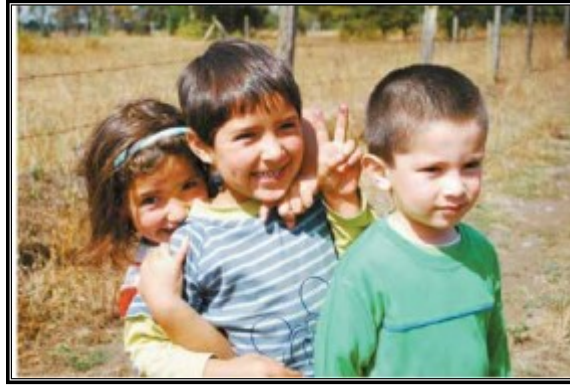


HOMELESS IN PARADISE

April 28, 2017

Column #133

Hear Our Voice! - Part 13



WHERE HAVE ALL THE HOMELESS CHILDREN GONE?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

CONTINUING last week's seventh Pink Pussyhat Action column, "Getting children in resistance to Trump's bullyhoo," I ask: "If kids are homeless, how can they be recruited?"

Inner Buddha says: "Find them first."

"Okay, so where do I start?"

"Begin where grass roots grow. Where would homeless children be welcome and most likely found?"

I imagine an illegal immigrant, and a real estate agent, wondering: "What signs indicate places that offer impermanent housing?"

Answer: sanctuary streets and short-term rental rows because both are in single-family-residential neighborhoods that provide temporary sleeping quarters.

Sanctuary Streets Versus Short-Term Rental Rows

An online search for Seaside reveals few short-term rentals in a city rife with unadvertised sanctuary streets.

In Monterey and Pacific Grove, short-term rentals abound to the exclusion of sanctuary streets.

Children in sanctuary settings are likely to attend the same schools even if their addresses change, but kids in short-term-rentals usually live elsewhere in permanent homes.

Parking may be on the premises but is usually greatest at curbside.

In Seaside, Monterey and Pacific Grove, disgruntled residents often complain to City Council, "I walk halfway across town to get home because there's no place to park!"

However, Seaside residents do not complain like Montereyans or Pagrovians, "People party and make noise all night. I don't like it!"

In Seaside's uncounted Hispanic and Latino community, fear of Trump's threat of deportation prevails, so streets where musical family-style fiestas with colorful piñatas were a loud-and-lively way of life are now graveyard still.

The rare sight of children in Seaside includes a half dozen boys skateboarding at the Salvation Army at dusk. Kids who once walked home are now whisked away by frightened parents when they get off the school bus.

In Seaside, vehicles park in and across private driveways of houses in which doubled-up families sleep on mattresses shared in shifts to fit their work schedules.

Because of the transient nature of "doubling up" in sanctuary homes, the generic family term "Oaxaca" is used to describe their place of origin in Mexico, whether true or not, if asked, "*De dónde es usted?*"

The Cars Kids' Parents Drive

Kinds of vehicles broadcast neighborhood types.

Seaside's streets are lined with trucks, vans, SUVs and other rented or leased late-model heavy-duty vehicles capable of hosting a family.

How much revenue such dealer-owned transportation generates is unknown.

Vacationers staying in short-term rentals might also be driving late-model vehicles, more likely high-end luxury cars or old autos they've restored. They sleep in beds with fluffed pillows and bedspreads, not on bare mattresses lined up on floors of host houses.

Where Are The Hard-To-Capture Homeless Children?

Some pre-schoolers enjoy safe sanctuary among loving caregivers at The Salvation Army campus in Seaside, but the overall search for homeless children old enough to be recruited as Pink Pussyhat resistors should begin in the public schools.

Data from the 2015 Monterey County Point-in-Time Homeless Census and Surveys reveal:

"There were 117 total families with 343 individual persons experiencing homelessness in Monterey County in 2015, representing just under 15 percent of the total homeless population. The majority of these families were sheltered; only 2 families including 7 individuals were unsheltered. . . .

"There were 50 unaccompanied children living on the streets of Monterey County and 220 transition age youth (18-24) living on the streets or just under 12 percent of the total homeless population."

According to the 2009 Monterey County Point in Time Homeless Census and Survey:

". . . One interviewee explained that worry and fear keeps homeless families hidden and prevent them from accessing the services they need. She stated, '*Overall, homeless families are hiding the fact that they're homeless or a family in transition because they don't want to advertise it and they're concerned about the welfare of themselves and their children.*'"

In the 2009 Homeless Census and Survey, Monterey County's Public Schools revealed the primary nighttime residences for homeless students on the Monterey Peninsula as: Double-ups (couch surfers), 139; Shelters, 26; Hotels, 3; Unsheltered, 26.

The true estimate was higher since homeless Hispanic/Latinos aren't visible.

Current figures will be updated when the 2017 Homeless Census is released in May or June.

Pending receipt of Action Eight, as Trump's first 100 days end this weekend, this column will delve into foster care/adoption of homeless children, The series will end after all ten Actions are covered.

I'll turn recruiting juvenile protestors over to parents and teachers, and selling/renting properties to realtors, but invite you to follow Buddha's suggestion to ask yourself:

“If I were a child whose parents are terrified of being deported, would I stand up against the man who is threatening them?”

Meanwhile, check the Pink Pussycat Movement's progress at:

<http://www.womensmarch.com/webelongtogether>

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