

HOMELESS IN PARADISE

January 13, 2017

Column #118

Part 2 – Hasta la Vista!



MERYL TELLS AMERICA: “TAKE YOUR BROKEN HEART... MAKE IT INTO ART.”

By Wanda Sue Parrott

MEETING the press was standard presidential practice until this election year. If Twitter-tweets knocked presidential protocol bassackward, they evoked untitled pokes like this:

Don't tear out your hair
And don't you dare despair.
Fear not prez-elect
Who beats press' intellect.
You give yourself a rope
With which some people hope
You'll light yourself a smoke,
Or hang yourself. No joke!
~Pharaoh Phart Ankh Amun, Monterey

Or, as actress Meryl Streep advised with brillioquence (brilliant+eloquence) at last Sunday's Golden Globes Awards: “Take your broken heart. . . make it into art,” remembering Carrie Fisher. (Photo above: President Barack Obama gave Streep the Presidential Medal of Freedom Award in Nov. 2016.)

Take Your Broken Heart. . . Make It Into Art

We strive for literary artistry in columns about homelessness on our peninsula. You know the old axiom: “An artist is not an artist until he or she can see beauty in ugliness.”

Well, homelessness isn't pretty. Does it take a genius to recognize homelessness as the 21st century's equivalent of historical population-decimating plagues? We're on that path!

Presidential I.Q.S, Smarts And Hand- Writing Analyses

How have American presidents performed in the race to beat homelessness?

Experts conjecture that George Washington had a “high average” Intelligence Quotient of 118 back in 1789 when he was inaugurated, which means he was no genius. Mean average I.Q. ratings widely accepted today are:

19 – 79: disabled
80-89: low normal
90-109: average
110-119: high average
120-144: exceptional
145 and above: genius

Did George Washington foresee that by 1989, homelessness would blanket the country? No. But Benjamin Franklin (I.Q. est. 160) did. He forecast greed would destroy the dream of democracy in 200 years, meaning by the end of Ronald Reagan’s presidency.

By 1993, when Bill Clinton was inaugurated, mothers with school-age children were panhandling at supermarkets, banks, and restaurants, and sleeping bags full of men with wine breath blocked library doors. Families became car dwellers.

How Did The Presidents Cope?

William Jefferson “Bill” Clinton (Democrat)—42nd President. Inaugurated Jan. 20, 1993.

Signature: Anna Koren, Graphologist, reveals Clinton didn’t see himself as upper class. He needed to belong, to touch and be touched, and “he saw the entire nation as his family.”

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature, "Bill Clinton", enclosed in a rectangular border. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.


According to 1990 Census Bureau statistics, nationwide there were 49,793 homeless people on the streets and 178,828 in emergency shelters. Estimates were that those living with relatives or friends doubled or tripled the actual number.

During his campaign, Clinton said he would host a national meeting to discuss public housing and the homeless. He proposed housing the homeless at abandoned military bases and transferring 10 percent of government-controlled housing to churches and community non-profit organizations. He also promised to develop strategies for those needing drug and alcohol treatment and emphasized the need to house homeless families.

What happened? George W. Bush inherited the problem! George W. Bush, Jr., (Republican)—43rd President. Inaugurated Jan. 20, 2001.

Signature: Sheila Lowe, author of “Handwriting of the Famous and Infamous,” writes:

“The excessively large capitals in his signature reveal a ‘larger-than-life’ self-image. . . While he sees himself as a star, the body of writing shows both weak and strong energies and fluctuations in goal-directedness.”

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature, "George W. Bush", enclosed in a rectangular border. The signature is written in a cursive style with large, prominent capital letters.

In 2002, Bush appointed homeless policy czar, Philip Mangano, who activated “housing first,” an idea pioneered by New York University psychiatrist Sam Tsemberis that urges authorities to move the hardest homeless cases into housing immediately, then tackle their other problems.

Housing First Here At Home

“Housing first” was extended by Obama. Now, local agencies use it as a motto. They include the Fund for Homeless Women, a field-of-interest fund of the Community Foundation of Monterey County, whose recipients of 2017 grants amounting to \$228,000 were announced in December.

One-Year Grants: Community Homeless Solutions, \$40,000; Community Human Services, \$3,000; Interim, Inc. (McHome Outreach), \$10,000; Outreach, Unlimited (I-HELP for Women), \$25,000; Pass the Word Ministry, Inc. (One Starfish Safe Parking), \$25,000.

Two-Year Grants: (Additional funding for year 2018 is configured into the 2-year-grant recipients.) Gathering for Women, \$85,000; Housing Resource Center of Monterey County, \$140,000.

For details, attend Friends of Homeless Women, Wed., Jan. 18, 10 a.m., St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, Pacific Grove, and/ or Homeless Outreach, Mon., Jan. 23, 1 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, Monterey.

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