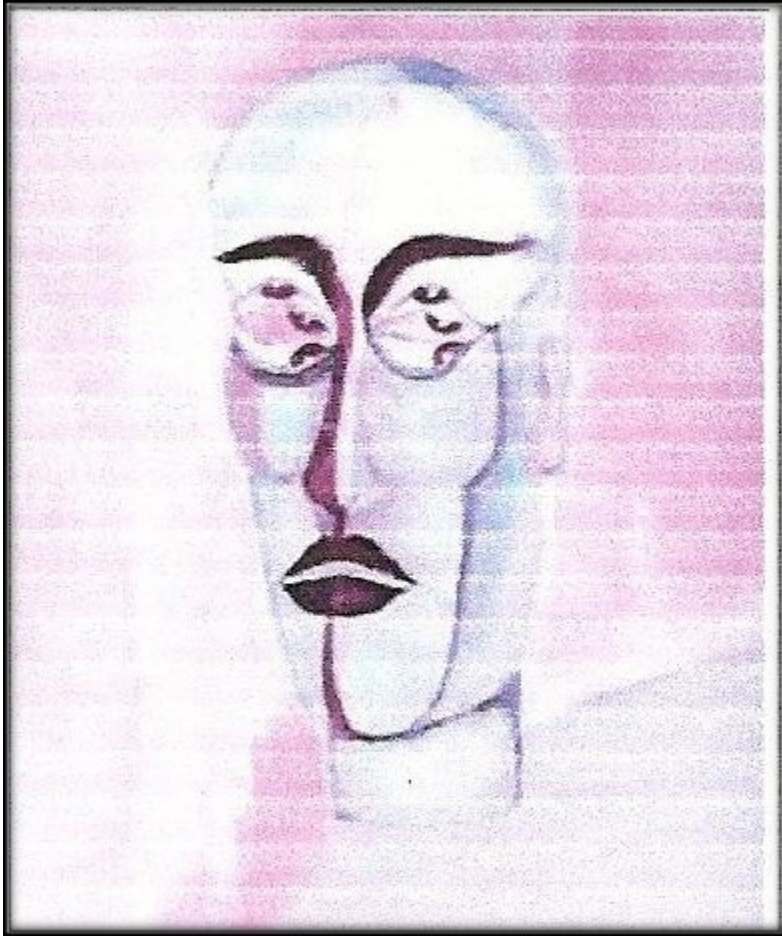


HOMELESS IN PARADISE

September 13-19, 2019

PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE - Part 2



IS IT TOO LATE TO SAVE THE GREAT AMERICAN DREAM?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

*america's mask
miss liberty without stars
face of homelessness*

EXPOSING how soviet psycho-politics operated, Ukrainian defector Victor Kravchenko claimed in his 1946 best-seller "I Chose Freedom": *If the People can be turned against each other, the Soviet Union will win its takeover of America without firing a single weapon.*

That was then while this is now. So?

Instead of trying to place the blame on anyone for the cultural dilemma that's killing democracy, Seaside's mayor Ian Oglesby and city council aren't playing the political blame game; they're asking what can be done to stem the rising tide of homeless persons who aren't only camping on our beaches, they're drifting into neighborhoods and sleeping practically in homeowners' and renters' backyards in places like Laguna Grande Park.

Welcoming Vehicle Dwellers

At the September 5 Seaside City Council meeting, a motion was approved unanimously that the city's Municipal Code be amended by a Safe Parking Ordinance that allows homeless persons who live in their vehicles to park overnight in specifically designated areas supervised by bonafide social service agencies that operate under stringent guidelines that include:

- Toilets, water, and trash facilities must be available.
- Participants must keep the area clean.
- Participants must observe being parked on the premises only during stipulated times that generally fall into 12-hour shifts, such as 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. or 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- Neither drug use nor alcohol consumption is allowed.

October 6 marks the date the Safe Parking Program may be launched in Seaside.

First location will be the parking lot of Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, where approximately 18 current participants in the One Starfish Safe Parking Program in Marina will be moving to Seaside when the facility is ready. Why move? Greed-driven builders didn't want homeless people near their multi-million-dollar development close to the county offices on old Fort Ord.

“No Place Like Home”

You've heard the old saying, “Home is where the heart is.” This old saw, with a minor revision, puts the finger on what's really tearing our country apart and, therefore, is called Public Enemy Number One in this series.

Try saying it this way: Homelessness is where the heart is not.

Seaside resident, Axel H. Gehrmann, who is co-minister with his wife Elaine Gehrmann at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula, delivered a pertinent sermon on March 10, excerpts of which shed light on the true nature of heartsickness that's turning the American people against each other.

It starts with the demise of the Great American Dream of owning one's own home if home ownership is your desire. Just finding an affordable place to rent, however humble, is the near-impossible challenge today.

No Place Like Home

By Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann, Seaside

. . . The US Census Bureau says over 40 million men and women live in poverty, and many of them are essentially an illness, an accident, or a paycheck away from living on the streets.

. . . In her book “Homeless in America” Anna Kosof writes: “. . . From the very beginning of time, people have waged war for food and shelter. In the most primitive societies, we have struggled to meet these most basic human needs. It is astonishing that in the twenty-first century, we are still struggling to meet those needs.”

. . . What is a home? It is a place of shelter. A place to put our possessions. A safe place to sleep. It is a roof over our heads. Any building, any apartment, any house can be a shelter. But a home is more than that. Home is something else.

. . . Scott Russell Sanders writes: “The word house comes from an Indo-European root meaning to cover or conceal. . . conceal from what? From storms? Beasts? from the eye of God? [The word] home comes from a different root meaning ‘the place where one lies.’ That sounds less fearful to me. A weak, slow clawless animal, without fur or fangs, [a human] can risk lying down and closing its eyes only when it feels utterly secure. Since the universe is going to kill us,

in the short run or in the long run, no wonder we crave a place to lie in safety, a place to conceive our young and raise them, a place to shut our eyes without shivering or dread. . .

However leaky or firm, whether tar paper or brick, the shell of a house gives only shelter; a home gives sanctuary. . .

The longing for a safe place to lie down echoes through our holy songs and scriptures. Abused and scorned, we look over Jordan and what do we see? A band of angels coming for to carry us home.”

. . . Perhaps the greatest tragedy of homelessness is that without a home it is so much more difficult to be fully and deeply ourselves. We need a safe place where we can let down our guard, where we can take off our protective mask and be seen as who we truly are. . .

A real home is a wonderful, precious place. A place of connection with family and friends. A place of connection to our own hearts, a temple of the soul. . . If this is our church home, then we are all called to be homemakers. . .

The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula is a host to both Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Programs (I-HELP) for men and women. Guests receive a delicious dinner and then sleep overnight in the safety and warmth of the church sanctuary. The homeless are welcome to attend services on Sundays, 9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. at UUCMP, 490 Aguajito Rd., Carmel.

Call 831-624-7404 or visit www.uucmp.org.

Victor Kravchenko survived defection in America for about 20 years, during which he feared for his life. On February 25, 1966, his Great American Dream ended when Kravchenko died from a single shot to the head while at his desk in his Manhattan apartment.

Was his alleged suicide caused by the same deadly force responsible for statistics revealed by Monterey Mayor Clyde Roberson at last month's Pasta with the Pastors fundraiser for I-HELP: *Seventy percent of people living in Monterey are renters.*

Or did the Russians really get him?

###

Painting and haiku by Wanda Sue Parrott

Contact Wanda Sue Parrott at 831-899-5887 amykitchenerfdn@hotmail.com

Copyright 2019 by Wanda Sue Parrott