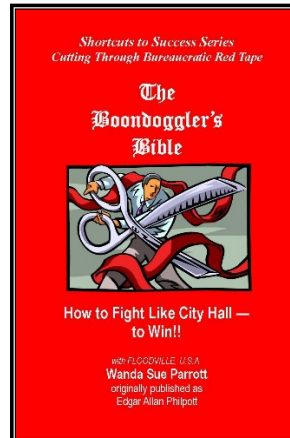


HOMELESS IN PARADISE

September 21-27, 2018

CEDAR STREET SUMMIT - Part 8



REMEMBERING RALPH RUBIO'S BIG BOONDOGGLE THAT WORKED!

by Wanda Sue Parrott

FLIPPING through old columns led to rediscovery of this headline from the March 27-April 2, 2015, edition of Cedar Street Times: Kick the Can Politics--Homelessness versus diplomacy on Seaside City Council.

“If I were empowered to give out public service honors,” the text said, “Seaside City Councilman David R. Pacheco would have won 2015 Diplomat of the Year Award at last week’s city council meeting.”

I nominated Seaside for “the hypothetical 2015 Boondogglers of the Year Award.”

Why? While homeless veterans slept outdoors like cold baked potatoes--in dirty army jackets behind tattered flags—Seaside was reluctant to commit \$35,000 to join other peninsula cities in tackling homelessness.

Although the veterans were abiding by Article 20 of the United Nations’ “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” which states “(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association”, Mayor Ralph Rubio refused to vote yes on the issue close to Dave Pacheco’s heart, and Mister Pacheco was distressed about the ragged, tattered people in parks and parking lots.

PG’s Matching Funds Challenge

More than one year earlier, Pacific Grove councilperson Rudy Fischer, now a candidate for mayor of PG, had invited every city council on the peninsula to accept PG’s matching funds challenge.

This meant \$1 per resident would be donated to a pot to be given to designated non-profit service providers helping the homeless on the Monterey Peninsula.

Monterey and Carmel joined, then Sand City, but Seaside resisted for more than a year, despite councilman Pacheco’s unfunded participation in the project’s monthly meetings.

Boondoggery On The Brain

My book, *The Boondogglers Bible—How to Fight Like City Hall to Win!!* had just come out, so boondoggery was fresh in mind as I watched local re-enactments of boondoggery I’d defined as a game government plays like it’s a sport: putting off until well past tomorrow what could be, but isn’t, accomplished today, especially where money is withheld from a party or legal entity claiming entitlement to the funds.

Such boondoggery seemed obvious when Mayor Ralph Rubio argued for keeping the \$35,000 inside city limits to be slated solely for Seaside's homeless population.

Mayor Rubio got his way, and I got a great column from observing the mayor's stubborn stance versus Dave Pacheco's near loss of temper, and diplomatic control as he said council was kicking the can down the street for too long.

That was a year before Trump's election, and eruption of bully politics that made Mayor Rubio look like a saint!

What's your opinion about Seaside's Mexican-American mayor who will soon retire after devoting most of his adult life to serving the hometown he loves with hands, heart, mind and soul?

Boondoggles Are Like Fingerprints; No Two Are The Same

A boondoggle is a stall-and-delay tactic that usually ends one of three ways for people or entities waiting for resolution.

He/she/it gives up the pursuit.

He/she/it dies and the matter ends.

He/she presses for resolution and settles by lawsuit or compromise.

How's your boondoggle history?

Have you told a caller "I'll get back to you" and then purposely not followed through? If yes, you boondoggled the caller by making him or her wait for something undelivered.

A seasoned boondoggler, like a powerful politician and/or diplomat, never says outright yes or no; instead, he/she says maybe.

A boondoggler is a person who bluffs, but never cheats. (A boondoggler who cheats becomes a criminal.)

True boondogglers can be honest people who mystify the truth instead of life.

Boondoggery Is Everywhere

Boondogglers can be professional panhandlers in sandals and shorts along curbs or at street corners who work so hard to keep from working that they're on the job all day and all night.

Conversely, a boondoggler can be a workaholic who wears a suit, tie and wing tip shoes, or a nun in a habit.

Boondoggling, like gambling, is a game to which many are addicted. It can be like a rash; if the itching stops, you're either cured, disconnected, or dead.

A boondoggle is often a scheme that started with a dream that had a theme.

Ralph Rubio's boondoggery fits this definition because the outcome of his resistance to joining the matching fund challenge was the benefit the city's homeless veterans received when \$35,000 was ultimately used toward establishing the Veterans Transition Center (VTC) where many formerly homeless Seaside veterans now live in refurbished quarters on old Fort Ord.

Calling All Veterans!

For details about the VTC, contact Phil Butler, Ph.D, former Vietnam Prisoner of War and Commander, U.S. Navy (Retired), 831-649-1336, phil@phillipbutlerphd.com.

Phil is president of Veterans for Peace, Chapter 46, mission statement of which is: “Exposing the true cost of war and militarism.”

Address is: Monterey Peace and Justice Center, 1364 Fremont Blvd., Seaside, Ca 93955.

The 2018 Homeless Veterans Stand Down is coming from Friday, September 28 through Sunday, September 30, 2018 at its new location, the Monterey County Fairgrounds, 2004 Fairground Rd., Monterey, CA.

As was the case at prior stand downs in the heavy equipment area at the former Fort Ord, the event that might not have happened if Mayor Ralph Rubio hadn't hung onto his dream and stood his ground will include benefits a veteran boondogger might not have dreamed of, including: clothing issue, meals, event housing, counseling, legal services and health/dental services.

Also, VA claims assistance, military records and documents review, discharge upgrades, employment referrals and even veterinary service for animal companions.

Add in music, entertainment and much, much more.

Contact www.VTCMonterey.org, www.MontereyStandDown.org; or call Marlene at 831-883-8387, Ext. 238.

As I reviewed the column that gave Seaside the hypothetical Boondogger of the Year Award in 2015, Ralph Rubio re-emerged as neither powerful city father nor bullylike boondogger.

Instead, he appeared in the image of the savior a formerly homeless veteran I call Sparky, who is now sober, clean, and housed, described as “a humble carpenter, like another beloved public servant who was born in a manger two thousand years ago.”

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Photos: Ralph Rubio, Mayor of Seaside, Courtesy City of Seaside

Book--Income from book sales supports this column.

\$20 from Wanda Sue Parrott, P. O. Box 1821, Monterey, CA 93942.

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