

# HOMeward

*Serving the Sacramento area homeless community*

Volume Two, No. 4

JULY/AUGUST 1998

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Ellen Ostergren  
*Happy trails to you*

## Whose river is it?

Levee repairs will force homeless to move camps



Despite the fact that urban camping is illegal, many have chosen to make the river their home.

photos: Steve Ward

by Christina Stock

Those who camp along the American River near the downtown area will soon have to move, due to plans to reinforce weak areas in the levee.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and California State Reclamation Board have identified an approximate 13-mile area of the levee in the American River Parkway which is badly in need of repair.

Despite the fact that urban camping is illegal in Sacramento, many homeless people have made this part of the river their home. As the 12th Street area provides one of the only downtown river access points, there is a frequent clash between homeless campers, who feel a constant threat of I.D. checks, dawn patrols, and camps being periodically torn up, and downtown residents who find these campers intimidating. However, all who appreciate the

American River Parkway have an interest in the safety of its levee. The area slated for repair, beginning at the 12th Street bridge, and continuing north through the CSUS area to the Watt Avenue bridge, includes many spots where erosion has already eaten into structural sections of the levee. Without repair, erosion will increase, continuing to take soil and plants with it. In the worst case, a levee failure could pose catastrophic consequences for downtown Sacramento.

In a natural setting, a river meanders, overflowing its banks on one side and then the next, changing its course and shape. In an urban setting however, a river could meander right through downtown. Timothy Washburn, Counsel for Sacramento Flood Control Agency, says the river is



see Levee page 3

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## 1999 Federal Budget Proposals Continuing Cuts To Most Needy

Washington, D.C.: The National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH)

### HUD Homeless Assistance Funding

For the 1999 budget the Senate Appropriations Committee is recommending to the full Senate a \$1 billion appropriation for HUD McKinney programs. While this is an increase of \$177 million over 1998, it is \$150 million less than the President recommended, and \$600 million less than NCH, state and local coalitions called for in the 1999 budget. Further, the Senate did not appropriate funding for the 34,000 vouchers for homeless families and individuals (physically or mentally handicapped) who have the most difficulty accessing permanent housing, and they only allowed for about 7,000 vouchers for families moving from welfare to work, all of which are targeted for use in seven cities only [none are Sacramento].

It is critical that the subcommittee reinstate the 34,000 vouchers for homeless families and individuals who have the most difficulty finding permanent housing, as well as the 50,000 vouchers for families moving from welfare to work.

### Medicaid Program Threatened by House Budget Resolution

On June 5 '98, the House of Representatives adopted a FY 1999 budget resolution (No. 284) that calls for a \$12 billion cut in Medicaid over a five year time period. This sizable cut is in addition to a \$10 billion reduction to the Medicaid program that was enacted last year as

part of the Balanced Budget Act. The Senate budget resolution (No. 86), which was adopted on April 2, 1998, does not include a reduction to the Medicaid program. The House and Senate must resolve differences between their versions of a FY 1999 budget resolution before it takes effect.

### PATH Homeless Mental Health Program

Mental illness can play a major role in determining a low-income individual's likelihood of experiencing homelessness.

900 NCH page 7

## NEW YORK STREET ARTISTS: Struggling for First Amendment Rights A New York Artist's Perspective of Making a Living on the Streets

### Prologue

by Lee Parks

For our reader's benefit this is a brief history of the New York situation involving street artists, who are attempting to make a living selling their art work on the streets.

The city of New York requires all persons selling non-food items on the street to obtain a General Vendors License. In 1979 an amendment to the law limited the amount of licenses to the then current number, with exceptions for veterans who qualify. Even with these exceptions, the number of licenses issued in New York by 1996 was only about 1,200. This required a 2-3 year wait to get a license.

In 1982 the City amended the law to allow the City to issue a license any vendor of books, newspapers and other written matter to comply with the Constitution's 1st Amendment guarantee.

For some time street artists in New York have been harassed, arrested, and had their work seized by law enforcement officers when attempting to sell their creations in public spaces. In 1994 appeals were made to the US District Court for the Southern District of New York.

In 1995 the US District Court jointly rejected all cases. It likened fine art to be the same as "applied or decorative art" with no verbal message.

The artists appealed to a higher court, the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. In 1996 the Appeals Court ruled in favor of the artists, stating their opinion as follows:

(Discussion 1, in part): "...The City apparently looks upon visual art as mere 'merchandise' lacking in communicative concepts or ideas. Both the court and the City demonstrate an unduly restricted view of the First Amendment and of visual art itself. Such myopic vision not only overlooks case law central to First Amendment jurisprudence but fundamentally misperceives the essence of visual communication and artistic expression. Visual art is as wide ranging in its depiction of ideas, concepts and emotions as any book, treatise, pamphlet or other writing, and is similarly entitled to full First Amendment protection..."

Although the Appeals Court ruling freed the artists from getting a vendors license, it allowed the city some control on when and where selling could be allowed for safety reasons. As the reader will learn from this story by Robert Lederman, the city of New York has used this exception to increase restrictions on all First Amendment exempt vendors.

### New York City and the Restriction of 144 streets to vending.

by Robert Lederman

There have been a number of misconceptions concerning the Street Vendor Review Panel's "vote" on 5/20/98 and its effect on the city's

(mostly portraits of Mayor Giuliani) and received an additional 21 Criminal Court summonses. Despite being arrested a total of 32 times for protesting or showing art since Giuliani came into office and receiving more than 40 summonses I've never been found guilty and have only been brought to trial on one arrest, in which I represented myself and was acquitted.

Not only have my arrests increased in frequency but the rank of police officer ordering the arrests and attendant threats and violence against me have steadily risen. It used to be just the cop on the beat or a Peddler Squad officer that I

for a single retail store, causes more congestion in one day than all the vendors in New York put together in one year, in 1998 it almost caused the deaths of numerous people. The Times Sq. B.I.D.'s New Years Eve Celebration cost the City millions in police overtime.

The City's hundreds of "street festivals", which are nothing more than a few individuals using their influence to obtain a permit to hold a street fair, and then selling the rights to thousands of vendors, causes immense congestion and inconvenience... The main petitioner for closing these streets is the Downtown Alliance. This real estate organization is made up of landlords and businesses who are the traditional opponents and competitors of vendors.

...The Downtown Alliance itself closes off entire streets to vehicular traffic, allowing restaurants and other businesses to set up tables, chairs and clothing racks in the street. "Congestion" caused by a few vendors can hardly be compared.

That the Downtown Alliance B.I.D. is financing and building a police precinct in which NYPD officers and private security guards for the Alliance will both be headquartered is simply more proof of the inordinate influence this organization wields.

Not only does this so-called Alliance not represent New Yorkers generally, according to both City Council reports on the B.I.D.'s, its own members have little if any say in the decision making process. They are members not by choice but by the accident of being in the B.I.D.'s territory.

The extra taxes they are assessed to finance the B.I.D. are involuntary and are about to be increased by as much as one third to pay for the police substation.

The bottom line is that in Giuliani's New York, corporations, Business Improvement Districts and real estate interests can exploit and congest the streets and parks of our city, violating every precept of "quality of life". Vendors, street artists, and other people are mercilessly harassed, arrested, and persecuted no matter how much they try to play by the rules.

**"...Visual art is as wide ranging in its depiction of ideas, concepts and emotions as any book, treatise, pamphlet or other writing, and is similarly entitled to full First Amendment protection..."**

US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

vendors: The new restrictions do not just affect food vendors.

According to the NYC Vending Ordinance, First Amendment protected artists, newspaper vendors and book vendors (all of whom are exempted from needing a license), as well as licensed vendors, are restricted from any street where food vendors are restricted. This means that the sweeping new restrictions affect far more than food vendors' business locations and the public's right to buy a cheap hotdog. They effectively ban the selling of fine art, books, political materials, bibles, and newspapers on the street as well.

In 1996, after winning our court battle, we believed the arrests of street artists would finally come to an end. The Federal Court declared that: "...the city's requirement that appellants be licensed in order to sell their artwork in public spaces constitutes an unconstitutional infringement of their First Amendment Rights..."

Has the Mayor, who lost his appeal ... begun to respect our rights? To use myself as an example, from 1993 until we won our case in 1996, I was arrested 8 times for selling my art and received 5 separate summonses. In the past three months alone I've been arrested 11 times while displaying or creating art

had to deal with. Now I'm routinely confronted by Inspectors, Captains, Lieutenants and officers from the NYPD Intelligence Division. My group's activities are routinely photographed and videotaped by the police and I've been interrogated a number of times by NYPD Intelligence while in custody. Am I a terrorist or a violent criminal? My "crime" is that I persistently advocate full First Amendment freedom for all New Yorkers...

As Earl Andrews, chair of the Street Vendor Review Panel noted in the Times and elsewhere, there is good reason to believe there will be a lawsuit ... The panel is made up of three City Officials personally appointed by the Mayor from City Agencies known to be anti-vendor. The only non-Giuliani appointed member was missing at both hearings.

At the 1/8 hearing on proposed street restrictions the Downtown Alliance showed an absurd video purporting to document congestion which featured a homeless man dropping his pants.

If congestion was something the city was really concerned about, why does it let corporate sponsors promote parades, marathons, film premieres in Central Park and hundreds of street festivals each year? The Macy's Day Parade, a commercial



## LEVEE

Continued from page 1

limited by the constraints that an urban environment poses. "This river is in a zoo. This isn't a wild river."

In keeping with the Flood Control Act, issues from visual appeal to environmental concerns must be considered in altering the state of the river. The levee repair project will provide protection while attempting as much as possible to maintain the river's natural charm. "We are trying to create nice zoo conditions," says Washburn. "It's naturalistic, not natural."

During upcoming months, the riverbank will be blocked due to fences around construction areas. Although it is uncertain exactly when work will begin, Aug 1-Nov 15 is the season when river conditions allow for construction. Repairs are expected to continue for the next 2-3 years during the August through November season. Low berms covered with rock from the water line to nearly the top, will be installed, called "cobbling," and the slope will then be covered with plants. The new growth will take up to five years to cover the repaired slope.

An environmental impact report for the project evaluates the current effect of homeless campers in the 12th Street and other areas. The report expects that people living in this area will migrate to other parts of the river, and return when repairs are completed.

Homeless campers are viewed as a possible threat to the project, but also as interested

inhabitants that could aid in its success. Living in the vulnerable flooding area, these occupants have perhaps the closest relationship to the river. Becoming cautious of the tiny plants will be the most crucial part of keeping the soil in place on the levee, where it needs to be. "Part of our task is this," says Washburn. "Can we as a community come together and get a little ahead of the game?" Many homeless do consider the river their home, as it offers a sense of stability in an otherwise crisis-filled existence. Preventative levee repair could be the lesser of dangerous and ugly alternatives, which have been seen in past floods.

"In 1986, 2000 feet of the berm just went on down the river," says Washburn. "At that point the Corps of Engineers just go in and dump rock." The present deep undercuts show the worst areas for erosion. "We're one step away from that here," Washburn continues.

In an interesting part of the environmental impact report, viewer groups are considered according to their perceived interest in the view itself. The report looks at motorists, bicyclists, boaters, railroad employees and homeless campers. Rather than generalizing, it makes a unique distinction between different groups of homeless people and the way they seem to regard the river area.

The homeless who camp near the 12th Street bridge were noted to have lower concern for the way the river area looked, compared to the homeless who camp further up the river in other sites. The report states, "...the unkempt nature of the

homeless campsites at this site indicate that in general, homeless people here tend to be more transient than elsewhere and apparently have little concern for the visual quality of this area."

In contrast, the report goes on, "...farther up the river, a few homeless people live in constructed shelters, but that disturbance by these people is hidden and litter is not evident. These people are regarded as having some visual concern for the site.

While some are seen as a nuisance, more serious campers tend to remain inconspicuous. Many homeless take pride in keeping "a clean camp," and with selective enforcement of camping ordinances in Sacramento, some of these campers seem to have better luck dodging the law than others. "Self-policing" among those campers sometimes decreases crime and other threats, because they realize the benefit of keeping the area relatively trouble free. As with boaters and bicyclists, the homeless are probably going to remain a presence on the downtown river. And with this presence, it also becomes their river.

## Some history

Historically, the area surrounding the American and Sacramento rivers was a highly productive ecosystem naturally designed to flood, with floods occurring almost annually. Although Native Americans lived in the floodplain for millennia, only in the last 150 years has there been any significant influence by humans.

Sacramento itself has experienced flooding since its establishment. Sutter built his fort about two miles from the rivers on high ground, the land near the rivers being wetlands. By the '49 gold rush, residents had already built up a small levee along the Sacramento river shore where the port was.

In the late 1850's the ground level was raised by 4-5 feet from the river as far as Plaza Park along I, J, and K Streets. But that proved insufficient, and after a devastating flood, the residents raised the ground level in what was the whole downtown area 8 to 10 feet. The project took about ten years, from 1864 to 1873.

That eliminated severe flooding downtown, but outlying vicinities were protected only by a network of levees, usually privately owned and maintained, and often used as roads. Not until 1910 that a coordinated effort by city, state, and federal agencies brought about any systemic planning to flood control.

Since then, urban encroachment into the river's historical floodplain has continued. Hydraulic mining for gold during the late 1800's, sand and gravel mining as late as the 1970's, and further encroachment as more towns came into existence, has greatly restricted the flow of water, and altered the American River in areas extending far beyond Sacramento.

It wasn't until the Shasta Dam was built on the Sacramento River in the 1930's, and the Folsom Dam on the American River was completed in 1955, that Sacramento ceased to be a casemented island in a wetlands sea. =

## River Wedding

by Billeen "Sunshine" Pruett

On June 15th, Muriel S. Wade and Brad T. Simons were married. James Page, a Universal Life Minister, officiated. Razor gave the bride away, and Susan & Phil Sanders acted as Matron of Honor and Best Man. Gremlin was the ring bearer. Sunshine and Wally witnessed the exchange of vows. Special guests were Equay, one of Muriel and Brad's dogs, and Havoc, who is the canine partner and protector of the Sanders.

The ceremony took place at six o'clock in the evening at the river's edge. As was Brad and Muriel's desire, humans, animals, plants, earth, water, sky, and the essence of nature and Creator were all a part of their becoming one. The scene was ethereal in its beauty and simplicity. *Theirs was certainly a very special and unique wedding.*

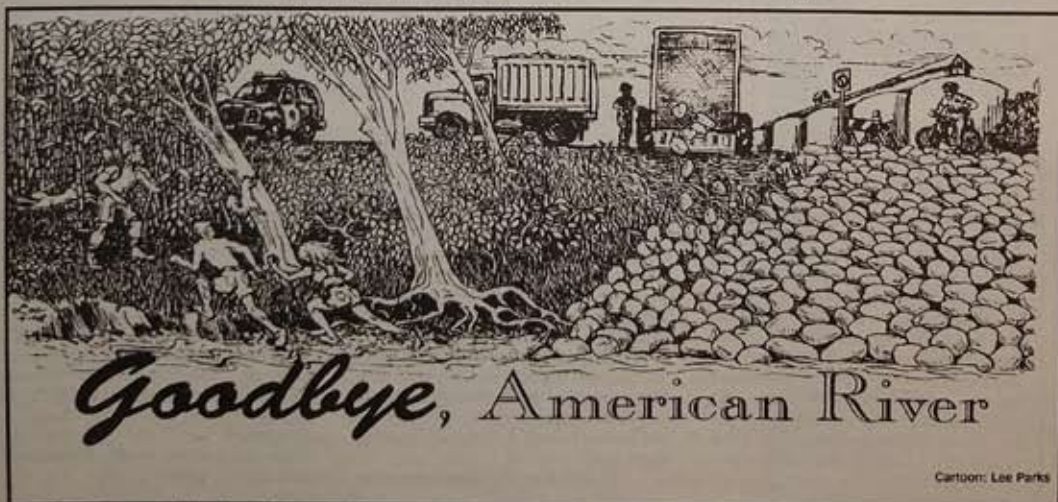
## Volunteers Needed for 'Food Not Bombs'

by Norman Darringer

On Sunday afternoons for the past eight years, vegetarian food has been cooked in the Food Not Bombs members' own kitchens and then brought together at the Cesar Chavez Plaza to feed the poor.

The group urgently needs people to call and arrange for the pickup and delivery of raw vegetables, fresh fruit, and fresh bread to a central location. There are plenty of donors both private, business, and organized surplus centers, who desire to distribute these surpluses to those who appreciate and utilize them.

Food not Bombs is a worldwide organization devoted to peace and non-violence. If you have transportation and access to a telephone please call Tammy at 916-442-0564 or 916-492-9362.



Homeless campers will be forced to move during construction on the downtown portion of the American River levee, although they are expected to return when repairs are completed.





## Sacramento City-County Board on Homelessness

As a result of public forums on homelessness held by the Midtown Business Association, The City Council and County Board of Supervisors have voted to form a "Sacramento County and Cities Board on Homelessness" to recommend solutions.

The board will be composed of representatives from businesses, neighborhoods, service providers and religious communities, as well as city, state and federal representatives. It will develop a five year program to "comprehensively address the funding and management of services designed to mitigate homelessness."

The board will activate this fall and will prepare a status report within one year. The goal is to evaluate the effectiveness and propose possible changes to homeless services. A recent planning document named the following focus areas and tentative solutions:

**Case Management and Over Concentration:** a system to track homeless population and collect data.

**Emergency Food:** standardized emergency food.

**Public Safety:** a misdemeanor jail to house those who commit misdemeanors

**Neighborhood Revitalization:** meet the needs of homeless while being appropriate for neighborhoods

**Mental Health:** expand and decentralize services.

**Employment:** pre-employment vocational training.

**Sobriety:** assess and evaluate current programs.

**Homeless Veterans:** report on efforts to develop and coordinate delivery of services.

In last year's forums, the participating members were unable to agree upon a meaning for the word "respect." In recent gatherings of homeless people, questions and comments were brought up by members of this community regarding the direction the new board will take:

"In tracking the homeless and collecting data, do they want to know who the homeless are and where they are all the time? Why?"

"Will they ration food, to keep people from double-dipping?"

"Ever seen a homeless neighborhood? It looks like the American River Parkway. Would neighbors let someone pitch a \$50 tent next to \$100,000 house?"

"Sleeping outside in the city is a misdemeanor. Why bother with the rest of this if they're going to throw the homeless in jail?"

Street people ask these questions, because they are experienced in what the law will do with politically correct phrases such as, "housing" people who commit misdemeanors."

The challenge for this committee is to find solutions to truly end homelessness in Sacramento. Whether they find enough respect and housing to go around, remains to be seen.

### Father would not separate from son

Hello,

Please let me introduce myself. My name is Richard Carbaugh. I am a single father. I have a five year old son who's name is Dominic. We are both from Texas. We came to Sacramento because I used to live here eight years ago. I am an ex-forest fire fighter from the California Conservation Corp.. Now I am disabled. I wish to bring to your attention something that has bothered me ever since my return to California.

I see women's shelters for women with children. And men's shelters for just men, but no men's shelters will accept a child, for they could be sheltering a sex offender, and they can't insure my son's safety. Which has left my son and I to sleep on the streets. I would like to know why there isn't any help for us, and why do sex offenders seem to have more rights than we do?

I am so outraged by this that we are leaving on the first of the upcoming month, never to return to this God forsaken STATE! I can only pray that this doesn't happen to another that is in my position. After all, all men aren't dogs, or should I say irresponsible. GOD HELP THIS STATE!

Sincerely Yours and very Angry,

Richard Carbaugh & Son.

### A camper's complaint

CHP said pulse over 100-go to jail for being under the influence, I said "for what? under the influence of sleep?" It was the middle of the night!

The black & white cops told me that they were going to bring a truck in and haul my stuff off and take me to jail. I keep a clean place. I supply homeless with a bedroll if they don't have one, a tarp as well if needed.

They told me that I had one hour to move. I told them that I didn't have anywhere else to go. I don't get checks- No money, No GA, No stamps. I stood my ground, what else can I do? Nothing- but survive & protect!

They threatened to pepper spray my dog (and me) if I didn't keep him contained. He's there for my safety & survival! I live on the river away from most everybody. There's wild coyote and wild dogs where I'm at; I have the right to protect myself!

I kept my cool, but I'm still very infuriated, because this is supposed to be a free country. As long as I don't trespass, harass, or impede or obstruct, and I don't do any (or)...I don't drink in public, I go back to the river.....

Anonymous

## Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee

### Voter Registration Drive

SHOC President Eddie Harris continued his press for voter registration by appointing Norman Darringer SHOC Voter Registration Chairman.

Voter registration forms and blank census forms were distributed this spring to shelters, Social Security office and many churches.

Sign up tables were staffed along with the census tables at Leaves and Fishes and the Salvation Army. Registration was also held in the food line at Cesar Chavez Plaza as "Food Not Bombs" served their fine vegetarian meal.

The box score was 318 registration forms handed out, 23 of which were filled out for people by county registration monitors. Roughly 618 citizens from the homeless community pledged that they were registered and were going to vote in the June primary.

### Joining SHA

**Annual Membership:**

Standard, \$35;

Low-income, \$15

**Organizations:**

Full, 0.1% agency budget;

Associate, \$100

**Send donations to:**

Sacramento Housing Alliance

2125 19th St., No. 101

Sacramento, CA 95818

SHA is a network of concerned citizens who promote decent affordable housing for low income households and homeless people through advocacy & participation in public discourse. The SHA does not itself provide or manage housing.

(916) 442-1198

## Welcome to Homeward: Please help us make a difference!

"Homeward" is a publication of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC), which is a part of the Sacramento Housing Alliance.

Homeward is a bi-monthly newspaper in which communication and concerns of the homeless are presented in a way that increases public awareness through education, involvement, and encouragement of our community about this segment of our population. It helps to alleviate miscommunication by providing a dialogue between disparate

communities. It also serves as a creative outlet for homeless people.

The opinions expressed in Homeward are those of the authors, and not necessarily the Sacramento Housing Alliance or SHOC.

SHOC meets every Monday at 10am to discuss political issues, and the Homeward editorial committee meets on Wednesdays at 10am. All meetings are held at Leaves & Fishes' Friendship Park.

We welcome any participation or

contributions: Articles, poems and other writing can be submitted to the Sacramento Housing Alliance or given to Birte in the Leaves & Fishes library.

Subscriptions are available with a \$15 contribution. A one-year subscription is offered with an annual membership to the Sacramento Housing Alliance. Make checks out to SHA. All correspondence can be sent to Homeward, c/o SHA, 2125 19th St., Suite 101, Sac, CA 95818. For information call 442-1198.

### Member NASNA: North American Street Newspaper Association



## Coming Full Cycle

by Jean Scott

In 1993-94, I was in a situation I was to become fully experienced with; a situation known as HOMELESS! At that time I thought of this homelessness as not the same as Hopelessness, because I had a plan and worked that plan. Unfortunately, bad associations and a clever con-man got the better of what was my inheritance. Also, decisions on my part didn't help my situation either.

This story, My story, begins to sound like a script for a rejected TV series. Except that, of course, it has happened to me; and now this is 1998 and looking like a long summer ahead of me. I will be knocking on many doors that will not be open to me as a homeless statistic of one.



photo by Helen Dodge

I began this with the phrase "Coming Full Cycle"; in this phrase is my current life style. My home burned April 11, 1998, just a short two months ago. The cause of the blaze was undetermined; except perhaps the

renter, who lived in the back bedroom, could have been smoking and fallen asleep. But there is no one left alive out of that back bedroom to put the blame on.

I thought I would never

know this situation again. Only this time I knew where to go, where at least I could get some help and a sympathetic ear, perhaps a bed in a shelter, all in the same area. All In The Same Area is important because I am in a wheelchair three-fourths of the time.

The place is called Maryhouse, and in the same block is St. John's Shelter for women and children, and Friendship Park. Each of these three places performs unique services geared on being a cushion for those human beings who find themselves in the same homeless situation as me.

I could fill this space with heartache or anger, even hopelessness; but that is not necessary, if the readers of this newspaper are aware of the meaning of homelessness. Homeless is not a choice, though we all have choices. I am certain that homelessness is at the bottom of anyone's list, if

this situation is orchestrated at all!

In the next few months I must make some kind of magic in applying for loans or grants and/or contributions to rebuild a home on my property. (And Yes, I owned my home out-right, in that fire I lost what most of us try to obtain.) All of this must be accomplished by me in my trusty wheelchair, with or without a helper!

Somehow, with grace and mercy from above (and here below), these tall, seemingly impossible mountains will be scaled, as life does move on and situations DO change! Thanks for reading, and thanks again, Jean Scott.

*Editors Note: Since writing this for us, the city bulldozed Jean's burned house and charged her for doing so. She can't live on her own property and is staying wherever she can.*

## New Talent Highlights a Busy Month

It's been another busy month for the Homeless Artisans. We just finished three sponsored art shows. Two were at the Thursday Night Market on K Street, sponsored by the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.

These proved to be very good shows, especially for one of our newest artists, Jeff Petway and his "pyrographics". Using a magnifying lens and the sun, Jeff burns images in wood; guitars and walking sticks are his speciality. The crowd went wild over Jeff's work; I haven't seen this kind of excitement in a long time. I picked up several phone numbers of people interested in ordering works by him. Congratulations, Jeff, you're on your way!

Our third show was sponsored by the River City Small Business Chamber, which they called "Salute to the Arts '98". It was held at the Firehouse Restaurant in Old Sacramento. The Homeless Artisans shared space with eight other Sacramento artists.

Razor with his wood sculpture, and Pete LaRue with his melded glass sculptures were in attendance. Benny's wire insects, and Jeff Petway's "pyrographics" were displayed. In our group Razor and Jeff's works were the hit of our show.

*The Firehouse* put on some great eats, cheese, fruit, and hot hors d'oeuvres. But food is always a hit with the homeless. Thank you *River City Small Business Chamber* and *Firehouse Restaurant*.

We are now doing our shows at Cesar Chavez Park on Saturdays. All who want to sell their art or crafts with us are welcome. Set-up time is 1pm Saturday afternoons.

Attention artists and craftspeople, we are planning a trip to Venice Beach for the Labor Day weekend in September. This will be a 4-6 day trip, and there will be a \$30 gasoline charge. Have plenty of your arts and crafts ready for sale on the boardwalk.

We plan to take the theatre troupe with us for the Venice Beach show. Also, Pete LaRue is putting together a puppet show. This one will be fun for all. The police in Venice Beach treat the homeless people pretty well. They are friendly and say, "yes sir, yes ma'am" to you. You can sleep almost anywhere without hassle. If you haven't joined the Homeless Artisans yet, now is a good time to join up. Don't miss this one.

To register for the trip, sign up in the Loaves and Fishes library as soon as possible, so we can arrange transportation. You may also find out more about the theatre troupe and puppet show on Saturdays at Cesar Chavez Park, or see Art.

Anyone wishing to purchase art from the homeless or sponsor a show, please contact Art Clay at 492-1115 and leave a message.

Do you want God's help? Tell Him your plans for the future.

## Artists' Update



by Art Clay

Artist Jeff Petway uses a magnifying lens and the sun to burn images into wood.

photo by Curtis Hagen



# Poetry

## Twilight

by Portmarion

Once again I have descended  
 into the land of eternal twilight.  
 The sun has ceased to shine,  
 It's warmth nowhere to be  
 found.

An icy chill envelopes me,  
 Suffocating my vigor of life.  
 My soul cries to the heavens,  
 Begging that I be spared  
 this agony.

But my old friends isolation and  
 sorrow  
 Have once again come to stay.  
 Smothering in a mist of sadness,  
 I am unable to speak.

Oh, that I could be released  
 From these rusty old chains,  
 But I am bound tightly,  
 And I know there is no escape.

And so I am eternally  
 condemned,  
 To wander through this dank  
 bog,  
 The Land of Eernal Twilight,  
 Where my very soul is  
 crushed.

## Mud

by Portmarion

Backhoes and dump trucks  
 Shovels and picks,  
 For those faint hearted,  
 These things do not mix.

Earth movers, bulldozers,  
 Forklifts and cranes,  
 The wimpy guys think  
 That this stuff is insane.

As far as I go, Joe,  
 Just give me some mud,  
 Some cement and some  
 diesel,  
 And a cut for some blood.

And I'll smile ear to ear  
 As I light my cigar,  
 And spit on the ground,  
 And I'll belch so you hear.

You know what you can do  
 With your white shirts and  
 ties.  
 Don't give 'em to me, Joe.  
 It would be my demise.

## Lunch Line Lady

by Portmarion

She deals with the misfits, the  
 lost and the tramps.  
 They love to come see her, they  
 come from their camps.  
 She loves everyone of them; she  
 thinks they're great.  
 She realizes most of them can't  
 help their fate.

She gives them lunch tickets and  
 brightens their day.  
 She knows just exactly the right  
 thing to say.  
 And when lunch is over: the  
 dishes all done,  
 She'll sit right down with them  
 and take in some sun.

As an equal she'll talk to them  
 with compassion & care,  
 It's not been too long since the  
 day she was there.  
 She remembers her roots, she  
 remembers her past,  
 Her memories of homelessness  
 always will last.

With her loaves and her fishes  
 she feeds multitudes,  
 And most people seeing her  
 leave in good moods.  
 She's the lunch-line-lady, as  
 sweet as can be,  
 Taking the time out to help you  
 and me.

## Innocent Children

by Angela

Innocent Children torn-shred by  
 shred-

By our mindless addiction  
 with lives we have led.  
 Fed not with our lives alone,  
 yet with this child's  
 heart-  
 flesh and bone.

This insane hunger that  
 tears us apart,  
 Keeps our eyes closed to  
 this child's broken  
 heart.

Faith in God's will can  
 hopefully reach  
 The soul who hungers to  
 love and to teach.

We must find some freedom  
 before there's no time,  
 Loving innocent children  
 is in no way a crime.

## It's Okay to Cry!

by SKC

For those of us who's loved  
 ones died  
 It is okay to have cried.  
 Go ahead and let your emotions  
 flow.

They are in heaven, don't you  
 know?  
 They are in a much better  
 space

Up there in God's place.  
 They know you love them,  
 inside.

Don't let your feelings hide.  
 Are you ashamed for not  
 saying "I love you"?  
 For not saying "Goodbye",  
 too?

Do you think it's a big deal  
 For not saying how you feel?  
 Was it just too late?

God says to believe in fate.  
 So, don't you feel shame,  
 You are not to blame.

Like we pray to God above,  
 We can pray to the ones we  
 love!

To you let me make it very  
 clear;  
 Like God, our prayers they  
 would hear.  
 You can, then, say "Goodbye!"  
 Remember, it's okay to cry!

## Death

by Billeen "Sunshine" Pruet  
 Dedicated to my Mohawk friend  
 who went home to die

Agent Orange is eating  
 my body  
 Nam is eating my soul  
 Which will die first  
 Does anybody know?

There should be a magic  
 cure-  
 I tried the pills, the meth,  
 cocaine and pot  
 The magic cure they were  
 not.

Love didn't work either  
 -it was wasted on me

The searing pain goes deeper  
 and deeper each  
 day.

The dope doesn't help  
 anymore.

blow  
 myself  
 away.....

## Homeless

by Portmarion

Dirty old woman in scraggly old  
 clothes,  
 Coming from somewhere that she  
 only knows  
 Laying alone on a big city street,  
 Without any shoes to cover her  
 feet.

Some "well-offs" look down at  
 her, stopping to say:  
 "God, look at that! She just ruined  
 our day!"  
 "Surely she must have someplace to  
 go!"

But if there is, she sure doesn't know.

She used to have kids and a husband  
 and such,  
 But one day everything got to be too  
 much,  
 She fell quite to pieces and went  
 terribly wild  
 From some of the things done to her  
 as a child.

Off to the hospital soon she was sent,  
 The doctors tried helping, 'twas good  
 that they meant.

They drugged her and counseled her  
 every day,  
 But she couldn't help she was acting  
 that way.

'Til one day she'd had it, she could  
 take no more,  
 She just got up and she walked out  
 the door.

She walked for 2 nights and she  
 walked for a day,  
 Trying her best to find some place to  
 stay.

But no place she found, she was  
 broken & beat,  
 And so she lay down on a big city  
 street.

When the "well-offs" walked by,  
 she was already dead,  
 A stiff, lifeless corpse on a cold  
 concrete bed.

All done were her long cold days  
 riddled with pain,  
 All done were her endless days  
 all filled with rain.





## ROADTOUR by Marvin Jensen

This spring I did some travelling to see first hand how my fellow homeless American citizens were faring in other areas. What I found was not very quieting to my heart.

First to Idaho, where historically the homeless get ridden pretty hard. This was April and the heat was already up. One friend of mine was made so miserable that he elected to leave the state. There was a campaign on T.V. against efforts of a local mission to open a women's shelter in an abandoned church. They used all of the usual excuses from, 'it would hurt businesses' to, 'there were not enough homeless women in the area to justify another shelter.' Sound familiar? Oh well, that is Idaho.

I then continued to Arizona. The Verde Valley, Cottonwood, to be exact. A formerly homeless friend informed me that there had been recent sweeps along the river. Being somewhat of an adventurer, I elected to spend some time camping there. It wasn't long before some minor attendant at the park where I procured my drinking water approached me and asked if I was camping. I told the truth, and he promptly told me that such activity was frowned upon.

The next day, as I sat quite still and well concealed, a group of people on horse back came riding by. From what I could overhear they were looking for someone camping in the area. Then two days later a man in uniform on an A.T.V. They did not find me, but then I keep a low profile. There was plenty of evidence around that not long before there were several people camping in the area.

Reports have it that in Prescott, Arizona, the homeless are required to carry a special I.D., and as reported in the last issue of this paper, Tucson is busy passing laws which enable the police to harass homeless persons. Not a pretty picture!

My next stop was San Luis Obispo. There, things are as yet a bit more humane. The shelter is for the most part pleasant, but security is lax and theft is a problem.

However, staff is for the most part friendly - a bit above par. It's a nice enough building, but the big drawback is that it is less than 100 yards from the sewage treatment plant - the flies are black and the breeze is often foul. I ran. All I can say is if you are homeless, be careful where you eat!

# Sunshine survival guide

## keeping mind, body and soul together on the streets

by Billeen "Sunshine" Prueett

*Homeless people living outdoors and in shelters find some unique ways to get by. All contributions are welcome.*



### Mosquitoes and biting insects

Because of El Nino and its crazy weather, we have an especially heavy crop of mosquitoes this year. These suggestions will help make your summer a lot more comfortable.

Rubbing the skin with baby oil or imitation vanilla extract repels biting insects such as mosquitoes and blackflies.

Avon's Skin so Soft makes a good Non-toxic insect repellent. Rub a liberal amount on exposed parts of your body. It's especially good for people with sensitive skin and for small children.

Rub cider vinegar on your skin to repel insects. If you take in enough cider vinegar by putting it on the food you eat, you'll develop a body odor that will repel insects including blackflies. They will swarm around but won't bite. The same with Brewer's Yeast and garlic.

To eliminate the itch of insect bites, rub on meat tenderizer or lemon juice.

White vinegar is another remedy. Apply it full strength, but do not use if your skin is raw.

### Switchel

Here is a recipe with some good ingredients that are easy for people on the street to get. This is more natural & better than Gatorade-type drinks, which cost too much. Switchel was used by farmers when mowing hay in the intense heat, to refresh them. When you have to walk or bicycle a long way, this will help keep your energy up.

- 1 gal. water
- 2 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 cup dark molasses
- 1/2 cup cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger

This is very sweet and has a strong gingery taste.

## CLASSIFIED

Submit your classified to the housing Alliance or put in the black and white can in the Loaves and Fishes library. One ad free to private parties and non-profit organizations per issue. Try to keep it under 25 words.

### Craft Items Needed

Would appreciate any yarn or related items for crocheters and crafts people living at Quinn Cottages, 1500 North A St. Ask for Sunshine, or label donation for cottage #102. These items will be shared with the Homeless Artisans. Thank you

### Donations Wanted

Loaves & Fishes Retail Store, 1225 N 'B' St. Open 10am to 3pm Mon-Sat. Donations of unwanted items appreciated.

### Jobs Wanted

Give hope and happiness. Give a job, such as moving or yard work, to a homeless worker. Call Loaves & Fishes job phone 446-9316. Ask for Marie or Margaret Mary, or mail to Loaves & Fishes; Jobs for Homeless; PO Box 2161; Sacramento, CA 95812

### Personal Notice

I do hereby resign from the Homeless Artisans. I regret that Mr. Clay and I have reached a personal impasse regarding creative integrity. However, I still respect and support Mr. Clay's efforts to provide the poor and homeless with an avenue for self-help through the arts. Lee



Cartoon by: Paula

## NCH

cont. from page 2

Severe mental illness prevents individuals from carrying out essential aspects of daily life. In addition, they encounter more barriers to employment and tend to be in poorer physical health, both of which lead to an inability to afford housing.

While the number of people served by PATH is sizable (76,000 in 1996), it falls considerably short of reaching the estimated greater than 200,000 homeless peo-

ple with serious mental illness.

NCH encourages homeless people, advocacy organizations, Health Care for the Homeless projects, and other homeless service providers to contact members of their Congressional delegation and to communicate their support for these critical programs before the 1999 budget has been finalized. Updates and further information is available on the NCH web page. <http://nch.ari.net>

## Codequote

One letter has been substituted for another. Length of words and punctuation marks are good hints

"RABRX ZK RXM STOPAIRD LPRM PG  
RXTR FTRZPF RXTR JPBCY CZJE TCC  
PRXMAK" -KBHAMSM JPBAR OBKRZJM  
PCZLMA UMFYTCC XPCSMK

Second Hint: "What is truth?" Pontius Pilot  
(answer somewhere in paper)