

# HOMeward

## Street Journal



Volume 7, No. 5 Member NASNA September/October, 2003  
North American Street Newspaper Association

### In This Issue

page 1

Annual River Clean-up  
Stand Down  
NASNA Conference

page 2

News Digest  
Questioning Chronic

page 3

Second Annual 'Meanest City' Report

page 5

Affordable Housing Symposium

Homeless Count

page 6

Walk in My Shoes

page 7

Civil Rights &...  
Poetry, Cartoon, Obituary

page 8  
Classifieds

Homeless Resources

## STAND-UP FOR STAND-DOWN

by Sundown  
Who?

Attention all veterans - Honorably or Generally Discharged in the Sacramento area. You and your immediate family ( spouse and/or offspring), widows and widowers of vets, and active duty / reserve troops and their families are reminded that the 2003 Stand-down is just around the corner.

Invitations are cordially extended to attend the 12th annual Sacramento metro - politan area 'Stand-Down - 2003'. A Veteran specific 3 day, 2 night, fully provisioned convention of ex and current service members.

Various volunteers and staff, representing a plethora of agencies, departments and services, will be available at your service. Present will be representatives in the areas of physical and mental health, housing assistance, EDD, DMV, DVA, and a fully

staffed on-sight court to remedy any legal problems.

Where?

The Convention will be held at the Boy Scouts of America camp ground at Camp Pollock, Northgate near the I-160 bridge (12th & 16th Street bridge), in the Parkway along the banks of the American River.

The Main Gate will open for registry at 6 am on September 26, 2003, and will remain open to late-comers for the duration the event. Pre-registry can be accomplished through the Sacramento Veterans Resource Center by contacting John Oberg or Rick Dibble at (916)393-8387.

Why?

Stand-downs, now coast-to-coast, were devised to provide a safe forum within which to address various vet-specific needs and require -

see *Stand-down* page 6

## North American Street Newspaper Conference

by Paula

Association des journaux de rue, I mean the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA) annual conference was held in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada on July 24-27, 2003. Paula Lomazzi hopped a jet to represent Homeward Street Journal. She missed the opening ceremony due to a lagging jet, but made it in time to check in her room Thursday and panhandle Michael Stoops (NASNA and NCH exec.) for a few Canadian bucks for dinner.

Friday, morning, participants representing street papers from cities throughout US and Canada, introduced themselves and spoke a little bit about their papers and the situations they and those experiencing homelessness were facing in their cities. The Quebec City Mayor, keynote speaker, congratulated street newspapers for being a tool that fosters dignity. Tim Harris, NASNA chair, discussed marketing—telling the public who you are and how to project that. What is your paper selling? A moment of compassion, possibility of human relation, a moment of hope and possibility (empathy = understanding and action). 2 new member papers were accepted by vote.

The workshops gave conference goers the gift of education they could take back home.

Homelessness-101  
Quebec City is facing severe problems that are being addressed by citizen's committees. Canada is divided. Federal government legislates and the cities have to implement. New policies are increasing poverty. Welfare has been cut 28%. Evictions are easier. There is no rent control. Minimum wage hasn't risen in 7 years. Housing shortages. It is hard to find vacancies and all leases end on July 1. There is increased gentrification. The root causes of homelessness? Lack of money and need for more affordable housing and public and social housing (supportive housing and shelters). There are 7,000 units social housing in Quebec; 4,000 people are waiting to get in. In the summer there are an estimate of 2,000 homeless people in the city. When winter sets in there will be only about 400 homeless people.

Brian, from Cleveland Ohio's Grapevine suggests that local homeless coalitions work more hand in hand with their local street newspapers. Education is

see *NASNA* page 4



## The 2003 Great American River Cleanup Saturday, September 20 - 9 a.m. - 12 noon

Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee is a land steward for the mile 2-3 area of the American River Parkway, sponsored by the American River Parkway Foundation. We have gotten behind in our commitments this year though hope to catch up with the hours of cleaning that we have promised. And we request your help. We need to clean as much of the parkway as possible before the rains start. Its an ecological necessity and also it gets more difficult to do the work when everything is water soaked.



members of the Sacramento community will be helping, too. Joining in this cooperative effort is so rewarding when you have just finished working about an hour or two and find the landscape has remarkably improved in ascetic beauty, so beautiful that the bountiful nature can finally be appreciated to its fullest by all visitors and uncondoned residents alike.

SHOC's mile's checkin point will be near Northgate on Del Paso Blvd. Come on out. Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, sturdy shoes and work gloves. Bring sun screen and water. Bags, snacks and beverages will be provided. And you'll get a free tee shirt!

The Great American River Cleanup is a great opportunity to commit a bit of at least one Saturday morning toward this cause. Other



## STREET NEWS SERVICE

**NORTH AMERICAN NEWSBRIEFS**  
**WWW.STREETNEWSERVICE.ORG**

**Molly Rhodes**  
**August, 2003**

Portland, Ore., street youth are shunning services that require them to give up personal information, like their names and family history. As a result, even as the number of street youth continues to grow, the number of these youth seeking publicly funded services has dropped by more than 50 percent over the past four years, according to the Portland Tribune ([www.portlandtribune.com](http://www.portlandtribune.com)). Over the past four to five years, the Multnomah County Board of Directors began requiring that agencies that serve youth start keeping better track of who they're serving and funneling more street youth into education, job, and housing programs. These changes came in response to a local report that found that many of the city's services allowed kids to come and take essentials like food, clothing, and temporary shelter without any sense of who these kids or were and little attempt to get them off the streets into housing and job programs. Yet since these rules took effect, the number of homeless youth being served by county services has dropped dramatically from 993 in the fiscal year that ended in June of 2000 to an estimated 400 in the fiscal year that ended this past June, out of an estimated total population of 1,500 to 2,500 youth who have lived on the streets in the past year. "With some kids, the new rules aren't

pushing them into the services," a young woman called Bright Eyes told the Tribune. "They are pushing them out."

Families staying at Salt Lake City's Road Home shelter can now proudly claim to have added their own artistic stamp to the home, thanks to four newly installed stained glass windows that were all made by children who stay at the shelter. The stained glass window project was led by the Salt Lake Art Center, in an effort to brighten the perspective of about 60 shelter kids, who both designed and built the windows, according to the Salt Lake Tribune ([www.sltrib.com](http://www.sltrib.com)). Panel designs included one dominated by green, blue and red geometric shapes and a yellow sun in a corner, as well as ones with a house, a star, a snowman, and hearts. "The process is important," Lou Marzulli, the children's case manager at the shelter, told the Tribune. "They'll probably remember building these for the rest of their lives."

For families staying at the Tedford Shelter, they've found not just a temporary home but the resources needed to get a place of their own. That's because the Brunswick, Maine, shelter is also home to a comprehensive library filled with information homeless families can use to get jobs, services, and get back on their feet. The library was developed in partnership with the Curtis Memorial

Library's Health Information Partnership, and the tireless efforts of Curtis librarian Paul Dostie, who also works at the shelter. The library contains 54 titles, covering topics such as health, pregnancy, parenting, domestic violence, and substance abuse, as well as a collection of fiction, according to the Times-Record ([www.timesrecord.com](http://www.timesrecord.com)).

A month-long protest to bring attention to the plight of homeless people in Ottawa shows no sign of closing down, even after the group's permit expired the beginning of August. The police said they have no plans to interfere with the protesters, who have set up camp near the government conference center, as long as don't break any laws, according to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation ([ottawa.cbc.ca](http://ottawa.cbc.ca)). There is the charter of rights and freedoms." Ottawa police staff Sgt. Monique Ackland told the CBC, "and people have the right to demonstrate as long as it is done within the parameters of the law." The protesters plan to keep the protest going for a year.

A Cleveland photographer has put a real face to the homeless population in area. Two years ago, with the support of the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless (NEOCH), photographer David Hagan began inviting the city's homeless people into his studio, providing food and music as he captured them without makeup and in their everyday street clothes. The culmination of his work is now available in a book, distributed by NEOCH, Face to Face: Portraits of Homeless People in Cleveland. "While photographing, we discovered that we were portraying our homeless subjects as they should be seen," reads the introduction to the book, "as diverse as the rest of us; complex people in a challenging world, struggling to find happiness." For more information on the project or to get a copy of the book, visit [www.neoch.org/face\\_to\\_face1.htm](http://www.neoch.org/face_to_face1.htm).

## Questioning 'Chronic'

**Bush's Samaritan Initiative – another solve nothing, look good band-aid?**

*Originally published by Street Roots, August 04, 2003. Released through the Street News Service.*

Homeless and civil rights advocacy groups are asking the federal government to scrap the Bush administration's chronic homelessness initiative for more effective legislation.

In a letter to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, the National Coalition for the Homeless, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and 24 other national, state and local groups, say that the administration's plan is "all but guaranteeing the perpetuation of chronic homelessness," rather than ending it in 10 years as the plan is intended to do. The letter, addressed on July 21, calls on the administration to focus on the causes of homelessness, not just its symptoms.

"The 'chronic homelessness' initiative does not address the reality of home-

lessness in our states and communities," the letter states. "We have witnessed growth in the scale and severity of homelessness among families with children, unaccompanied youth, and other populations who do not fit neatly into the 'chronic homeless' paradigm. Yet current federal mandates are forcing our communities to overlook these gaps and needs in favor of a narrowly-constructed national priority."

Among the 27 organizations signing on to the letter are the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, the National Center on Family Homelessness, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, the National Organization for Women, Volunteers of America, and many others. The Interagency Council coordinates the efforts of federal agencies that support homeless programs.

The federal program, also known as the Samaritan Initiative, is part of Bush's pledge to end chronic homelessness within a decade. To date, \$35 million has been made available for fiscal year 2003 through the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services. The money is available through bids by nonprofit or public housing and health programs.

The federal initiative defines chronically homeless an "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years." A disabling condition is defined as a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions.

The initiative provides that no more

than 10 percent of the funds awarded will go to projects that will serve homeless families with a disabled family member. A disabled homeless family is defined as an adult person with a disabled condition who is accompanied by at least one dependent child.

The administration is targeting the subpopulation of chronically homeless based on research that suggests that the chronically homeless who comprise 10 percent of the national homeless population, use up 50 percent of homeless shelter services. On this analysis, the administration's policy is to spend the largest money on the largest body of consumers, thereby freeing services for majority in need.

According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, the research is informative but the conclusions are flawed. The research, it says, was narrowly focused, and did not include families

**Continued Next Page**

# 'Chronic'

cont. from page 2

with children or unaccompanied youths. It also did not evaluate rural or suburban areas or any service other than publicly funded, centrally-administered, emergency shelter days.

"Federal policy should not be based on research that excludes the data and experiences of suburban, rural, and smaller metropolitan areas, as well as less traditional arenas of service delivery (public schools, motels, community action agencies, etc)," the letter to the Interagency Council said. "Nor should definitive conclusions be drawn from this research — namely, that targeting resources toward a population that 'uses up' a greater percentage of federal resources will 'free up' more for other populations. In the absence of any meaningful expansion of resources, or in the absence of consideration of research that examines the impact of homelessness on the populations assumed to be unharmed by their relatively shorter shelter stays, such a conclusion is unwarranted."

Also, the program does not address the underlying causes of homelessness, and therefore will do nothing to prevent currently housed disabled people from losing their housing. The NCH says there is not enough funding for permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless, or enough affordable housing for people discharged from disability services.

"While supportive housing is a critical component of ending homelessness for many individuals with disabilities, by itself it cannot prevent people with disabilities from becoming homeless," the letter states. "Similarly, 'discharge planning' is a laudable goal, but when no affordable housing exists to which people can be discharged, it becomes merely an exercise in problem management. Only a sustained effort to address the systemic causes of homelessness, including lack of adequate health care, affordable housing, and livable incomes, will prevent

and end homelessness for people with and without disabilities. This is perhaps the most perplexing aspect of the "chronic homelessness" initiative: the complete absence of any discussion of poverty. To separate homelessness from poverty is to fundamentally distort its causes — which is precisely what the chronic homelessness dialogue appears to have accomplished."

Advocates with the homeless and civil rights groups are asking the administration to turn its attention to alternative legislation, including the National Housing Trust Fund and the Bringing America Home Act. These measures are more broad-based proposals, based on the experiences of providers and advocates from diverse geographic areas.

The Bringing America Home Act, H.R. 2897, was introduced to Congress on July 25 by Rep. Julia Carson (D-Ind.) with nearly 30 co-sponsors. The bill features a broad range of components, from housing to civil rights. It proposes creating the National Housing Trust Fund which advocates say would secure funding to build and preserve 1.5 million affordable homes over the next decade. Features of the bill include affordable housing, job training, civil rights protections, vouchers for child care and transportation, emergency funds for families facing eviction, living-wage guidelines, and increased access to health care.

The bill has been endorsed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which passed a resolution this year urging Congress to pass the measure. Several city and county councils also have reportedly passed resolutions in support of the act.

Reprinted from Street Roots, Portland, Oregon.

*"Even in a time of elephantine vanity and greed, one never has to look far to see the campfires of gentle people."*  
Garrison Keillor

## National Coalition for the Homeless' Second Annual Report Deems Sacramento the 11th "Meanest" City.

As homelessness increases, number of laws targeting homeless people continues to rise

WASHINGTON, DC- In Milwaukee, a church has been declared a public nuisance for feeding homeless people and allowing them to sleep there. In Gainesville, police threatened University of Florida students with arrest if they did not stop serving meals to homeless people in a public park. In Santa Barbara, it is illegal to lean against the front of a building or store, and no one can park a motor home on the street in one place for more than two hours. The report makes note of a few of the most egregious acts of the City of Sacramento (deemed the 11th meanest city) against the men, women and children who are homeless. It cites the City of Sacramento's prosecution of almost 900 people for illegal camping in 2002, highlighting the city attorney's relentless pursuit of Billy McManus. Also described is the City's attempt to close the St. Francis of Assisi Steps Ministry, despite a critical lack of adequate and appropriate shelter space.

These ordinances and activities demonstrate the increasingly hostile attitude in the United States toward people who are homeless, according to a report by the National Coalition for the Homeless that was released in August 2003. This report examines occurrences since January 2002 and documents civil rights violations perpetrated against people experiencing homelessness.

With the highest unemployment rates in almost a decade, more people are becoming homeless, and as the economy continues to tighten, it is causing financial crises for shelters and service-providing agencies. Though nearly all cities still lack sufficient shelter beds and social services, many continue to pass laws prohibiting people experiencing homelessness from sleeping outside.

"Instead of the compassionate responses that communities have used to save lives

in the past two decades, the common response to homelessness is to criminalize the victims through laws and ordinances that make illegal life-sustaining activities that people experiencing homelessness are forced to do in public," said Donald Whitehead, Executive Director of the National Coalition for the Homeless, who is himself formerly homeless.

Almost 70% of the cities surveyed in the first report have passed at least one or more new laws specifically targeting homeless people since January 2002, making it increasingly difficult to survive on the streets. Cities are attempting to make it illegal to perform life-sustaining activities in public, while at the same time refusing to allocate sufficient funds to address the causes of homelessness.

This 2003 report finds Las Vegas, San Francisco, New York City, Los Angeles, and Atlanta to be the top five "meanest" cities in the United States for poor and homeless people to live in; California is the "meanest" state, followed by Florida as the second "meanest."

The National Homeless Civil Rights Organizing Project (NHCROP) - a project of the National Coalition for the Homeless comprised of local advocates in communities across the country - has compiled quantitative and qualitative data samplings from 147 communities in 42 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. These cities represent rural, urban, and suburban areas in all geographic and demographic varieties across the United States.

As it becomes increasingly difficult to afford housing, this country is turning to jails, instead of creating affordable housing by enacting the Bringing America Home Act and providing services to deal with people experiencing homelessness. These individuals and families are

arrested for committing such illegal acts as sitting or standing on sidewalks and napping in parks. Whitehead stated, "At the national level, we see a relationship between municipalities efforts to make homelessness a crime and the increases in hate crimes and violent acts directed at homeless people in those cities."

Brian Davis, Executive Director of the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless, said, "imagine, the loneliness and feeling of helplessness, when every shelter is full and then the city's police force adds insult to injury by confiscating all your belongings or issues a ticket for sleeping in a park. It takes a special person to be able to cope with the daily struggle to survive while the city government throws added barriers into your path toward stability."

Illegal to Be Homeless: The Criminalization of Homelessness in the United States, published by the National Coalition for the Homeless, 2003. For full report go to <http://www.nationalhomeless.org>.

### 20 Meanest Cities

1. Las Vegas
2. San Francisco
3. New York City
4. Los Angeles
5. Atlanta
6. Cincinnati
7. Key West
8. Austin
9. Orlando
10. New Orleans
11. Sacramento
12. Milwaukee
13. Santa Cruz
14. Miami Beach
15. Jacksonville Beach
16. Hollywood, FL
17. Santa Monica
18. Nashville
19. Honolulu
20. Boulder

### Top 2 Meanest States

1. California
2. Florida

# NASNA

continued from page 1

key. There are about 3.5 million people experiencing homelessness in the US. The reasons for this have grown (chronic health, elderly and predatory loans, youth coming out of foster care). There is not enough family support. Too little is done to address prevention, ie. rental assistance. There are many emergency shelters but no where else to move people out of homelessness. Most people find the shelter systems unacceptable. Cleveland says they want no more affordable housing in the city. They think it should go to the suburbs.



exchange for a donation. Most papers charge vendors anywhere from 15 cents to 65 cents per paper, some provide the papers to the vendors for free.

The two giving the class had many years experience with newspaper distribution and have formed relationships with many of their paper's vendors. The vendors treat the job as entrepreneurs. They are gainfully employed. They are required to vend the papers in a respectful manner to the public, to be sober when vending and to not be aggressive. The vendors, in general, have come to take pride in their work and take responsibility for problems that may jeopardize their good standing with the community.

One of the vendor programs has a speakers bureau and vendors give workshops. Two vendors go to a school and tell the class about their jobs and end the presentation by selling the paper to each of the students. Students have asked for the presentations because they were curious. This educates society while society is young.

Vending is not the only solution



The National Coalition for Homelessness is addressing 4 main areas, 1. civil rights - criminalization of homelessness. 90% of the cities in recent NCH report have laws against homelessness. 2. Housing - a priority. Clevelanders need to earn \$11 an hour to afford housing. Any affordable housing must be preserved by demonstrations, lawsuits, government action. 3. Economic justice -Temporary laborers are being exploited. There are a few cities that now have a non-profit hiring hall (Cleveland, Chicago, Phoenix). Universal Living Wages are important. Entitlements. 4. Healthcare - Emergency rooms are often only place for uninsured. Mental Health and substance abuse treatment housing fills up first by those sentenced by a judge to enter a program. The court system becomes the processing mill for addressing homelessness. Increases in homelessness have occurred in every city for the last 18 years, except for St Paul. One big hope is the Bring America Home Act, legislation recently introduced in congress. It addresses economic justice, exploitation, universal health care among other necessary improvements. It may take a long time to pass, like the 3 1/2 years it took to pass the McKinney Act.

Newspaper vendor programs. Most street newspapers have vendor programs, where people distribute the papers in

to homelessness, but it is one and helps many go on to get housing and other employment. Vending is one solution, not good for everyone. The vendor has their own solution.

Dinner An elegant dinner was served at the hotel's conference room. Key note speaker shared with dinner guests the important work recently done by the Collectif pur une loi sur l'elimination de la pauvreté a collective of organizations and concerned citizens that have worked for many years to get legislation passed making poverty against the law. This legislation requires Quebec government to act against poverty and exclusion. [www.pauvrete.qc.ca](http://www.pauvrete.qc.ca)

Saturday meetings. The 2nd Edition Excellence in Journalism Award gave recognition to street newspapers and authors for best issues, articles, and art

work. Each winner received an attractive symbol of appreciation for their excellence.

Then to business. There is only one opportunity each year where members are altogether in one location. Decisions must be finalized and voted on. New ideas and motions must be introduced. NASNA members approved to further pursue relationships with INSP, the international street paper organization. Bylaws were amended. It was decided that the 2004 conference be cancelled in favor of energy and staff redirecting their efforts towards capacity building (Paula expressed her sadness to the group). But applications to be host paper for the 2005 conference would be due in a month. Nominations for Executive committees - voted on later.

Shelter tour. Saturday afternoon there were other classes offered, but Paula attended the Quebec City Shelter Tour.



instead. Fanny was our tour guide and main translator. YWCA had a portion of their facility dedicated to homeless women that were allowed to stay for 2 years. The Salvation Army shelter serves 1,000 homeless people a year and they offer prayer, help in applying for government assis-



ment, mental health problems, aids, referrals and serves 3 meals each day. The largest shelter (95 beds) was run by the government and had several programs that addressed various needs such as detox area with medical staff, alcohol and drug therapy school for getting high school diplomas, budgeting, job referrals and meals. The last shelter visited was privately run and was the only shelter on the tour that didn't charge anything for services, food or shelter. In fact they did not ever solicit anyone for money, sticking to the principal of allowing God to take care of all their needs. And God has come through miraculously and in abundance of supplies to meet the needs of the poor that come to them for help.

Most all the shelters in Quebec City charge their guests for a bed for the night or the month. One co-tour guide said it gives a dignity to people that sometimes have lost much dignity. Most all the shelters allow people a lengthy stay, up to 2 years and at the last shelter the man that guided us around had stayed at that shelter for over 20 years (of course, he was now considered staff and had his own room with TV and his little dog). The whole community has meetings together and forms partnerships for the purpose of helping homeless.

Saturday evening - The much awaited Vend-off took place in the old Quebec City, an area filled with quaint looking mainstream shops, coffee houses and tourists. The Vend-off is an annual contest where the vendors from all the North American street newspapers compete to see who can sell the most papers. Bernard had promised it wouldn't rain for the event, yet 5 or 10 minutes before the vend-off was to begin, the rain began to pour. But it didn't thwart the hardy vendors from selling their soaking papers to tourists as they ran to cover. The winner received an all expense paid trip to the 2005 NASNA Conference.

Homeward's foreign correspondent got up early Sunday morning to get to the airport on time, missing the Sunday morning events and many goodbyes. After boarding her jet she followed the sun back to California, beating the nightfall and last bus to town.



# 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, which is a part 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 the homeless a voice in the public forum. Homeward also informs the homeless 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 the Leaves & Fishes complex, or mailed to the address below.

All writing submitted for publication will be edited as necessary, with due respect for the authors' 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 publishing excerpts on Homeward's webpage and possible reprinting in NASNA member papers, with due byline. 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.

All correspondence can be sent to Homeward Street Journal, PO Box 2430, Sacramento, CA 95812

For information please call: 442-2156

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

excerpts from the paper are published on the web at <http://users.comcast.com/shochome>

## Sacramento Housing Alliance To Hold Affordable Housing Symposium

The Sacramento Area has witnessed significant increases in housing costs for both rental and for-sale homes. In the Sacramento County Housing Element, officials recognize that the greatest gap between incomes and housing costs occurs in rental units affordable to very low-income households and home prices affordable to very low- and low-income households (H.E. pg. 8-11). It is estimated that the rent for only 5% of all rental units is affordable to extremely low- and very low-income households. In the County, over 91% of renters who earn less than \$20,000 per year are overpaying for their housing.

The Community has rallied behind the idea that a percentage of new housing should be required to be affordable to lower income households. The County Board of Supervisors demonstrated its agreement with this concept by unanimously approving an affordable housing policy.

Housing Element Policy-45 reads: "The County will adopt an affordable housing program concurrent with the approval of the Housing Element that will require at least 10 percent of new residential development to be affordable to extremely low, very low and low income households."

Their "aye" votes acknowledge the critical lack of affordable housing for lower income families (those earning less than \$47,850) and particularly for extremely low income households who earn up to \$17,950 in entry level jobs and on fixed incomes.

Market rate housing developers, real estate professionals and local government officials are now required to plan for and implement mechanisms to produce this affordable housing. For many of them, this is new and unknown territory. There is an urgent need for technical assistance. It is essential that

all have an opportunity to come together to learn how to identify and implement feasible ways to meet these requirements and evaluate potential partners (both for- and not-for-profit) who have the experience and skills required to develop, own, and maintain affordable housing opportunities, including home ownership in mixed income communities.

The Sacramento Housing Alliance will begin this project by hosting 2 to 3 planning sessions with a representative group of stakeholders. The Symposium is tentatively scheduled for mid-November. It will bring together a full range of participants for a thorough dialog and study of best practices in the region. It will also provide a forum to learn from collective experience. The information shared and relationships made will increase the quality of affordable housing built in Sacramento area communities.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING NOW!

*Can't Afford Decent Housing?  
Concerned about housing costs?*

#### ATTEND A TOWN HALL MEETING

There is not enough affordable housing to meet the needs on our community. What Sacramento can do is require a percentage of all new housing to be affordable. Come share your experience and get involved!

#### WHEN:

Saturday, September 20th  
9:30 am - 11:00 am

#### WHERE:

Trinity Cathedral  
2620 Capitol Avenue  
Sacramento, CA

### Sacramento Street Count

On August 26, 2003, in the wee hours of the morning, a large crew of workers walked the streets and alleys and parks and parkways to count the people that were sleeping without the comfort of a home. That same day, in the offices of the shelter providers and jailers and hospitals and transitional houses, the numbers of people experiencing homelessness that slept the night before in some facility were totaled.

Found sleeping unsheltered were 675 people (254 men, 69 females, 7 children and 105 undetermined). Local correctional institutions held 747 captive for the night (estimated that 20% of population may be experiencing homelessness). 669 people (including 146 children, 346 men and 177 women) took refuge in an emergency shelter. Transitionally housed were 805 people (306 men, 237 women and 262 children). 2,896 totals the number of people known to be experiencing homelessness on the night of August 23, 2003 in Sacramento.

We know that many people sleeping outdoors have gotten pretty good at not being easily found, especially since it is against the law to sleep outdoors. So we can assume that the count is very conservative. The numbers they came up with are still too many people without permanent housing, too many people that may have to sleep outdoors on the coldest nights of this winter, too many children without a home.

### Joining 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) 442-1198

Annual Membership dues:  
Standard, \$35;  
Low-income, \$15

#### Organizations:

Full, 0.1% agency budget, Associate, \$100

#### Send donations to:

Sacramento Housing Alliance  
PO Box 2430  
Sacramento, CA 95812



*Sink your Teeth...*  
a story attributed to Elizabeth in the last issue on page 4, was actually a letter to editor written by R.M.

Faulhaber of Kelounna, Canada, after visiting Sacramento. If Mr. Faulhaber gets to read this paper again, we wish to express our regret over the error.

## STAND-DOWN cont. from page 1



ments; coordinate needs with assistance, and elevate individual self-worth and livings standards.

Also, a Stand-down provides a brief respite from the rigors of co-existence within a society of civilians, who are often unaware of the impact that training and remodeling, conditions and requirements and, ultimately, the experiences endured by service members, has had on the lives of military personnel and those around them.

What?

After registering and check-in, personal travel gear will be secured at the gate in a safe storage area, and folks will be issued a new sleeping bag, a cot, and be assigned to quarters. Sodas and tobacco are usually available on-the-

house.

Barring the unforeseen, live music and shows will occur on the 26th and 27th, with a D.J. filling in between breaks. There will also be open mike times for anyone who wants to participate.

Meals will be cooked and catered by many well known service clubs and benevolent associations throughout the event.

For the energetic (and those who'll heckle them), Frisbees, footballs and such will be provided.

As this is an all-ages event discourtesy, profanity and altercations, drugs and alcohol in any amount, will be considered grounds for immediate removal of all offenders from the event. Over-all

site security is provided by the very capable members of the Viet-Nam Veterans Motor-Cycle Club, Sacramento chapter.

In Closing

Though the last decade, or more, this event has generated national attention; has provided countless veterans with "a hand up - not a hand out"; provided a safe haven in which to regroup; and is now available in many States.

Volunteers log prodigious hours coordinating and providing for the various requirements inherent in an operation of this size, and is greatly appreciated by all, I'm sure.

Well troop, I look forward to meeting you there, if all goes well -ey?

# TAKE A WALK IN MY SHOES

Street News Service [www.streetnewsservice.org](http://www.streetnewsservice.org)

by Dan Newth

That little hamster driving the rumor mill has been working overtime lately. Several "grass roots" organizations heard comments, through the grapevine, that the Portland City Council was displeased with them. It started after crossroads had the audacity to hand out sleeping bags, a demonstration of the needs of Portland's homeless, in front of city hall. Then, members of crossroads addressed the City Council, presenting the radical concept that people should have a right to sleep.

I have a friend who thinks City Council members have an opportunity for spiritual growth. He'd like to extend an open invitation to the City Council. Leave your cash and credit cards at home, and spend a day and night in the homeless system.

You could challenge your immune system by eating breakfast at the Blanchet House, after that you may decide to purchase your lunch. Time to panhandle. Holding a sign will most likely generate a visit from the friendly "Clean and Safe" cops. They present an intimidating attitude considering that in reality they are little more than security guards. They may offer you a place to stay but don't believe them. The jails are full.

You end up being ordered to move, along. Luckily, you managed to scrounge up a dollar, just enough to get a burger at McDonalds. You're still hungry, you ask around for a place to eat. Salvation Army feeds at 3:30 p.m. It's 2 p.m. now. Head to Waterfront Park and chill out because the mercury is at 90 degrees. When you get there you see hundreds of people laying around, enjoying the blue sky, sunshine and easy access to drug dealers. The police know who the dealers are but will race past a drug deal if they see a homeless person lying down wrapped in a blanket. Heck, it's too hot for blankets, anyway.

A sudden urgency comes upon you. The-

call-of-nature, abdominal cramping with that got-to-go-now feeling. Thank god for public restrooms! This is a great time to practice the funny walk. You know, short quick strides with the muscles of your gluteus maximus clenched.

Is that an angry mob outside the bathroom? Well, it seems some druggie has been occupying the restroom for the past 45 minutes. Now you're mad, but pounding on the door and yelling have little effect other than swollen knuckles. It was a metal door. Isn't it funny that something air tight isn't water tight? You feel something dribble down your leg.

Where is another restroom? You walk around — well, more like shuffle, asking at offices and restaurants. The most common reaction is a scrunched up nose.

Congratulations. You have acquired a homeless aura: The combination of perspiration and diarrhea make you authentic.

Well you've made it to the Salvation Army. Relief at last. You knock on the door and the guy you see at the reception desk through the glass ignores you. Feeling the fuse shorten you yell out the urgent need to use the damn toilet. Suddenly, desk guy pays attention to you. He will now be able to exercise his small bit of power by refusing you access to the bathroom. The irony — that someone that has been homeless (the desk guy) exhibits so little compassion to another human being enduring the powerlessness of being homeless — escapes you for the moment.

Desk guy sends you on your way. The Adult and Family Services office is across the street. We can always rely on the government, can't we? Why not apply for government assistance while in the neighborhood?

Today, you have other priorities. The pain is causing you to walk stooped over. Your face is pale and grimaced. As you walk by a couple of construction workers sitting

in an old Scottsdale pick-up, you hear the comment, "Watch the tools. There goes another junkie." You get a feeling it was directed at you.

So you enter the AFS office. About a dozen are waiting in the lobby for their numbers to come up. Three social workers are at the front counter, one with a client, the other two are chatting and joking with each other. You have just entered the "Client Zone."

Approaching the two social workers, you stand at the counter for a few moments waiting for acknowledgement. Social workers know damn good and well they have a lot of power to influence a client's life. Subconsciously, they understand it is OK feeling superior to the client. It takes training and effort to maintain sensitivity to the clients' needs. These two ain't had that training.

"Excuse me, but I was wondering..." and you're cut off.

"Take a number and you'll be helped at the information counter," states the social worker.

"But I just need..." and you're cut off again.

"The numbers are in the red dispenser." And the social worker turns away.

"THE BATHROOM! WHERE'S THE BATHROOM!" Your frazzled nerves have snapped.

The social workers have now evaluated your case and determined it looks, sounds and smells like a nut. One social worker signals the security guard while the other addresses you like a child. "Yelling is inappropriate behavior for this office. If you will please take a number and sit down you will be helped as soon as possible."

"Can I help you?" you hear the voice of the security guard.

"Yes I need to know where the restroom

is," your voice is a little shaky and the pain is making you desperate.

"The clients' restroom is closed," the guard says, "and we don't allow anyone under the influence to remain in this building."

You feel insulted and defensively state, "I AM NOT UNDER THE INFLUENCE!" Then you add in a subdued tone, "May I please use another restroom?"

The security guard shows no give. "I'm going to have to ask you to leave now."

Just as the anger starts to overwhelm you it is replaced by humiliation. The Blanchet House breakfast has broken free in a noisy wet slide to the floor. You now have the complete attention of everyone in the room. The smell is making you feel ill, people are moving away from you.

You turn and walk out the door, swearing to yourself you will never show your face in that office again.

Reprinted from Street Roots, Portland, Oregon.

## Mandella Garden Update

The continuing story from last issue "Corporate Agriculture Protested at Mandella Garden" takes a positive turn. A judge recently determined that the Fremont project (slated to replace the Ron Mandella Community Gardens) will now be required to have an Environmental Impact Report before the project can begin. This may not only delay the project, but could result in finding that the the housing project is detrimental to the environmental health of the community. I'm only hoping that an environmental investigation will prove the irreplaceable benefit of the garden. *Paula*

# CIVIL RIGHTS AND HOMELESSNESS

by Elizabeth Hallaway

Gradually, a tent city is hap - pening here in Sacramento. Over 6,000 signatures were delivered to the mayor's office to end the sleeping ban and establish a legal camp. Strategies are evolving to secure this camp for those interested, and the public is slowly warming to that idea. However, existing laws regarding sleeping outside are still selectively enforced and new laws seem to be created to move homeless out of certain areas. There are continued reports of police harassment. We need to oppose "The Homeless Management Information System" which requires every community to participate or they lose federal funds for homeless programs by 2004. Do reservations and concentration camps ring a bell?

Sacramento is setting itself up for a civil lawsuit. Homeless homicides are a matter of record. How many more must die as we are repeatedly turned down for camp permits? Is Sacramento condoning homeless deaths by putting the law above the safety of its citizens? Do hate crimes not pertain to us? Training should be required to sensitize police to the real issues.

The Kensington Welfare Rights Union travels around America working for justice, including economic equality. They have already helped set up viable tent cities in Pennsylvania and New York and are establishing one in Washington, D.C. Oregon, Seattle and a few southern towns have successful camps as well. Homeless here are steadily gaining support from almost all sectors, and there are many bills on the Senate floor designed to help the poor. What are the real reasons Sacramento won't cooperate with those trying to find their own way? If one looks at the budgets for homeless programs, one wonders where the money actually went. Some programs merely feed themselves.

Mayor Menino of Boston (where all homeless have shelters) said in an interview published by Shelterforce (Nov./Dec. '02) "...I don't think housing is on the radar screen of the Bush administration. They talk about home ownership but I don't see the commitment to real investment that is needed to solve... a focus on rental housing. That is where the needs of the working poor are." When asked if living wage

legislation is important he responded, "It's part of it. I'm proud that Boston was able to pass living wage legislation with the support of business and labor." So where does our mayor stand? The National Coalition for the Homeless in Washington, D.C. recently reported that California is the number one state, and Sacramento is the eleventh "meanest" city respectively regarding their treatment of the homeless. Perhaps Davis is not the only one who needs to be "recalled."

What about empty buildings in need of rejuvenation that the homeless could help fix themselves? Why not hire some homeless to keep parks and bathrooms clean, and handle some recycling? What about the price to our environment when the poor are forced to urinate and defecate on our streets because officials are afraid to keep public bathrooms open?

The California Homeless Civil Rights Organizing Project says hate crimes against the homeless should be addressed by the U.S. Department of Justice. CHCROP endorses letting the homeless actively participate in programs and policies which directly affect them.

S.H.O.C. hopes to see a larger rally next time out (perhaps at the Federal Building?) With constant war somewhere it is imperative that those who believe in peace, fairness and compassion stand up to a monstrous government that exemplifies hate, greed, corporate welfare and cruelty. We have strength in numbers. RSVP for your rights.

# Dreams from Eldamar

by Elizabeth Hallaway

As evilly as Morgoth\* tortured elves, and turned them into orcs, so our governments twist us into spiritually devoid puppets. It is not good in our blood, but gold, and lust.

A genius from the past has revealed our future, and shown how important is choice. We can fall into depression or depravity or stand firm, and yes, afraid and face any demon before us.

White as the Lady, gold as the mallom leaves in Lorien, and green as the ancient earth our land and air and sea could be if we find the courage, and celestial help to throw down the stones of Mordor.

(\*from The Silmarillion by J.R.R. Tolkien)

# HALLOWED GROUND

by Elizabeth Hallaway

It is a message when a robin crosses your path, a call to your passion when the wolves howl. What does it take to get your attention when a squirrel drops a pine cone on your head? It is a message when political upheaval is upon you, a call to your intellect when babies cry. Make friends with your squirrel brothers. Where you stand is hallowed ground, lies be lost and truth be found. Shady hues of illusions news must surely disappear, as long as you and I and them keep our relations clear. When the stream of life goes flowing by and seasons rearrange, remember, be sure, of one true fact - everything must change. The Earth is speaking, believe your eyes, and hear the sound She is making. One Great Spirit loves and gives, and all we do is keep taking. Hallowed ground, hallowed ground, treat all life like hallowed ground.

# THE PHARISEES AND THE SCRIBES

by Elizabeth Hallaway

When some speak of hell and fallen angels, there is no devil except what's in our hearts. Fallen angels are merely a symbol of our weaknesses.

If God is real, and has made us as we are, and only good comes from It, then heaven can be the only Truth, politics and faux religions notwithstanding. All this divisive, living in a box mentality pimps us to church and state. We must redeem and embrace the devil and stop lying to ourselves. Taking ourselves lightly, we can fly, and there is no laughter in hell. Suddenly we will look and see that heaven has been here all the time.

The Pharisees and the scribes still get it wrong.

**Obituary**

Why, what is pomp, rule, reign,  
but earth and dust?  
And live we how we can,  
yet die we must.  
Shakespeare

