

HOMELESS IN PARADISE

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FROM BARD-BOMBS TO BLITZES

Getting results through a “Homeless News Day” media event

By Wanda Sue Parrott

BARD-BOMBING the Bush White House in a mass Poetic Voice to protest the pending invasion of Iraq in March 2003 was a failure. If my experiment had succeeded, diplomacy, not war, would have revealed Saddam Hussein didn’t have the ballyhooed weapons of mass destruction.

It’s possible a gazillion poets actually hand-penned protest poems on postcards, then mailed them to the first lady, but the White House never leaked a word about Laura’s early April card shower. Did the literary protest end in defeat, or was poetry considered insignificant by the powers-that-were?

Anyway, what the connection to homelessness? It’s an election year, that’s what! Read on.

Anyone Interested In A Homeless News Day?

Fast-forward to Tuesday, May 24, 2016, and a “Here and Now” segment I heard on National Public Radio.

Audrey Cooper, editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, was being interviewed about a forthcoming collaborative blitz of the Bay Area by members of all media combined to “promote discourse on how to find solutions. The media-wide event will feature a variety of subjects related to homelessness, which has spread in San Francisco like a kudzu vine. Homeless news will run all day throughout the day on Wed., June 29.

If the multi-media outlets on the Monterey Peninsula were to join in the movement, and every newspaper, radio and television station would broadcast news dealing with homelessness, there truly could be strength in numbers.

Monterey Peninsula Round-Up

Meanwhile, here on the Monterey Peninsula, both homelessness and efforts to alleviate it, as well as control it, are transpiring, as evidenced through changes currently in progress.

Gathering for Women: The largest number of guests in the Gathering for Women's two-year history took place this week. A record 129 women were served.

Rev. Cindy Storrs will become the Director of Operations for Gathering for Women, effective July 1.

A Variety Show to raise funds to benefit Gathering for Women will be held on Sat., May 28, a p.m. at the Center for Spiritual Living, 400 W. Franklin Ave., Monterey.

Tickets are \$20 and may be purchased at the door or online at www.montereycsl.org .

Monterey's Matching-Fund Challenge: Monterey's assistant city manager Hans Uslar gave me this matching-funds challenge update:

"I am happy to report the Cities of Pacific Grove, Carmel and Monterey have come together to complete the homeless challenge grant. The City now has a total of \$47,423 to be spent on homeless service providers from the 2016 Challenge. Monterey's contribution of \$28,252 was matched by Pacific Grove's contribution of \$15,295 and Carmel's contribution of \$3,786."

A meeting is slated for June 2 with all potential local service providers, who will be asked for proposals on how to best allocate the funding. City of Monterey staff will review the submitted proposals and make recommendations to a group of three elected officials representing each of the giving cities.

"We also sent out a letter to the Councils of Del Rey Oaks, Seaside, Sand City and Marina to inform them the challenge was met," Uslar adds, "and they still have time to join us."

Respite care for homeless patients: A Medical Respite Unit for homeless persons discharged from a hospital opened at 780 Hamilton Ave., Seaside on Tues., May 24. Reyes Bonilla, Executive Director of Community Human Services (formerly Shelter Outreach Plus) says Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, Natividad and Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital combined forces to offer six beds (two per hospital).

Amenities are needed to enhance the living environment of this formerly private home. For details about items needed, contact Steve Craig, 831-384-3388, ext. 115, or visit <http://www.shelteroutreachplus.org/>

So Long, It's Been Good To Know You...

It's like the folk song says, "but I've gotta keep moving along." And so it will be with Seaside's homeless residents in vehicles whose welcomes have expired, such as my neighbors in a vintage Hippie VW bus that moves from day to day.

Seaside City Council voted unanimously on May 19 to adopt the amendment, first read on April 21, to modify Chapter 10.04 and Chapter 10.32 of the Municipal Code to prohibit the parking of recreational vehicles, trailers and prohibited vehicles on the streets, alleys, public rights-of-way and publicly owned lots.

Advance notices about restricted parking will be placed on all such vehicles, and signs are to be posted at entrances to the city.

Metaphorically, that is poetically, it's like a mass 30-day eviction notice being served on people who must be gone after June 19 or... or what?

For those hit by such a bard-bomb, can diplomacy save them from their weapon of mass destruction, the law?



If a June 29 Homeless News Day catches on, tune in to learn a few answers. Meanwhile, read the amended Ordinance at <http://seasideca.boardsync.com/web/site.aspx>

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