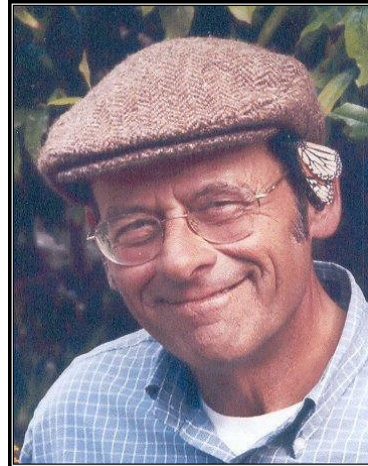


## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

April 26 – May 3, 2018

### HUMPTY DUMPTY HOUSING - Part 10



#### **HIDDEN HOMELESS CHILD LEFT BEHIND AFTER PARENTS WERE DEPORTED** **Counting the Hidden Homeless children deportation leaves behind**

**By Wanda Sue Parrott**

**DURING** World War Two, when pilots threw up in their air masks, seeds of a common remark were planted: “Life sucks!”

If you’re curious, Marine pilots were instructed “suck it up” to avoid asphyxiation from vomit fumes.

“Suck it up” now means “shut up,” “stop complaining” and “if you don’t like it, do something to change it.”

If that doesn’t interest you, this should:

#### **Embrace The Suck**

As I drove from Trader Joe’s parking lot last week, a muscular man strode before my car while National Public Radio was broadcasting, “California leads homelessness in the nation...” His tee-shirt message blocked my view: “Embrace the suck.”

“...134,000 homeless people,” the announcer continued, “or ¼ the nation’s homeless. . .”

“Wrong! Those figures suck,” I thought. “There must be more homeless people in California, if the New Bedou and Hidden Homeless are included.”

The New Bedou live in vehicles and migrate--like Mister Muscle was doing on foot.

Finally home, I Googled “Embrace the suck” and found it is popular wording on military tee-shirts.

More relevant was an e-mailed story about a Hidden Homeless kid, from Jonathan Shoemaker of Carmel, who changed his characters’ names to protect their privacy.

## Jose Manuel The Dreamer

By C. J. Shoemaker (Retired California Teacher)

“This is about a sweet kid in a class I taught in South County. He shared his story with a group of fellow students as the result of a writing assignment in which they shared their work.

\* \* \*

*Jose Manuel found a spot to sleep.*

*His home was wherever nightfall found him, sometimes in the caring home of someone who remembered his parents. At other times he simply found a fence or the back wall of a building to shelter him from the wind after working in the fields all day.*

*Tonight he strolled out into the nearby cultivated fields to rest in a hollow between the long rows of growing vegetation.*

*From there he could watch the stars march across the sky, across the valley, and disappear behind the coastal range.*

*Wrapped in his warm serape, Jose rocked his head back and forth in the soft earth to create a comfortable hollow in which to rest; in which to finally sleep after his eyes had their fill of the night skies.*

*This had been a good day.*

*He celebrated his birthday today.*

*Tia Araceli had said that he was born about seven days before Easter, so every year he celebrated his birthday a week before Easter.*

*Today he completed fifteen years.*

*He thought, ‘A man.’*

*He wondered what his father did on his fifteenth birthday. ‘Girls have big parties if their family can afford it, but a boy just becomes a man, I guess.’*

*He had always worked and earned his keep in one way or another. As long as he could remember, he had made some contribution to the household in which he was staying.*

*When Tia Araceli and Tio Tomas left for Arizona, they left him in the care of the young Mendez couple who had no children. Tia Araceli said that he was three months old when his parents were caught by the Border Patrol and sent back to Mexico.*

*After the Mendezes were blessed with two children of their own, they couldn’t afford him anymore.*

*He was six years old and big enough to earn his keep with various families in the labor camp, doing chores and looking after the younger children while their older brothers and sisters had to go off to school and the parents worked in the fields.*

*As he drifted off to sleep under the stars of his fifteenth birthday, he decided that he would start going to school in the morning.*

*The next day, Jose went to the high school that his friends attended.*

*He found out that you have to have records from a prior school in order to be admitted.*

*Someone told him to try the Continuation High School: ‘They might take you there.’”*

## True Story

Jonathan Shoemaker ended with, “The principal unofficially enrolled him in my class, where I got to know and respect him. I wrote it in 2001 but now is a crucial time for America to read it. I wonder how many others are in this category?”

“According to data from the 2015-16 school year, 246,296 students were homeless in California. . .” says the Sacramento Bee (April 17, 2018). “Nationwide, 1.3 million homeless students were enrolled in public schools in 2015-16, according to the National Center for Homeless Education” and “. . .the biggest contributors to child homelessness are high rents, low wages and a lack of affordable housing.”

<http://www.sacbee.com/news/local/homeless/article208741089.html>

Embracing the suck was Jose Manuel’s birthday gift to himself.

Anyone know stories of other Hidden Homeless children left behind?

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Photos: Possible homeless youth left behind after parents were deported, photo courtesy of Clip Art.

C. Jonathan Shoemaker, retired teacher with a Pacific Grove monarch butterfly on his ear.

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