

Cuts for all comers at Gallup's Ho'zho Center

Written by By Bernie Dotson For the Sun
Friday, 02 February 2018 09:37



Charity haircuts, meals served to those in need

There's nothing like a home-cooked meal and a fresh haircut on a day when temperatures barely exceed 50-degrees.

At Gallup's Ho'zho Wellness Center for Personal Enhancement, about a dozen homeless folks could attest to that Jan. 27, having gobbled up beef stew and pastries, water and gotten their hair sheared by barbers and hair stylists.

The haircuts, done by a handful of local stylists, who volunteered their talents, were appended to the ecumenical ministry, "Answer God's Call Ministry on Mesa Avenue."

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Note: Ho'zho is a Navajo word describing a way of living that includes harmony, beauty, truth and balance.

The Ho'zho Wellness Center for Personal Enhancement is located at 216 W. Maloney Ave.

"I actually didn't know they were giving out haircuts," Jefferson Miles, 57, a retired firefighter, said. Miles is from Farmington and is homeless.

"I pulled over to change my jacket, but decided to get a haircut," he said." I'm very thankful for it."

There was a brief prayer before the hair-cutting began. Then, in an orderly fashion, the men and women wanting haircuts waited, shared small talk and ate — the meal provided on the dime of Kimberly Wahpepah of Gallup, herself once homeless and a volunteer organizer of the event.

"I know what it's like to be homeless, because I was once homeless," Wahpepah said. "There is no charge for anything here. I do it because I want to help people. I like getting involved in volunteer work."

Wahpepah, who drives around Gallup periodically and serves food to homeless people, said the amount of people wanting haircuts dwindled as the 3 pm hour approached. She said those who showed ranged from homeless wayfarers to couples who's fallen on hard times.

"For me it's a way of giving back" Chris Wahpepah, the husband of Kim and a barber, said. "In doing this, I'm helping somebody."

Chris Wahpepah said no style cuts were given, just basic cuts. No one was turned away for the three -hour session, the two said. Chris and Kim said the haircuts go a long way in terms of landing a job interview, grooming or simply bolstering self-confidence.

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"A haircut can change the way you think about everything," Karen Weiss of Gallup said. Weiss said she just got a trim. "You just feel different. You look different, too."

Miles, who said he considers himself, "temporarily homeless, added, "You leave here looking better and feeling better about yourself."

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For the Sun***