

# Hometown support for the homeless

Lagunans — both housed and homeless — join together to create a music recording to help the Friendship Shelter and raise awareness.

By Sarah Noone  
Coastline Pilot

Scott Hays' dream of defying the stereotypes of homeless people has turned into a hometown recording project.

Raising awareness for the homeless by rocking out to local Laguna Beach musicians was the inspiration behind "Shelter Me," a CD

from Hays, a Laguna Beach resident and the recording's executive producer.

The CD features songs that revolve around the issues of homelessness and are performed by noted, local musicians with all proceeds going to the nonprofit Friendship Shelter in Laguna Beach.

The Friendship Shelter — marking its 20th anniversary this year — specializes in a 60-day self-sufficiency program that provides 31 homeless men and women with food, clothing, shelter and support services.

Residents are expected to work, save money and develop the skills necessary to rebuild their lives.

Graduates of the program then have the opportunity to apply to the Henderson House Transitional Living apartments located in San Clemente, which can accommodate up to 25 adult residents for one year.

Hays' initial inspiration came from his friendship with street musician, David Holland, who he had met during leisurely strolls downtown. He was touched by Holland's words and passion for music.

"A homeless person is a homeless person until you meet them," Hays said. "I have been a resident of Laguna Beach for over seven years, and by walking downtown I have met street musicians like David Holland.

"I have come to know their talent and songs, and I thought, 'I have to record this.'"

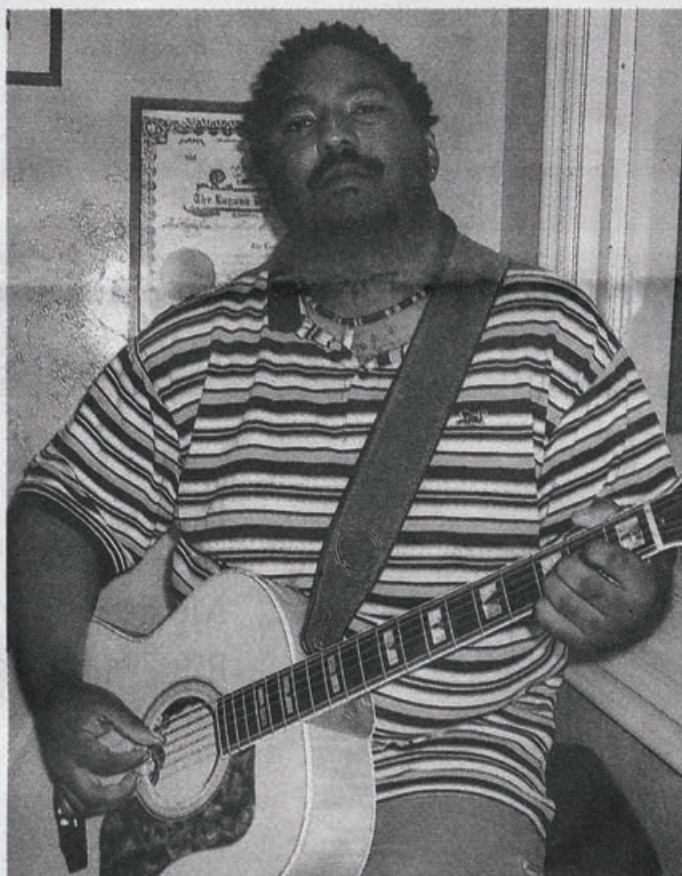
Holland, who plays guitar and sings on the streets of Laguna Beach, wrote two of the songs on "Shelter Me."

"Rebel Without a Dime" is performed by the band Missiles of October, and Jason Feddy sings and plays guitar on "Ain't it Just a Wonderful Life."

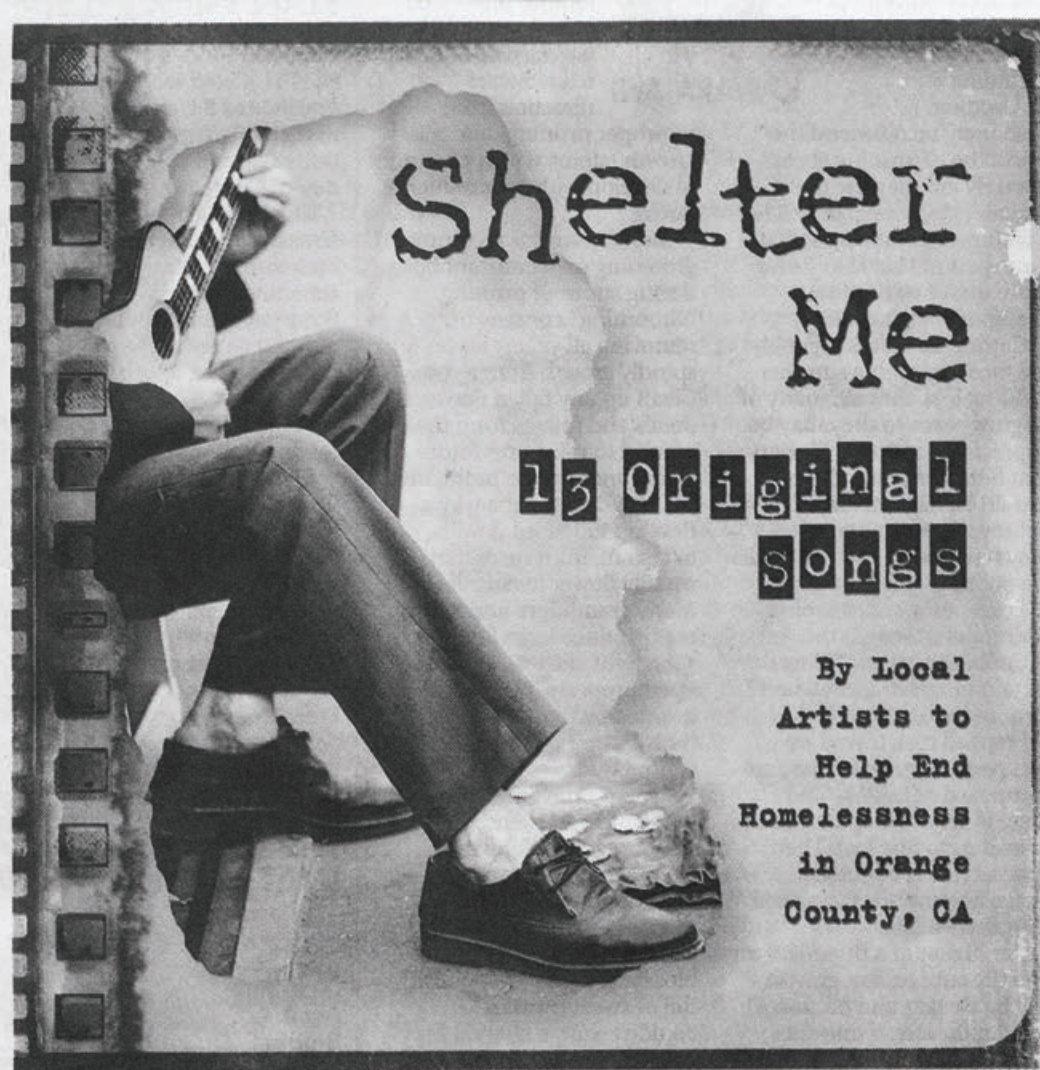
"If they just listen to the line that Holland wrote in 'Ain't it Just a Wonderful Life,' 'I've been livin' out of my car for so long, I forgot what it

(love) could be like,' then all of us involved in this project did our jobs," Hays said.

What struck Hays most about Holland and another musician, Jelani Diaz, who was homeless for a time, was their optimism. He believes that the common thread that joins these compositions into a body of work is "not



**CONTRIBUTOR:** Musician Jelani Diaz was once homeless. Diaz wrote and recorded a song for "Shelter Me."



**MUSICAL OUTREACH:** The artwork for "Shelter Me" CD.

## Shelter Me

13 Original Songs By Local Artists to Help End Homelessness in Orange County, CA

Executive Producers: Scott Hays & Bob Francis

Engineered: MZB Studios, Coyote Hills Studios • CD Package Design: Patty Roberts, PMGD

1. Rebel Without a Dime (4:40)
2. Flying a Sign (4:30)
3. Falling Home (4:00)
4. Something in His Eyes (4:05)
5. Love's Gonna Find a Way (6:55)
6. Light the Way (2:05)
7. Refuge (2:45)
8. Badge of Freedom (3:10)
9. Trust Me (5:55)
10. Kick me Down a Little Heart & Soul (3:35)
11. Beautiful You (4:05)
12. The Boys (5:30)
13. Ain't it Just a Wonderful Life (5:10)

### Shelter Me

All proceeds from the sales of this compilation CD go to Friendship Shelter. For information about Friendship Shelter contact Mark Miller 949.494-6928 or mmiller@FriendshipShelter.org. Or visit its website at [www.FriendshipShelter.org](http://www.FriendshipShelter.org)

For information about this CD contact Scott Hays at 949.306-3290 or Shays123@aol.com Or visit his website at [www.ScottHays.com](http://www.ScottHays.com)



# HOMELESS

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desperation and hopelessness, but rather grace and mercy."

Recommended for the project by a mutual friend, Hays visited Diaz for the first time at the Santa Ana Rescue Mission, which is no longer in operation. They both sat together in a storage room listening to recordings of Diaz's music until Hays decided upon the song, "Beautifully You," which Diaz wrote and recorded for the album.

In addition to the CD, a 13-minute short film with the same title made by Myles O'Grady, an Orange Coast College film student and Laguna Beach resident, documents the making of "Shelter Me."

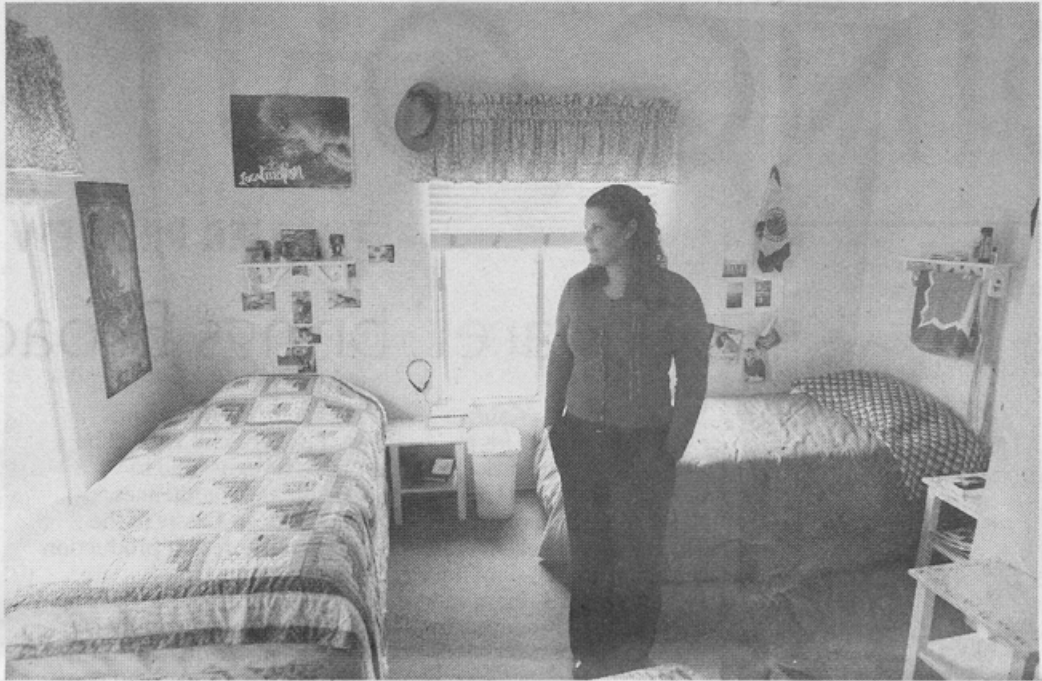
The film includes interviews with Holland and Diaz sharing their personal experience of being homeless.

In the documentary, Holland claims that if it wasn't for music he would have committed suicide long ago.

"When people ask me what's life like on the road, I tell them it's like Christmas morning every morning when I wake up, because I get to play music," Holland says in the film.

Diaz's story is quite different.

"I went to San Jose to record, and when I returned home my roommates were gone and new tenants had moved in," Diaz said. "I had no place to go, so I am grateful for the Mission helping me get back on my feet."



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**COMFORT:** Jennifer Miller stands in one of the many cozy rooms in Friendship Shelter, a place where homeless individuals can call home for 60 days as they transition their lives.

The optimism that initially touched Hays in the first place shines through in the documentary as Diaz confesses the lessons he learned from his temporary situation as a homeless man.

"Being homeless taught me lessons in humility and how to be a servant," Diaz said. "It changed the culture of my thinking completely."

Diaz also believes that all working artists are only one to two paychecks away from homelessness — since he lived with other actors and musicians during his time at the Mission.

Although the CD has received overwhelming support from individuals, in the beginning stages the

project got off to a slow start.

"After Mark Miller, programs director for the Friendship Shelter, agreed to the idea [of a benefit CD] then I started placing calls to musicians asking them for help, but things didn't get under way until the owner of the Laguna Beach restaurant, Mozambique, Ivan Spiers got on board," Hays said.

Spiers donated his studio, MZB Recording Studio in Tustin, and the cost of recording time to lay the tracks for the featured artists that also included musicians and songwriters Lisa Lofthouse of the Montage Resort & Spa, who co-wrote "Falling Down" with Shayne Fair, and Alec Bridges, who

sang vocals and played the guitar and harmonica on the song "Refuge."

On Sept. 18, a volunteer committee of long standing supporters will host the "Art of Getting Home," a fundraiser for the Friendship Shelter. The event will feature art work donated by artists, dinner and entertainment by the musicians who came together for "Shelter Me."

For more information about the Friendship Shelter or to purchase the "Shelter Me" CD online, visit [www.friendshipshelter.org](http://www.friendshipshelter.org), [www.weedpatchrecordings.com](http://www.weedpatchrecordings.com), [cdbaby.com](http://cdbaby.com) or visit Hobie Sound Spectrum or Laguna Beach Books in Laguna Beach.

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Jim McQueen

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