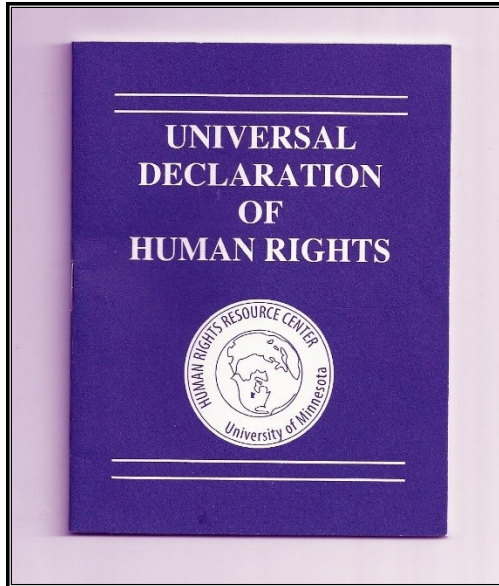


## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

October 19-25, 2018

### CEDAR STREET SUMMIT - Part 12



### WILL MEDIA HONOR SURVIVE TODAY'S "FAKE NEWS" & HORSE-PUCKEY?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

**DURING** the past week, a local trial in the court of public opinion escalated.

If you wonder what kind of "trial" it was, think of the national poohbah who, last week, tweeted about the blonde porn star who sued him by calling her "Horseface;" her insulting sexual retort was calling him "Tiny."

Tacky!

And dangerous.

The public, eager to slurp sleaze like it's a melting hot fudge sundae, forms judgments based on hearsay, half-truth and pure horse-puckey, and claptrap detracts from major issues.

Example: The honorable National Public Radio (NPR) reported on October 15 that refugees from Guatemala and other countries continue to arrive daily at our southern border. Most don't make it into the US. A few do. Some end up in Monterey County.

For example, I've often witnessed a van drive up an alley in Seaside, with at least one adult and small child being deposited. They're illegals, easily identified because they speak no English, and their worldly goods are contained in a small bedroll or bag.

They're left in the dark until a gate opens, and they vanish for the night into a system I call the 21st-century version of the 19th-century "Underground Railway" that helped escaped slaves reach the north.

These people are virtually IOBY, meaning "In Our Back Yards." Next day, they move on. To where?

The peninsula's housing crisis is real; it affects everyone living on the Monterey Peninsula. We need to band together to solve the crisis, yet we seem to prefer to be sidetracked by gossip and innuendo.

## **Claptrap Can Be Cruel**

For instance, a man identified as Darryl Choates accused social-justice activist Karen Araujo at the October 4, 2018, Seaside City Council meeting of deliberately tripping him.

Choates threatened to file criminal charges against Araujo, whom he erroneously called “campaign manager” for Seaside mayoral candidate Kayla Jones.

The encounter was partially taped by KSBW-TV; both Choates and Araujo were cast in enough unfavorable light to inspire Mary Duan to write in her Monterey County Weekly column “Local Spin” (Oct. 11):

“. . .Choates spoke during public comment and, along with a few other speakers, called on Jones to resign. As he was making his way back to his seat, he crossed paths with Karen Araujo of Salinas, who is vice chair of the Monterey County Democratic Central Committee. She was walking up to speak and as they passed, their feet connected.”

The whole fascinating feature, entitled “An encounter at a Seaside Council meeting leads to a criminal complaint” can be read at [http://www.montereycountyweekly.com/opinion/local\\_spin/](http://www.montereycountyweekly.com/opinion/local_spin/)

If clicking the link won’t work, copying and pasting it in your search bar should bring it up on your screen.

## **So What?**

Since this Summit Series explores the United Nations’ 1948 “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” it looks for local cases that exemplify the various articles designed to protect humanitarian rights.

An example is Araujo, a highly respected social activist, who was personally overwhelmed and publicly embarrassed by the incident at Seaside city council’s meeting.

I apologized to Araujo for my errors in initial coverage of her unfortunate encounter, and trust KSBW to do the same through public disclosure of true facts.

It’s the honorable thing to do, and it proves Article 10 is still effective and functioning in this age of “fake news” and twitter patter.

## **Article 10, The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights**

“Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his/her rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him/her.”

Since KSBW had not, to my knowledge, aired follow-up clarification of the Choates-Araujo incident by press time last Tuesday, I interviewed Karen Araujo by email:

Q. Why were you at the Seaside city council meeting on Oct. 4, 2018?

A. To hear the Indigenous Peoples Day proclamation that Kayla wrote.

Q. What happened?

A. I moved toward the steps to go to speak after hearing the last person. I intended to thank the City for the progressive policy on covering childcare in response to the previous speaker, who was disparaging it. I stopped when I saw someone else was stepping down there ahead of me.

Q. Then what?

A. Our feet collided as we passed one another.

Q. In the TV excerpt, you had a shocked look on your face. Did anything happen to cause it?

A. Yes. He said quietly as we passed something like “Oh, all right, okay, nice”—like sarcastically. Then a moment later, louder, “You tripped me. She tripped me!” And he called for the police officer to come over.

Q. Then what happened?

A. I followed the directions of the officer for us to go outside to talk about it. When he went to sit down, I was saying, “Isn’t he coming, too? and “Aren’t we all three going to talk?”... “He should come out with us.” Something like that.

Q. What do you think will come from this?

A. No idea. He said he wants to file charges for assault.

Q. Will you get a lawyer?

A. I don’t know how all that works. I’ve never been accused of a crime nor filed charges on anyone else. It’s uncharted territory. I have no money for an attorney, nor a credit card. I have to wait and see.

While we wait to hear what KSBW might say, I suggest: Don’t be too quick to judge anyone who’s tried in the court of public opinion via tweets like #45 issues from Washington.

Instead, support a worthy cause in your own backyard.

An example is Watsonville-based COPA, whose approach to getting things done is by working together.

### **COPA’s Convention**

On September 30, the Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action (COPA) celebrated its 15th anniversary at a convention in Salinas.

Nearly 1000 advocates from COPA’S 28 member churches and labor unions, and Supervisors John Leopold and Zack Friend, Santa Cruz, and Jane Parker, Monterey, as well as U.S Representative Jimmy Panetta, turned out to support Affordable Housing, Mental Health & Addiction, Healthcare for the Undocumented, and Immigration.

It should have been--but wasn’t-- major news, so you’re reading about it here!

Want to know more? Contact [info@copa-iaf.org](mailto:info@copa-iaf.org), [copa.nationbuilder.com](http://copa.nationbuilder.com), 831-728-3210.

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Photo: UN Declaration of Human Rights, Courtesy of University of Minnesota

Human Rights Resource Center

[www.hrusa.org](http://www.hrusa.org), [www.humanrightslibrary.org](http://www.humanrightslibrary.org)

An untitled earlier version of this column appeared in Cedar Street Times, Pacific Grove's Hometown Newspaper on page 20.

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