

HOMELESS IN PARADISE

January 19, 2018

Column #171

The New Bedou - Part 6



*human kindness saves
homeless baby kangaroos
orphaned one by one*

KANGAROO FOR DINNER? JUDGING THE HUNGRY BY WHAT THEY EAT

By Wanda Sue Parrott

*new bedou search here
for oases without palms
where their body rests*

TRYING to think like a local realtor, I ponder, “What single word defines ‘disparity’ in property values in Paradise, where multi-million-dollar Pebble Beach estates co-exist with litter-strewn Lapis Road?”

Memory whispers, “Recall Tom Bratty’s property-buyer’s ABCs.”

I flash back to my 1965 failed foray into Monterey Peninsula landlordship. “The tenants in our duplex wrecked the units by trashing the yard, sawing the top off the kitchen sink in Unit A, and stealing the toilet bowl from Unit B.”

The ghost of Tom Bratty, Pacific Grove broker serving as my mentor back then, whispers, “Remember what I taught you to consider before buying or renting: location, location, location.”

“You also said ‘Assess the tenant before signing a contract.’ How does a property owner pre-judge potential buyers or renters by the content of their character rather than color of their skin?”

“You take a chance. . .”

“I did and got a minister in the rental house who left the place with a carpet of wall-to-wall guinea pig poop.”

As Tom Bratty's ghost starts to say, "Sometimes, you have to eat the loss," a familiar, orange-tinted face with a blond thatch of hair materializes, blurting something about seeking a site for a weekend golf getaway in Paradise.

Tom Bratty's memory vanishes like a burned-out light bulb.

I face the POTUS alone and try to imitate a licensed real estate agent who's selling Lapis Road north of Marina.

Imitating A Real Estate Agent:

"Do I have a deal for you," I say. "It's a one-mile strip of undeveloped county property that's perfect for a hotel with 18-hole golf course. It even has its own sand traps. . ."

"Why's it so dirt cheap?"

"It's near the county dump. . ."

"You mean a shithole site?"

"Those are your words, not mine."

"You think the S-word makes me sound racist? I'm the least racist person you'll ever interview."

"I'm not interviewing you. I'm trying to shed light on property that's a New Bedou oasis."

"A New Whatoo?"

"A place modern-day Bedouins live in their cars, campers, RVs, trucks, and tents while migrating in pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness."

"You mean like bands of Gypsies?" He answers his own question. "Nah, that's fake news."

"The New Bedou are migrants who sleep in vehicles and tents and move from one watering hole to another. . ."

"Tell me what they eat, and I'll tell you their skin color, ethnic background, skills, country of origin and religion without saying a word that could bring discrimination charges against me."

"Garbage," I say.

The president's mouth gapes like a goldfish gasping for air. "How many are there?"

"Comparables can tell us. Where shall we start?"

"Anywhere in California."

"Done!"

The Angels Stadium Oasis In Orange County

Google finds a You-Tube video filmed in spring 2017 by Steve Willette as he bicycled through the Santa Ana River trail between Anaheim and Manhattan Beach in once-pristine, conservative Orange County at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yRZbbJ9kyg>.

The homeless campsite near Angels Stadium is Lapis Road, multiplied several hundredfold, with tents and shanties along with vehicles, whole families, and dogs of all shapes and sizes beside the flood control channel.

"Is this Shit City?"

"No, it's Angels Stadium Oasis."

"Tell me more."

“According to the 2017 Point-in-Time Homeless Census & Survey, the homeless population of Orange County is estimated to be around 4,800, and there are more than 50,000 homeless in neighboring Los Angeles County.”

“Are there more places like this?”

“All over the world.”

The New Bedou Of Australia

Google finds this July 4, 2017, Huffington Post (Australia Edition) headline: “Platypi to Kangaroos: Animals made Homeless in the Floods.”

The report includes, “When Cyclone Debbie hit in April, animal-rescue organizations were busy receiving everything from egret chicks to roos.”

Among the kangaroos was the orphaned Joey (baby) in this photo with retired Pacific Grove teacher Jane Britton, who recently toured Australia where there are two kangaroos for every person and homelessness in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney has reached 100,000.

“This isn’t fake news, Mister President,” I say. “Ecologists are proposing a campaign that encourages Australians to develop a taste for their most-beloved animal. During your forthcoming State of the Union Address on Jan. 30, are you going to say America is great again, or tell the truth by asking us to start eating our most-beloved animals, our dogs and cats?”

Watch the speech to find out.

Meanwhile, the rumor of a homeless woman found dead in a wheelchair at Del Monte Center was apparently fake news.

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Photos of Jane Britton with Joey (baby kangaroo) and kangaroos in compound courtesy of Jane Britton; used for educational/illustrative purposes only; no copyright infringement intended. Contact Wanda Sue Parrott at amykitchenerfdn@hotmail.com or leave a message with The Yodel Poet at 831-899-5887. © 2018 Wanda Sue Parrott