

# Letters to the editor: Homeless people and election

Editors,  
 I read Lydia Bashaw's article on "Homeless find refuge at Clackamas." I find it very discomfoting that we have homeless people living in the same area that students and staff walk or jog through. In my opinion, we should have been notified about this sooner!  
 Don't blame them for wanting to stay here, but our campus isn't a hotel. As a community, it's our job to set up some kind of safe house for them; it would keep them off the streets and our campus safe.

Kelly Grahn  
 student

Editors:  
 I am responding to the article "Homeless find refuge at Clackamas," from the May 13, 2009, edition of *The Clackamas Print*.

Until reading this article, I had never questioned the safety of this campus. Don't get me wrong, I am sensitive towards the homeless and on one hand am glad that some have found safety here. However, it is common knowledge that homelessness is often a result of drug use and other crime. This worries me. As much as I'd like to have complete faith in humanity, I have to question what might be stopping these students from harming myself or another student for a little money or food? I'm sure hunger could drive someone to desperation, so in my opinion the homeless should not be given much trust.

However, I certainly hope that there is something that CCC can do to help these people. Perhaps donating food that is slightly past the sell-by date or unclaimed lost clothing? Maybe if we take care of them, the issue of possible violence or crime can be handled before it begins.

Mami Forquer  
 student

Editors:  
 I am responding to "ASG elections show low student involvement at Clackamas," by John Hurlburt. I was interested on how small the turnout for the ASG election. No one candidate received more than 55 votes. I think this might be a big deal, but to me it is not. I have voted for both Alyssa and Bailee personally. Both of them spend more time at CCC than any student taking 24 credits, or any instructor teaching five classes a day. They do an excellent job as president and vice president.

Michelle Belmont  
 student

Editors,  
 I am responding to the May 13 article about "the homeless" on campus. I think that it is wrong for us to take away the identity of those individuals who are without homes by turning them into an impersonal "thing;" we group them as "the homeless" instead of recognizing that they are unique individuals who are without homes. Who knows? Under different circumstances, it could be you, me or your little cousin who is searching for a meal, or a place to lay their heads. With the current economy, many people are turned onto the streets not as drug users or criminals.

I think it is sad that these people are without homes and are forced to use our campus. If you're worried to give them money because you think they will use it to buy drugs or alcohol, then give them a bag of groceries! If you can't afford to do that, you can at least bare minimum, provide a kind smile.

Christifer Rodrigues, student

Editors: In response to "Homeless" May 13, 2009.  
 I personally have never seen homeless people on the CCC campus, but of course that doesn't mean they don't exist.

Though living on a public campus may give a small amount of comfort to these people, I believe they should be allowed to stay conditionally.

To the average person, many "homeless" people push themselves into the public eye through begging on highways all day. If they can stand that long, they should be able to get some sort of job.

I understand that some people have no choice in the matter and that some of them are disabled. I believe if a homeless person living on campus is not begging or being disruptive, they should be free to come and go as they please.

Emerald Baldwin  
 student

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**ASG elections show low student involvement at Clackamas**  
 BY JOHN HURLBURT  
 The turnout for the Associated Student Government (ASG) election was surprisingly low, with only 55 votes cast for any one candidate. The ASG is the student body's representative body, and its members are responsible for representing the student body to the campus community.

**Free-spirited family feuds**  
 A preview for the drama department's upcoming play  
 See preview page 5

**Homeless find refuge at Clackamas**  
 LYDIA BASHAW  
 A group of about 15 homeless people found refuge at Clackamas Community College (CCC) on Monday. The group, which included men, women, and children, were seen sitting on the steps of the building. Some were talking to each other, while others appeared to be resting.

**Campus' future green while still in the red**  
 MAURISA BERNARDO  
 Clackamas Community College (CCC) is planning to install solar panels on its campus. The project, which is part of the college's sustainability initiative, is expected to be completed in the next few years.

Editors:

I read your article on the Associated Student Government's election. I was one of those students who was not aware that this election had taken place. Furthermore, I do not believe I would have voted if I were aware that an election was taking place. This is mainly due to the fact that I do not know what the candidates, once elected, will do for the campus.

However, I would be willing to cast a vote and encourage others to do so if I were better informed of the benefits casting a vote would make. I encourage students who take their candidacy seriously to inform other students why they would make good leaders. This can be achieved by setting up a booth during high-student traffic times and speaking out to students. Another possibility would be for candidates to speak with teachers and ask them to get involved by handing out flyers at the end of class with informative pieces detailing why elections are important.

Maurisa Bernardo  
 student

Editors:

I write to you regarding the article dealing with the homeless at CCC in the May 13 *Print*. I feel that news stories today focus on the negative side of life. This article on the homeless is just another example.

To me homeless people on the CCC campus is a frightening aspect, due to the unpredictability of Portland's homeless population. Most homeless have reached rock bottom and will do anything to fulfill basic needs.

This doesn't mean that I don't feel pity or sadness when seeing and hearing these individual's stories. What I feel is really needed for these people is help, not an article showing the lack of humanity people have for each other. Why write an article when you could simply ask the person if they needed directions or assistance to the nearest homeless shelter?

What really hits home with the article is that you see parts of yourself in these people. This story reflects the idea of giving up, when life kicks you down just drown in self pity.

Kelly Fitzgerald  
 student

Anyone is welcome to respond to any content published in *The Clackamas Print*. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Send letters by e-mail to [chiefed@clackamas.edu](mailto:chiefed@clackamas.edu) or deliver them to Roger Rook 135. Letters may be edited for clarity and space.