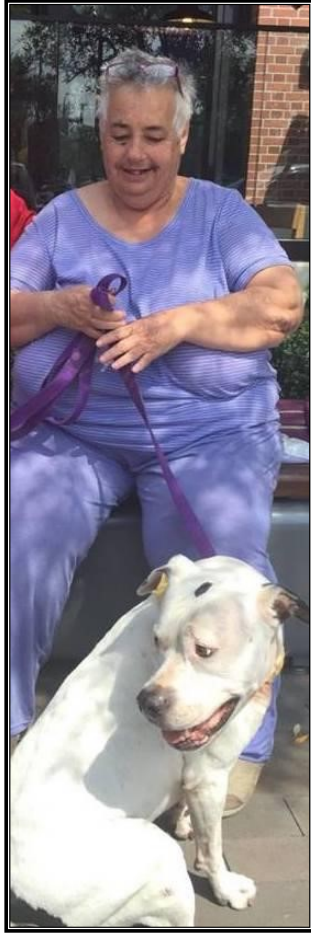


## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

August 2-8, 2019

### PENINSULA PULCHRITUDE - Part 31



### CHANGING THE WORLD TWO WORDS AT A TIME

By Wanda Sue Parrott

*social media  
served as our world's unpaid press  
screaming LIVE SHOOTER  
within one minute  
streaming shots circled the world  
revised lexicon  
celiasue hecht  
reporter using english  
broke the news to me*

**TURNING** from cyberlife to old-fashioned human communication, I spent a leisurely senior-salad-Sunday with two sheltered women and our homeless friend at Crazy Horse Restaurant in Monterey, later switched on TV halfway through “60 Minutes,” then read a book until bedtime.

If I'd watched the news, July 28 would have been a sleepless nightmare.

Instead, I woke refreshed to find CeliaSue Hecht's email about the shooting on Sunday that took the lives of four people and injured 12 at 5:41 p.m. in Gilroy. CeliaSue's subject/headline said:

### **Gilroy Garlic Festival. . . So Sad, So Close To Home**

“The 20-30 white guy was wearing tactical gear & carrying an assault weapon. Police shot him dead & are searching for possible accomplices. He killed a 6-year-old child, Steven Romero. No one should be allowed to have an assault weapon—maybe a soldier at war, but no one on the streets of California/America.”

CeliaSue Hecht, an unemployed, unsheltered writer/editor about whom I have written previously because of her ongoing struggle to find housing following two bouts with breast cancer, as well as recent treatment for blood clots on her lungs and a heart condition, added these sidebar statistics to her post:

“Last year handguns killed 10 people in Japan, 50 in Great Britain, 47 in Switzerland, 611 in Canada, 105 in Israel, 41 in Sweden, 38,658 in the United States. God Bless America.”

### **Impact Of The Lay Citizens Press Corps**

Working press corps have traditionally complained they're part of a profession that's “overworked and underpaid.” Not so today.

The world's citizen press corps of today is a vast body of less-than-cub reporters who photograph, twitter, tweet and text in every language of the world, capturing on-the-spot happenings like the scene at the Garlic Festival, which they then broadcast immediately like gossip for free.

Through these initial on-the-spot messages, shouts of “Live Shooter” were transmitted instantly all over the world, thus changing the lexicon of language by entering the vulgate domain, meaning common words used by everyday people.

While professional investigators are researching facts about the shooter who graduated from Gilroy High School in 2017 and bought his AK47-like assault rifle in Las Vegas, grass roots reporters hold the power to actually keep language alive.

### **Does Unpaid Reporting Qualify As Public Service?**

How does CeliaSue Hecht feel about being 69, unhoused and living in a van with her dog Cici on \$700 per month social security while continuing to produce news blurbs like the one that alerted me to lexiconography-in-motion?

I asked, “CeliaSue, what's your story?” Excerpts of her answers include these memorable quotes:

- “The number of homeless people 62 and older jumped 68.5% across the United States from 2007 to 2017. I am one of them.”
- “I was supposed to get married and have children and be set for life. That was the script according to my parents and society. But not exactly how it has turned out.”
- “I used to make fun of my parents who seemed to spend a lot of time talking about their ailments. My friends and I always talked about solutions, alternative health care, and now here I am having survived some devastating losses, including the most important person in my life for 40 years.”

Many readers have inquired about CeliaSue and Cici, who celebrates her 13<sup>th</sup> birthday August 1. CeliaSue has been recovering at a nursing facility in Monterey following hospitalization at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP). She was able to visit Cici and says:

## Happy Birthday To Cici

“I say Cici’s birthday is August 1, because I don’t know the exact date. She is 13. Happy birthday sweet baby dog.

“She is currently at the dog boarder because she got overheated the other day/morning and scared me. It is too much for her now, the heat. She used to be very heat tolerant, having been born in Las Vegas in the summer (when it is 120 degrees).

“She still loves to sunbathe on occasion, but mostly the heat makes her pant a lot.

“The other morning, she would not move. I got her into Safeway and she lay down on the floor and would not move for an hour. Not like her at all. I gave her water and just let her be, and finally got her moving. She used to love walking around saying hi to people, wagging her tail, licking folks.

“When I got her to the dog boarder, she perked up and acted normal, which was a relief. anyway.”

## Still Hoping To Find Housing

CeliaSue has been unsheltered for four years. She’s working with a case manager to find housing. She says it’s easier to house a dog than a person like herself, whom I define as “an unpaid professional journalist.” She calls herself a Communications Curator.”

CeliaSue’s writing career began at Sunshine Publications after she received her BA in Journalism from Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, in the 1980s. She moved on to Los Angeles and worked for Earthplay, an international educational company.

She is now a writer/editor whose passions include art, books, movies, sustainability, hot romantic comedies, and cool creatures (dogs, cats, rabbits, dolphins, whales, goats, elk).

She is available for freelance assignments ranging from assisting pet friendly non-profits to supporting local eco-friendly, humane businesses.

“I believe tiny steps equal a fabulous future. Ten percent of all profits go to helping senior women without homes obtain jobs and housing. Homelessness at any age devastates a person’s health,” according to CeliaSue, whose love of philosophical maxims includes “Do unto others one kind deed at a time” and the summum bonum salutation on all her emails:

### “Change The World One Word At A Time.”

Well, maybe two words will also do, like “live shooter.”

The name of 19-year-old Santino William Legan, the dead shooter shot by law enforcement officers last Sunday, might be forgotten, but his legacy will live as long as language does.

For a complete list of blogs, articles and other publications by CeliaSue Hecht visit this site <https://celiasuewriter.wordpress.com/vip/>

You’ll hear more from CeliaSue in September, as I’ve invited her to be guest columnist while I recover from oral surgery.

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This column appears in the weekly edition of Cedar Street Times, weekly hometown newspaper of Pacific Grove, California. This is Column #251. [www.cedarstreettimes.com](http://www.cedarstreettimes.com).

Photo courtesy of CeliaSue Hecht. Triple haiku by Wanda Sue Parrott

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