

HOMELESS IN PARADISE

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Hear Our Voice - Part 5



*Cindy Storrs, Gathering for Women, accepts check from
Kathy Whilden and Michael Reid,
co-founders of the Fund for Homeless Women.*

WOMEN IN RED WILL REVEAL WHO'S "THE BOSS"

By Wanda Sue Parrott

DRESSING in red and taking the day off is the latest Action supported by the Women's March on Washington to celebrate International Women's Day, Wed., March 8.

If President Donald J. Trump dismissed the January 21 Pink Pussyhat revolution as insignificant, whoa!

As my dad might say, "Hold your horses, son, because this race is speeding up, starting with two S-words!"

The first S-word is "Strike," an act to impact the socio-economy by impeding consumer spending.

Women—both homeless and sheltered—will strike on Wed., March 8. En masse, the ladies will prove to Washington which sex is really in power.

"A Day Without A Woman" Strike

If you're female and want to participate, it's this easy:

- DO: Wear something red, either a whole outfit or accessories, then go somewhere others see you and flash your flair!
- DO: Treat yourself to a day for relaxation. DO NOT report for work, if you are paid, or volunteer to perform tasks, if you are unpaid (unless someone's life or health depends on it).

- DO something special, like go on a picnic, read a book, attend a free concert, browse garage sales, or stroll around town and befriend every cat and dog you meet. .
- DO spend what you can afford on contributions to local organizations that help homeless and less-fortunate men and women, and/or shop at businesses owned by women or minorities.
- DO NOT spend money at mega-corporation chain shops, gas stations, department stores or other big businesses operations if you can get by without them.
- DO NOT forget the point you are making: The Power of Pulchritude shows the men who run the economy that women control it by managing the purse strings of the masses.

Why strike? As author/educator bell hooks, Ph.D., said in her keynote address to the Third International Women's Convocation hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Association at Asilomar from Feb. 16-19:

“. . . if we really want to undo imperialist, white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy—we have to study. We have to learn. We have to utilize new forms of knowledge and allow those forms of knowledge to change us.”

Change Through Sanctuary Cities And Churches

The second S-word is Sanctuary,” a condition or space affecting the well-being of those who seek it.

From New York to Los Angeles and San Francisco, “Sanctuary City” is a hash tag meaning a place providing safety and shelter to those in danger.

Currently, sanctuaries represent safe havens to immigrants who fear deportation, potential victims of religious hate crimes, and those at risk of persecution from sexual, racial and gender-based prejudice and violence.

Programs like Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program (I-HELP) for Men and Women, and One Starfish Safe Parking Program for Women are also sanctuaries.

At its Feb. 16 meeting, Seaside city council slated a study session for March 2, with public input and council discussion of possible local and federal impacts if Seaside should become a Sanctuary City; the item will be agendized at the March 16 Seaside City Council meeting.

“Sanctuary Churches” are also emerging as refuges. Four Unitarian Universalist churches in Southern California have already committed to being sanctuary churches, and other UU congregations around the state are contemplating joining them.

Hot Haps Around Town

At its Feb. 28 meeting, Monterey Planning Commission recommended City Council amend City Code Section 38-11 Definitions:

“Add Article 16B to create a new Emergency Shelter Overlay Zoning District to permit emergency shelters meeting specific operational and management requirements by right; and apply the Overlay Zone to all properties designated for Commercial and Industrial uses.”

If council adopts the recommendation, several sites, rather than just one, can be designated for future emergency shelter(s) location(s) rather than the formerly proposed one area.

No actual emergency shelter is planned.

Great news for homeless women: Gathering for Women, recipient of generous 2016 grants from Monterey County Gives and the Fund for Homeless Women (see photo), opened its Service Center at 187 Eldorado St., Monterey on Wed., March 1 to provide resources, clothing, personal care items, and limited emergency assistance on Mon., Wed. and Fri., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The site will serve as interim quarters until GFW purchases its own commercial building in Monterey. Anyone with a 5,000 minimum sq. ft. structure for sale should contact Leslie Fry Sonn , 831-277-3638, lesliefsonne@gmail.com.

Finally, the All Women's Ball benefitting Community Human Services' Safe Place Program for Runaways and Homeless Youth, is coming on March 10. Mark your calendar and wear something red. For details, contact lsanchez@chservices.org.

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