HIGHLIGHTS

“Doing the Most Good”

TUCCALOOSA COUNTY COMMISSION COMMITS $50K TOWARD SALVATION ARMY SHELTER

BIRMINGHAM BUSINESS JOURNAL by Ryan Phillips
January 22, 2015
http://www.bizjournals.com/birmingham/morning_call/2015/01/tuscaloosa-county-commission-commits-50k.html

Tuscaloosa’s Salvation Army is one step closer to making its new shelter a reality. The Tuscaloosa County Commission on Wednesday agreed to give $50,000 to the city, who would in turn donate the money to the Salvation Army for the shelter project, according to a report from Fox 6. […] As we reported earlier this month, the Salvation Army has been working since the tornado to raise $5.6 million to build a new shelter, which will be built regardless of reaching the monetary goal.

AVID VOLUNTEER TAKES REINS OF SALVATION ARMY BOARD

THISWEEKNEWS by Thomas Gallick
January 21, 2015

A Lewis Center man who “fell in love” with the Salvation Army through volunteer work has been selected to lead the organization’s National Advisory Board. William J. Burke, senior vice president of marketing with Nationwide Insurance, began his three-year term as board chairman earlier this month. Burke said he began volunteering with the Salvation Army in 1996 after being asked to join a local advisory board.
[...] Online donations also poured into the Salvation Army, jumping 16 percent in November and December over those same months in 2013. That increase was fueled by a new Twitter campaign that asked donors to use the hashtag RedKettleReason to tell their followers why they gave to the Army’s year-end drive. About 66,000 people did so, more than doubling the number of mentions the Salvation Army got on social media during the holidays in the last two months of 2013. Such strong results mean “we have reason to be optimistic,” about 2015, says Ron Busroe, the Army’s development secretary. “The stock market is up, and people continue to be generous.”

SAVATION ARMY PROPOSES MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR REDEVELOPMENT TO HISTORIC BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL
NBC WVTM by Fred Davenport
January 20, 2015

The local Salvation Army announced a multi-million dollar development plan today that could be coming to north Birmingham. But first the Birmingham City Council had to approve a change in the zoning of the land where the group wants to build. The Salvation Army wants to turn Lewis Elementary School and the surrounding area into apartments, a homeless prevention center, and a church. Tuesday morning, city leaders approved a rezoning request for the school’s property so the Salvation Army could develop its $15 million project.

PALIN TO HELP FEED THOSE IN NEED AT SALVATION ARMY
NBC KSNV
January 20, 2015
http://www.mynews3.com/content/news/story/palin-salvation-army-sportsman-channel-las-vegas/Hx2Fx7vLG0OiA-cME7eIOA.cspx

Sarah Palin, former governor of Alaska and vice-presidential candidate, will visit Las Vegas on Thursday to promote the Sportsman Channel’s efforts to provide food to people in need. Palin will attend a “Hunt.Fish.Feed” event from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Las Vegas Salvation Army, 35 W. Owens Ave. The Sportsman Channel promotes the event as a way to “provide nutritious, responsibly harvested meals to more than 25,000 less fortunate members of society.”
**Salvation Army to Give Invocation at Annual Dr. King Celebration**

**MILWAUKEE COURIER**
January 17, 2015


Major Dan Jennings, Salvation Army Divisional Commander for Wisconsin & Upper Michigan, will give the invocation at the 2015 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday Celebration. [...] Milwaukee’s Dr. King celebration is only one of two nationally that is still held on an annual basis.

**Philanthropy**

**WHAT’S NEXT FOR NONPROFITS THIS YEAR**

THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY by Drew Lindsay and Suzanne Perry
January 20, 2015


The nonprofit world begins the new year with signs of a giving surge that could break new records in 2015 and a burst of charitable spirit by Generation Z’s teenagers. At the same time, growing threats of global terrorism and data privacy, along with intensifying racial tensions and concerns about the weakening of family structure in America, are propelling nonprofits into action. To identify people, trends, and ideas that will shape the new year and spark new thinking among charities, donors, and foundations, we talked to dozens of philanthropy leaders and experts.

**THE GIVING DAYS MODEL: COLLABORATION, FEDERATION, OR UNIFICATION?**

NONPROFIT QUARTERLY by Steve Boland
January 20, 2015


Charities are always seeking a new way to increase the size of the donor base. Conventional wisdom holds that getting large numbers of donors in – even at small levels – can begin a conversation about the value a nonprofit brings to its mission. A relationship that begins with a gift can evolve into ongoing financial and community support. A newer tactic to introduce donors to charities is online collaborative giving days. (Special giving days have been around for decades; using online tools to harness the power of crowds arose just in the past several years.)
**Technology Start-Ups Don’t Hold All the Answers for ‘Broken’ Nonprofits**
The Chronicle of Philanthropy by Phil Buchanan
January 20, 2015

For the 13 years I have worked in philanthropy, I have heard again and again the same sweeping generalizations about the supposed ineffectiveness of the nonprofit sector – typically followed by a pronouncement that the answer lies in “business thinking” or acting “like a start-up.” It has become downright tiresome. And just when I think that, maybe, just maybe, the sea monster of arrogance and ignorance about nonprofits has been slain, it rises, horror-movie like, to prey again on those who don’t know better.

**Nonprofit Overhead Doesn’t Matter. Except When It Does.**
The Huffington Post by Brady Josephson
January 20, 2015
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brady-josephson/nonprofit-overhead-doesnt_b_6508830.html

There have been a few defining moments that have dramatically shaped my life (beyond the regular events like graduations, weddings, etc. – not to diminish those…) and one of them directly led to the creation of my blog, re: charity, and started my writing career. Over 4 years ago now, I heard Dan Pallotta speak at the AFP Conference in Toronto about his book Uncharitable and was so moved/inspired/pissed-off that I bailed on my afternoon sessions, wrote my first post and launched my site. I’ve continued to write about the issue of nonprofit overhead (as well as other subjects thankfully…) so when I came across a recent study in Science magazine titled “Avoiding overhead aversion in charity” I had to read it. And then write about it. So here we are.

**Trust in Non-governmental Organizations Sinks Due to Money Focus: Survey**
Reuters by Belinda Goldsmith
January 20, 2015
http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/20/us-development-ngos-idUSKBN0KT1YF20150120

Trust in non-governmental organizations has fallen in the past year amid concerns they have become too money focused, according to an annual survey on Tuesday that found global trust in major institutions at a five-year low. The 2015 Edelman Trust Barometer found the level of trust in government, NGOs, media and business in 27 countries sank in the past year as three major airline crashes, Ebola outbreak, data breaches and banking scandals hit public confidence. [...] Only the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, France, Brazil, the United States, Poland, Italy, Spain saw greater trust in NGOs last year.
...The partnership with the Center for Innovation through Data Intelligence marks Good Shepherd’s first experience with big-data analytics — a “tool” that many nonprofits are interested in but few are using, according to a new survey conducted by the Bridgespan Group in collaboration with The Chronicle. The new study identifies the types of management practices, or tools, that nonprofits are using and highlights which tools are proving most satisfactory for charities. Bridgespan, a nonprofit consulting group in Boston, intends to update the survey every two years.

A GENERATIONAL GAP: GIVING TO CHARITY
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL by Glenn Ruffenach
January 19, 2015
http://www.wsj.com/articles/a-generational-gap-giving-to-charity-1421726453

Only a few weeks ago, many Americans were rushing to help their favorite charities — even if last-minute tax deductions, rather than the holiday spirit, were the spur. As it turns out, what we give, and where we direct our dollars and goods, varies from generation to generation. That’s among the primary findings from a recent Harris Poll titled “Money? Time? Blood? What Are Americans Giving?” Overall, nine in 10 Americans (91%) have made some sort of contribution within the past two to three years.

GIVING TUESDAY TALLY SURGES TO $46-MILLION, REPORT SAYS
THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY by Eden Stiffman
January 16, 2015

Fueled by social media and online-giving campaigns, donations on the latest Giving Tuesday surged to an estimated $45.7-million, more than double the amount raised in 2012, when the event began. “Giving Tuesday has gone from a simple idea to a purpose-driven global phenomenon,” Blackbaud President Mike Gianoni said in a news release from Indiana University.
5 Hot Causes for Donors in 2015
THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY by Drew Lindsay and Suzanne Perry
January 15, 2015

[...] Donors are increasingly worried about the collapse of families in working-class neighborhoods, says Adam Meyerson, president of the Philanthropy Roundtable. They’re backing groups like First Things First, a nonprofit in Chattanooga, Tenn., that aims to reduce the rates of divorce and out-of-wedlock births to teenagers.

CAPACITY: THE PHILANTHROPY BUZZWORD FOR 2015 THAT’S MISSING
FORBES by Tom Watson
January 15, 2015

In many ways, these are changing times in U.S. philanthropy. The emphasis on data and measuring impact more closely, pushing for scale and large-scale solutions, social investing and performance metrics, crowd-funding and digital networks has created the sense that the social sector – and nonprofits along with it – has reached an inflection point that may soon fundamentally shift the way funds are raised and spent on causes and social change. Yet these trends often disguise some underlying fundamentals that aren’t changing. The big constant, of course, is the steely resistance of overall U.S. philanthropy to grow; it has remained at or just below two percent of GDP for a couple of generations.

Poverty

DOESN’T PRESIDENT OBAMA KNOW THAT $10.10 AN HOUR IS NOT ENOUGH?
The NEW YORK TIMES by Teresa Tritch
January 22, 2015
http://takingnote.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/doesnt-president-obama-know-that-10-10-an-hour-is-not-enough/

In his State of the Union address Tuesday night, President Obama called on Congress to raise the federal minimum wage, currently $7.25 an hour. But he gave no indication of how much or how soon it should go up. At best, that leaves as a starting point the Democratic proposal from the last session of Congress, which called for a raise to $10.10 an hour, phased in over two years. That’s regrettable because $10.10 sometime in the future is too low and too slow. Just to be in line with economic and historical markers, the minimum should be between $11 and $18 an hour today.
The Government Just Took A Step Toward Ending Mass Homelessness
THINKPROGRESS by Bryce Covert
January 22, 2015
http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2015/01/22/3614296/national-housing-trust-fund-homelessness/

At the end of last year, a little-noticed announcement came out of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA): it has allowed Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to contribute funds to the National Housing Trust Fund. It may sound small and unimportant. But the National Housing Trust Fund was created by Congress in 2008 to fund affordable housing projects across the country. Yet its coffers have stood empty ever since – until now.

How the Poverty Machine Keeps People Down and Out
FORBES by Erik Sherman
January 20, 2015

A popular trope is that people are at their economic wit’s end because they don’t work hard enough at jobs or education and that they waste all their money on luxuries and don’t focus on the essentials. As with many stereotypes, there may be some examples that seem to support them, although even then reality may differ from the presumptions of perception. […] All that said, people in poverty not only lack what the middle class has, let alone the wealthy, but find themselves at odds with cultural and economic systems, that, as the Bible said, are geared to give more to those who have and take from those who don’t.

Should students read Ayn Rand instead of a book about poverty?
LOS ANGELES TIMES by Michael Schaub
January 19, 2015

A parent in the wealthy Texas town of Highland Park has challenged a book about people living near the poverty line, and suggested books by Ayn Rand, Ben Carson and Karen Hesse as replacements, the Dallas Morning News reports. The challenged book, David K. Shipler’s “The Working Poor: Invisible in America,” was one of seven suspended by the Highland Park school district in September. Those suspensions were eventually reversed, but the district announced in November that students would need permission slips from parents to read “The Working Poor” and five other books.
PREVENT HOMELESSNESS? BREAK THE CYCLE OF POVERTY? IT'S NOT JUST HIS DREAM BUT HIS JOB
THE WASHINGTON POST by Robert Samuels
January 17, 2015

Sometimes, he just hopes they'll open the door. But the prospect seemed unlikely on this cloudy morning as Lamar Smith, 36, approached the brick walk-up. The lights were off, the blinds closed; no sign of anyone in this Southeast Washington home. [...] As a housing stability case manager with the city-contracted nonprofit Community of Hope, Smith connects clients with job-skills programs if they had no jobs. He'll go over budgets if they have trouble budgeting. He'll help them until they need no help at all from him or the government; a crisis fixer for Washington's poorest – if they open the door.

MITT ROMNEY'S RE-INVENTION AS ANTI-POVERTY WARRIOR
THE HUFFINGTON POST by Igor Bobic
January 17, 2015
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/17/mitt-romney-poverty-2016_n_6492894.html

With the shake of an Etch-A-Sketch, Mitt Romney reintroduced himself to the Republican Party on Friday as a man interested in running for president because of his desire to address poverty and income inequality. One only wonders why the former governor of Massachusetts neglected to focus on the growing problems the last time he held the title of GOP standard bearer.

DIAGNOSING THE MANY ROUTES TO HOMELESSNESS
WALL STREET JOURNAL by Bob Flaherty
January 16, 2015

[...] It is already below zero outside the converted machinery-rental shop that serves as Bozeman's Warming Center for the homeless. A local nonprofit, the Human Resources Development Council, opened the center a few years ago after a homeless man froze to death in a U-Haul truck. Overnight guests must leave by 7 a.m. But for tonight perhaps no cold, lonely deaths. [...] I don't ask, but with familiarity and trust bits of their history bubble up. Divorce, lost jobs, disappearing husbands or wives, alcohol, drugs, mental illness. These homeless are often different from the homeless you read about in the New Yorker or hear about on NPR. Certainly, many have hit hard times, but just as many prefer to live off the grid. They want most of all to be left alone.
More than Half of American Public Schoolchildren Now Live in Poverty: Study
THE HUFFINGTON POST by Rebecca Klein
January 16, 2015
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/16/southern-education-foundation-children-poverty_n_6489970.html

For the first time, more than half of U.S. public school students live in low-income households, according to a new analysis from the Southern Education Foundation. Overall, 51 percent of U.S. schoolchildren came from low-income households in 2013, according to the foundation, which analyzed data from the National Center for Education Statistics on students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. Eligibility for free or subsidized lunch for students from low-income households serves as a proxy for gauging poverty, says the foundation, which advocates education equity for students in the South.

Talking to Kids about Homelessness
THE HUFFINGTON POST by Betsy Brown Braun
January 14, 2015

With ever increasing numbers of homeless in our cities, it is not surprising that young children are asking questions. Whether it is someone in the street asking each car for money, someone pushing a cart overflowing with possessions or a person forlornly propped up against a building, children notice anything that is different (as do we all, frankly).

Getting Personal About Homelessness
THE HUFFINGTON POST by Anita Casalina
January 14, 2015
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/anita-cosalina/getting-personal-about-ho_b_6466790.html

As I think about cold winter weather, I always remember that there is a population of homeless people who are truly at risk when exposed to the elements. With much of the U.S. facing another round of unusually cold temperatures (even for January 1) I’d like to share some of the ways that people are finding to help. One of the most basic things groups are doing to help the homeless is giving homelessness a face -- getting personal.
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities have their own specific needs when it comes to health and medicine, according to experts. Yet LGBT people often avoid seeking medical care because they’re afraid they might face discrimination or that doctors might not understand their special health needs, said Barbara Warren, an expert on LGBT health and health policy, speaking at a discussion on LGBT health sponsored by the Thomson Reuters Pride At Work chapter in New York City on January 15.

The United States must create a more flexible immigration system if it wants to end illegal migration, former Mexican president Felipe Calderón said Wednesday in an interview with USA TODAY. Calderón, in Davos for the World Economic Forum’s annual meeting, praised President Obama’s executive order allowing Mexican immigrants who have U.S.-born children and have lived and worked in the U.S. for at least five years to stay in the country without fear of deportation. But Calderón said he fears it will be short-lived.

Anyone watching the State of the Union address Tuesday night might have felt a sense of déjà vu, as President Obama adopted a boldly progressive attitude he hadn’t taken in years -- really, since before assuming office. What is different now -- for those viewers who didn’t hit the power button after the speech -- is that many of Obama’s opponents, including his most ardent and ideological critics on the Republican right, are speaking in similar tones about inequality of income and the structure of the economy.
In State of the Union, Obama Sets an Ambitious Agenda
THE NEW YORK TIMES by Michael D. Shear and Julie Hirschfeld Davis
January 20, 2015

President Obama claimed credit on Tuesday for an improving economy and defiantly told his Republican adversaries in Congress to “turn the page” by supporting an expensive domestic agenda aimed at improving the fortunes of the middle class. Released from the political constraints of a sagging economy, overseas wars and elections, Mr. Obama declared in his sixth State of the Union address that “the shadow of crisis has passed,” and he vowed to use his final two years in office fighting for programs that had taken a back seat.

Obama Focuses on Income Inequality in State of the Union Address
NEWSWEEK
January 20, 2015
http://www.newsweek.com/obama-focus-middle-class-islamic-state-annual-address-nation-300891

President Barack Obama challenged the Republican-led Congress on Tuesday to break out of the “tired old patterns” of confrontational politics and back an effort to lift the middle class, with higher taxes on the rich and trade deals. […] Many of the proposals outlined in Obama’s address, while popular with many Americans, are unlikely to become reality, given Republican opposition and the fact that Obama will soon become a lame duck as the country turn its attention to the 2016 campaign to succeed him. But his proposals for wealth redistribution could serve to shape the political debate around the next White House election and could help former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the overwhelming favorite for the Democratic presidential nomination if she decides to run.

Obama Is ‘Not A Christian’ Because He Supports The LGBT Community, Bryan Fischer Claims
THE HUFFINGTON POST by Curtis M. Wong
January 20, 2015
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/20/obama-gay-christian-bryan-fischer-_n_6509366.html

The American Family Association’s Bryan Fischer has taken aim at President Barack Obama over lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues once again, Right Wing Watch is reporting. Fischer, whose opposition to the LGBT community is well-established, told listeners in a Jan. 16 edition of his “Focal Point” radio show, “I do not know what goes on inside Barack Obama’s heart, but I do know that he is not a sincerely devoted follower of Jesus Christ. So, in my mind, that means he’s not a Christian
NEW AG IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO END CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING
THE HILL by Malika Saada Saar
January 18, 2015

In the coming weeks, the most important criminal justice issues in the country will be front and center during the confirmation hearing of Loretta Lynch. One issue that her predecessor, former Attorney General Eric Holder, did not adequately address is the national tragedy of child sex trafficking. Repeatedly, the buyers of child sex, who are the economic engine of this horrendous industry, are let off the legal hook. Congress has an obligation to the victims of child sex trafficking to ensure that our nation’s chief law enforcement officer is fully committed to going after and prosecuting not just the pimps, but the buyers of child sex.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DOESN’T JUST HELP THE UNEMPLOYED
PBS NEWSHOUR by Simone Pathe
January 16, 2015

[…] The following summary was written by the NBER and doesn’t necessarily reflect the views of Making Sen$e. We will tell you, however, what the takeaway is: The expansion of unemployment insurance averted about 1.4 million foreclosures and $70 billion of associated costs between 2008 and 2012. And that wasn’t just good news for out-of-work recipients. Having fewer foreclosures is good for the stability of the housing market and other people’s property values.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIM HAS EMOTIONAL REUNION WITH FAMILY, 24 YEARS AFTER ABDUCTION
THE HUFFINGTON POST by Robbie Couch
January 16, 2015
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/16/chinese-trafficking-victim-reunited-father_n_6487276.html

Sun Bin was able to hug his father and sister for the first time in 24 years on Tuesday, after being torn away from his family by child traffickers in 1991. After the 28-year-old Chinese man was abducted at a vegetable market in Sichuan province, he was sold to a family on the country’s east cost thousands of miles away, CNN reported, citing Chinese state media.
The Hire More Heroes Act is misguided. There is no veterans' unemployment crisis.

THE WASHINGTON POST by Peter A. Gudmundsson
January 15, 2015


Last week, the House of Representatives unanimously approved the Hire More Heroes Act, which would exempt businesses from counting newly hired military veterans toward the 50-worker threshold at which they must provide health insurance or pay a fine under the Affordable Care Act. Although the bill calls veterans “heroes,” it treats them as victims. […] Americans may be shocked to learn that there is no veterans' unemployment crisis.

Public Policy

Obama Emphasizes Tax Plan in State of the Union

THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY by Megan O'Neil
January 20, 2015


In his sixth State of the Union address, President Obama hailed a resurgent U.S. economy while calling for an increased federal minimum wage, expanded access to child care, and the closing of tax “loopholes” as means to embolden the middle class. “Middle-class economics works,” President Obama said. “Expanding opportunity works. And these policies will continue to work as long as politics don’t get in the way.” […] President Obama’s tax proposal, which was released last week and includes raising the capital-gains tax to 28 percent from its current 23.8 percent for high-income filers, while maintaining an exemption for assets going to charities, was welcomed by some nonprofit leaders.

Nonprofits Find Much to Like in Obama Tax Plan

THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY by Alex Daniels
January 19, 2015


A higher estate tax, as envisioned in a proposal released by President Obama this weekend in advance of Tuesday’s State of the Union speech, would spur more charitable giving in the form of bequests and charitable trusts, according to some nonprofit tax experts. The estate-tax increase was included in a broad proposal to raise taxes on the most wealthy Americans and reduce the burden on poor and middle-income taxpayers. His proposal would increase fees on big banks that are highly leveraged and expand tax credits for the working poor, child care, and college tuition.
5 POLICY MOVES TO WATCH IN 2015
THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY by Drew Lindsay and Suzanne Perry
January 16, 2015

If there’s big tax reform this year, Orrin Hatch, the Utah senator and Senate Finance Committee chairman, will be at the center of questions like whether the charitable deduction should be changed. He’s also sponsoring social-impact-bond legislation.

KEY COURT VICTORY CLOSER FOR IRS OPEN-RECORDS ACTIVIST
THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY by Suzanne Perry
January 15, 2015

The open-records activist Carl Malamud has moved a step closer to winning his legal battle to give the public greater access to the wealth of information on Form 990 tax returns that nonprofits file. During a hearing in San Francisco on Wednesday, U.S. District Judge William Orrick said he tentatively planned to rule in favor of Mr. Malamud’s group, Public. Resource. Org, which filed a lawsuit to force the Internal Revenue Service to release nonprofit tax forms in a format that computers can read. That would make it easier to conduct online searches for data about organization’s finances, governance, and programs.