

HOMELESS IN PARADISE
November 29 - December 5, 2019

IN OUR OWN BACKYARD - Part 7



CeliaSue and Cici

CAN HOMELESS SENIORS SLEEP ON TURKEY SANDWICHES AND STUFFING?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

*doggies die indoors
warm, beloved and free of pain
owners freeze in cars*

*cici had cancer
celia sue put her to sleep
on september 12th*

FOLLOWING last week's Letter to the Editor from Utah resident Rick Hadlock about how to advise children about fending off homelessness, we received the following op-ed essay by a 70-year old reader from Marina who chose a free lifestyle while young and is homeless now.

How CeliaSue Hecht's youthful experiences as a member of the hippie/flower-child generation influenced her lifestyle today is unknown. Her comments neither reflect the opinions of Cedar Street Times nor mine.

Before I yield the balance of space: Happy Thanksgiving however you spend it.

What California Needs: Affordable Housing And Help For Women With Pets

By CeliaSue Hecht

Food is one basic necessity for survival.

Survival includes all of our physical needs for food, water, air, safety, shelter, warmth, health. Plus, we also have other needs (to belong, be valued and loved).

California, there are other basic needs that human beings have to have fulfilled in order to survive.

So, yeah, what we need in California is more free donated food, not affordable housing for seniors (shelter, warmth, safety) nor health care?

I am not saying that poor people should starve to death or go hungry, but people cannot sleep on a turkey sandwich or receive warmth, shelter, and safety from stuffing, yams and mashed potatoes.

Hunger for seniors (and others) does need to be addressed adequately. However, it is not the only basic necessity for human beings and one of the most vulnerable population: seniors.

<https://californiahealthline.org/news/food-insecurity-senior-hunger-california/>

Money, Managing Care For Seniors And More

The US average median income in the U.S. is \$28,555 a year.

Median household income of a Monterey resident (or Los Angeles, Sonoma County) is \$64,772 a year while San Francisco is \$96,265 to \$120,000).

Napa is \$102,000. Silicon Valley is \$118,400 and \$150,000 in Marin County.

Clint Eastwood's net worth is \$375 million. He is easily one of the richest celebrities in Carmel.

There are six million seniors living in California in 2019.

Nine million are projected in the next 10 years.

And caregivers are needed for seniors.

But who cares for the aged seniors without homes?

<https://www.kpbs.org/news/2019/apr/29/aging-california-seniors-will-need-caregivers-and-/>

What the Monterey Bay Peninsula does 99.9999 percent of the time is feed poor people, not house seniors or provide adequate health care.

There are two low-income housing units for thousands of seniors (Pacific Meadows and Rippling River) and one is being built in Marina. But every organization provides donated food—the Salvation Army, churches, Gathering for Women--while 1,000+ women, many 50+ seniors are without homes, prematurely aging and dying on the streets and in cars.

ER doctor [Margot Kushel](#) (San Francisco) says:

[@MKushel](#)

About 1/2 of homeless older adults first become homeless after 50.

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11787061/from-working-in-tech-to-homelessness-the-challenges-facing-a-senior-veteran>

Death, Shelters And Defiance Of Law

Three men without homes died in the last few weeks in Carmel and Monterey because of what numerous people are saying is discrimination and lack of adherence to a California law that requires hospitals to provide people without homes food, clothing, and a place to go to... (warmth, shelter, a roof) not a tent, not the street, and certainly not a car at midnight.

Homeless shelters are not places for sick seniors, either. They are expensive, wasteful places to store out of sight people that those in charge do not want around. They do not have enough beds, to begin with and they are not where people receive health care. Nursing homes are abundant with abuse.

Hypothermia kills people without homes even in 50 degree weather.

A few years ago people died in Monterey and a warming shelter was approved by the City Council but never got created.

One of the men who died recently in Carmel was having a stroke and another had cancer and both were sent off to a tent where they died.

No Euthanasia For Humans

A couple of hospitals nationwide and Kaiser Permanente provide housing for seniors with histories of a lot of Emergency Room visits.

ER visits and costs declined while health improved. Imagine that.

Meanwhile millions of dollars and resources are raised for pets who need homes. . . there are many dog rescues and cat shelters who cater to every need of the canines and felines. Adoption events. Who adopts seniors without homes and finds them homes or (horrors) creates/build homes for seniors?

There is an abundance of options and kindness for animals.

My Cici dog was put to sleep (9-12-19) to ease her suffering (while humans are left alone to suffer and commit suicide in horrific ways).

During euthanasia, pets receive a mild tranquilizer for their comfort. They will then receive an overdose of an anesthetic drug, so the pet feels no additional pain as he or she falls into a deep sleep and bodily function stops.

Before Cici left the planet, she was safe and warm in a kennel at Dawg Gone It, a Seaside dog boarding facility while her owner, with multiple serious health issues, had to sleep outside in the cold getting sicker.

The die-with-dignity law in California for people is complicated and requires lots of hoops and red tape for folks to jump through.

Pets are spoiled with dog food and places to be while humans are thrown away like trash.

Calling On California

Californians, how many dead bodies have to pile up before affordable housing is going to be provided for the elderly and others in this state?

California could be a leader lighting the way for other states in the USA if. . . if. . . if we wanted to and made it Number One priority to save lives instead of squandering them.

Thank you.

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This column appears weekly in Cedar Street Times at www.cedarstreettimes.com.

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

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