

## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

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Column #88



### **THEY'RE HAVING WHAT ON THE BEACH?** *Rumors and innuendo from the Houseless Grapevine* By Wanda Sue Parrott

**KICKING** off summer includes local line dancers practicing “Sex on the Beach” based on the hit song by that title from the nineties <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QD6WPaGfyOg>.

If rumors are true, a local homeless woman I’ll call Trixie is doing more than dancing; she’s allegedly selling sex on the beach, on Alvarado Street in downtown Monterey, and wherever else your-guess-is-as-good-as-mine might imagine.

I asked participants in the Interdenominational Homeless Emergency Lodging Program (I-HELP) for Men: *What can you tell me, in strictest confidence, about sex-for-sale by members of the peninsula’s homeless community?*

Two fifty-somethings said, “Although we’re part of the homeless community, there are different lifestyles within the community; we have more structure. . .” and “I never heard of it even when I was in that group.”

A man in his 60s said, “I never heard anything. If I did, believe me, I’d find out more.”

“Why?” I asked.

He said, “It’s a matter of morals.”

A teen volunteer responded, “Those who are less affluent are more prone to it, probably” and a dapper 40-year-old said, “No comment.”

Monterey Police Chief David Hober said the Monterey Police Dept. has not heard anything specific in relation to a person in the homeless community being engaged in prostitution. According to Chief Hober, “Prostitution is something that occurs in society, and we do enforce prostitution laws.”

### **Bright Boxes Become Baby Bordellos**

My May 29, 2015, column featured tiny homes as potential shelter for houseless people. In Los Angeles, Elvis Summers had built a portable 3-1/2 ft. x 8 ft. home for a 60-year-old homeless woman from supplies he bought at Home Depot. A tiny-house fad exploded after the story was picked up by *People* and went viral.

Summers raised \$19,000 on GoFundMe, with which to build and distribute sleeping-box houses like this one.

Barely six months passed before Summers' experiment was doomed for the tiny houses under freeways and bridges in Los Angeles. They were deemed unsanitary by officials and rumored to be fast-sex-for-quick-cash baby-sized bordellos.

By Feb. 26, 2016, the *Los Angeles Times* reported city officials had stepped up efforts to ban and seize the tiny houses; Summers trucked many of them to storage before the city could impound and destroy them.

Whether so-called sellers of sex were arrested by the vice squad or prosecuted by the Los Angeles District Attorney's office is unknown, but I've learned through the Houseless Grapevine of one city's creative jurisprudence approach to homeless lawbreakers.

Would this system work here?

### Homeless Court

According to homeless advocate Bon Tindle, in Springfield, Missouri a special courtroom in the Greene County Courthouse is reserved for hearing only cases involving homeless people.

"Homeless Court" features a judge who handles cases as expediently as possible in order to neither tie up courts nor homeless individuals whose special circumstances are taken into consideration.

Whether hookers and hoofers share the same cell space remains to be revealed, but bunks for homeless overnights who wind up behind bars are an alternative to sleeping on the street, as might be bunks on a bus reputed to be possibly used as a cold-weather warming shelter in the greater San Luis Obispo area. More local warming shelter news will appear next week.

### First Responders

Meanwhile, two responses have been received from my recent invitation for readers to share memories of the first homeless persons they remember. One was Cedar Street Times' popular columnist Tom Stevens, whose "Otter Views" column about a homeless Hawaiian woman appears in the June 10 edition on page 19 at <http://goo.gl/MhPLTG>.

The other respondent was Virginia Artrip Snyder of Delray Beach, Fla., who contacted me via Facebook. Virginia refers to herself as the former investigative-reporter-turned-private-eye who inspired the TV series "Murder She Wrote." She says:



*"When I was a little girl living on an isolated farm in Virginia, a man came to our back door and asked if we had any food we could give him. He said he was 'riding the rails' looking for work. Many men were riding the rails, looking for work. Oh yes. Mom made a sandwich for him for which he thanked very politely. This was during The Great Depression.*

*"I don't know how he found our house as we were so isolated that electric and telephone lines did not reach us until I was about 12 years old."*

This year Virginia celebrates turning 96.

Trixie, the homeless woman rumored to supplement her social security by having whatever-you-call-it on the beach, is alleged by rumor and innuendo to be age 80 to 84. I don't know the truth. Does anyone?

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