

YOUR VERY OWN  
PERSONALIZED  
MAILING LABEL  
COULD BE HERE  
IF YOU SUBSCRIBE

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 1774  
Sacramento, CA

# HOMeward

## STREET JOURNAL

Volume 5, No. 4

Member NASNA  
North American Street Newspaper Association

October, 2001



**In This Issue**

Page 1

River Cleanup  
Friendship Park  
Anniversary

Page 2

Articles from the  
Denver Voice

Page 3  
Whiteness as  
Concept

Call to Start CPS  
Support Group

Page 4  
Rainbow  
Gathering

Page 5  
Property Value  
vs. Value of  
Property

Page 6  
Baseball Game

Page 7  
Obituary  
Sweeps  
Good Apples

Page 8  
Homeless  
Resources

I am enough of an artist to draw  
freely upon my imagination.  
Imagination is more important than  
knowledge. Knowledge is limited.  
Imagination encircles the world.

Albert Einstein

### Our Condolences

The Staff and members of Homeward and the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee express our deepest condolences to any of our readers who have lost family or friends in the recent terrorist act in New York. Such acts show a total disregard for the value of each and every human life and are contrary to basic moral and ethical principles that every civilized society holds dear.

It is our fervent prayer that the leaders of this nation, in exacting justice from the perpetrators of September 11's heinous act, do not lose sight of the high principles of liberty and justice that has made this nation great. To take the easy way out, to give up liberty for security, will not ensure such things will not happen again, and will only subject innocent people to further loss of rights. It will only serve the interests of terrorists and other tyrants, who would rejoice to make America like them.

We also wish to express our appreciation to all the members of the Red Cross for their diligence in helping the victims of the recent tragedy in New York, as well as for being an organization which has come to the aid of many distressed people year round.



Photo courtesy of Randy Dittmar

### Great American River Cleanup 2001

The American River Parkway Foundation sponsored the Great American River Cleanup event on the first day of Autumn, September 22, 2001. The Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, as official land steward for Mile 2-3 of the American River Parkway, served as site coordinator for the cleanup near Northgate and Del Paso Blvds. We were expecting a turnout similar to last year, around 10 homeless people and 10 other volunteers from the community at large. Well, this year we had 128 participants. The cleanup was to take place from 9 AM Saturday morning until noon. Before 9 AM, carloads and carloads of people piled out of cars and headed towards the

sign up table. Most of the volunteers were under 18 and had their permission slips already filled out.

Around 9:30 we ran out of bags and gloves. A nearby site coordinator phoned the ARPF for more supplies. Work progressed steadily, speedily and by noon we had made gigantic piles of trash, and made massive areas of natural beauty to behold.

Volunteers were instructed to leave homeless camps alone, but it was reported by one volunteer that he hadn't

see River Cleanup page 6

### Happy Birthday Friendship Park - 10 years!

Sign over the information center

On Friday, September 28, 2001, Friendship Park celebrated its 10th anniversary with breakfast, awards of recognition, and a talent show which lasted well into the lunch hour.

The festivities took the edge off the end-of-month doldrums in the crowded park. The breakfast of quiche was a treat for the men, as usually only the women and children get breakfast at Mary House. Though the line stretched around the park, it moved quickly.

The talent show began with introductions and some fine words. The master of ceremonies was Garry, who dressed appropriately for the occasion by wearing a Tux, which was an effective masquerade - no one was quiet sure who he was.

Birte, of the library, was presented with a plaque of recognition by Jim Peth and Sister Judy, Park Directors,

for having been with the park staff the entire 10 years. Birte was taken by surprise, as no one told her before hand.

Also presented was a model drawing of a mural that

will be put up on the wall at the left of the Friendship Park entrance. The basic design, of a ship and a fishing net, will be available for anyone

see 10th Anniversary  
page 7



Garry, Master of Ceremonies



Birte being presented with her plaque for 10 years service by Jim Peth and Sister Judy. B. B. stands by with a balloon "crown"

## De'ja Vu All Over Again - The Grass is the Same Shade of Green on Any Side of the Hill ...

## Under-age And On The Street

By Katlyn A. Lynn

Being homeless and on the streets is never easy but when you're under 18, too young to even rent a hotel room, even ordinary problems can seem insurmountable. Meet Nicola and Devon.

Devon became homeless at age 13 when she ran away from home to escape a severely abusive father. For a teenage girl in this kind of situation who has already had to experience the enduring torture that is rape, any way out can seem to be a good option. For Devon, who was raped before puberty and again at the start of puberty, life and sexuality were changed forever. At age 13 Devon chose the life of a teenage runaway.

Nicola first became homeless at age 15 after his mother died of a heroin overdose. His father, who suffers from schizophrenia, was unable to care for him. None of his siblings, 4 older brothers and 5 older sisters, was willing to take him in. Consequently, at 15, Nicola became the responsibility of Social Services.

Nicola spent almost a year trying to live in the group homes where he had been placed by Social Services. "They were really bossy and controlling. Once I had to go to court for assaulting another kid. In court that kid admitted someone else had done it," said Nicola. Nicola decided he had enough and would do better on his own. He left his foster home and began the life of the homeless.

Immediately both Nicola and Devon encountered problems common to everyone on the street. They had no place to sleep, eat, or shower, and no way to earn money. Worst of all, there were the police. According to Nicola, "When someone on the street says, 'be careful out there it's dangerous,' they are not referring to the other people on the street. They are talking about the police."

Anyone who has been on the streets knows that the experiences of males and females can be quite different. First let's

look at Nicola's experience. Surprisingly the other people on the street would watch out for the kids out there. Even so, Nicola learned the value of respect for others quickly. "On the mall, you learn to respect people in order to avoid getting hurt." He said this with a deadly air of sincerity that only those with experience can carry off.

When asked about being on the street and dealing with psychiatric issues he had this to say. "The other kids understood about problems I had with being bi-polar and having P.T.S.D. and I did manage to keep on my medications by going through Stout Street Clinic."

"The biggest problem was the police, they called us 'scrubs.' That's a name they use for someone they consider to be less than a person. They would come and jack our hands up behind our backs then they were really ruff when they searched us. They would accuse us of being drug dealers. Sometimes I'd watch them beating other kids in the legs with their night sticks."

Nicola's story has a somewhat happy ending. People who experience homelessness do sometimes get off the streets thanks to the help they get from places like the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, Urban Peak, and others. For some, experience on the streets can shape them into bitter people who resemble the negative stereotypes perpetuated through our society by mainstream media. But for most, the street experience teaches a level of compassion and understanding of the human condition that is difficult to obtain through any other kind of experience.

Recently Nicola has found a home thanks to being accepted into a voucher program from the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless. He is trying hard to hold down a job and has lots of friends. Everyone that knows Nicola likes him and describes him as a "Soft Touch." He has so much empathy and compassion for young people experiencing homelessness that he has a hard time turning them

Articles on this page reprinted with permission of the Denver Voice

away. His apartment always has 2 to 3 guests. He's just kind hearted though, not glibbie. The streets can and do sometimes breed compassion.

Devon's story is turning out quite different from Nicola's. She's now 15 and still on the streets. Similar to Nicola, Devon is also bi-sexual, bi-polar, and somewhat schizophrenic, but she has the additional handicap of being dyslexic. She has trouble dealing with the side effects of medications that help suppress the effects of schizophrenia and her bi-polar disorder and so has decided to live largely un-medicated.

While persons living in a stable situation may be able to deal with these side effects, homelessness does not lend itself to these kinds of adjustments. Though many homeless persons are able to persevere and find significant relief from these medications, sadly, some people do not.

"When you're young and on the streets, the guys all assume that you are impressionable." Devon had this to say as we talked about being preyed upon by other people encountered out on the streets. "You can't work because you're too young and you can't get a hotel room." Guys will make all kinds of offers of money, food, shelter, and just about anything else in exchange for your company and ultimately the use of your body. "Most of the homeless girls I've known have become major whores," said Devon though she claims to have fought hard to avoid getting trapped into these kinds of situations.

Before coming to Denver, Devon lived in Sacramento. She would get fed occasionally in the parks and found she could get personal hygiene products there as well. She also found aid at a local youth shelter where she obtained a sleeping bag and was allowed to rest from 9am to 1pm.

Though the shelters tried to help, Devon found as many problems there as she found solutions. She encountered many people there, like on the streets, who didn't know any way except violence, to deal with their issues. As a result, she found herself being continually assaulted. "I met all kinds of people who were just plain crazy out there."

To get help at youth shelters, Devon found she was required to pursue school,

take medications, get an ID, and participate in other programs. Having all of this thrown at her at once coupled with her learning disabilities, mental health, and other issues, Devon decided that this was just more than she was willing to take on and more than she felt she could handle.

To get away from these situations again, she tried hitch-hiking and eventually ended up here in Denver. "For a kid hitch-hiking, getting caught means jail or juvy. I would always run from the police whenever I saw them." But she went on to say, "they go easier on you when you let them know that you are on your way out of town." That statement says a world about society's attitudes towards runaways and homelessness. Just like most places in the United States, homelessness, poverty, abuse, and other issues are just fine so long as they exist some place else where I don't have to see them.

I asked Devon how being on the streets has changed her and she responded with the whole story not holding back anything. "Being on the streets has made me feel better about myself. Now I see what other people feel and experience. I used to like to fight and was spoiled but that has changed... My family would judge me but people on the street just accept you for who you are and leave you the freedom to change yourself."

On the other side of the coin, she says at times, her current life makes her "just want to go hide in a corner." Devon's found herself doing things she never thought she would see herself do and at times does not like the person she sometimes sees herself becoming. Still, she's full of appreciation for the people that help her survive and has learned the true value of a friend.

At the end of our time together, I asked Devon if she had anything to say or any advice for other kids on the street. "You can't afford to be spoiled when you're out there and whatever you do, don't promise yourself the things you can't get." Although my interview with Devon ended on a down note, don't count her out just yet. Homelessness is full of ups and downs that make the up times more precious than gold. Being on the streets shapes your character in amazing ways. That's why some of the best people I've ever met have come straight from the streets. ∞

## A Typical Afternoon at 18th &amp; Stout St. ...

&amp; Denied medications by the Denver PD

by Shirley Whiteside

Tom was arrested on Wednesday. He was suspect because he needs a haircut, and he made the mistake of sitting at 18th and Stout to take his daily medication. One pill is the size of a horse pill and he was trying to choke it down with a bottle of Pepsi he had. (You might say, "Sure it was Pepsi." It really was!) A Federal officer decided to do a warrant check and found him to be guilty (warrants Tom was not even aware he had.) They were for drinking too close to a roadway and a glass container. Book 'em!

The officer put all Tom's stuff in a paper bag (including 2 bottles of medication, his TB card [TB cards in Denver, too? - HW Ed] and addresses, a pack of cigarettes, and \$26.50 in cash,) and put Tom in the car. Tom said, "Hey, what did you do with the bag?" Officer Friendly opened the car door and removed the bag from the roof of the car and put it inside, then proceeded to take Tom to the lock-em-up place at 13th

and Cherokee.

When Tom was released on Sunday for commission of these heinous crimes, he was told he could claim his property at the Police Administration Building on the following day. He was quite upset because he had never been able to actually retrieve property this way before.

Fortunately, this time it worked and his property was there, but we asked the helpful attendant at the property department where one files a complaint about property matters like this - after all he was essentially being denied vital medications for 24 hours, which could have caused injury to him. The clerk told us that the Property Claim isn't staffed on Sundays or after 2:30 PM. (A friend of the VOICE noted that they can arrest you on Sundays...) She also told us that it is common, as in Tom's case, not to be given a receipt for property - often officers get in a hurry, or people are being shuttled to or from another place like Detox.

She thought the federal officers probably don't give them at all. If the arrested individual is intoxicated, it just makes it easier for the officer to abuse the individual to save the hassle of extra paperwork. We finally said maybe we could write a letter to the police chief? She said that would probably be best.

Some people say the Denver VOICE is the same old whining all the time, but we prefer to think that publicizing typical problems, such as this—what people who are on the streets are subjected to simply because they don't have a place to go—can help to make a change. One change might be an amnesty day. (A former procedure, no longer used, set aside one day a week where people could walk in and check whether they had outstanding warrants without risk of arrest.) In some cities people have organized to clog the court system with small claims suits against lost property, which has been somewhat effective. Right now, in Denver, they're just choosing to build a new jail. ∞

# The Origins of Whiteness and White Supremacy as Concepts

Excerpted with permission of the author from "What is White Supremacy?", copyrighted 1998

By Elizabeth (Betita) Martinez

The first European settlers called themselves English, Irish, German, French, Dutch, etc. - not "white". Over half of those who came in the early colonial period were servants. By 1760 the population reached about two million, of whom 400,000 were enslaved Africans. An elite of planters developed in the southern colonies. In Virginia, for example, 50 rich white families held the reins of power but were vastly outnumbered by non-whites. In the Carolinas, 25,000 whites faced 40,000 black slaves and 60,000 indigenous peoples in the area. Class lines hardened as the distinction between rich and poor became sharper. The problem of control loomed large and fear of revolt from below grew.

There had been slave revolts from the beginning but elite whites feared even more that

discontented whites - servants, tenant farmers, the urban poor, the property-less, soldiers and sailors - would join black slaves to overthrow the existing order. As early as 1663, indentured white servants and black slaves in Virginia had formed a conspiracy to rebel and gain their freedom. In 1676 came Bacon's Rebellion by white frontiersmen and servants alongside black slaves. The rebellion shook up Virginia's planter elite. Many other rebellions followed, from South Carolina to New York. The main fear of elite whites everywhere was a class fear.

Their solution: divide and control. Certain privileges were given to white indentured servants. They were allowed to join militias, carry guns, acquire land, and have other legal rights not allowed to slaves. With these privileges they were legally declared White on the basis of skin color and continental origin. That made them "superior" to Blacks (and Indians). Thus whiteness was born as a racist concept to prevent lower-class whites from joining people of color, especially Blacks, against their class enemies. The concept of whiteness became a source of unity and strength for the vastly outnumbered Euro-Americans - as in South Africa, another settler nation. Today, unity across color lines remains the biggest threat in the eyes of a white ruling class.



Seen in Folsom

## Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary, 1989 Bigotry:

1. stubborn and complete intolerance of any creed, belief, or opinion that differs from one's own.
2. actions, beliefs, prejudices, etc., of a bigot.

## Florida Man Gets 4.5 Years for Enslaving Homeless Workers

by the Denver VOICE Staff

Michael Allen Lee recruited homeless people from cities in central Florida to work in his citrus fields. He promised them a good wage and other benefits but what they found was something quite different.

Mr. Lee charged for everything, including the sacks they used to pick fruit and rarely paid workers more than \$10.00 a day. Sometimes he paid nothing at all. He let them know that any attempt to leave would result in a manhunt and beating.

These workers were kept in deplorable living conditions, with housing violations too numerous to count, then forced to work in the fields every day. That's all over now thanks to a man named George E. Williams. Williams escaped through a window in 1997 after being beaten to unconsciousness by a crew boss, dragged to another location, beaten again, then forced to clean his own blood off the walls.

More than 135 years after the 13th amendment was passed, bringing an official end to slavery in our country, our courts are still prosecuting cases of involuntary servitude.

They gave Mr. Lee 4.5 years. You're probably wondering why this guy didn't win the Denver VOICE Big Richard Award. We decided he would be getting 4.5 years of the Big Richard award already. How many people who have been homeless do you think he'll meet in prison?

## A Call For a New Support Group

### F.U.S.E. Families United Stands Equal

Noticing that there is not much, if any, support for families who are going through difficult times with Child Protective Services, I making a special call to family members that have had dealings (past or present) with this agency, to come together for mutual aid and comfort. This is going to be a great opportunity for family members and friends to establish a safe, confidential, and understanding place to form a support group that can fully relate to the feelings of being powerless, and of having no control in your own family!

Due to some unforeseen circumstances in the lives of some families, the C.P.S. has taken control of the children right out of the hands of Mothers and Fathers. How do we trust this agency to follow through with their word to reunite the family together as planned? The sad part of this whole picture is that most of the families are still torn apart after putting all their efforts into the requirements asked of them over and over again! I've had personal dealings with this agency. I was a product of the system back when it was called the Child Welfare Department. I spent almost two years of my life in and out of foster homes, and my life has been mixed up and confused for as long as I can remember.

There is one foster home that stands out in my mind to this day, that I was in at the young age of 2 yrs old! The woman

that ran it - whom to this day I call Misses Neat - didn't allow me and my young sister to play like most kids. She kept us dressed up like little dolls and had us on downers so we would stay mellow all the time. One day we got back from church, and while waiting for lunch my sister and I went out to play. Like young kids do, we got dirty making mud pies. The biological son came out to get us for lunch, and when Misses Neat saw my sister and I she lost it! She grabbed us up and took us into the bathroom for a bath. My sister didn't fight the bath, but I, on the other hand, wasn't so willing. So Miss Neat fought with me in the tub and tried several times to dunk me under the water. I was afraid she was trying to drown me in the bathtub! This was too much for her own son to witness, so he called the agency and reported his own mother for what had just happened.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that CPS is not needed. I say somewhere along the line they forgot the purpose of Child Protective Services is to protect the children in their care with safe, loving, and nurturing families. For our children too many times people are seeing the innocent children being abused, and injured to the point of being taken to hospitals for services. We see the kids even getting killed in these so called hand-picked homes that a good part of the time aren't as thoroughly checked as people are led to believe.

Or has this agency forgotten the main objective is to reunite

the family together? Why does Child Protective Services offer limited, difficult to get support to the parents, instead of the resources that the family might need to get them reunited as a family unit. Why the prolonged separations, the pitting of family members against one another, even to the point of the family feeling the injustice done in their lives?

To many innocent children are put through so much pain, suffering, abandonment issues, confusion, and low self-esteem, while being away from their natural families during these long and drawn-out cases. That affects their very young lives, which are almost put on standby in a stranger's home. I would also like to mention that they are also in the dark about what is going on in their lives. We the parents aren't allowed to discuss the truth about what is going on around court matters. That very much affects the children's lives just as much as their parents. These orders come from the agency itself - they say it is for the children's own good! Would you personally like it if were you being told nothing about your own family's case?

I feel that it is long past due that we the parents join together to address these issues. Please respond by the first of November if interested at 442-2156 and leave a message for Grace. I will return your call. Let us see if a concerned group of people can make a difference standing up for what is right for both the parents and the children.

# Welcome Home!

Eye-Witness Account of the 30th Annual Gathering of the Rainbow Family

The 30th Annual Gathering of the Rainbow Family of Living Light took place in the beautiful Sawtooth Wilderness of the Idaho National Forest approximately 81 miles north of Boise, Idaho during the first week of July of this year. The actual site was Sack Meadow, a place where many years ago the Indians of that region had been killed in a confrontation with the military. The elders of the descendants of the fallen heroes came and met with the Rainbow representatives and gave permission for them to camp on that site after a lengthy conversation. This was a smaller gathering than most estimates being at about 12,000 to 15,000 people attending.

The days were hot and the nights cool to cold. The elevation was approximately 7,700 feet high. The nearest town was Lowman, a sleepy little country town consisting of a gas station, a post office, a grocery store, a restaurant and a lodge. From the site, Lowman was a long winding drive of about two hours down the beautiful Bear Valley and for about three weeks many a vehicle went back and forth along that road for tobacco and food and gas or maybe a hamburger. Not far away were many natural hot springs and groups of hippies were busy driving up and down the road to them.

The hippies did it again! They created their own magical, enchanting Rainbow City in the mountains complete with kitchens, coffee houses, tea houses, shower houses and even a bakery. There were plenty of large meadows with surrounding trees and at night the forest was ablaze with flickering lights and bonfires scattered all about. Bread of Life is one of the favorites because of the delicious food; on the day that I arrived they served the best fish chowder that I have ever had and on another day they served elk burritos with homemade salsa. The Indian spiritual centers are very popular and always feed lots of hippies with all vegetarian meals. At night, they often stay up late frying their hot homemade cookies and passing them out. However, in my opinion, the synagogue from Jerusalem outdid all the kitchens with their Friday evening meal in which they served the best hummus that I had ever had along with some other truly wonderful vegetarian dishes.

There was the Granola Funk Theatre offering entertainment ranging from its own gong show to tung-tu providing night after night of Rainbow entertainment.

It took them over two weeks to build the beautiful theatre complete with resplendent stage. The San Francisco Disco Dance Hall was a big hit. Also popular were the sweat lodges both Indian traditional and hippie-style as well as the Rainbow wrestling matches always offered by the Zipolite kitchen also well known for its scrumptious doughnuts and french fries.

The travelers came from most every state in the Union as well as Canada, Mexico, Germany, France, etc. Some flew in from across the seas and some from one state to another. Most came in vehicles. Being that the Rainbow family is such a creative family the vehicles themselves are often very creative. Vans are popular and some are covered with beautiful artwork, others with boats on top or bedrooms on top. Buses are plentiful; some of them gleaming, streamlined and sleek; others crafted masterpieces of wood with glass windows of mosaic art complete with velvet curtains and velvet seats. Many are simply the humble abodes of the "just getting by" Rainbow traveler. And, of course, there are the bicycle riders, the motorcycle riders and the few who hitchhike their way in and hitchhike their way out with little more than a sleeping bag and a change of clothes. The Rainbow greyhound travelers often group up with others at the bus station and might hire a ride into the gathering or perhaps hitchhike their way into the gathering. Everyone makes it in one way or another.

At this particular gathering, the federal police were there to greet the travelers with road checks complete with sniff dogs and flash lights. One Rainbow flicked a bugger out his nose and this was cause for the police to make a complete search of the vehicle on grounds that he flicked out a doobie. Other common grounds for searches were taillights, license plate registration, and the like. At one popular corner, the police simply slowed traffic to a standstill while they intently studied the faces of the occupants in the vehicles. The travelers who drove in early in the morning or late at night were able to bypass this.

However, once the travelers made their way into the parking lot, they were greeted with big cheerful "welcome home" hugs and cheers which put great big smiles on their faces because THEY WERE HOME! The parking lot can double as a party lot quite easily, and really, just

"hanging out" at this particular location can be very entertaining. For the most part, however, the travelers anxiously load up their gear upon arrival, carrying it into the main gathering with great excitement and expectation.

Once you are inside the main site, setting up at the first site available will do just fine. However, the more experienced campers sometimes have their own preferences. Mothers with children will usually head for Kiddie Village which is run by Felipe who builds a playground for the children with see-saws and swings and sees to it that the children always have a meal prepared just for them. This kitchen is well known for good entertainment and good food. Felipe is also in charge of leading the children's parade on the Fourth of July to the main circle where the prayers for world peace are completed at approximately 12 o'clock noon. There is a complete silence held throughout the gathering for prayer from eight o'clock in the morning until the children break the silence. The Rainbow family has created a unique world peace pole which is on display and it is interesting to note that other countries in Europe now have their own world peace poles modeled after this one and that these countries also pray at the same time that we do so that what began as an American prayer for world peace is now an International prayer for world peace!

The main purpose of the annual gathering is to foster worldwide peace, cooperation, and spiritual healing. There is much teaching and learning as well as building upon a kinship system because the Rainbow believe that we are all related to each other and to all things. Making joyful noise and the celebration of life is part of the gathering as well. They are extremely conscientious about addressing concerns on the safety, health, and the well-being of the forest. On the whole, they are

peace-loving and gentle folk. The Rainbow family believes in its First Amendment right to peacefully assemble and express their beliefs on National Forest Service land. However, the US Forest Service has just published the final regulations to make the Rainbow gatherings illegal.

The mainstream media does not give coverage to the gathering but the local press does as well as the press from across the seas such as the French and German press. It was the peace pole which attracted the attention of the Jewish Rabbi and his congregation who were curious about what kind of people these American "Rainbow" were who had been praying for world peace every Fourth of July for so many years. This group, followers of Rabbi Schlomo Carlbach, came to the Pennsylvania gathering in 1999 for the first time and became captivated with the Rainbow family and have since become part of the family.

The main meal occurs at about six o'clock in the evening when the hippies gather into a large circle to be served by the many community kitchens. Here the daily announcements are given out and the "heartsong" of an individual may be heard. The "magic hat" is passed around for donations, and the Rainbow join hands for the "om." Great big pots of hot steaming food are brought into the center of the circle and then served to all. This could be described as the central daily meeting of the clan.

There are many community kitchens. Brew-Ha-Ha features truly wonderful blends of teas, Rainbow Crystal Kitchen can be relied on for their famous "Rainbow Stew," no matter the time. Instant Soup Kitchen never runs out of soup. Turtle Soup Kitchen features "vegan" meals. The veterans have their own Blues Party Peace Camp with really great jams at night. There are innumerable others but one of everybody's favorites

is "Lovin' Ovens" which bakes bread every day for main circle and features pies, cakes, cookies throughout the day and throughout the night as well. It takes well over two weeks for the ovens to be made out of straw and clay and for the big "living room" with the huge, long frepit to be dug out. Benches are built all the way around and at night it's transformed into a cozy, warm musicians' hangout where some of the best music is played and where some of the best coffee is served, not to mention the outstanding homemade pizza. Many musicians come to the gathering to entertain, some professional, others not and they visit different kitchens and different campfire groups throughout the day and night. The storytellers come as well as the puppeteers. At night, the drum circles can be heard throughout the entire forest and lull many a Rainbow to sleep.

There are many classes, but my favorite class is the one that Greenlight, the herbalist gives. For years, he has been taking the hippies to the fields and forest teaching them about the world of flowers, grasses, trees, etc. There is a way to identify the plants that can nourish and the plants that can kill and this is taught in his class. C.A.L.M. (Center for alternative Living Medicine) treats most every ailment with natural healing methods. Ed, one of my friends, ran out of Prozac at the gathering and wasn't ready to go home quite yet so C.A.L.M. administered St. John's Wort to him and he was just fine. The Rainbow family takes responsibility for taking the campers to the emergency ward of a hospital if necessary and so everyone's medical needs are met one way or another.

The trading circle is always a big hit at any gathering. Here, the traders gather their wares and sit up and down the paths provided, setting out their trade

see Rainbow page 7

**Yes!**

I want to see **HOMEWARD**,  
a newspaper produced by homeless people, *expanded in Sacramento.*  
Enclosed find my donation of \$15 for a one year subscription.

Please mail my copies to:

5.4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office Use only

Street & Apt: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC)  
and mail to: P.O. Box 2430, Sacramento, CA 95812

received

mail list

# 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 to the Sacramento Housing Alliance or sent to Site in the library at Loaves & Fishes.

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 she should so state, but the letter must still be signed.

Poetry and graphics will not be edited, unless 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 MAGNA 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 call 442-2156.

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

excerpts from the paper are published on the web at www.geocities.com/homeward2

SHOC is now on the Web at http://users.ownet.com/shochome

## Property Values Vs. the Value of Property

by Paula

I once felt very blessed by having a place where I could go to sleep once in awhile, safely, outdoors, in the downtown area. It was a little vacant lot that in past years had been clear-cut every summer. This summer, for some reason, they "neglected" to cut down the weeds. By August, the lot had become a beautiful jungle of diverse vegetation, reaching an average height of 5 ft. I hadn't been so conscientious as to identify all the plants that had sprung up, or bothered to photograph the natural history lesson that would teach what a wonder weeds could become if left alone during a mild summer. The varieties spoke of health and life, promotive of self-sustaining ecology. A sign of beauty was present when I woke in the mornings to view the gargantuan flowers (maybe primroses) of different colors, that spotted the field. Previous summers, my sleeping spot (I chose one so that the rest of the lot would not be trampled) was in view of the road. This summer, only the residents using their back doors were aware of my presence when going home after 10:30 at night (I would always wait until I thought most neighbors may be indoors for the night).

One evening I neglected my regular routine of going there alone and later, a friend of mine, who is confined to a wheel chair, accompanied me there. We arrived there around 9:30 PM. A neighbor that probably never saw me before, an early-to-bedder I may have avoided by my old routine, walked by us, saw us and obviously went in his house and called the police. The police showed up shortly afterwards.

The police officer told us we had to leave, that he would not normally make us leave, except in this case, a neighbor had called. The officer suggested that we would easily get away with sleeping at the railroad yard. I informed him that the railroad yard is reported to be a toxic hazard right now. The land is being excavated and toxics are being unearthed. He claimed to not know of this fact.

I agreed to leave and go sleep in some "other illegal location". The cop explained that the neighbors are just worried about their property values declining because of homeless people sleeping nearby.

Property values! Shouldn't we rethink that phrase? Value to me means something that is worthy, not only worth money. The value of prop-

erty could be measured as a refuge for a harmless individual that truly appreciates the value of land, and for a friend who once had her wheelchair stolen while she slept in a more visible downtown location. The value of property could be measured as the nutritional health of the land that makes life possible without requiring expensive fertilizers and human maintenance to keep the life perpetuated. The value of beauty of a natural landscape, so rare within a city. Green life when you would think everything would be dried out by August—a miracle. Oxygen. Lower temperature emanations. Healthy soil. Life.

We left and went to another illegal location. I didn't walk by the lot for almost a week. During that week away I never verbalized nor dwelled upon a fear that there would be horrible repercussions from that one night of being found out by the wrong neighbor with the wrong perception of what "value" means. When I returned to the field I found it had been destroyed. All vegetation had not only been cut down, but had been removed and piled on the street. If they had allowed the cut down vegetation to remain on the land, the earth would receive the nutrients and protection from the sun for subsequent growth. The earth would have healed and would have been ready to promote new growth, new life. The value of that property had been eliminated in order for the unreal estate value to increase potential financial profits for a piece of property that is other than the one raped. Also, of great intrinsic value—There were about 20 perfectly straight 8 foot long potential walking sticks, that had been left in the field to season for two or three years, thrown into the pile of debris. Financially profitable for someone with the artistic skill to transform the sticks to walking sticks—\$100 each/\$2000 total/artistic value immeasurable. Every last speck of removable value was removed.

I don't understand who determines property to be worth more money just because nearby land is barren. Is it the nature of money or the real estate business (that would definitely not approve of someone enjoying land for free)? Is it just average homeowners that decide this attitude all by themselves? We live off the life that the earth provides, but is that life only appreciated after it is harvested, packaged and laid out in the grocery store? Don't we all know that the oxygen we breathe comes only from plant life?

So to redefine a phrase: Value does not appreciate. We appreciate value.



Homeward attempts to be accurate in its stories. Occasionally, however, accuracy gets lost in the editorial shuffle. So to set the record straight, here are any corrections from the last issue.

### JUST CAUSE

by Paula in the last issue of Homeward (August 2001, Vol. 5, No. 3) stated that the "City" had the deal with McClellan Air Force Base, and had control of the usage of the base. I apologize to the City of Sacramento for accusing them of being involved in the deal when in fact it was the County of Sacramento involved in the deal. The County of Sacramento was negotiating with Cottage Housing Inc. for the hotel at McClellan Air Force Base, which resulted in Cottage Housing Inc. not being awarded the property. At present Cottage Housing Inc. is negotiating with the County for another site, so there is a possibility of a positive outcome. My apologies, Paula.

**"If money is your hope for independence you will never have it. The only real security that a man will have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience, and ability."**

-Henry Ford

## SHOC President's Message

Those of you that are on General Assistance - the Welfare Department has a rule that they don't seem to want to tell you about, it's called the "Irresponsible act". Here is how it works: When you are sanctioned for any reason tell your worker or her supervisor to file an irresponsible act for you, this will lift your sanction. You have only three acts through the life of you G.A. so use them sparingly, don't waste them on legitimate excuses such as a medical emergency.

- Cliff

## SHOC Meeting Time Has Changed

**Come join us on Wednesdays at 1:30 pm in Friendship Park**

The Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC) is just a group of Homeless and formerly Homeless folks coming together to discuss homeless issues and what we can do to improve our situations.

We have an office on the corner of Ahern and North 'C' St. (the old payee building)

Current Activities: Homeward Street Journal, Civil rights issues in sacramento and statewide with the California Homeless Civil Rights Organizing Project, American River Cleanup, Livable wsages with ACORN, Human Rights with WEAP, and more.

## 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

## River Cleanup

continued from page 1

heard and had cleaned up a couple camps. He told us the location and one of us put back what we thought was someone's belongings to a best guess location. We also found a few things obviously not trash in the trash piles. We have returned a few items to the rightful owners, but I'm afraid we have not come out of this completely clean. I'm sorry it happened.

And after the cleanup, many of us went to the Riverfest at William Pond. There we got a T-shirt, raffle tickets, dinner, ice cream and sodas. Richard Wells won the raffle for a river raft ride and Georgia

Westfall won prizes for her entry in the Weird Trash contest. Marion came out a winner with a special invite to a DJ's gig. Two of us got the concession on recycling the cans (a big old bag of them). SHOC may have won the prize for having the most volunteers at their site (not confirmed, yet). And then, after the Riverfest was over we got to fill up half of Art's van with leftovers (hot dogs, buns, cases of cat-up and mustard, cookies galore). We donated most of the cases to Loaves & Fishes, and took some of the food to Discovery Park and ate some ourselves.

The volunteers did some wonderful work, a benefit to the beautification of the river area. Closer, so much closer to getting the area in a condition that the City can't condemn. Special Thanks to those of the homeless community that participated in the cleanup (and to those who clean up year around on their own, too). Special Thanks to the young people and adults from the Young Men/Young Women Youth Group, Sacramento CA North Stake, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Special Thanks to the young people and adults from the ASCE YMF (American Society Civil Engineers Younger Member Forum). Special Thanks to the other volunteers that came out there to help.

All Photos in this story courtesy of Randy Dittmar



**Photos:**  
**Top Right: The pile of trash at sign-up site (there was more else-where)**  
**Bottom Left: Volunteers at the sign-up table**  
**Bottom Right: Richard Wells & Georgia Westfall (with Little Dude) receive their prizes**



## Baseball Game: Green & Blue Hats vs. the River Rats

September 9, 2001, the Green and Blue Hats vs. the River Rats Teams competed at the Franklin Park on C Street for an exciting game of baseball. The River Rats showed up first and wanted to throw some balls around, but didn't have any. So they figured they could warm up to their advantage by practicing their running. It would be useful practice for running from

cops, too.

Green & Blue hats were up first for a quick turn at the bat. The River Rats, up next, were deemed the Home Team, due to the fact that the team was comprised of homeless people, and who more suitable to calling a park "Home", than them? The Green and Blue Hats, employees of Loaves & Fishes, all have jobs and most likely live in apartments and houses. The River Rats first time at bat proved they may have a good chance, when the Green/Blue Hats couldn't figure out at one point who had the ball.

The scores stayed two to two for some time. River Rats put the pressure on with a home run from a ball hit out in the street. The Green/Blue Hats hit some monumental fouls—one landed in the encampment of spectators, another into the ladies bathroom (or almost). Garry stopped a fly ball with a paper plate. A train went by, we were afraid it'd stop and we'd lose half the River Rats. 8-9 Green/Blue ahead and dinner is served during half-time (oh, wait, this isn't football, is it?). Dinner is a big hit. Deli sandwiches, water bottles and watermelon donated by Joyce and Charley.

After the catered affair, the game resumes with a bit of difficulty when the home base blows away (the bases are paper plates).

River Rats got a man to 3rd base, Umpire cried "out". All at once, every player (I think batters and the field, both) started talking at the same time, loudly. I couldn't make out what any of them were saying, but I definitely didn't hear "kill the umpire", which may have convinced the umpire to change his ruling to "okay, safe, then".



Last team up to bat is determined. I don't know how that was determined because no one had a watch. A police car drove by. It was getting around dusk. I thought the Green/Blue Hats were quite a bit ahead at that point, but I must have been wrong. The game ended with the umpire determining the game a technical tie 5 to 5. Everyone likes the umpire. We all had a wonderful day at the ball game.



10th Anniversary *continued from page 1*



interested to add their personal touch by painting their own vision inside the net. Jim said this would be an on-going project over the next year.

The talent show was over 15 performers with acts as varied as poetry, acappella singing and guitar playing in venues as varied as blues, folk, rock and rap. Even Tim

Brown, Director of Loaves & Fishes, joined in with a blues song and harmonica playing.

Though a few guitars were shared, some performers brought their own instruments out for the special occasion, no doubt kept hidden in safe places in a city where any day could be eviction day.



Mustard Seed children do "Twinkle Little Star", wearing their "star" sunglasses



Tim Brown does the blues with harmonica

Sweeps Increase

It is necessary for everyone to know what has been going on with the homeless community recently. The police and rangers have been stepping up sweeps of the homeless people that live out by the river. Homeless people, who were once left alone if they were out of sight and who kept their camps clean, are no longer left alone by the authorities. Some police have been approaching homeless people with drawn guns. Some are taking people directly to jail for sleeping outdoors. After three days these people are let out of jail, often without having been to court, and all their possessions are gone. The hours of the sweeps used to allow homeless people to get at least some sleep, but now search hours are extended into the nighttime. Possessions belonging to homeless people are routinely being confiscated.

Obituary

David Villescaz "Chachi"

Dec 17, 1959 - Sep 17, 2001 of accidental poisoning

John Reed "Copper John"

D. Sept. 01, 2001 of a prolonged illness

Two Good Apples in a barrel of...

Many of the older neighborhood associations in the Sacramento area have been accused of promoting NIMBYism (Not in my back yard attitudes when it comes to accepting services and/or housing for the poor in their neighborhoods). But, not to let a whole barrel of rotten apples spoil a few — there are two neighborhood associations that I have been in contact with who are remarkable. I don't know if it's coincidental, but the two remarkable exceptions happen to have been formed in new growth areas.

Natomas Neighborhood Association recently received an award from the Sacramento Housing Alliance for promoting an inclusionary policy before the City of Sacramento made it mandatory through their Housing Element Policy. They have promoted all new development to include a percentage of housing for the low and low-low income brackets. They realize that with new businesses being built in the area that housing for those who work in those businesses will be needed. They have taken a hold of a common sense not too common in most neighborhoods.

Another neighborhood association, South Laguna Creek Neighborhood Association invited members of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee to one of their board meetings to "share a dream for a better world". They were newly formed in a new growth area, yes, part of a dangerous sprawl, but conscientious enough to meet with homeless people so that their development plans could better deal with the inevitable population of homeless and poor people. They wish to incorporate inclusionary policy from the ground up. We have been in touch with each other for the past year, from time to time, sharing information.

Two out of approximately 50 currently formed neighborhood associations in Sacramento? Not bad for a start. Let's forget about the barrel of apples metaphor and hope for the snowball effect here. We'll be watching the two who have the best chances from the get-go to accomplish the most excellent, effective and happy communities.

Rainbow Gathering *continued from page 4*

goods for display on top of beautiful pieces of material or perhaps simple cloths. Tents, beautiful jewelry, dresses, tie-dye T-shirts, snickers, all are traded here in the exciting hallelaloo of making a deal. This popular pastime in itself provides unlimited entertainment for often the music makers will come to entertain the hardy trade warriors or a kitchen will come with tasty bits of food. A unique aspect to the Rainbow trade circle is that "green energy" is not acceptable here thereby insuring the retention of genuine trades.

For me, one of the most amazing aspects to the Gathering is the unique way in which the Rainbow co-operate amongst each other to get things done. In their own words, they are not organized, they are organic! For example, as one young visitor described, he went into the hand-capped camp to get a shower, however, they were out of water so he had to go get the water. When he got back with the water, the people were hungry and were looking for someone to peel potatoes so he decided to peel the potatoes. Meanwhile, another fellow came to visit a friend and decided to cook the dinner because there was no

cook! After dinner, someone else wandered in and did the dishes because they needed to be done. And so, the needs of the handicapped were met simply and smoothly with no one in charge. And so it goes on throughout the entire Gathering, the needs are always met in a happenstance manner.

In closing, I would like to quote two paragraphs from the Missoula Independent by George Ochenski concerning the Montana gathering of 2000:

"Finally, some eight miles up a dirt road, there they were, the 20,000 hippies that threatened Montana, only many of the license plates on the array of mostly normal vehicles were, in fact, from Montana. Virtually everyone we passed smiled and said, "Welcome home" as we walked the two miles from the parking area to the camps and community kitchens dispersed in the thick lodgepole forest. Various paths wound throughout the Gathering and the methods by which 20,000 people lived, cooked, ate, got clean, disposed of wastes and filtered water were both amazing and ingenious.

Miles of small PVC pipe delivered clear spring water to the camps, where it was run through standard, home-sized, water filters. Tiny lodgepole bridges were temporarily constructed where paths went over streams or bogs, which were marked "off limits" to protect the riparian zones. In spite of a vast number of dogs, there was no sign of their droppings, nor did I ever see even a single cigarette butt laying by the trails. Some grass was trampled and the paths were getting a lot of use, but most of it was by foot traffic and none of it seemed severe. It sounds incredible, but it's true. The Rainbow Gathering, with an estimated 23,000 in attendance, was by and large cleaner than many of our regularly-used state or federal camp sites.

The article goes on to say "Perhaps the lesson for Montanans here is that we shouldn't leap to judge people by how they appear to us. Or by how the media presents them to us. By that standard, Radcot was the popular, charismatic leader and the Rainbows were the alien threat to our safety and environment. But in the end, judging by their actions and the outcomes, just the opposite turns out to be true."