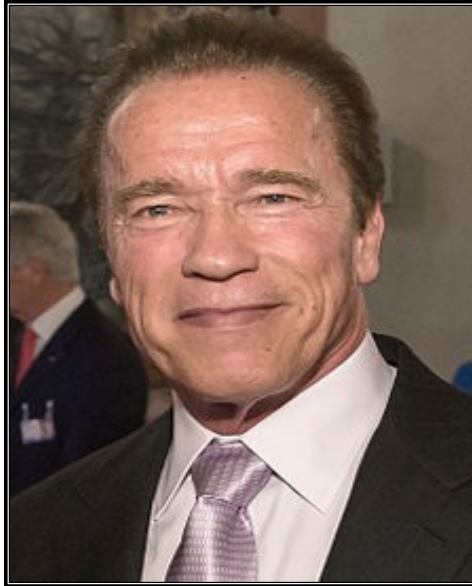


HOMELESS IN PARADISE

December 16, 2016

Column #114



SELL THE SIZZLE, NOT THE STEAK!

Part 5: The Bard says it best: All the world's a stage...

By Wanda Sue Parrott

NAMING former “Robocop” Arnold Schwarzenegger incoming star of “Celebrity Apprentice,” as NBC did earlier this week, should inspire you to run, not walk, to your next city council meeting. If you do, you’ll activate grassroots democracy pronto.

Consider this fact: Schwarzenegger, 69, succeeds Trump, 70, who currently remains the reality show’s executive producer and is poised to be inaugurated as President of the US.

One man served as 38th Governor of California, but is barred from being President because he was born in Austria. The other, a natural-born citizen. is a political newbie. So, which professional performer will be adviser to whom? Could Arnold govern America by dint of Donald?

Remember a book and popular film titled “The Mouse that Roared.” It means you and me. By dint of our small voices we collectively can sing a big song. Are you ready for us, city hall?

City Hall In A Nutshell

Whether this is your first visit, or you’re a regular councilgoer, be prepared. Around 72 hours before a meeting, copies of the agenda, and data pertinent thereto, shall be made available for public inspection by the city clerk and/or placed on the city council’s website. Study it.

The actual City Council Meeting Packet may also be read in person at city hall. The city clerk will seat you in the library, a sitting room or simply let you read at the counter.

Or, pick up an agenda near the entryway when you arrive at the meeting.

Information distributed by speakers to the council become part of the public record. If you have any photos, written data or other documents to be distributed, bring copies with you to provide for this purpose. Keep copies for yourself.

Minutes of meetings will be posted after they are approved. They contain details about proceedings.

When To Speak Up

At the start of the meeting, after the flag salute, the mayor opens the floor to public comment about items not on the agenda. They may be heard but not decided by the council. Speakers range from teachers thanking the city for after-school sports to disgruntled neighbors complaining about weeds in a park..

During the consent agenda portion, council and public members may pull items for further discussion; Otherwise, council will vote on numerous collective issues in one consent item.

In public hearing portions of the meeting, council may also vote on items under discussion and the public may speak up on everything from Neighborhood Improvement Projects to the city's invitation to join the Matching Funds Challenge.

The mayor will clarify your options for speaking, and may impose a time limit of 2 or 3 minutes per speaker.

You may speak off the cuff (without notes) or read a prepared statement.

When I attend city council meetings through early January, I'll welcome newly sworn council members and ask city councils to vote yes when they are invited to participate in the Matching Funds Challenge grant program that benefits non-profit agencies that help the homeless.

Hope to hear you speak out at city hall.

Schedule Of City Council Meetings

- Carmel by the Sea—City Hall, Council Chambers, E. side of Monte Verde between Ocean and 7th Avenues. 1st Mon. and Tues., 4:30 p.m. 831-620-2000. www.ci.carmel.ca.us .
- Del Rey Oaks—City Hall, Charlie Benson Memorial Hall, 650 Canyon Del Rey Rd., Del Rey Oaks. 4th Tues. of month, 6 p.m., or special time to be announced. 831-394-8511. www.delreyoaks.org .
- Marina—City Hall, Council Chambers, 211 Hillcrest Ave., Marina. 1st & 3rd Tues., 5:30 p.m. closed; 6:30 p.m. open. 831-889-1278. www.ci.marina.ca.us .
- Monterey—City Hall, Council Chambers, 580 Pacific St., Monterey. 1st & 3rd Tues., 4 p.m. (closed), 7 p.m. (open). 831-858-3935. www.monterey.org .
- Pacific Grove—City Hall, Council Chambers, 300 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove. 1st & 3rd Wed., 6:00 p.m. 831-649-3100. www.cityofpacificgrove.org .
- Sand City—City Hall, 1 Sylvan Park, Sand City. 1st & 3rd Tues., 5:30 p.m. 831-391-3054. www.sandcity.org .
- Seaside—City Hall, Council Chambers, 440 Harcourt Ave., Seaside. 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7 p.m. 831-899-6700. www.ci.seaside.ca.us .

Exchanging Sizzle For The Meat

The sizzle's been sold. Now comes the steak.

Is America becoming a New York production of song and dance routines with no hit musical score? Or will we soar to heights that surmount Broadway and brouhaha?

As we head toward Jan. 20, remember that P. T. Barnum called his circus “The Greatest Show on Earth” and you know this old cliché: There’s no business like show business!

The Bard said it best: “All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players.”

Welcome to the new democracy’s grassroots cast.

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