

## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

July 17-23, 2020

### IN OUR OWN BACKYARD - Part 38



**Beautiful Boondoggle Buster: Supervisor Jane Parker**

Photo courtesy County of Monterey

### WILL THE PENINSULA'S NEXT BOONDOGGLE BUSTERS PLEASE STAND UP?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

**KNOWING** the difference between a “Boondoggle” and “Goonboggle” is tricky. If a homeless shelter near you seems disturbing, can you identify with one or both of these definitions?

**Boondoggle:** (as defined by Edgar Allan Philpott): *A process of convoluted time-energy wasting that's often so confusing it winds up unresolved back at the point where it began. This point of origin can be reached time after time, which is why it's always called “Square One.”* (Boondoggles prevent shelters from being built where needed.)

**Goonboggle** (as defined by Albert L. Baker): *When two or more goons get the wrong person, place, or thing to harass, intimidate or destroy.* (One way of saying the homeless are not welcome or wanted.)

The definitions are taken from my little red paperback about cutting through bureaucratic red tape, *The Boondoggler's Bible—How to Fight Like City Hall to Win!* (Great Spirit Publishing, 2014). It resulted from my legal case against Springfield, Missouri, but also describes the Monterey Peninsula's position in relation to shelters for the homeless today.

Of the twelve cities on the peninsula, only one has taken a stand about actually sheltering the homeless: Seaside.

The others are apparently procrastinating about how to solve the problem that's circulated for years. Which of the eleven will take the next step? Carmel-By-The-Sea, Del Rey Oaks, Gonzales, Greenfield, King City, Marina, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Salinas, Sand City, or Soledad?

## The Boondoggle Busters Of Seaside

For two months, Seaside has been promoting overnight shelter to the homeless who live in vehicles for one or two nights a week in Robert's Lake and Laguna Grande Park parking lots, if other cities will provide the same hospitality the other five nights per week.

This seems both unfair and illegal, because Seaside's tax-paying residents, and visitors to the city, cannot park at Robert's Lake because its two parking lots, with their 32 parking spaces, are filled 24/7 with as many as 33 vehicles and several bicycles belonging to Shelter in Place campers.

At its July 2 city council meeting, Seaside proposed a 4-hour parking limit in order to free up spaces so other-than-homeless residents may have access to the public parks. How such a time-limit would be enforced was "continued," which differs from "boondoggled" because remaining undecided allows for better investigation into the most-effective solution for a sticky issue.

A complaint at the same meeting reported fecal matter and other trash in the Robert's Lake parking area, despite the city's provision of portable toilet and sanitary facilities. Discussion followed about moving vehicles to Laguna Grande Park overnight so unsanitary messes could be cleaned up.

An advocate for the homeless raised the question: What happens if a vehicle won't start?

Seaside's Mayor, Ian Oglesby, and City Manager, Craig Malin, both reported no responses have been received following their invitations for other cities to participate by also opening their public parking to homeless campers for a night or two each week.

Want to bet who the next Boondoggle-Buster City will be?

**Boondoggle Buster:** *An individual person, group or official entity dedicated to getting done something that needs to be done as quickly, efficiently and fairly as possible.*

## Portrait Of A Boondoggle Buster

Everyone, other than infants and the feeble-minded of all ages, participates in the Boondoggle Game.

How? It's simple. Has someone ever asked you for a donation, to which you replied, "Give me your number and I'll get back to you" and you never called back?

Boondoggling is procrastination with a purpose, usually to avoid taking unwanted-but-needed action.

Since no one wants homeless camps where filth and disease can breed in their neighborhood, a NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) attitude prevents any action from being taken.

Seaside is inviting the seven cities on the peninsula to try a YIMBY (Yes In My Back Yard) approach to sheltering the homeless. Will any other cities join Seaside in tackling this increasing problem?

Fortunately, Monterey County Supervisor Jane Parker, has been dedicated to boondoggle-busting throughout her 12-year term representing District 4. Unfortunately, she's retiring, but hopes her aide, Wendy Root Askew, also a dedicated Boondoggle-Buster, will be elected to take her vacant seat.

Jane says, "What is needed at this time is a shelter in every town!"

## A Homeless Shelter In Every Town

In a July 10 Homeless Outreach meeting hosted on Zoom by Sandy Larson of the First Presbyterian Church in Monterey, Jane Parker was guest speaker.

"One of the things I've been trying to do for at least four or five years is reach out to different cities and say, 'How can we work together?'," Jane said. "If we were to team up as jurisdictions, we'd have a better chance of seeing what is happening, where the gaps are, and how we're going to fill these gaps. I've gotten no takers for quite a long time."

Jane's succinct suggestion for busting the homeless-issue boondoggles lies in individual and group advocates working through direct contact with the younger members of peninsula-wide city councils, specifically:

Carmel: Jeff Baron

Monterey: Tyller Williamson

Pacific Grove: Jenny McAdams

Seaside: Alissa Kispersky; Jon Wizard.

Jane said, "When the public shows up and says, 'This is important to us,' and 'We want to be part of the solution,' it really helps light the fire under the elected officials."

For details about Homeless Outreach, contact Sandy Larson at [slarson2130@gmail.com](mailto:slarson2130@gmail.com).

Finally, a word of caution about boondoggle-busting:

**Boondogglers' Breaker:** *Boondoggling can kill you, if your conscience doesn't do it first!*

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*The Boondogglers' Bible—How to Fight Like City Hall--to Win!!* by Wanda Sue Parrott (\$14) is available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

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