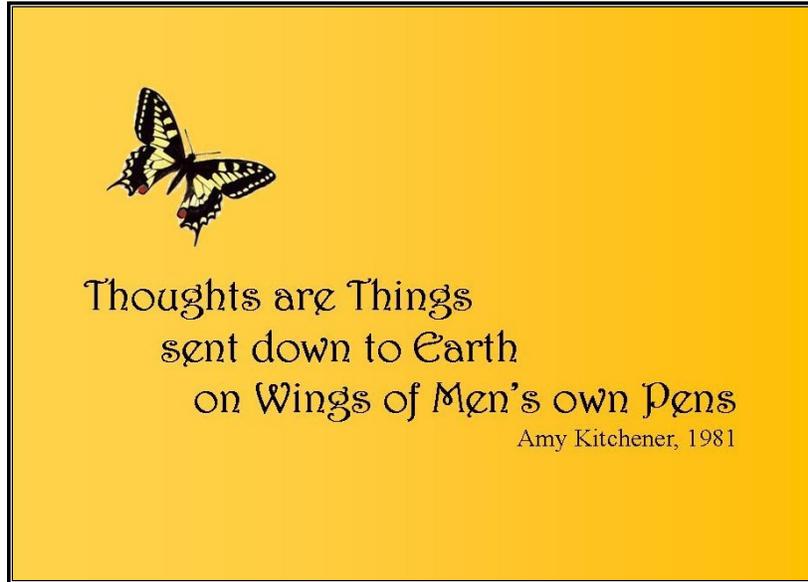


HOMELESS IN PARADISE

October 15-21, 2021

INTRODUCING HOMELESS IN PARADOX - Part 2



CAN MONTEREY PENINSULA SURVIVE THE CHANGE FROM PARADISE TO PARADOX?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

REPEATING the opening lines of last week's column helps me stick to my resolve to go forth and finish three final installments of Homeless in Paradise before—to use writers' parlance—"killing it off."

If reference to violent demise shocks you, read on.

Writers like me live in mind worlds—meaning domains full of metaphorical visions and intangible ideas that are our realities.

Everything from a short poem to a vast volume of history is a creative piece like a living thing to the mind that conceived, incubated and gave it birth. To truly be "finished" a piece must be released, else the revisions might go on for a lifetime. I named this final four-part series "Homeless in Paradox" because--now that California has finally declared all-out assault against homelessness--the metaphor of Paradise is no longer applicable to the Monterey Peninsula, while Paradox is a perfect portent of what is to come: exposition of persistent poverty in one of the richest parts of the United States.

What Does Homeless In Paradox Mean?

According to Wikipedia: *"In literature the paradox is an anomalous juxtaposition of incongruous ideas for the sake of striking exposition or unexpected insight. It functions as a method of literary composition and analysis that involves examining apparently contradictory statements and drawing conclusions either to reconcile them or explain their presence."*

An example of a local paradox is the recent passage of legislation that outlaws Single Family Residence (SFR) zoning in order to increase the affordable housing supply here in Paradise.

How? Through such means as allowing current SFR property owners to now erect small habitable structures of no more than 500 sq. ft. in residential yards. Also, dividing one lot into two, permitting separate Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) and remodeling existent residences into duplexes.

Could this mean cramming already crowded areas with even more people? Go figure!

Meanwhile, palatial mansions the size of mini-hotels stand virtually unoccupied in Pebble Beach and other high-end parts of the greater Monterey coastline. What, if any, role will they play in Governor Gavin Newsom's boondoggle bust of the century? How many 500-sq. ft. shacks will we find in their yards in the future?

Not only is the Monterey Peninsula, formerly known as Paradise, turning into Paradox, so is the USA because poverty and homelessness are running rampant like a raging river in a drought. That's a paradox.

Beyond the metaphor, I am old and a successor is needed to further pursue where homelessness is going. Hospice of the Heart is helping me find spiritual strength to let go this column which I love.

Hospice Of The Heart

Metaphorically as well as paradoxically, a writer must kill his/her/their child in order to give it life.

There are mental apron strings, just as exist in real life between children and parents, as well as parents and their kids. If heartstrings aren't "broken," the process of a child or a literary product being free to have its own life can be diminished, damaged, and/or destroyed.

Sometimes it takes a powerful act, such as I made when I declared that it was time to kill off this column, to end something at the right time. That something could be a marriage, a job, a no-longer-productive habit or a journalistic column whose effectiveness has been completed.

When Governor Gavin Newsom signed history-changing powerful legislation into law that cast homelessness out of Paradise and into Paradox, my job was technically done. I'd spent seven years as a lobbyist for busting the boondoggle that hobbled homelessness. He did it! He'll handle the ballyhooing now.

If my experience inspires you, my hope is that your Muse is with you. Here's how I met my muse, Amy Kitchener. Hope you recognize your muse(s) as they appear in dreams, as thoughts and ideas and as images.

Meeting The Muse

My Muse, Amy Kitchener, manifested as an image in my kitchen in 1973 and periodically appears even now. She gave me this message back in 1981 and it has inspired every one of the 363 Homeless in Paradise columns to-date.

"Thoughts are things sent down to earth on wings of men's own pens."

It reminds me that Homeless in Paradise was a public service which I performed as a freelance columnist. But when a writer finishes a piece that has deep meaning to him or her, it's like ending a relationship around which one's life has been built. It's necessary to let it go just as if it were a loved one who had died. There is a period of hanging on (denial), then mourning, grieving, and final acceptance and release.

The question now isn't how one can live without the one idea, person, concept, or belief that's gone, but how to fill the void with someone or something new. Since this week's column is number 363, I am announcing that the final edition of Homeless in Paradise will be Column 365 dated October 28, 2021.

So, now, to the words mentioned at the start of this column:

Famous First Words!

Coming full circle is called "returning to square one" in boondoggle-busting lingo. If I'm correct, that's nearly where I am after last weekend's monumental action by California Governor Gavin Newsom.

Merely two weeks and a day after surviving attempts to recall him, Gov. Newsom made boondoggle-busting history that should prove as powerful an influence on 21st Century Americana as the Big Bang theory was to 20th Century theories of how the universe was born.

Gov. Newsom didn't just bust the cycle of homeless boondoggling in California. He blasted it. Is it any wonder that I tremble?

And I add: *If you're not trembling, too, you should be!*

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CREDITS:

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