number of the squatters as "OK" and was even allowed to speak at the meeting.

Donations to date are about \$1600. and one check came from Ontario.

We are being asked to provide "support and witness" - "regular folks who will just come and see, listen, and show they care in whatever way they can, but particularly to be on hand when the eviction is eventually enforced.

There are creative solutions being sought for what to do when the squat is "cleared," but I'm not at liberty to divulge them. I just hope that cooler heads prevail and solutions can be found, as freezing weather has set in.

This report is being made from Vernon, where I am trying to get my head into 2 meetings about this spring's general meeting of conference, a presbytery meeting, and a sermon for Sunday which will uplift and inspire folks!

Look forward to seeing what you and The Observer make of this.

Susan