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Street Journal

Volume 13, No. 5

Member NASNA
North American Street Newspaper Association

Sept. / Oct, 2009

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Soccer success, strength of character earns formerly homeless Volunteers of America graduate a place on U.S. team set to play at Homeless World Cup in Milan Sept. 6-13.

by Barry Wisdom

Sacramento, CA: Wes Colter calls it the biggest thing that ever happened to him. The 31-year-old AmeriCorps employee – a graduate of two successive Volunteers of America-operated programs for homeless individuals – is headed to Milan, Italy in September to represent the United States at soccer's Homeless World Cup. He joins players from New York, Charlotte, N.C.; Minneapolis; Los Angeles; and San Francisco.

Colter, who graduated from a transitional housing/job-training program in May, was named goalkeeper for the eight-man U.S. team at the close of the Street Soccer USA Cup tournament, held July 31 through Aug. 2 in Washington, D.C., where his

Sacramento teammates – all formerly homeless men – were honored with the Ray Bernadbel Trophy for Fair Play.

Distinguished by their exemplary sportsmanship and passionate play (as well as their matching "Mohawk" hair styles), the six-man Sacramento team – five of whom are current students or graduates of the same program Colter completed earlier this year – finished this month's event in 10th place among 16 teams culled from across the country.

"I didn't think I would be chosen, but I definitely was hoping I would," said the 31-year-old Colter, who currently works with AmeriCorps' Restoring Youth and Communities project, which calls on juvenile offenders to assess needs in their community and take positive action through community service. One of his clients in the program, Vince Flores, became Colter's teammate on Sacramento's Street Soccer USA squad.

It's a job that holds special

meaning for Colter, who spent most of his adolescence and much of his adult life in trouble with the law due to drug and alcohol abuse. In his last jail stint some four years ago, Colter says he hit bottom and realized it was time to make a change.

"I just got tired of going to prison – I just realized I was much smarter than someone who would waste his life in prison," said Colter. "I grew up being bussed to a GATE program for gifted kids. But my father was an

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Wes Colter defending his team's goal during the Street Soccer USA Cup 2009 in Washington, D.C. (Photos by Barry Wilson)

NASNA's 10th Conference

By Paula

DENVER, CO: The North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA) held a conference this year in Denver, Colorado, hosted by the *Denver Voice*.

Street newspapers from throughout the United States and Canada sent delegates to attend, including Sacramento's *Homeward Street Journal*. The purpose of the conference is to network with other papers, vote on NASNA issues and to learn new skills about producing a newspaper, running a successful vendor program, homeless advocacy and other education.

Throughout the year NASNA

helps new papers start, gives technical support to other papers and promotes the Street Newspaper movement and its striving to promote the end of homelessness through advocacy and education and their vendor programs providing income to homeless and poor people.

I arrived at the Mile High city Thursday afternoon (July 30). Public transportation took me to the conference site, Denver University, where we were assigned shared dorm rooms and where all the workshops and meetings would be located. The first event was a reception at a nearby restaurant/bar for everyone to get together with some food and drinks, hosted by *Denver Voice*.

Andy Freeze, executive director of NASNA, and Amelia Patterson, executive director of *Denver Voice* welcomed delegates to this 10th NASNA Conference in an Opening meeting Friday morning. After the welcome, everyone went to the first

workshop which was a speed networking exercise, kind of like speed dating without the dating. Participants sat in desks facing another person, talked for 5 minutes, and then

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Attendees at Workshop

Homelessness and Housing Policy in Urban Development

Street News Service www.streetnewsservice.org

by Tony Taylor
Street Sense, USA

Shaun Donovan, named secretary of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development served as an intern at the National Coalition for the Homeless when his career in Washington was just getting started. In an interview with current NCH intern Tony Taylor, Donovan answers Taylor's questions about homelessness and housing across the United States. But first, the new Cabinet secretary reflects back upon his days at NCH.

"As an undergraduate I was volunteering at a homeless shelter in Cambridge and went to hear Robert Hayes, founder of Coalition for the Homeless, speak. His powerful words moved me to ask if there was any work I could do with the coalition in Washington as I was moving there to intern for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Robert Hayes directed me to Maria Foscarinis and the National Coalition for the Homeless. I interned for the Coalition at the same time as working in Senator Moynihan's office and conducted research federal housing policy at both places. I remember staying up all night to set up an exhibition of photographs from Stephanie Hollyman's book *We the Homeless in the Senate Rotunda*."

Street Sights: At a recent news conference, President Obama was asked to comment on the growing crisis of family homelessness. The President responded by acknowledging that the homelessness problem in this country "was bad even when the economy was good," and cited the importance of creating quality jobs to help homeless families and individuals afford shelter. While job creation is certainly an important component of a federal response to homelessness, it is only part of the solution. What would you add to the President's response?

Shaun Donovan: For many Americans, the previous economic prosperity was largely fueled by the artificial growth in home values. This put tremendous pressure on the rental marketplace as lower income families struggled to find a home or apartment they could afford. They experienced none of the benefits of a booming housing market and all of the negative consequences.

President Obama and I are convinced that any recovery must be sustainable and based on real growth, not only on the jobs front, but in the housing market as well. And this absolutely must include a more concerted effort on the part of the federal government to encourage the production of more affordable rental housing.

Street Sights: What steps have the Congress and your Administration taken thus far that will prevent more people from becoming homeless and help put people experiencing homelessness back into

homes?

Shaun Donovan: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$1.5 billion in grants to rapidly re-house families who fall into homelessness or to help prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place. HUD's new Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) allows us to fund homeless prevention activities as never before. President Obama and the Congress recognized that too many families are experiencing a sudden economic crisis and are at extremely high risk of becoming homeless. The Recovery Act is just one way we're hoping to offer the kind of short- and medium-term help to put them on the path to self-sufficiency.

Street Sights: For many years, low-income families and individuals in our nation have faced a severe shortage of affordable housing. How will the Department of Housing and Urban Development address this problem under your leadership?

Shaun Donovan: The prior Administration lost sight of how the housing boom, as beneficial as it may have been for homeowners, placed much of our available rental housing stock well beyond the reach of many lower income families. In particular, families living in high-cost areas continue to face a hard choice — either move to a lower cost area or live in substandard housing.

We must take a more balanced approach to our national housing policy. This is why we are seeking to create \$1 billion Housing Trust Fund to stimulate the production of affordable housing and to increase the number of available rental vouchers. We also intend to increase funding to our long-standing CDBG and HOME programs that will go a long way toward investing in the affordable rental market. I believe the President's proposed 2010 budget returns the federal government to its leadership role as a catalyst for expanding the availability of decent and affordable rental housing.

Street Sights: What role do you believe scattered-site public housing should play in your Department's response to homelessness?

Shaun Donovan: Housing First projects have shown that homeless persons, including chronically homeless persons, can be stably housed in scattered site housing, with appropriate support. Of critical importance is the ability of the families and service providers to be reliably in contact. Placing homeless families in locations that are distant to important service providers may add a layer of complication to the provision of services.

Placing homeless families in scattered site public housing is a local decision based on the type of housing available, and the

type and location of the services being provided. I encourage PHAs to connect with their community's local continuum of care to secure services and to assess what the best housing option might be for homeless families.

Street Sights: What is your vision for the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness in the coming years?

Shaun Donovan: The focus of the previous USICH was to end chronic homelessness. We learned from that experience that if we assess research and then clearly define a policy objective, target resources to meet that objective and then measure results that we can make a real difference. HUD, a member of the USICH, played a key role in this initiative. It's now time to use that same process and see what can be done not just for the chronically homeless but for other homeless populations, including homeless families. This Administration intends to have more engagement and collaboration through the USICH with Federal agencies to solve homelessness.

Street Sights: While many people experiencing homelessness live in city streets or in emergency shelters, countless others spend their nights in the homes of friends and family, in campgrounds, or in low-rent motels. How will this Administration plan to reach out and provide needed services to those households, as well?

Shaun Donovan: People are often forced to live with family and friends because they can't find an affordable home to rent. This is why it is critical that we do everything we can to stimulate the production of affordable rental housing. The Recovery Act's Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program will help thousands of families to avoid homelessness by offering moving expenses, security deposits and temporary rental assistance. HUD is making significant contributions toward the capital needs of local housing authorities so they, in turn, can serve more families. And we're reaffirming HUD's support for our voucher programs by proposing nearly \$18 billion in the 2010 budget, an increase of \$1.6 billion over current levels. It's clear that President Obama is intent on making sure that lower income families, and specifically those at higher risk of homelessness, must not be forgotten as we seek to put this nation back on the path of sustainable economic growth.

Street Sights: Homelessness is not just a housing issue, of course, but an issue pertaining also to health care, incomes, civil rights, education, jobs, in what ways do you plan on coordinating your efforts at HUD with the efforts of the other Departments in combating homelessness?

Shaun Donovan: To solve homelessness requires not just housing but access to an array of supports. The services by

agencies such as the US Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and Education are absolutely vital to help ensure that once persons are housed they have the services they need to become stably housed and improve their lives through education and employment. Clearly the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness will be playing a key role in coordinating government agencies on the issue.

Street Sights: During your years as Commissioner of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, what role did you play in providing housing resources for the city's homeless population? What lessons did you learn from that experience that will inform your work as HUD Secretary?

Shaun Donovan: In one of the most expensive housing markets in the country, we were able to make significant progress toward building and preserving 165,000 units of affordable housing, the largest municipal affordable housing plan in the nation's history. One of my proudest achievements in New York was the New York/New York III a \$1 billion agreement between the state and the city to finance and develop 9,000 new units of supportive housing in New York City. The lessons I learned are that if you hope to develop affordable housing, you have to be nimble and you have to gather a collection of partners to help make it happen.

Street Sights: How did you become involved in the issues of homelessness and low-income housing?

Shaun Donovan: As an eleven year old, I was sitting in Yankee Stadium during Game 2 of the 1977 World Series when Howard Cosell's uttered his famous words: "Ladies and gentlemen, the Bronx is burning." The Bronx burning on the city skyline was just one of the many visible signs that government institutions and urban programs were failing. People were asking if our cities were dead, and American families moved out of urban cores to the suburbs in record numbers. It was a frightening and eye-opening time to live in New York. But it was a time that also sparked a deep interest in me, an interest in how I could play a part in changing the policies that shaped the urban landscape and the built environment around me. I remember very vividly walking on my way to school in the morning and seeing people sleeping on the streets. I remember constantly asking myself why. Why was the world like this? And what can I do to change it? I worked for a community housing developer in New York City after studying public policy and architecture in graduate school. Then one of my professors from graduate school asked me to join him at HUD in the Clinton Administration.

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National Street Soccer Team

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alcoholic and my sister and I were neglected – we weren't taught the kinds of things kids are normally taught when they're young."

The cycle continued for him, Colter said – fathering two children for whom he wasn't there. "My thoughts were consumed by drugs and alcohol," he said.

While serving his last sentence, he reached out for help to deal with his abandonment and addiction issues and began searching for a recovery program he could enter upon his release. He ultimately found Volunteers of America. "That's where I really started addressing my drug and alcohol issues," Colter said. Soon he found his first legitimate job, began attending 12-step programs, found a sponsor and, following successful completion of his entry into Volunteers of America's continuum of care, he was accepted into the two-year transitional housing and job-training program he credits for his current success.

Thanks to the skills he developed there, Colter found work as a mobile electronics installer, and then at AmeriCorps. When he completes his current AmeriCorps assignment, he plans to return to school to

become a drug and alcohol counselor.

Chris Mann, a Volunteers of America staff member who has coached Colter and his Street Soccer USA teammates since forming the group in November 2008, says Colter's selection for the national team – set to compete in Italy Sept. 6 through 13 – was a no-brainer. "It really wasn't that surprising to me, because he has great character – he's perfect for it."

Street Soccer USA founder and CEO Lawrence Cann agrees.

"He was one of our top choices," said Cann. "He'll serve as a great ambassador for people who struggle with homelessness and poverty. We were pleased that Wes could make it."

"The poise and maturity of the 2009 SSUSA National team will challenge popular opinions of who the homeless are and what they are capable of," said Cann. "These players are a testimony to the human spirit and to the great work our growing network of programs does across the nation, on a daily basis. And get ready to be surprised when you see them in action, too – these players are seriously talented athletes."

The SSUSA National team will convene in New York on Sept. 1 for practices and events before they depart for Milan. A scrimmage with the U.S. team and a New York-based team of soccer celebrities will take place on Sept. 3, before the players – including Colter – depart for Milan on Sept. 4.

"I believe Wes exemplifies what all people in our field hope for," Mann said, "and that is to be a light for people to make life-changing decisions through programs like ours. Sports through Volunteers of America has been a great catalyst in his development from incarceration to self-sufficiency. He is not only captain of our soccer team, he has organized softball teams and was a youth leader. He is as great as an example of a recovery success that I have worked with in my 12 years with Volunteers of America."

"Our goal is to make people aware of Volunteers of America and to spread the word that we have amazing programs at Volunteers of America," said Mann of his desire to get involved with Lawrence Cann's inspirational concept of social change

through soccer. "Since we started the original Sacramento team in November, five have gotten jobs and the others are in school – and all six have quit smoking."

Colter said he is extremely happy about his upcoming trip to Milan to compete in the Homeless World Cup, but even more

excited about the prospect of being able to share his firsthand knowledge that people can change given the opportunity. "Some of our society has a 'Once a criminal, always a criminal,' or a 'Once a dope fiend, always a dope fiend' mentality. But people can – and do – change for the better."



See SSUSA Cup Team 09
Front row L-R: Chris Rich, Wes Colter; Center row L-R: John Wright, Scott Trent, coach Chris Mann, Vince Flores; Back row: Mutt Klanjac

Federal Government Extends \$30 million to Staunch Section 8 Bleeding

Street News Service www.streetnewsservice.org

by Joanne Zuhl
Street Roots, USA

The federal government recently announced it will provide \$30 million to people on Section 8 housing assistance, after authorities across the country reported massive shortfalls in funding.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD, funds the Section 8 program through local housing authorities. Among them is the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority, which in May notified nearly 300 families in Tillamook, Clatsop and Columbia counties that the authority could no longer afford to provide them housing assistance (Street Roots, "The Letter" June 12).

For Jeff Crist and Jennifer Cherry, a family in Girabald Street-Roots has been following throughout this crisis. She has been reduced to a stressful, monthly waiting game. The couple, who have three children, were among the hundreds of families dropped from the Section 8 program as of July

Because of disabilities, neither Jeff nor Jennifer have been able to work, and NOHA was covering about 90 percent of their rent.

Last month, NOHA elected to draw on its other funds to pay rent for families to stay in their homes on an immediate basis. Crist says they're secure for the month of August with NOHA's assistance, but he says they probably won't know about September until late in the month.

In the meantime, Crist says he continues to look for work wherever he might find it, but, he says, "It's not looking really good right now. There are no job openings."

Cherry is recovering from surgery on a herniated disc in her neck. She is restricted to lifting no more than 10 pounds right now, which limits her work options. But she and Crist are hopeful that as she recovers that restriction will be lifted, and that as the economy strengthens, Crist can find work.

HUD has already spent \$89

million of the \$100 million set-aside fund provided annually by Congress to support housing authorities facing increased demand or "unforeseen circumstances." HUD says the remaining \$11 million will go to agencies that are on the verge of terminating families. The additional \$30 million will go to agencies that are eligible to receive extraordinary administrative fees for technical assistance to prevent the termination of families. These funds can also be used to fund vouchers, according to HUD.

Carol Snell, the executive director with NOHA, says that they immediately applied for \$700,000 out of the \$30 million HUD has made available. If they receive all of that, Snell says, NOHA expects to bring everyone who was terminated from the program back on to vouchers. The housing authority has already spent its reserves for housing, and at this time has no money to support those terminated past August, Snell said.

According to HUD, the funding

shortfalls – revealed in May when HUD notified agencies of their 2009 allocations – have impacted about 15 percent of all public housing authorities.

The Section 8 funding system is the subject of a bill now working its way through Congress. SEVRA – the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act, includes provisions that would create more flexibility and stability in funding formulas for housing assistance. Advocates say it's a good move forward, but not enough to correct the problem of wholesale voucher terminations, the complete scope of which is still not

known.

"There's no doubt that some of the policy changes that are contained in the SEVRA bill would help make it less likely that this year's type of situation would recur in future years, so we strongly support that bill, it will give HUD and housing authorities more flexibility in dealing with problems in the future," says Jeremy Rosen, executive director of the National Policy and Advocacy Council on Homelessness in Washington D.C. "That said, no amount of

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Safe Ground Sacramento Land Lease and Update

Safe Ground Sacramento received some real ground on Friday, August 21, when Attorney Mark Merin leased a vacant lot to Safe Ground residents, who have been wandering daily from camp to camp since being evicted from the vacant lot on North 10th Street on July 13. Preparations were made days in advance by fencing, leveling and clearing brush. Two portable toilets were rented. 35 matching tents were erected. The Safe Ground Sacramento banner was hung on the front locked gate, a Safe Ground sign on the back gate and homeless people that have signed the Safe Ground pledge moved in quickly. Police showed up telling people they couldn't stay there, but residents showed copy of their lease to the officers.

After the Safe Ground Rally, March and Campout on July 1, homeless people with the campaign moved into a lot next to VOA shelter and Union Gospel Mission on Bannon Street. There they established more a feeling of community and solidarity until they were evicted by police on July 10. Safe Ground community moved into a vacant lot that was owned partially by the City and other mixed ownership. This lot has been historically called "The Field of Dreams" and was located on North D and North 10th Streets. Residents were able to remain residents for the weekend where they elected a "Council of Elders" and came up with a pledge that everyone, including visitors, had to sign. The pledge stated their willingness to keep alcohol, drugs and

violence out of Safe Ground. On July 13, the police came out in force and evicted everyone. David Moss got a citation that he wouldn't sign, and was taken to jail. Others left but held vigil outside of the fenced area all day and over night. Police kept the vigil, also. They all went to the next City Hall meeting to speak in the open session.

Safe Ground residents decided to camp out by the river and other places, each morning packing up all their belongings and moving to a new place for the next evening. This constant moving camp continued until the most recent move into the leased land on C Street.

During the wandering days there was much progress made. On July 21, the Mayor convened a Safe Ground task force to come up with a plan for a viable campground for 60 homeless people as a prototype to be duplicated regionally. A wide variety of concerned representation came together and came up with agreement on most items, and of course there were minor disagreements on a few elements of the final plan. It will probably be presented to City Hall at some point, which may prove to be another battle since the idea does not have support from most of the Councilmembers and outright opposition from the City Manager's office.

Mayor Kevin Johnson has been very supportive of exploring the Safe Ground concept. He even camped out with the Safe Ground crew on August 12 along with Natalie Bomke of Fox 40. He appeared on Fox 40 and CNN and spoke about his experience, how he was touched that homeless people took their food stamps and bought hamburgers, buns, condiments, and provided him a meal. He was amazed at the high sense of community, how everyone worked together to help each other, a sense of community that you don't often see in other areas of the city. Mayor Johnson has stated he wants to focus a great deal of energy within the next several years on ending homelessness.

had been reported that the police evicted everyone, but as of going to print they are still well and peacefully situated on the piece land they leased from Mark Merin. There was one neighbor who complained because his back yard is only separated from Safe Ground by a cyclone fence. David Moss said that he has talked with the neighbor trying to dispel his misgivings on three different occasions, at one time accompanied by a priest. A neighbor on the other side of Safe Ground has been more receptive and has offered the community use of his water hose. Community members have been helping with supplies and equipment. The Safe Ground Sacramento Campaign says "Thank you for all your support!"

At Safe Ground's current site, it



Mayor Kevin Johnson talking to Colin Reid at the August 12th site.



Tents set out in parallel rows at most recent site.



Letter to the Editor

Letter from Louisville

I'm sending this letter about my experience at the Louisville conference, "Building the Unsettling Force: A National Conference to End Poverty" in July, which was co-sponsored by the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign and Social Welfare Action Alliance. I'm writing because the Conference startled me.

I'm 62 years old - I guess I've been an activist for forty years or more, starting in high school in Berkeley as the Civil Rights Movement awakened the country. In college, I joined the resistance to the Vietnam War and the draft, educating myself as I went along about America's role in the world as the enforcer behind cruel, militaristic regimes in Latin America, Africa, Vietnam

itself.

We took over Oakland for a day in 1967 - I think we believed, even assumed, the system was about to change, somehow, perhaps just because of the strength of our youthful energy!

And I come from a long, proud tradition of activists. My family was involved in the Communist upsurge of the Thirties and my mother was an unrepentant Red until the day she died in 2001, exactly three weeks after 9/11. "They hate us, hate us, for what we've done," she observed with exhausted fury in her last days.

But Louisville was something new. Two blonde girls - thirteen and fifteen stepped up to the stage on the opening day, their guitars looking much too

big for their small frames, and sang,

*The end of complacency is tonight.
We're not going down
without a fight!*

And all that weekend I saw that we had reached the moment when we can call ourselves a movement - a convergence, someone called it, a coming together of organized resistance to this system which is putting us out of our homes and out of work and pushing us into the streets without hope for a future.

The conference felt like the culmination of these long years of preparing, and here it was, the intransigence of a beautiful, betrayed, people, Americans. Hundreds of people from the grassroots

hungry and heartbroken and angry-and, perhaps the most significant thing of all-determined-of every shape and size and ethnicity, a Minneapolis grandmother fighting the loss of her home and a young feminist wearing combat boots, visionaries from the Hip Hop conference, gay activists, radical social workers, homeless people organizing while struggling for bare survival, veterans of struggle and new comers treating every moment as a revelation.

The homeless activist who came with me from Sacramento summed it up with the words, "It's time."

I felt the arc of history as well as the arc of my own life-I was not sure I would see anything like this in my day. And now I have.



NASNA Conference

continued from Page 1

rotated to the next seat to talk for another 5 minutes with someone new. This continued until everyone talked to almost half of everyone else.

I took the workshop "Leadership: Working Smarter (Not Just Harder) & Managing Stress in Turbulent Times" thinking it would help us with the Safe Ground Sacramento Campaign. Then we had a buffet style lunch at our Dorm's cafeteria, where all our breakfasts and lunches were to be served free.

In the afternoon I took workshops on engaging volunteers and building an individual donor base, both helpful in running a newspaper and for Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee work, also.

That evening we went to downtown Denver for the 2009 NASNA Awards and an elegant dinner at Marlow's Restaurant.

The keynote speaker was Cheri Honkala, director of the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign, and special guest speaker was Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper, who recently met with our Mayor Johnson on homelessness best practices. There was an award ceremony where *Homeward Street Journal* was recognized for "Best Poor People's Campaign" which reflects our work with the Safe Ground Sacramento Campaign and our coverage of the campaign.

Saturday began with the NASNA general meeting and voting for the new board of directors. Then I took a workshop called "Invisible Web" where we learned ways to research stories on the internet beyond the standard "Google" searches, including websites such as the US Census, State and City websites, MySpace and other online resources.

"Organizing Principles" was presented by Paul Boden, director of *Westem Regional Advocacy Project*, San Francisco. Many will know Paul from his appearances at many of our Sacramento actions. Participants came up with recommendations to NASNA to publish stories simultaneously, stories that would more strongly impact positive social change.

The last workshop I signed up for was about social networking web sites, such as Twitter and Facebook, and the internet.

The last event of the weekend was a barbeque held on campus. All of *Denver Voice's* vendors were invited to this evening event.

To my surprise, a recent vendor of *Homeward*, Charles Davis, was there wearing a Denver



Top Page: Just about everyone.

Above: NASNA's New Board of Directors. Front row; Tasha French, Serge Lareault, Andy Freeze, Elizabeth Ochs. Back Row: Ben Siew, Israel Baker, Rick Barnes, Sean Condon. Another Board member, Bryan Pollard, is not in picture.

Below: Some vendors at the conference BBQ. Charles Davis, former *Homeward* Distributor, is the one in a cowboy hat.



Voice T-Shirt! He had moved to Denver without telling us!

Sunday morning, most people left for their perspective locations across this quarter of the globe. My plane wasn't departing until evening, so I spent the afternoon touring Denver with local resident advocate Randle Loeb and Jennifer Yellowhorse from Making Change in LA. Randle's deep connection to his community made him the perfect guide to show us the various homeless shelters, permanent supportive housing and other sites of interest.



NASNA 2009 Awards:

Best Poor People's Campaign - *Homeward Street Journal, Sacramento* - for work on the Safe Ground Campaign and coverage of the project.

Best Series - *Real Change News, Seattle* "The Man Who Stood on the Bridge" by Rosette Royale - Demonstrates how mental illness, family dysfunction and the prison system destroy lives.

Most Improved Newspaper - *Street Sights - Rhode Island*

Best Vendor Essay - *The Contributor, Nashville* "Welcome Home - A Transitional Tale" by Michael "Pontiac" Cooke. Cooke tells his story of transition from one of Nashville's urban 'tent cities' to a new life in subsidised housing.

Best Cover Design - *Whats Up Magazine, St. Louis* - Spring 2009

Best Feature - *Street Vibes, Cincinnati* "We Are Their Slaves" by Gregory Flannery - highlighting immigrant labor exploitation.

Best Interview - *Street Roots, Portland* "Revolution" interviewed by Israel Bayet; interview was with Srdja Popovic, the founding member of a youth movement in Serbia that toppled Slobodan Milosevic through a non-violent uprising.

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A Four-Dimensional Sphere, Just Like the Universe Seems to Be

www.chongonation.com

by the homeless science writer, Chongo

For a sphere in three dimensions, the greater the distance from the center, the greater the area of the surface of the sphere that corresponds to that distance as a radius is. For a sphere in four dimensions, astoundingly, the exact opposite is true, the farther from the center, the smaller the area of that surface, although that "surface" is now, having additionally, depth, a three-dimensional volume (of the momentary space), instead of an infinitely thin two-dimensional area of the surface of a sphere (corresponding to that distance as a radius). Just like any and every direction on the two-dimensional surface of a sphere in three dimensions would point to the same location at the farthest distance on the spherical surface area, so would any and every direction within the three-dimensional volume of a sphere in four dimensions also point to the opposite side of the spatial volume (instead of surface area), which here, is the region of the Big Bang.

Analogously, any and all directions, even opposite directions, at the North Pole of the globe of Earth, like meridians of longitude point to the single location at the South Pole, with no exceptions. As if looking along these meridians of longitude radiating from the North Pole of the earth, were we to look far enough, outward into space, following "meridians" in what are now three dimensions, as if we were looking straight around the earth across Earth's two-dimensional surface, following the meridians south - outward - we would ultimately see what is effectively a single location, like the South Pole is a single location. Again, for three-dimensional space, that single location is the single tiny region that we call the Big Bang while hole that, unlike the South Pole, does not lie at a fixed distance but again, is constantly receding.

An additional, fourth dimension, that of time, provides additional "depth" to three-

dimensional space, and hence provides more "room," to all that already provided by three dimensions, in fact, what is effectively an infinite amount of more, as three dimensions would provide what would effectively be infinitely more area for a two-dimensional surface. This provides enough room to accommodate the ordered "stacking" of three-dimensional, momentary "spaces", as if they were two-dimensional "layers" instead. Each individual one of us constantly find ourselves atop what is the equivalent of the "north pole" of our own unique series of single, spherical, three-dimensional, spatial moments, each stacked consecutively, one upon the other in a circularly encompassing way (as will be explained next), which together, form a four-dimensional spherical volume, again a volume with effectively infinitely more depth than three dimensions could ever provide.

This "deeper" volume and everything filling it constitute our own, four-dimensional sphere, which is wholly unique to each individual one of us, because this sphere, like any, has a unique center, just as the location that each one of us occupies as its center is unique, being a unique location in space at an equally unique location in time. In addition to being individual and unique, our light cone is also actual, because it is made of the actual light of the moment. (To be as precise as is achievable, an actual light cone is unique to the individual particle; to be more general instead, it can be considered being individually unique to our local vicinity, like the local vicinity of the earth for example.)

This four-dimensional sphere that is individually unique to each one of us is called by science not a sphere, but a light cone. It is named a cone because, among other reasons, a four-dimensional sphere being represented in the simplicity of three dimensions is more like a cone - for example, an ice cream cone - than like a spherical globe, such as a soccer ball

for example. This is no doubt why science commonly utilizes the term light cone instead the term light "sphere," although one is synonymous to the other. Light cone includes further the term light in the name, instead of being called a space-time cone, for example, because space and time, distances and angles are mapped according to the lines established by the lines of light (see inside back cover) that constitute the cone (all photons being unique in their space and time, location and extent, with respect to cone's center point). Gravity shapes the trajectories of these lines, spherically.

The sphere of an individual and actual four-dimensional light cone is illustrated on page 116 below, again, as the two-dimensional surface of a cone, like an ice cream cone made of light, in three dimensions, represented in the two dimensions of the illustration below on page 116. The illustration on page 116 shows relativity at its simplest, where the only "motion" of the observer, or of the local vicinity for the observer, again, like the observer's planet for example, (or the observer's detector) is effectively through time alone, and not through any space whatsoever (effectively).

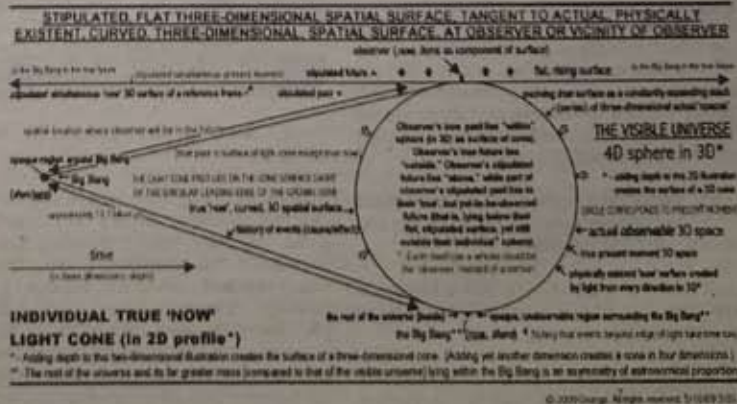
As can be imagined utilizing the illustration of the surface of the cone, a successive series of concentric circles of light, each corresponding to a single spatial moment alone, progressively build the

cone, one spatial moment stacked upon the other, in a series of consecutive moments (as a single circle in the illustration), ordered with respect to cause and effect, that is to say, with respect to time. Each moment of three-dimensional "space" that we see, sense, experience, and/or otherwise detect in every three-dimensional direction constantly is thus really just one, in a "stack" of, by virtue of being part of a sphere, circular, three-dimensional, spatial layers, each layer corresponding to a solitary "spatial" moment. In the illustration, each circle constituting the cone (only a single circle is shown) is a circular layer corresponding to a single moment, that, when stacked, one moment upon the other in a series of successive (circular) moments, like a serially ordered series of concentric, progressively larger circles, arranged with respect to cause and effect, each subsequent circular layer successively encompassing the previous, but in more dimensions than the two required for a circle, form a four-dimensional sphere that spans space and time together, inseparably.

Returning to the original question of meaning for the word universe, this four-dimensional sphere of our light cone constitutes what science calls the visible universe. The visible universe is a synonym for the term light cone, and just like any light cone, is wholly unique to the individual at its center, however precise or general

the specification, identically to how a center is unique to its respective sphere. This is distinct from the other scientific definition of the term universe, called the history of the universe, which, in stark contrast to a visible universe, or synonymously, to an actual light cone, that is wholly unique to the individual, is unambiguously unique to no individual anyone or to no single thing whatsoever, although of course, according to quantum theory, it is collectively unique to all life in our realm. The history of the universe excludes nothing that is existent in our realm, regardless of any light cones. Unlike the visible universe, which is bounded by its edge at the Big Bang, the history of the universe, being unique to no light cone whatsoever nor to its physical extent, may lack any boundary altogether and thus have no edge at all. This, of course, makes physical existence itself, in a simple word, boundless.

(From CONCEPTUAL RELATIVITY, by Chongo in collaboration with Jose. To see all the books that Chongo has written on nature (physical theory), go to chongonation.com, which is a web site dedicated to educating those who have least opportunity for learning the scientific foundations that describe nature (accurately). Chongonation provides books that allow such opportunity, in lay terms, without any math. Simply go to the www.chongonation.com home page and click on either 'Books on Nature (Conceptual Physical' or 'Products & Prices' to see just how many books are available.



Housing Policy *continued from Page 3*

Street Sights: Why do you believe it is important for the government to play a role in providing and attaining affordable housing in this country? Do you believe that the federal government can really make a difference in preventing and ending homelessness?

Shaun Donovan: The resources of the federal government can help as no other entity can, either through direct investment, tax credits, bond financing or a combination of these tools. But government can't do it alone. The only reason we were so successful in New York was because we marshaled the combined resources of a number of public and private players. I also think we have to change our general approach to affordable housing and endeavor to create sustainable communities that are transit-oriented and energy efficient. That's why HUD is working closely with the Departments of Transportation, Energy,

Labor and Education to cultivate a more comprehensive and holistic approach to development. We just have to think smarter about how we build the communities of tomorrow.

In the same way, I think the federal government can make a real difference in preventing homelessness as we work to end homelessness for those experiencing long-term or chronic homelessness. As you know, there has been a shift in how the federal government, as well as State and local communities, in how we confront chronic homelessness. All across the country, you're seeing the creation of thousands of new permanent supportive housing units and a noticeable decrease in our reliance on emergency shelters. I anticipate that we will continue to see this paradigm shift in the years to come.

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Bob & Spencer

The **HAPPY** Homeless Guys



by Scott Valentine & Mike Diaz

Section 8 Funding

continued from Page 3

flexibility can get around the situation where there isn't enough money for the program. The policy changes and SEVRA just by themselves won't change this problem or fix future problems."

Rosen was among a group of advocates of affordable housing

advocates that met with HUD to talk about solutions to the current Section 8 crisis. Rosen and others say they will be sending a letter to HUD urging it to ask Congress for additional funds to correct the funding shortage. However, Rosen said that such a request from HUD would be politically unpopular.

"The counter argument, of course, is that you have 285 people in Oregon, not to mention the people in all too many other places around the country where the housing authorities have notified them that they may lose vouchers and could eventually become homeless," Rosen said. "HUD is sincerely

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KISS MI NECK! *Spoken word / performance poetry review*

by Jack Tafari

Well KISS MI NECK, it seems Yasus Afari has done it again!

On the very heels and in the midst of a successful series of "pomedry" concerts, dubbed "The Pomedry Show", Yasus Afari has created yet another masterpiece called "Kiss Mi Neck" spoken word / performance poetry, the likes of which has never been done before.

This 22 track set, which is loaded with melodies and harmonies, production techniques and creative arrangements has been creating such waves in the studios, that people have been reportedly camping out at Tuff Gong Recording Studio to hear some of the tracks that they have been hearing about, especially Kiss Mi Neck, Blouse & Skirt, Komplex, Pick Pocket and The Girl I Love.

Some of the studio engineers on the project have been saying "KISS MI NECK" is a "Blouse and Skirt" album and "Komplex" a bring it to dem hard core, inna dem face, babylon sick to the treatment."

This KISS MI NECK album is like no other, it is spoken word / performance poetry with a difference so much so that some people even think they are hearing music and others are saying they don't miss the music as they have never ever worked on or heard of an album like KISS MI NECK.

KISS MI NECK has been generating interest on line where Yasus has a growing presence as well as internationally with several companies showing great interest.

The art work for KISS MI NECK is another exceptional feature of Yasus' Album. The cover design is being treated as one of, if not the best in the history of Jamaican music. It is a real gem, a master piece.



Yasus Afari

which is poised to be a collector's item. It is even conceivable that the album will be seen both as a work of art as well as a musical masterpiece.

Homeless people love poetry. Street Roots, the paper I used to vend while homeless in Portland, Oregon, was full of vendors' and other homeless people's poetry, one reason for its popularity.

Yasus Afari's brilliant spoken word poetry is performed in PATWĀH, the language of everyday Jamaican people first put to page by the legendary Mama Lou. And although Yasus' works have legs and stand strong on the printed page in their own right, they are best heard performed live or on CD. And until you Sacramento homeless people find that permanent Safe Ground I hear you are looking for, walk safe and JAH bless.

Writer Jack Tafari lives in London in the UK. Currently he opens empty properties to help house London's homeless and is studying British housing law.

Obituary

Gary "Buzzy" Wilson
d. 7/7/09 aged 56
natural causes

Linda Wise
d. 8/19/09 aged 49
natural causes

Macario "Mac" Hernandez
d. 7/23/09 aged 54
by drowning

looking at ways to make sure no one actually gets terminated, but it remains to be seen if they can actually accomplish it."

I want to see **HOMEWARD**,
 a newspaper produced by homeless people, expand in Sacramento.
 Enclosed find my donation of \$15 for a one year subscription.
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Make checks payable to the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC)
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clip & mail coupon

HOMELESS RESOURCES

- Night Shelters**
- Salvation Army: 12th and North B St. 30 days per year. Dormitory living, G&S Dinner, breakfast clothing for residents. Men/Women: Sign up. GA patio weekdays at 1PM. 442-0331
- St. John's Shelter: Women and Children. 4410 Power Inn Rd. Call between 10am & 3pm for space availability. 453-1482
- Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon St. Beds for Men Only, sign up 8:30pm 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. 447-3268
- SAEHC, Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center: 4516 Parker Ave. 24 hrs. Family Shelter: Families, single adults with children who have no other resource. Women's Refuge, single women, no children. Call for screening/pace availability. 455-2100
- Day Shelters**
- Friendship Park: 12th St. & 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 8:30-11:00pm. Sunday 11am service, lunch at noon. 447-3268
- Loaves & Fishes: 1321 No. 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. 452-2906
- Helping Hands: 3526 6th Ave. Sundays, 8-11 breakfast, sack lunch, clothing.
- Food-not-Bombs: serves free food in Central Chavez Plaza. 9th & J St., every Sunday 1:30 pm. All Welcome
- Women & Children**
- Maryhouse: 1321 No. 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. 454-0688
- see Wind in Youth Services for young adults
- Free Clothing**
- Sacramento Food Bank: 3333 3rd Ave. (at Broadway) 10am-2pm Mon - Fri. 456-1980
- Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon St. Men: M-Sat 9-11am or 1-2:45pm; Women and Children: Wed only. Call for appointment to go in at 11am, 1 or 1:30pm, or attend Bible study at 9:15am and get clothing at 10am. 447-3268
- Medical**
- Mercy Clinic: For homeless adults, children. Nurse's office in Friendship park. 7:30am & 12:30pm. 446-3343
- Capital Health Clinic: (C St. Clinic) Closed due to budget cuts.
- Sacramento Dental Clinic: 4600 Broadway (Primary Care Bldg) Walk-ins 8 am - 12:30 pm. 874-8300
- Mental Health**
- Guest House, 1400 N. A St. Homeless Mental Health Clinic. M,W,Th,F,r, 9-11:30am Tues 9-11:30am only. Mental Health evaluation, medication if needed. Housing referrals for mentally ill. GA refs, SSI app, refs to A & D counseling. 443-8972
- TLCIS Intake Offices: 1400 N.A. St. Bldg. A. Adults 18 yrs & up. Referrals to transitional living programs, independent living, mental health support services, SSI/SOI application assistance. Walk-ins 9-11am M-F. 440-1500
- Genesis: Professional Counseling for life problems, referrals. Text to Friendship Park gate. 899-1536
- Youth Services**
- Ologenes: youth 16-21 yrs old. Hot Line call 1-800-339-7177
- Wind Youth Center: 701 DeLoane Ave. Serves youth ages 12-20. Breakfast and Lunch - Clothing, Laundry and Showers, Case Management, Drop-in Hours: M - F from 8:00am to 4:30pm and Sat 10am to 2pm. 443-8333
- Crisis Intervention**
- WEAVE: Services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children. Referrals to court mandated battery intervention programs, Safe house, 24 hr. crisis line. 820-2952
- Sacramento Mental Health Center (County): 2150 Stockton Blvd (at T St.) 24hr. Will evaluate anyone for voluntary or involuntary psychiatric care due to danger to self or others. Inpatient care facility, drop-in. 732-3637
- AIDS / HIV**
- AIDS Housing Alliance provides residential care, transitional housing & permanent housing services to homeless persons living with aids. 979-0997 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 classes. 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. 447-2437
- Harm Reduction Services: 3640 40th St. High risk outreach, HIV, Hep-C testing, case management for HIV; free medical clinic. Needle exchange. 456-8840
- Alternative Test Site: Free anonymous testing, Wed/Thurs. Call for appt. 874-7720.
- Legal Aid**
- Disability Rights, CA: Free legal services for people with disabilities. Call for appt. toll free TTY: (800)775-5746
- Tommy Clarkbeard Legal Clinic: 401 12th St. (DeLaney Center) Free legal assistance and advocacy for problems related to homelessness. 436-0368
- 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. 551-2150
- Welfare Rights: 1901 Alhambra Blvd. (2nd floor) M-F 9am-5pm; AFDC, Food Stamps, Workfare and Medical help at hearings. 726-0618
- Miscellaneous**
- Francis House: 1422 C St. 9:30-11:30 am M-W & 1-3 pm M-F. walk-in or referral providing resource counseling, advocacy, vouchers for IDs, Div Licenses, Birth Certificates, plus motel vouchers for qualified families. 443-2646
- Social Services: 28th & R St. M-F 7:30am-5pm. Call for ass. 874-2672
- Employment Development Department (EDD): 2901 50th St. (at Broadway) M-F 8am-5pm. Unemployment, job services. 227-0300
- Medi-Cal: 1-800-773-6467-1-888-747-1222. Or see DHA eligibility workers 1725 28th St. 916-874-2256
- Social Security Office: 831 Folsom Blvd (College Owners Liberal shop) M-F 9am-4:30pm. 81-9419. toll 1-800-772-1213

About SHA

The Sacramento Housing Alliance is a network of concerned citizens which promotes decent affordable housing for low income households and homeless people through advocacy and participation in public discourse.

The SHA does not itself provide or manage housing.

You may call for info: **(916) 455-4900**

Individual Membership dues:
 Standard: \$50;
 Low-income, Student: \$10

Organizations:
 \$200 - \$1,000
 Dues based on organization budget, please call to get estimates.

Send donations to:
 Sacramento Housing Alliance
 1800 21st St. Suite 100
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Welcome to HOMEWARD:

Please help us make a difference!



Homeless Street Journal has been publishing since 1987 as a non-profit project of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, which is a member of the Sacramento Housing Alliance. The paper's mission is to alleviate miscommunication between communities by educating the public about housing and poverty issues, and by giving homeless people a voice in the public forum. Homeward also informs homeless persons of shelter and occupational assistance, and acts as a creative self-help opportunity for those individuals who wish to participate.

The opinions expressed in Homeward are those of the authors, and not necessarily the Sacramento Housing Alliance or 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, one should so state, but the letter must still be signed.

Poetry and graphics will not be edited, after the paper will publish the submission as is.

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 NASNA member papers, with due notice. Any requests for stories outside the above three will be referred to the author.

Subscriptions are available with a \$15 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, nor make any reference regarding the relationship between Loaves & Fishes and this newspaper whatsoever.

All correspondence can be sent to Homeward Street Journal, PO Box 952, Sacramento, CA 95812

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

The paper may also be E-mailed at: Homeward2@yahco.com

On the web at: <http://homeward.wikispaces.com>

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