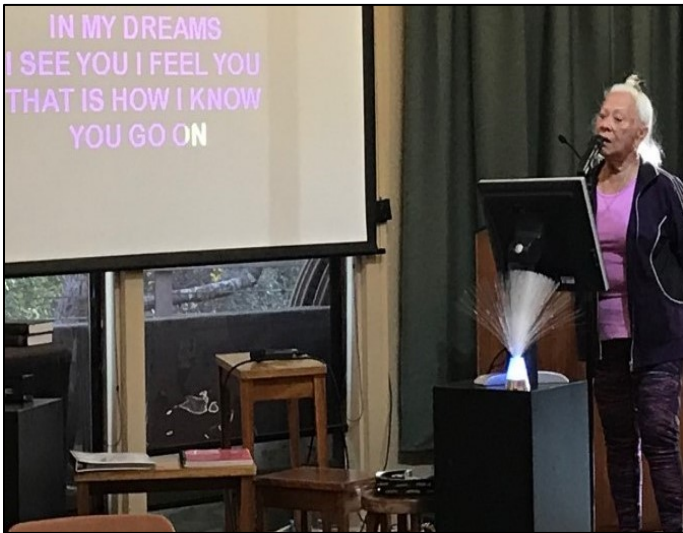


## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

Feb. 12-18, 2021

### MONTEREY PENINSULA MAKEOVERS – Part 7



*Josephine Guerrero sang in grief following seizure by the SPCA of her dog Peanut on Feb. 14, 2020. The case is still under appeal. Josie will sing again this weekend at the annual Karaoke Party benefitting the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula.*

*Photo courtesy of Rev. Elaine Gehrman, UUCMP*

### WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF HANDOUTS WERE UP TO YOU?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

**DURING** this week--when attention has been focused on the second impeachment proceedings against now-former-president Donald J. Trump--only minor attention has gone to local homeless issues.

If you consider the sudden absence of Change A Heart Foundation's founder, Todd Sondgroth, from my list of contacts, you'll see why I wonder what's going on.

Have I been deleted from e-mail updates on his help-the-needy projects about everything from providing fresh water to African villagers to giving 10 homeless women cars to sleep in by the end of January? If yes, why?

Whether all ten cars were ever delivered is unknown, but a video showed Todd's partners in Africa delivered water for ebullient boys girls, men and women who were smiling, chanting and dancing as clean water flowed into the dirt on which they stood.

Here's what little I do know from hearsay and e-mails sent by readers of this column.

#### **Wanted: Parking Spot For Trailer**

A storage trailer Todd solicited was apparently donated, because he posted the photo of a white trailer attached to a vehicle on a Facebook item a reader shared. His stated intention was to use the trailer for delivery of fresh meals, clothing (including underwear), personal toiletries and hygiene items to the homeless around town. Who would prepare the meals, do the driving and distribution, or otherwise service the needy, was not spelled out, but Todd was asking for help finding a place to park the trailer and, as ever, for donations to help cover expenses.

My informant asked if the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula's parking lot would fulfill Todd's need. As a member of UUCMP's social justice committee, I replied that I would have to vote nay should the issue be raised. Why? Because there are many non-profits on the peninsula whose sweat, tears and maybe even blood have gone into providing the services Todd proposes to deliver directly to homeless folks who would once have been called "squatters" for living on the beach, in parks or elsewhere on public property.

## What Would You Do?

If you were a city father/mother entrusted with the welfare of your whole community, how would you vote if it came to sustaining those who would continue sleeping and pooping in public if so encouraged and/or allowed? If you were a social worker, case manager or director of a non-profit professionally empowered to help those who cannot or will not help themselves, how would you vote?

Before deciding, imagine you are a gardener, working hard and long to create a beautiful lawn that is suddenly decimated by gophers after a well-meaning stroller-by feeds them without contemplating consequences.

If then-President Donald J. Trump had foreseen the outcome of his calls for action, would he have kept his words that incited insurrection to himself? Who is impeaching whom?

While Todd's sincere desire to share cars with homeless women may be unimpeachable, could consequential inadvertent offenses result in his impeachment (casting doubt on credibility) of himself? For instance, this item came from a local homeless woman who said:

“A woman from Gathering For Women was in an accident that demolished her car. Todd insisted on lending her a car. She doesn't own it. It's needed repairs at least three times already. She's really upset because he won't take it back and she can't sell it or afford repairs.”

What would you do, beside providing your own curse words! The answer? Start by letting your needs be known to those who can do something legitimately unimpeachable to help.

## Community Needs Assessment

Monterey County Community Action Partnership's (MCCAP) mission is to assess the needs of low-income residents of Monterey County and develop, maintain, and evaluate community services that empower low-income individuals and families to improve their quality of life.

Every two years the MCCAP gathers input from the community to help gain information about services priorities. This year's needs assessment will be done virtually because of the Covid-19 pandemic. You are invited to complete this survey and share it with your neighbors, friends and family throughout Monterey County.

English Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TV7Z9WW>

Spanish Survey: <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/TLZ8PXT>

Contact: Glorietta Rowland, [rowlandg@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:rowlandg@co.monterey.ca.us) .

## Community Donations

Several readers have asked where they can donate used items, including clothing. Most places that usually take used clothing are not collecting during the Covid-19 pandemic, but Major John Bennett says the Salvation Army is accepting new clothing and used items that can be washed in a dishwasher, such as glasses and dishes.

Contributions can be dropped off at The Salvation Army Monterey Peninsula, 1491 Contra Costa St. Seaside, CA. 93955, or for details contact Office: (831) 899-4911; Direct: (831) 713-1247; Cell: (808) 352-3800; Email: [john.bennett@usw.salvationarmy.org](mailto:john.bennett@usw.salvationarmy.org).

In the event you wonder about donating to Change A Heart Foundation, call Todd Sondgroth at 831-905-0482.

## Community Karaoke Celebration

You can help benefit the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula (UUCMP) by attending its Karaoke Party via Zoom on Sat., Feb. 13, 6 – 9 p.m.

UUCMP is an active advocate of social justice projects that include Orphan Productions, Inc. Safe Parking for people living in vehicles and the One Starfish Safe Parking Program for homeless women who sleep overnight at local churches. Also, Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Programs (I-HELP) for both men and women.

Suggested Karaoke party donations are \$10 per individual or \$15 per family. Contributions can be made at the time of the party or sent by check to UUCMP, 490 Aguajito Rd., Carmel, CA 93923.

Reservations are not required, and people of all ages are invited. You are welcome to dress up in a costume if you are so moved. On the night of the event, go to the events section on the website at

<https://uucmp.org/congregation-news/event/>

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“Homeless in Paradise” is a free public service self-funded and produced by independent journalist Wanda Sue Parrott. It appears in Facebook, Nextdoor, and *The Cedar Street Times* at [www.cedarstreettimes.com](http://www.cedarstreettimes.com) and on private email lists. If interested in being added to the list, submit your request to 831-899-5887, [amykitchenerfdn@hotmail.com](mailto:amykitchenerfdn@hotmail.com).  
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