

HOMELESS IN PARADISE
June 25-July 1, 2021

LET THE BOONDOGGLE-BUSTING BEGIN! -- Part 6



*post pandemic
can cause homelessness to spread
unless it's stopped fast
reverse lanterman
reinstitutionalize
mental health care now
may our governor
act fast soon while he still can
to save our great state
california's back
now juneteenth is legal too
happy july 4th*



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 9, 2021

Ms. Wanda Sue Parrott
Monterey, California

Dear Ms. Parrott,

Thank you for sending me your kind note of support and encouragement. I am humbled by the faith the American people have placed in Vice President Kamala Harris and me.

Our country faces many challenges, and the road we will travel together will be one of the most difficult in our history. It is time for all Americans to set aside their differences, to try to understand one another, and to strive to make the promise of a just, prosperous, and secure Nation a reality for everyone.

If we look ahead in our uniquely American way — restless, bold, and optimistic — and set our sights on the Nation we know we can be, we will meet this moment. I look forward to writing the next great chapter of the American story with you.

Sincerely,

(article starts on next page)

WHAT DOES GOV. GAVIN NEWSOM MEAN: “ONCE THE MIND IS STRETCHED...”?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

LISTENING to Governor Gavin Newsom speaking to James Corden on the CBS Late Late Night Show on June 15, 2021, took me momentarily back more than 50 years. If I didn't know better, I'd say Ira A. Greenberg, Ph.D., was whispering in my ear, “*Once the mind is stretched, it can never return to its original form.*”

It started in 1967, when Governor Ronald Reagan began dismantling the California mental health system and progressed to Camarillo State Hospital, where I was a Hearst reporter working undercover as a mental patient. An experimental series of Psychodrama sessions Dr. Greenberg was producing via closed-circuit TV had cast me as the mother of a mentally ill woman who heard voices. I was to do a series of features about life inside what then could be considered a “nut farm” or “insane asylum.”

Psychodrama In The Seventies

“What’s the voice saying?” Dr. Greenberg asked the 50-ish patient I'll call Kathleen as the TV camera rolled.

“Kill her!” Kathleen screamed.

“Who?”

“My mother. The bitch...”

“Why do you want to kill her?” the psychologist asked.

“I hate her. She stole my boyfriends.”

“Did you talk to her?”

“Hell, no. I hate her!”

“Well, Kathleen, your mother is here and wants to talk.”

Dr. Greenberg waved that it was my turn to speak. I sat on my folding chair like an actress doing improv.

“Kathy, it’s Mom,” I lied.

The patient raged toward me, wielding a non-existent knife. Cursing ensued, followed by Kathleen bursting into tears and me hugging her. Interesting juxtaposition, since I was about 20 years her junior.

“You helped her reach the root of her pain,” the psychologist said when the closed-circuit TV went down.

“Can she be cured?”

“I can’t predict. She hears so many voices.”

“I hear voices,” I said. “Thoughts are voices in my writer's head.”

“Everyone hears voices,” Dr. Greenberg said. “It’s how they react to the voices that determines whether they’re geniuses, normal, or sick.”

Lanterman Act’s Reactions

Institutions like Camarillo State Hospital were closed in the wake of the well-intentioned Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Act (AB 846), initially proposed in 1967, and again by Assembly member Frank D. Lanterman in 1973, and passed in 1977. It gives people with developmental disabilities the right to services and supports that enable them to live a more independent and normal life.

As mentally disabled people opted for life outside of, rather than within, institutions, a community of mentally ill men and women evolved and is now plastered like blue plastic tire patches along freeways, beaches, and parks all along the Monterey coastline.

Reversing the unfortunate adverse effects of the Lanterman Act might preserve what is left of our California slice of paradise, but time for such action is running short. See https://lanterman.org/lanterman_act.

As to Ira A. Greenberg, Ph.D., who said we all hear voices, his book *Psychodrama: Theory and Therapy* (Hardcover, 496 pages) was published January 1, 1974, by Behavioral Publications.

The Hearst Corporation killed my series, considering it too frighteningly honest for a family-oriented newspaper like the conservative *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*.

What did Governor Gavin Newsom mean telling James Corden, “*Once the mind is stretched, it can never be return to its original form*”? Watch the interview at **Gov. Gavin Newsom Has Opened Up California!** Then, share your interpretation with webmaster Barbara Quin at <https://homeless-in-paradise.yolasite.com/Contact.php>, who became my official publisher as of June 19, 2021. See letter below:

Wanda’s Declaration Of Independence

Dear Marge Ann Jameson, Friend and Colleague:

Thank you seems an inadequate way to express my gratitude to you and Cedar Street Times for publishing my weekly column "Homeless in Paradise" every week since it first appeared on October 31, 2014.

You supported help for the homeless consistently when other media outlets did so only sporadically. Covering homelessness as it has gradually increased on the Monterey Peninsula has been a challenge that led me to making the critical decision to go on sabbatical leave as of this month.

Traditionally, a sabbatical is a break, such as a vacation or rest which members of the clergy take in order to refresh, reintegrate, and restore their dedication to service that can be as exhausting as it is invigorating in spirit.

The same can be said of community service or change of leadership directions in order to allow vital transitions to transpire smoothly.

This is the case with Cedar Street Times. During the remaking of the newspaper by its new editor, whose views and mine could possibly clash, I stepped aside and went solo as a publisher so we can all enjoy freedom of the press from respective viewpoints.

Inspiration for this decision is summarized in the words of Governor Gavin Newsom on the CBS Late Late Show with James Corden on Tuesday, June 15, 2021: “Once the mind is stretched, it never goes back to its original form.”

Congratulations on California's reopening, best wishes to Cedar Street Times on its transition, and thanks to all readers of Homeless in Paradise who encouraged its continuation. You can now read it weekly at www.homeless-in-paradise.yolasite.com.

If I end my sabbatical and return to Cedar Street Times, you'll read it here first.

Sincerely, Wanda Sue Parrott

P.S. I snail-mail hard copies weekly to only ten elected officials. I penned a personal margin note to the public servant whose response appears here.

Not only is California back, so is America!

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CREDITS: Photo of Wanda Sue Parrott dancing in 2019 Monterey County Fair courtesy of the Tap Bananas.
The Boondogger's Bible—How to Fight Like City Hall to Win!! (\$17 from author Wanda Sue Parrott,
P. O. Box 1821, Monterey, CA 93942-1821) or from amazon.com.

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