

A Voice for the Sacramento Area Homeless Community Since 1997



HOMeward

Street Journal

Volume 23, No. 6

Member INSP Street News Service

Nov. & Dec., 2019

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Decarcerate Sacramento Leads Protests Against Wasteful Expansion of County Jail

“Decarcerate Sacramento” Leads Public Outcry against Sacramento’s Wasteful and Hurtful Jail Expansion Projects

By Cathleen Williams

Lorenzo Mays, diagnosed with significant mental illness and an intellectual disability, was in Sacramento County Jail for eight years awaiting trial, having repeatedly been found incompetent to stand trial. Most of his days in jail were filled with the dangers and monotony of solitary confinement. Permitted just a few hours out of his cell per week, he experienced auditory hallucinations, deepened depression, severe anxiety and even suicidal thoughts. Yet he did not receive meaningful mental health treatment as his condition deteriorated.”

Lorenzo Mays is a lead plaintiff in *Mays v. Sacramento*, the civil rights case filed in 2018 against Sacramento County for cruel and unusual punishment and other constitutional violations affecting tens of thousands of prisoners cycling in and out

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International Network of Street Papers Celebrates a Quarter of a Century

INSP has been celebrating its 25th anniversary all year with events and projects, and sharing stories and memories. INSP spoke to members of the network also celebrating the quarter of a century milestone in 2019 about what has changed and what is to come.

By Tony Inglis

For a quarter of a century, INSP has supported street papers to promote independent media and quality journalism that provide a source of income and support to people experiencing poverty from its base in Glasgow.

Throughout 2019, INSP has been celebrating this milestone by showcasing the global impact and reach of the street paper movement and, as the last few months of the year approach, is hoping to draw attention even further to its work, and that of its members.

Speaking about the anniversary, INSP’s chief executive Maree Aldam said: “For 25 years, INSP has supported the street paper movement to help



A collage of the 25 street papers nominated for the People's Cover award

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International Network of Street Papers

tens of thousands of homeless vendors each year to earn an income and improve their lives.

"During this time, we have seen social shifts and economic changes that pose challenges to our street papers but also mean that their work – supporting some of the most marginalised people in our towns and cities – has never been more important."

As of this year, over 100 street papers make up INSP's network of members, scattered across 35 countries, and printed in 25 languages. This year alone has seen new members added to the cohort, including the first ever street paper in Peru. It's a sign that, even though a rapidly changing world continues to throw obstacles in the way, street papers are surviving – in many cases thriving – and INSP remains there to support them and their vendors, who, as individuals, continue to come up against sociopolitical factors, discrimination, criminalization, stigmatization, and even violence, in their fight to earn an income, take shelter, obtain permanent housing and pull themselves out of poverty.

She added: "In recent years, the global recession and related political and economic changes have had a significant impact on urban poverty and homelessness, with issues such as economic migration, unemployment and housing shortages increasing the need for innovative solutions like street papers. Digital developments in media consumption and cashless payments are a challenge to street papers but with our support, street paper organizations are evolving and innovating."

"Throughout our 25th anniversary year, and in the years ahead, we will support our street papers to stay relevant in a changing world. We will continue to provide editorial content, business development support and training to our street papers, and we will also increasingly support our network to collaborate at different levels – locally, regionally and internationally – exploring new ways to innovate and increase the social impact of street papers."

INSP's 25th birthday celebrations kicked off in February with its annual #VendorWeek, honoring the individuals at the very center of the movement. The 2019 installment of the Global Street Paper Summit – always a highlight of the network's calendar – saw important faces, old and new, from throughout the history of the network meet, talk and get to the center of the issues street papers face today and the innovations taking them forward. INSP's first ever chair and co-founder Mel Young spoke to current chair Fay Selvan about their experiences, and fielded questions about how times have changed, while delegates were given opportunities to quiz, critique and reminisce the movement as a whole. In the Summit's host city of Hannover, awards were dished out, recognizing the best of the street paper network. Not least was the inclusion of a special award chosen by the public (the first ever) for their favorite cover, with the eventual winner being Kralji Ulice of Slovenia.

New content has come to the INSP News Service, the network's news wire for street papers, in the form of a partnership with non-profit news organization Next City; the seeds for greater regional support and collaboration were sown thanks to mini-summits and the establishment of INSP North America; work has been done to get to the root of calculating how valuable INSP membership is through a consultancy project with Edinburgh-based student-led organization FreshSight; readers have gone round the world with vendors as their guide, sat in the stands at an international sporting tournament for the homeless community and much more.

To take celebrations even further, in September, INSP is sharing statistics gathered from its annual survey – the only one of its kind to measure the impact of street papers. In the last year, street papers have put £24.2 million in the pockets of vendors worldwide.

And as a way of displaying to the world this impact, INSP is taking part in the inaugural Edinburgh International Magazine Festival, including Magfest (20 September) where INSP board member Nikoleta Kosovac, of Serbian street paper Liceulice, will take part in a panel discussion, chaired by Big Issue editor Paul McNamee, talking about the ways magazines can shape our society, spark conversations and shift perceptions.

A shared anniversary

As well as being a landmark year for INSP, 2019 sees a number of street paper members celebrate 25th birthdays, many of which spoke to INSP about their longevity and continuing inspirational work.

25 years is a long time in the world of journalism and publishing, but it is particularly special for those working in street papers. Many of those interviewed commented on the changing media landscape. The majority both praised and bemoaned their existence, and in a sense both are valid. Street papers are doing extraordinarily well to continue, and be successful, in an environment where print journalism is less popular, funding opportunities are less accessible and other external factors – political, social, cultural – impact



Real Change Founding Director Tim Harris (right) sells copies of Real Change alongside vendor Darryl Manassa (left) for vendor week during Feb. 2018. [Photo by Sam Holman]

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their vendors, and for that they should be proud. At the same time, street papers exist because homelessness exists, as it did 25 years ago, and that's not something to be satisfied with.

"Our biggest achievement is that we still exist," says Volker Macke, editor-in-chief of Hannover's Asphalt, which celebrated its 25th anniversary with a special edition of the street paper and a party with supporters, readers and vendors in the city, as it hosted the 2019 Global Street Paper Summit, in June. "That our little street paper could help all in all about 3,000 formerly homeless or poor vendors throughout the past 25 years - that's something we're proud of."

It's true still that, as street papers grow, there is a tinge of sadness. Of course, growth shows that these organizations are helping more people, but often it can also be a reflection of an increase in need as well as success. After all, the ultimate success is the eradication of homelessness and poverty.

"At the beginning, we had maybe 30 to 40 vendors; now it's more than 80. This is a change, not a success. It tells us that there are more poor people," says Ilse Weiss, editor of street paper Strassenkreuzer, which started out with a print run of 10,000 every three months when it was established in 1994, but now prints 18,000 on a monthly basis.

Very modern phenomena, like the refugee crisis, have also contributed to the scale of the issue in countries like Germany. Weiss adds: "More people are homeless now [there are an estimated 1,200 homeless people living in Strassenkreuzer's base city of Nuremberg, according to Weiss], and many more poor people from other European countries come to German towns with some hope of an income and a future. But they mostly fail in the streets. There are thousands of refugees who do not have an easy future here. The gap is deeper now between those with and those without money and resources."

While those papers celebrating 25 years in the movement are wildly geographically different, there was wide consensus that, despite the great strides they have made as individual organizations to fill the gaps, homelessness is not decreasing drastically enough.

"The homeless people on Hannover's streets are no longer as visible as in the Nineties because we have more shelters today," says Macke. "But they are still there, still poor, and, due to a new housing shortage in the last five to ten years, still without homes. Formerly homeless people who now live in shelters have no chance to get their own flat or other permanent accommodation. They stand at the end of a long queue."

Put Domoi is a street paper in Russia, probably one of the most hostile and authoritarian environments of all those who are a part of the network. Its editor-in-chief Arkady Tiurin describes similar trends in homelessness as those by Macke, though is a little more philosophical: "External [visible] homelessness decreased markedly, while internal [hidden] homelessness remained at the same level. However, it has always been with humanity."

In other places, small wins are frustratingly counteracted. In Utrecht, numbers of 1,500 rough sleepers were lowered thanks to easily accessible shelters and healthcare around the mid-2000s, but is rising again due to insufficient social housing and care for young homeless people, according to Frank Dries, editor-in-chief of the area's street paper, Straatnieuws. There was a similar reaction by Sylvia Rizvi, editor-in-chief of Trott-war: "The safety net for the homeless community has improved. There's now a lot of specialist counseling services, integration projects, aid organizations and non-permanent assisted living facilities. Accommodation for the homeless is now often significantly better than before."

"Though, for organizations that want to help, it is difficult

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Sacramento's Five Point Plan on Homelessness

By Paula Lomazzi

City Councilmember Angelique Ashby brought together other councilmembers to create the Five Point Plan to meet the challenge from the Mayor to provide shelter for 100 people in each district. The plan is in the early stages without anything in the pipeline, though it is the current direction City Council wants to take towards addressing homelessness.

Other recent plans and efforts led to the recent Capitol Park Hotel being transformed into a temporary shelter until Mercy Housing converts it into Permanent Supportive Housing and a small LGBTQ focused youth shelter, both in Councilmember Hansen's downtown district 4. Still being planned is a 100 bed sprung shelter, a large tent-like structure on state property by Broadway and Alhambra.

The five points brought to the October 22 Sacramento City Council meeting was presented by Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency:

1. Scattered Sites for homeless families proposed for Ashby and Carr's districts. Carr campaigned hard with Ashby's support against putting a proposed sprung shelter for women and children in his district. This is their alternative.

2. Overnight parking for the vehicularly housed in Councilmember Jenning's district would provide parking in the evenings, only, with basic hygiene services and other social service outreach.
3. Tents and Sleeping Cabins. Councilmember Harris identified a site for a First Step Communities plan with an area of tents and cabins and tiny houses with a community center. Councilmember Warren is interested in 50 sleeping cabins in his district. Safe Parking may be included.
4. Motel Conversion. Harris is also interested in converting a motel into shelter to help 400 people.
5. Permanent supportive housing development funding, eg. Tax credits, Measure U funding through 2025.

All very ambitious but doable proposals were on the table with a straw vote for acceptance by City Council. However, the Council decided to wait for an itemized report to be completed, including budgets and locations, before final approval. Funding for these projects seems to be available now or in the near future (Whole Person Care Act, HEAP, Capitol Park leveraging, Measure U to name a few sources).

Budgets, though extremely high on projects that may seem simple, can probably be greatly downsized by looking at huge administration fees and high salaries that SHRA thought appropriate, consolidating expenses and services (a mobile shower could rotate to various locations—its mobile), and donations of materials and volunteer labor. There are many community members that have been rearing to go on projects using cabins (Compassion Village, First Step Communities, and HOME Aid) and self-governed, self-run tent communities (Safe Ground Sacramento). At the same time costs may at times have been underestimated because they have set goals of how many people can be served, where it may turn out that those being sheltered cannot be so easily transitioned within their time-limits to permanent housing.

We need more opportunities for people getting off the streets into appropriate housing than this plan will address, but it's a start. Meanwhile, we have to ensure the Mayor and others discontinue their talk about forced sheltering, and that we strengthen our communities by protecting those who engage in self-determined survival strategies, those who have been left out in the cold (and heat) for sometimes years, who have learned out of necessity how to survive without the luxury of these proposed services—for years!

Trump's Comments about Homelessness on the US West Coast Highlights Ineffective Government Policies

Brenda Wiewel, director of the Initiative to Eliminate Homelessness, explains why drawing attention to LA's homelessness crisis is a good thing – just not for the reasons Trump thinks.

By Brenda Wiewel

Los Angeles became ground zero for America's homelessness crisis after President Donald Trump visited the city on 17 September.

"We can't let Los Angeles, San Francisco and numerous other cities destroy themselves by allowing what's happening," Trump said. They're ruining the "best highways, our best streets, our best entrances to buildings."

While the Trump administration's prioritization of highways and buildings over people is far from heart-warming, he does have a point in highlighting LA and its homeless problem – but not for the reasons he thinks.

As an expert in homelessness, I've studied the many ways Los Angeles has tried to deal with homelessness on its streets. While some plans have worked better than others, I believe the city's efforts are instructive for policymakers across the country who want to tackle their own homeless problems.

Homelessness in LA

The United States' homeless population is concentrated on the West Coast and in the Northeast, with almost half in California alone.

Coastal cities are especially prone to homelessness because there's not enough affordable housing and real estate prices tend to be very high.

Rents are increasing in LA as well. When more than half of a household's monthly income goes to pay rent, there is not enough left for living expenses.

As a result, homeless encampments have cropped up in every part of the city. An increasing number of unsheltered homeless people in the U.S. — those who are on the streets as opposed to in temporary shelters — live in LA.

Rampant homelessness not only hurts those living on the streets – as seen by rising death rates – but also harms all residents of a community, including economically.

What hasn't worked

Many of LA's efforts to tackle the problem have actually followed Trump's approach: Treat it as a nuisance and keep it out of sight and away from where people live and work.

In the early 2000s, LA officials tried an approach known as the Safer Cities Initiative with a focus on Skid Row, an area of downtown LA that contains the largest homeless population in the U.S. It was supposed to clean up crime and community disorder by promptly targeting minor crimes, such as jaywalking or littering.

Later reports showed that it did not reduce extreme poverty or crime. It succeeded only in criminalizing homelessness and emphasizing problems of racial inequality.

In 2017 the city banned people from sleeping in their cars in residential areas and near schools and parks. And the city council has been debating limits on where people can sleep in the streets, without being able to come to any agreement.

The city has also tried to clear out encampments, which has resulted in homeless advocates filing lawsuits over the constitutionality of removing people's belongings.

Exploring other options

Some of the city's approaches, however, have focused more on addressing the root causes of homelessness and have the backing of research.

One such initiative known as the Coordinated Entry System

has brought together the government, nonprofit groups and private citizens to create a database of homeless people that documents their progress in and out of services.

The initiative also helped match people with available housing resources. It is structured to prioritize the most vulnerable homeless people, such as those with multiple health conditions that may be fatal within a year without intervention.

From 2017 through 2018, homelessness decreased significantly in many areas that used this system. Additionally, there has been an effort to inform policy decisions through data analysis by partnering with universities and to address conditions on the streets by working with encampments to provide shelter tied to permanent housing. Through a recent sales tax increase, Los Angeles area communities now have access to expanded outreach, housing and other resources.

As a result, there is capacity to reach more people experiencing homelessness. New regulations provide incentives to encourage developers to build more affordable housing units, and the city plans to put multiple housing units on the market over the next few years. Units will include homes and apartments.

The city has also made a commitment to addressing the role of race and structural inequality, bringing together the community, scholars and government representatives to investigate why African Americans make up 40 per cent of all homeless people but only 9 per cent of the total population in LA.

Although homelessness remains a serious problem in Los Angeles, the city is starting to take steps to address it based on best practices rather than simply removing the problem from sight.

Brenda Wiewel Is director of the Initiative to Eliminate Homelessness at the University of Southern California

Courtesy of *The Conversation / INSP.ngo*

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to find anywhere for their clients. Here in Württemberg, where Trott-war is on sale, there is far too little affordable accommodation. There are also too few council properties and even fewer year on year."

The availability, and quality, of accommodation is even more drastic in Göttingen. "Durable accommodation is getting more and more impossible and a lot of working poor people here are facing homelessness today," says Tagessatz editor Ute Kahle. "The social housing market here is facing a breakdown and a lot of people with work will be homeless soon, not being able to pay rising housing costs. 'Shelter [conditions] are worse than jail' is a quote from one of our vendors from last year - no words need to be added there."

In a detailed response, L'Itinéraire's executive director Luc Desjardins outlined how homelessness in the street paper's city of Montréal is disproportionately affecting women, the indigenous population (less than one per cent of the general population is indigenous), and yet the community makes up more than 12 per cent of homeless people in the city) and the elderly (the number of elderly homeless people there has quadrupled in the last 20 years).

In Seattle, it's an influx of the middle and upper classes, as opposed to refugees, that has had a detrimental effect on homelessness. "Since we started, Seattle has become tied with San Francisco for most unequal city in America and rates of homelessness have more than tripled," says Real Change founding director, and INSP board member, Tim Harris. "We are a national leader in both housing first and the tiny houses movement, but the economic dislocation caused by gentrification and state level disinvestment in mental health and drug and alcohol treatment have accelerated the rate of homelessness."

This anecdotal evidence may be cause for concern, but interviewees also highlighted the expansion of street papers to meet the challenge of supporting the ever-increasing number of those who could use their assistance. One of the main ways is their development in to larger scale organizations providing training opportunities, extra-curricular activities, other innovative ways for homeless people and vendors to earn an income, and engaging in political activism, something that has changed radically in 25 years.

"[When L'Itinéraire came into existence in 1994] the public was wary of these homeless people selling their paper on the street. But thanks to partnerships with the city, transit authorities, the media and, of course, the vendors themselves, L'Itinéraire became a part of the Montréal landscape," explains Desjardins, whose street paper celebrated its anniversary with a bumper special edition, participation in the World Press Photo exhibition and a big sell event, where 25 notable local names paired with vendors to sell the magazine for a day (12 September), raising in excess of \$30,000.

Real Change, which hosts its annual breakfast on 19 September, which will act as a celebration of its achievement of 25



(L-R) Fay Selvan, Hannele Huhtala and Mel Young at the 2019 Global Street Paper Summit in Hannover. [Credit: Sebastian Sellhorst]

years, has grown to create a lasting impact on its community. "In 2010, we ran an initiative campaign that helped change the conversation on poverty crime in Seattle and stopped construction of a new municipal jail for misdemeanors," says Harris of one of Real Change's biggest achievements. "Seattle is now a national leader in diversion-based approaches to low level arrests involving mental illness and drug use, and this was a pivotal moment in that evolution."

And Portugal's CAIS, another street paper reaching its 25th birthday, sees its scope as much larger. "After CAIS was founded, the great impact it had on people's lives was visible, especially in their self-esteem and dignity. Given the social and economic changes in Portugal over time, what started as a street paper quickly became a bigger organization with broader and more specific answers to people with different needs," explains its executive director Conceição Cordeiro. "CAIS was able to extend its

response in multiple areas, offering social and employment support, training and raising awareness about entrepreneurship and social responsibility."

For some of those spoken to, there are hyper-specific things. A regular writing workshop for vendors and social city tours at Strassenkreuzer; bringing vendors more integrally into the creation of the publication at L'Itinéraire, which even produces an annual 100 per cent vendor issue, as well as ensuring a path into possible employment in the media industry thanks to internships and mentoring for those vendors; an art project at Trott-war which works with established artists to create a gallery space for socially disadvantaged artists to make an income from their creativity; and in the Netherlands, a consolidation of three of the country's seven street papers, including Straatnieuws, pooling resources so as to ensure survival and "have a bigger impact nationwide", resulting in shared pages in each of their revamped publications.



Delegates populate an interactive timeline spanning INSP's 25 years. [Credit: Sebastian Sellhorst]

There is a sense that street papers are about even more than what they originally started out as. Straatnieuws' Dries puts it most succinctly: "First of all we have helped countless numbers of people to earn an honest income. Secondly, but by a smaller margin, we gave them a voice, a face and made them visible on the street."

With 25 years under the belt, and many other INSP members across the network set to celebrate equally impressive achievements in years to come, these now veteran street papers can now look to the future. Some have messages of support for INSP and fellow street papers, while others want to share their hopes and aspirations.

"I don't have big hopes; I prefer small ones anyway. But I dream: I would appreciate more honest discussions in politics and society about equity and chances. Less money thinking, and more democracy. I dream of Housing First possibilities for at least some homeless people. And that we sell out every month," says Weiss with a wink.

Harris is more realistic: "Our biggest challenges are to be part of the active resistance to social exclusion and growing inequality, and to adapt to the new media landscape by bridging print and digital media. [Street papers] all learn from each other and are stronger when we work together."

Tiurin is again gnomic, but inspirational: "We don't dictate what other people should do. But we are an example of living without illusions and fear."

And, of course, there are straightforward proclamations of thanks and solidarity.

"We would like to congratulate the work done by the street paper network over these 25 years," says Cordeiro. "We would like for that good job to continue, to fight social exclusion and poverty until this is no longer necessary. Innovation, new solutions, good practices and exchange between different partners in different countries are needed to keep improving and adapting to changes that might come."

Similarly, Desjardins adds: "L'Itinéraire has been fighting the good fight alongside INSP. We are proud to be part of the worldwide street paper movement, one that offers concrete solutions for getting people off the streets, empowering them, helping them regain self-esteem and allowing them a dignified way to earn an income. Thanks to INSP, our stories – and those of all the street papers in the world - gain a larger audience, and create a greater public awareness of the homeless situation."

Common amongst all the sentiments is Rizvi's final declaration: "Together we are stronger."

Translation assistance by Louise Thomas

Courtesy of INSP.ngo

Mercy Pedalers' Levee Cleanup

Mercy Pedalers joined homeless people living near the river for the American River Levee Cleanup Day located near Township 9 and Two Rivers Park in Sacramento. Those living outside near there started cleaning their areas before the October 16th event. Mercy Pedalers is a nonprofit "ministry of presence" with nearly 90 pedalers each ride bicycles or tricycles around town to offer acknowledgement and conversation, usually starting with a cup of coffee, to learn about the needs of houseless individuals and ways the pedalers can help.



Photos: Left & Above - Sr. Libby Fernandez, Mercy Pedalers' director

Below: Paula Lomazzi

Poor People's Campaign Supports Sacramento Climate Coalition

Presentation at Poor People's Campaign Forum at Sacramento State, October 16, 2019 sponsored by the Sacramento State's Center for Race, Immigration, and Social Justice.

by Cathleen Williams

on behalf of the Poor People's Campaign.

Just a year ago, Sacramento's skies were darkened as fires devoured Paradise, California, devastating a town of 55,000. The devastation of the fires demonstrates that what we used to call climate change deserves to be treated as an emergency – a climate emergency.

No government agency stepped forward to make the public investment in housing that was needed to stabilize and protect thousands of low income people. At every level, government said, "Well, there's little we can do. You are on your own. Best of luck."

So the mostly low-income residents of Paradise were scattered to the winds – some of them joining the tens of thousands of homeless in California.

But I'm not here to fill you with stories of gloom and doom, of fires and floods and a heating planet. I'm here to say that we have the power – especially you as young people have the power – to not just change but *transform* the structures and immoral policies that are both fueling the climate crisis *and* the crisis of housing and poverty.

As stated by Dr. Barber, "...we are witnessing a movement swearing that America will be born anew in this moment, right in the midst of the deferred dreams and hopes of the poor." This is the energy, the social force, that fuels the Poor Peoples Campaign.

We understand that the current economic system is destroying the planet as the price for private profit. According to official reports, PG&E, the nation's largest public utility, triggered the Paradise fires through its neglect – and it spent \$10 million in lobbying the state government last year to protect its interest in continuing to profit.

We can meet these crises with the vision of a green economy that can and will build millions of houses on a new model of cooperation and environmental preservation. The Paradise fire displaced just 55,000 people – but the numbers driven from our vulnerable coastlines by sea level rise will be in the millions --- and they will join us to build and rebuild our cities and our economy.

Right now, Poor People's Campaign is joining the launch of a campaign to demand that our own City Council sign on to a Declaration of Climate Emergency that has been prepared by the Sacramento Climate Coalition. The declaration requires specific actions to address the impacts, including the fire in Paradise with its devastating effects on the poor who became "climate refugees."

As Greta Thunberg said recently, "It may seem impossible to pull the emergency brake, but that is what we have to do."

Air conditioning for all?

Hotter world faces risk of 'cooling poverty'

By Laurie Goering

As climate change brings more frequent and extreme heatwaves around the world, demand for air conditioners is soaring, with 10 new units sold every second on average - but the poor may be left to swelter, according to a University of Oxford researcher.

By 2050, energy use for cooling is projected to triple, while in hot countries like India, China, Brazil and Indonesia, it is expected to grow five-fold, the World Bank has said.

"By the end of the century, global energy demand for cooling will be more than it is for heating," said Radhika Khosla, who leads an Oxford Martin School programme on future cooling.

But not everyone will be able to afford to beat the heat.

"Traditionally, energy poverty has been defined as people not having heating. Now that is potentially going to shift, and we could have cooling poverty," Khosla warned on the sidelines of a conference on efforts to slash planet-warming emissions.

Rising heat is having a huge impact on health – deaths and hospital admissions jump in heatwaves – but also on productivity as workers struggle to cope, climate scientists say.

A 2018 report from Sustainable Energy for All, a U.N.-backed organisation, said more than 1.1 billion people globally faced immediate risks from lack of access to cooling.

On a warming planet, cooling is not a luxury but "essential for everyday life", said the organisation's CEO Rachel Kyte.

But because air conditioners use 20 times as much power as running a fan, their growing popularity could fuel demand for fossil fuel-based electricity that exacerbates climate change.

Rather than relying entirely on air conditioning, buildings should be designed so they are easier to keep cool, which is still rare, said Khosla, who also directs research at the Oxford India Centre for Sustainable Development.

Her modern apartment has windows that open just a few inches, making it hard to keep cool on hot days, she said.

"Net zero" buildings – designed partly to stay cool without heavy use of air conditioning – are popping up around the world, from Southeast Asia to the United States and Europe, but remain the exception.

Khosla, who has herself lived in a range of hot

cities from New Delhi to Chicago, predicted that in the future, housing that cannot be kept cool or have air conditioning installed could see a drop in value, even in relatively cool places such as Britain.

New technology

In some developing nations with rising incomes, buying an air conditioner is also a status symbol, which could make any push for lower-energy alternatives challenging, she said.

Making less power-hungry, affordable air conditioners will be crucial, Khosla believes.

Most machines for sale now – the majority built in China – are half as energy-efficient as they could be, she said.

But researchers are working on more efficient cooling technologies that could hit the market in as little as two years, Khosla said.

Judges are now looking at entries for a \$3-million global cooling prize, launched by the Colorado-based Rocky Mountain Institute, aimed at developing an affordable window air conditioning unit that is at least five times more efficient than current models.

Amory Lovins, co-founder of the institute, said designing cheaper, greener air conditioning was "extremely important".

Getting manufacturers to ramp up production fast - partly by putting in place policies that require greater energy efficiency - will also be key, Khosla said.

Greener cooling is "one of the levers we have left" to hold the line on climate change, and using less energy for cooling would help avert power blackouts in cities on sizzling days, she said.

Cities face an "awful feedback loop" as air conditioners churn out hot exhaust, boosting temperatures further, she said.

All these risks mean smarter cooling must be figured out quickly, before the world gets even hotter and more families rush to appliance shops, she said.

"It's a future we can't afford to get wrong," she warned.

Courtesy of Reuters / Thomson Reuters Foundation / INSP.ngo

A Special Thanks to Our Homeward Underwriters:

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David & Benny wanted to be in Homeward.
Photo courtesy
Sr. Libby Fernandez, Mercy Pedalers

Decarcerate Sacramento Leads Protests

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of Sacramento County Jails. The case was settled on June 20, 2019, when the County agreed to improve its practices, especially with respect to prisoners who are disabled and/or mentally ill. As the settlement stated, “a reduction in jail population is a cost-effective means to achieve constitutional and statutory standards.” (See, Decarcerate Sacramento Fact Sheets for the data in this article.)

Despite the lawsuit’s exposure of outrageous abuse – and the settlement’s formal admission that the jail population can be reduced -- the County of Sacramento is pressing ahead with its plans for a major expansion of the Rio Consumnes Correctional Center (RCCC) in Elk Grove, which is projected to cost over \$80 million in funds loaned by the state, with an over \$8 million County match from the General Fund. “It’s not free money,” Supervisor Nottoli commented recently, noting that the cost of repayment will multiply that amount. Accepting the state loan also requires an up to 30 year commitment to running what would be a significantly more expensive jail. In addition, the County has included \$21.7 million in its 2019 budget for “jail upgrades,” allegedly in response to the lawsuit. One of the “upgrades” is actually another jail expansion plan, the construction of a new multi-story wing in the main jail downtown, projected to cost at least \$8 million.

The grassroots community group “Decarcerate Sacramento” has taken on the Sheriff’s and the County’s proposed jail expansions, calling for the funding of sustainable, community-based, alternatives to incarceration and at least a 30% reduction in the number of jail prisoners.

“Can’t Get Well In A Cell” is the theme of Decarcerate Sacramento’s extensive documentation of the negative impacts of jail expansion plans. Contra Costa, San Francisco and Los Angeles counties have all recently refused to fund jail expansions because of these negative impacts.

Decarcerate Sacramento points out that the majority of prisoners are poor and vulnerable. Two out of three persons in the jail, like Lorenzo Mays, haven’t even been convicted of a crime – too poor to afford bail, they wait for trial in jail, sometimes for years.

The jail incarcerates uncounted numbers of houseless people. Many are routinely jailed by law enforcement in Sacramento for petty offenses or simply for living outside. “I did 45 days in jail – straight time – for taking electricity from a pole to light my tent,” a houseless resident reported recently to the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC).

Most jail prisoners struggle with mental illness and substance abuse disorders and need treatment. African Americans constitute 37% of jail prisoners, even though they represent only 11% of the population, compelling evidence of the racially discriminatory arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of people of color in the county. The jail population has risen even as crime has gone down.

“Jail doesn’t mean treatment and rehabilitation,” says



Adam Jordan Wills of Decarcerate Sacramento. “Jail means violence from jailers, and sometimes from other prisoners. As we say, ‘hurt people hurt people.’ Jail means fear and trauma. Jail means restraint chairs, handcuffs, bags over heads, isolation cells, neglect, force, and the abuse of force.

“Jailed psychiatric ‘patients’ in the Sacramento jail spend 23-24 hours in their cells. They become more psychotic, more anxious, more disturbed and more suicidal. And jail is the most expensive, the most wasteful, the most hurtful way to provide for social needs and address social problems. We can save millions and millions per year by turning to community alternatives.”

In actuality, access to mental health and substance disorder services “are severely limited” for Sacramentans, especially for low-income residents who rely on Medi-Cal. According to Dr. Sher, director of Emergency Psychiatric Service at UCD Medical Center, “Our region needs an additional 100 to 200 psychiatric hospital beds to meet the needs of the current population, which has grown substantially.” Yet the number of acute psychiatric beds provided by Sacramento Mental Health remains at pre-2009 levels, when the County made drastic cuts.

In contrast to these cuts, the shocking expense of incarceration is a scandal that is rarely exposed and discussed, even as it triggers another wave of massive disinvestment in social services provided by the County.

It costs over \$200 million *per year* to operate the jail. There are 3600 prisoners on average in Sacramento. That means the expense per inmate per year is at least \$55,000 – funds that could be spent on housing and services in the community. Yet the Sheriff’s Department is the only county agency which has not been cut in recent years and in fact, continues to

increase.

According to Decarcerate Sacramento, the primary driver of jail costs is the number of incarcerated persons. The County’s plans for expansion would increase these costs by tens of millions per year. To balance the budget, the County is projecting further cuts this year of \$43 million in the areas of Child Family and Adult Services, Human Assistance, Animal Care, Homeless Services, and even Emergency Services.

“We need to redirect the funds spent on criminalizing poverty, homelessness, mental illness, and substance use disorders,” says Liz Blum. “We need to invest in education, schools, mentorships, therapists, after school programs, teachers, and community mental health facilities; we need crisis response without law enforcement. We need to address the root causes of our social problems.”

“History shows that if you build jail space, it will be filled. Let’s keep vulnerable people out of these destructive jails by stopping expansions, reducing jail population, and reinvesting funds. These are our three main demands.”

Decarcerate Sacramento, by awakening public awareness, has already scored some success in stopping the proposed expansion of RCCC. On October 22, the County Board of Supervisors bowed to public outcry against the jail expansion plans, and, citing the rising cost of the project, voted to delay further proceedings until November 5, 2019.

La lucha continua – the struggle continues. Check out Decarcerate Sacramento on Facebook for updates and information.

I want to help HOMEWARD continue in Sacramento.

Enclosed find my donation of:

 \$20 for a one year subscription \$100 for one year as an Underwriter**Please mail my copies to:****Name:** _____**Street & Apt:** _____**City:** _____**State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Make checks payable to the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC) and mail to: SHOC, PO Box 952 Sacramento, CA 95812

clip & mail coupon**Resources List****Night Shelters****Salvation Army:** 12th and North B St. Shelter spaces are limited, call for availability. 916-442-0331**St. John's Shelter:** Women and Children. 4410 Power Inn Rd. Call between 10am & 3pm for space availability. 916-453-1482**Union Gospel Mission:** 400 Bannon St. Beds for Men Only, sign up 6:30pm at mission, Newcomers/Referrals have priority. 7:30pm Chapel Service with meal afterwards, 6am breakfast for residents. Showers / shaves 9-11am & 1-2:45pm. open to all homeless men: 916-447-3268**Next Move (formerly SAEHC)** 24 hr Family Shelter; Families, single adults with children who have no other resource: Women's Refuge; single women, no children: Call for screening/space availability. 916-455-2160**Volunteers of America Family Shelter:** Adults w/children only. Apply Tues.-Thurs. 1-3 pm 1490 Bldg B, N. "A" St. 916-443-4688**Day Shelters****Friendship Park:** Between 12th St. & Ahern on North C: Weekdays 7am - 2:30pm; open to anyone: Many services**Meals****Union Gospel Mission:** 400 Bannon St.: 7 days, Evening meal, Men/Women: Church service 7:00pm required, dinner following 8:30-9:15pm. Sunday 11am service, lunch at noon. 916-447-3268**Loaves & Fishes:** 1321 N. 'C' St.: Lunch every day 11:30am-1pm. Tickets available 7 am-12:30 pm at Friendship Park weekdays: at 8 am on Saturday and 10am on Sundays.**Women's Civic Improvement Center:** Seniors Only: 3555 3rd Ave. 11:30-12:30 lunch M-F 916-452-2866**Food-not-Bombs:** serves free food in Cesear Chavez Plaza, 9th & J St., every Sunday 1:30 pm. All Welcome.**Foundation of Faith Ministries** 2721 Dawes St. Rancho Cordova. Every 4th Sat. 3-5 pm All Welcome.**Glory Bound Street Ministry** 4527 Parker Ave. Sundays; breakfast 11:30 am after 10 am church service; dinner 6:30 pm after 5 pm church service: Fridays; dinner 7 pm after 6 pm church service. Must attend services. 916-452-7078**Safe Haven Calvary Christian Center:**

1300 North C St. 8 am Sun, Coffee, Women's clothing, Service 9am: Wed. 6 pm bible study.

Women & Children**Maryhouse:** 1321 N. 'C' St. suite 32: Breakfast for Women and children 8am-9am. Day shelter 8am-3pm weekdays for women and families.**Wellspring** 3414 4th St.: T&Th full breakfast: M-W-F continental breakfast for women and children. 916-454-9688**Youth Services****Wind Youth Services:** Drop-In Center for youth (ages 12-24) experiencing homelessness: 1722 J Street, M-F 9am-6pm, S-S 10am-2pm: Emergency shelter for ages 12-17, call **1-800-339-7177**: Emergency shelter for ages 18-24, call **916-561-4900**. Services also include: street outreach, case management, mental health**Free Clothing****Sacramento Food Bank:** 3333 3rd Ave. (at Broadway) 10am-2pm Mon - Fri. 916-456-1980**Union Gospel Mission:** 400 Bannon St. Men: M-Sat 9-11am or 1-2:45pm: Women and Children: Thurs. 9 am signup, 9:30-10am bible study, 10 am - 12 pm shop. 916-447-3268**Medical****Mercy Clinic:** For homeless adults, children: 1300 block of N. 'C' Street next to fire station. 916-446-3345**Sacramento Dental Clinic:** 4600 Broadway (Primary Care Bldg) Walk-ins 8 am - 12:30 pm 916-874-8300**Mental Health****Guest House, 600 Bercut Drive.:** Homeless Mental Health Clinic. Mental Health evaluation, medication if needed. Housing referrals for mentally ill, GA refs, SSI aps, refs to A & D counseling: 916-440-1500**Hope Co-operative (formerly TLCS):** 1400 N'A St. Bldg. A; Adults 18 yrs & up; Referrals to transitional living programs, independant living, mental health support services; SSI/SSDI application assistance; Walk-ins 8-11am M-F 916-440-1500**Genesis:** Professional Counseling for life problems. Referrals. 401 12th St. (DeLaney Center). 916-699-1536**Crisis Intervention****WEAVE:** Services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children. Referrals to court mandated batter intervention programs, Safe house, 24 hr. crisis line: 916-920-2952**AIDS / HIV****AIDS Housing Alliance** provides residential care, transitional housing & permanent housing services to homeless persons living with aids. 916-329-1093 weekdays.**CARES (Center for AIDS Research, Education and Service):** 1500 21st ST. Serves people with HIV and AIDS. Medical care, mental health, case mgmt, health ed and regional prevention/ed classes. 916-443-3299**Breaking Barriers:** Homeless Outreach Program provides direct services to people living with AIDS and HIV. Transportation to social services, medical appointments, job interviews, and housing assistance. 916-447-2437**Harm Reduction Services:** 40001 12 Ave.; High risk outreach; HIV, Hep-C testing; case management for HIV; free medical clinic, needle exchange. 916-456-4849**Alternative Test Site:** Free anonymous HIV testing, Wed /Thurs. Call for appt. 916-874-7720.**Legal Aid****Disability Rights, CA:** Free legal services for people with disabilities. Call for appt. toll free: TTY:(800)776-5746**Tommy Clinkenbeard Legal Clinic:** 401 12th St. (DeLaney Center) Free legal assistance and advocacy for problems related to homelessness. 916-446-0368**Legal Services of Northern California, Inc:** 515 12th St. (at E ST.) M-F 8:30am-12pm, 1pm-5pm. Problems with public benefits, landlord / tenant, divorce clinic. Call for appt. 916-551-2150**Welfare Rights:** 1901 Alhambra Blvd. (2nd floor) M-F 9am-5pm: AFDC, Food Stamps, Workfare and Medical rep at hearings. 916-736-0616**Social Security Disability / SSI Lawyer Free Consultation** (916) 658-1880**Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee****<https://sacshoc.org>
(916) 442-2156****SHOC holds open meetings on Tuesdays at 10 am in the Delany Center Conference Room, at the Loaves & Fishes Complex near Ahern and 12th Street, to discuss current issues and activities that concern homeless persons.****23.6**
Office Use Only**Received****Welcome to Homeward:**

Please help us make a difference!

Homeward Street Journal has been publishing since 1997 as a non-profit project of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee.

The paper's mission is to lessen misunderstandings between communities by educating the public about housing and poverty issues, and by giving homeless people a voice in the public forum. Homeward also provides a financial self-help opportunity for those individuals who wish to participate by being a Homeward Distributor.

The opinions expressed in Homeward are those of the authors, and not necessarily of SHOC or Homeward.**Submissions and Editorial Policy**

We welcome any participation or contributions: Articles, poems and other writing can be submitted at our office in Friendship Park, or mailed to the address below.

All writing submitted for publication will be edited as necessary, with due respect for the author's intent. The editors will attempt to consult with an author if changes are necessary, however, the paper will go to print with the story as edited if the author is unavailable.

All Letters to the Editor must be signed to be published. If the writer wishes to remain anonymous s/he should so state, but the letter must still be signed .

Poetry and graphics will not be edited, either the paper will publish the submission or not.

In submitting articles to the paper, authors give their permission to print their submissions in accordance with the above stipulations, as well as possible reprinting in INSP member papers, with due byline. Any requests for stories outside the above three will be referred to the author.

Subscriptions are available with a \$20 contribution. Make checks out to SHOC (Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee).

Loaves & Fishes is not affiliated with the Homeward Street Journal in any way. Participants with the paper are not allowed to solicit for donations for L&F, nor make any reference regarding the relationship between Loaves & Fishes and this newspaper whatsoever.

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The paper may be reached at: (916) 442-2156

The paper may also be e-mailed at homeward2@yahoo.com

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