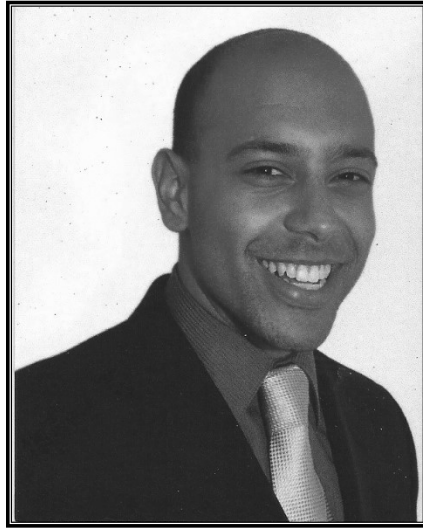


## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

June 26-July 2, 2020

### IN OUR OWN BACKYARD - Part 35



*Photo: Courtesy of Jon Wizard*

### WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT WHEN YOU CHOOSE FREEDOM?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

**JUMPING** back onto the political bandwagon just when the Fort Ord Reuse Authority was about to go down silently with the setting sun, freshman Seaside city councilmember Jon Wizard, 34, refocused the public spotlight on the Monterey Peninsula city where Campus Town is set to rise - hopefully sooner than later.

If Jon's announcement of his bid for mayor, made Thursday on the grounds of Seaside City Hall to a crowd of less than three dozen, seems premature, that's good. It is well-timed because mass public attention has been so fragmented by June's myriad media matters that something defector Victor Kravchenko, author of *I Chose Freedom*, said around half a century ago, seems to be happening right here and now in America.

Paraphrasing Kravchenko, here is how I remember his comment on a talk show:

***In Russian psycho-politics, the technique of turning the people of a country against each other is the way to break them down in order to take them over.***

In essence, the original American Public Enemy Number One, the Housing Crisis, is now a three-way split:

Housing - including homelessness.

Health - the Covid-19 crisis.

Racism - the Black Lives Matter movement.

### Wisdom Of Dr. Oz

Jon Wizard's early announcement caused the focus to return to the Monterey Peninsula... our own backyards where, if you're still sheltering in place, one of TV's favorite non-political commentators might help you avoid being a victim of psycho-political breakdown.

Dr. Oz suggests sitting still in silence, breathing in to the count of 1-2-3-4 and then holding the breath as you count 1-2-3-4-5-6-7. Slowly exhale and repeat the breathing exercise, allowing stress to flow from your mind and body with your exhales. Each time you do the exercise, focus on a stressor that is bothering you and concentrate on breathing it out of your mind and body.

If national politics is too disturbing, concentrate on what's going on at your local level.

Jon Wizard told me the message the People were sending when they took to the streets in demand of justice following the police brutality that killed George Floyd inspired him to throw his hat in the ring for mayor of Seaside.

### **Words From Wizard**

Jon would like to see the Seaside Police Department re-funded to allow some of its current funding to be allocated to agencies that provide social services offering remediation and release rather than punishment and incarceration.

Since my beat is homelessness, I asked Jon where he stands on that topic.

He said: "I led the effort to establish the first-ever shelter on the Peninsula by co-hosting a town hall and taking a leadership role on the council to schedule several meetings in the course of just one month. Casa de Noche Buena - for women and children - is being rehabilitated and repaired now to begin providing services by the end of the year."

Following in the wake of former Seaside Mayor Ralph Rubio, who brought the Veterans Transition Center to Seaside a few years ago, Jon Wizard says:

"I've also been working with Jack Murphy at the Veterans Transition Center on an opportunity they have to reuse the former Veterans Administration Clinic by CSUMB to provide housing and healthcare services to homeless and nearly homeless veterans, helping stabilize those clients by keeping them housed and healthy."

As to Campus Town, where Seaside is destined to become the City on the Hill following FORA's sunset on June 30, he feels current conditions could delay completion of the project that's still in its planning stages. He says:

"For Campus Town, I'm working on completing a study to determine whether it makes sense to establish a commercial linkage fee to ensure new retail businesses don't create new housing insecurity by paying low wages and creating a burden on the existing residents to fund new affordable housing.

"The commercial linkage fee would charge the new store - whether it's something like a Target or frozen yogurt shop - a small fee per square foot, which would then be restricted to supporting new affordable housing opportunities in Seaside."

Jon Wizard might be the first candidate to challenge Mayor Ian Oglesby, who intends to run for a second term, but he might not be the last. Stay tuned, and even consider for running for office yourself.

Don't forget! There's a White House to fill in November! Another old white guy will probably be elected. Which one will you pick?

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About this Column: "Homeless in Paradise" is a free public service self-funded and produced by the author. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this column appears regularly on the last week of each month in the Cedar Street Times at [www.cedarstreettimes.com](http://www.cedarstreettimes.com) (and as periodic FLASH columns like this one).

It also appears on Facebook, in Next Door and on private email lists. If interested in being added to the list, submit your request to the contact info below.)

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