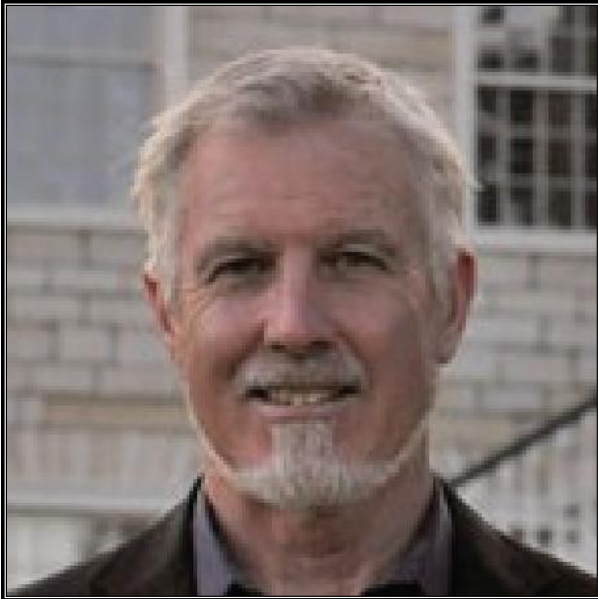


HOMELESS IN PARADISE

April 6-13, 2018

HUMPTY DUMPTY HOUSING - Part 7



Timothy Barrett
Monterey City Councilmember
is named Honorary “Monterey Miracle Worker”
Award recipient



Wanda Sue Parrott receiving 1996 Copper Kettle
Award with famed pianist Dino Kartsonakis,
at Salvation Army’s Center of Hope in Springfield,
Missouri

REKINDLING THE BELIEF THAT WITH GOOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

By Wanda Sue Parrott

DASHING through last Monday’s afternoon rush hour traffic to get my blood pressure tested before Doctors on Duty closed, I cut through La Tierra’s parking lot in Seaside.

If time hadn’t been tight, I’d have circled back for a double take at the scene by the green dumpster behind the Mexican mercado. A lopsided little body I recognized was slumped in a big office chair by a pile of black trash bags.

“I’ll check it out later,” I said.

Wrong!

On Tuesday morning I remembered glimpsing the surreal scene like something from Jesus Christ Super Star (which I watched on TV on Easter Sunday night).

“Was she dead from suicide?”

Strange thought, except this week marks the third anniversary since a guest in the granny unit of my house committed suicide from what he described as being “homeless in the heart.”

Holy Week For The Homeless

“This is Holy Week for the Homeless,” Inner Muse said.

“What?”

The internal dialogue revved up. “Easter Sunday was the first day of this week. Easter egg hunts are metaphors for questing for miracles. Passover started last Friday and is continuing. Consider the homeless woman as a Paschal Lamb.”

“Are you kidding?”

“Miracles still happen.”

“That’s what the Salvation Army says.”

“It’s true.”

“So?”

“Help people find proof.”

“How?”

“Start with a few miracle workers who rekindle the belief that with Good all things are possible.”

The voice faded after reminding me, “A miracle is a beneficent thought translated into wondrous, even divine, daily life.”

“Sounds like unconditional love.”

“Exactly!”

The Miracle Workers At Gathering For Women

I contacted Carol Greenwald, founding light behind The Gathering Place, who knows how to turn ideas into actions that work wonders. The name changed to Gathering for Women with incorporation as a 501 C-3 non-profit two years after the Tuesday morning program at San Carlos Cathedral was launched to feed, clothe, and provide assistance to unsheltered women of the Monterey Peninsula.

I attended their first luncheon back in 2014. Eighteen homeless women turned out for lasagna and salad.

Today, Gathering for Women serves as many as 80-100 homeless women every Tuesday at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 490 Aguajito Rd., Carmel, operates a day center in Monterey, and is hoping soon to serve daily lunch on its own premises.

Carol confirmed GFW’s fourth anniversary was Easter Sunday and said Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, Montage Health, is sponsoring a 2018 Community Breakfast Inaugural “Open Your Heart” fundraiser to open the doors of their day center. The event is Thursday, April 24, 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. in the Ferrantes Bayview Ballroom, Marriott Monterey Hotel, 350 Calle Principal, Monterey.

The \$35 tickets are available from www.gatheringforwomen.org/2018-community-breakfast/

Contact Jennifer Dalton, executive director, 831-241-6154.

The Miracle Workers Of The Fremont Street Mission For Elderly Women

Lois Varner, retired public health nurse, was named by California Assemblyman Mark Stone as “Woman of the Year” last month for helping homeless women of Seaside through her Monday morning Fremont Street Mission for Elderly Women at Burger King.

Lois and her partner in the ministry, Judy Peiken, are being honored as a team in the United Way Monterey County LIVE UNITED Awards, Tuesday, April 24, 5:30 p.m., Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa, 400 Cannery Row, Monterey.

For details, contact Lynda Patrick at 831-372-8026 or lyndapatrik@unitedwaymcca.org.

The Miracle Worker Of Monterey

Miracle Workers honor the divine essence of people like the woman on the swivel chair who appeared dead beside the overflowing dumpster, as if she had flopped, murmured, “Lord, take me,” and expired.

I knew only that she probably had a peaches-and-cream complexion six decades earlier. Now, her bloated sun-cracked face looked like maroon dyed saddle leather.

Our paths had crossed previously at Kentucky Fried Chicken, where she dug through trash while I ordered takeout. I tried speaking to her, but she vanished into the bushes. Her chalky white feet were bare and black.

On Tuesday morning I returned to the parking lot to see if she was still there. The dumpster was empty, the chair was across the lot behind a building, and no one living or dead was visible. No mention was made online of a dead woman like her.

The incident was reminiscent of Monterey City Councilmember Timothy Barrett’s recent Facebook post stating he’d just seen a dead homeless man clad in a thin shirt on a bus bench.

Timothy said he’d rather see the man in a shelter “in my own backyard” than on a bench in the cold.

Soon after, Timothy followed up his post by announcing the man had survived.

He’d apparently been dead--dead drunk.

And Timothy, who saw the divine aspect of the man’s being, and expressed his sincere care, earns one of two honorary Homeless in Paradise Column’s awards for “Miracle Worker of Monterey.”

The other goes to The Salvation Army.

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Contact amykitchenerfdn@hotmail.com or call 831-899-5887