

## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

August 7, 2015

### Column #43



### WOMEN ON THE STREETS *Who, what, and where is Granny?* Part One

**TRYING** to estimate how many homeless women need shelter is summarized in this metaphorical Dutch couplet shared by poet Emery Campbell, who learned it from his wife Hettie:

*Almost is not half.  
A cow is not a calf.*

It means: *Facts are deceiving when you're trying to count the uncountables, like homeless Grannies who prefer to remain invisible.*

Who is Granny? She is a metaphor for any older woman.

### Overall Homelessness Falls But Homeless Grannies Rise

Since the 2015 Point-in-Time Homeless Census & Survey does not list women as a subcategory, I juggled facts to conclude that 90 percent of the 444 persons interviewed in the census follow-up surveys were over age 25, which meant 372 were adults.

An adult woman can be anyone from age 25 through 125. For census purposes, age 50 is an arbitrary line dividing the juniors from the seniors (aka Grannies).

Fifty percent of interviewees in the survey of 444 persons were female; therefore, I based my hypothesis on the possibility that half the 372 adults were women, meaning 185 were female adults, of which a yet-unknown percentage is senior women to be calculated by Kathy Whilden.

Kathy is co-founder of the Fund for Homeless Women (along with Marian Penn and Father Michael Reid), and a hostess of the monthly Friends of Homeless Women meetings at St. Mary's by the Sea Episcopal Church in Pacific Grove, 10 a.m., the last Wednesday each month.

Back in 2013, when there were 2,590 homeless persons in Monterey County, THE Fund for Homeless Women concluded there were 350 homeless women on the Monterey Peninsula. This year, overall homelessness in Monterey County was only 2,308 persons, down 282 from 2013.

However, as Kathy announced at the July 29 meeting, although this year's Homeless Census & Survey lists only 2,308 homeless persons in Monterey County, 413 women are homeless on the Monterey Peninsula, a rise of 63 women from 2013.

“This is the best guess,” Kathy said, explaining that coverage of the homeless women ranged from Marina to Big Sur, including also Carmel Valley.

I had based my conclusions on her findings, and she agreed they looked good. So, here they are:

### **Configuring Confounding Census Conclusions Concisely**

**Total unsheltered homeless** (by Jurisdiction on the Monterey Peninsula): Carmel--6; Del Rey Oaks—55; Marina—68; Monterey—306; Pacific Grove—13; Sand City—55; Seaside—152. Total—655. Plus estimated peripheral areas from Carmel Valley to Big Sur—171. Grand Total Unsheltered Homeless Persons in Greater Monterey Peninsula corridor: 826.

**Living Conditions:** Based on the surveys of 444 people, of whom 50 percent were women, 49 percent were men and 1 percent were transgender, the numbers of people, whose ages are not known, who are living unsheltered from Marina all the way to Big Sur to the south, and Carmel Valley to the east, are estimated to be: Unsheltered people living on the streets, in encampments, or in vehicles: Women: 413; Men: 405; Transgender: 8. Total: 826

Therefore, the Fund for Homeless Women bases its estimate of 413 women now living unsheltered on the greater Monterey Peninsula on figures gained both from the 2015 Point-in-Time Homeless Census & Survey and statistics gained from The Gathering Place, at which 86 homeless women were served on Tues., July 28 at the Elks Lodge in Del Rey Oaks.

Base calculations were made on the understanding that 70 percent of the homeless women were outside or in their cars and 30 percent had access to emergency or transitional living arrangements.

Figures published in the census show a total of 368 homeless people in shelters on the Monterey Peninsula, Marina leading with 230 persons, followed by Seaside with 107, and trailed by Monterey with only 31. No sheltered homeless persons were shown for Carmel, Del Rey Oaks, Pacific Grove or Sand City.

I talked with one homeless Granny, whose story appears elsewhere in this edition in my File Notes about Pooh Bear and her Papillon puppy. Her need for shelter is a wakeup call to every city that is boondoggling instead of acting on this vital issue.

The question of who is a Granny leads to the next question: What and where is a Granny? A possible solution to affordable housing for elders who may or may not be homeless will be discussed next week.

For details about the Fund for Homeless Women contact:

<https://www.facebook.com/friendsofhomelesswomen>

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