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THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS TODAY

by Cathleen Williams

In May 2016, the *Sacramento Housing Alliance* and the statewide *California Housing Project* released an updated report on the shortage of affordable housing that has reached crisis proportions in the Sacramento County region and across the state.

- Cuts in annual federal and state funding, including elimination of Redevelopment funding, have reduced Sacramento County's investment in affordable housing production and preservation by more than \$37 million annually since 2008, a 56% reduction.
- Median rent in Sacramento County has increased 13% since 2000 while median renter household income has declined 13%, when adjusted for inflation.
- Renters need to earn \$3,803 per month to afford the average monthly asking rent of \$1,903.
- Sacramento County's lowest-income renters spend 62% of income on rent, leaving little left for food, transportation, health expenses, and other needs.
- Sacramento County needs 59,316 more affordable rental homes to meet the needs of its lowest income renters.

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Man with bicycle and trailer in front of
"Own the City" construction banner
Photo: Cathleen Williams

HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS:

"You can't be well if you're sleeping on a sidewalk"

For three decades, the National Health Care for the Homeless Council has provided comprehensive health care to people experiencing homelessness across the U.S. Ahead of his retirement, founder John Lozier reflects about how providing health care to homeless people has evolved. He also considers what still needs to be done to help the country's most vulnerable citizens, including creating universal care.

By Amanda Waldroupe
Street Roots - USA

The fact that safe, stable and affordable housing is an essential factor for a person's good health is increasingly acknowledged among housing and health care providers, policymakers and advocates.

It is a conviction John Lozier has held for decades.

Lozier is the founder and executive director of the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, a national nonprofit and membership organization that provides comprehensive health care to homeless people at primary care clinics the council either established or partners with.

The council was founded in 1986 and since then, its network has grown to include more than 10,000 doctors, nurses, social workers and advocates. The council provides support, training and mentoring to more than 200 public health centers and hundreds of organizations throughout the country that receive grant funding from the federal government's Health Care for the Homeless

program.

Encouraging people experiencing homelessness to become actively involved in their health care is one of the council's most important accomplishments. The council was one of the first organizations to have a consumer advisory council; membership is entirely made up of homeless people who have received care at a clinic supported by the council. In its trainings and work with clinicians, council staff emphasize case management and close relationships between providers that ensure effective referrals and continuous care.

It also helps homeless people regain their sense of humanity, Lozier said.

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“You can’t be well if you’re sleeping on a sidewalk”

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“It’s a great thing that desperately poor people and their providers are able to work so closely and so lovingly together,” he said.

Lozier will retire at the end of this year. He spoke with Street Roots about how providing health care to homeless people has evolved and what still needs to happen to help the country’s most vulnerable citizens, including creating universal care.

Amanda Waldroupe: *When you started the organization, how radical of an idea was it to create a program specifically designed to provide health care to homeless people?*

John Lozier: It was an important initiative. The approach evolved from interest in the Robert Wood Johnson foundation [a private foundation dedicated to improving health and healthcare for Americans]. They established some demonstration programs that sought to establish something very simple - which was probably a radical idea at the time - that homeless people can be effectively engaged in primary care services. There were 19 original projects, and we served tens of thousands of people.

We’ve understood from the beginning that housing is the core problem. Housing is health care. You can’t be well if you’re sleeping on a sidewalk or in a crowded shelter. One of the main things that has happened is that we have refined those understandings. When we think about violence, we think about trauma and trauma-informed care. And we think about cultural humility, an increasingly important approach to health care for the homeless.

A.W.: *It seems largely accepted that homelessness is a public health problem - not a public safety one, for example. But it took a long time, even, for public officials and the public to understand how much harm - physical, mental and otherwise - can be caused from being unable to get a full night of sleep.*

J.L.: Right. Sleep science is another place where our knowledge base has increased really dramatically in recent years - even more recently than the awareness about trauma. I think I would have to take issue with homelessness being a health issue. It’s predominantly an economic issue. It has to do with the lack of affordable and appropriate and available housing for people, which in turn drives health problems. In 1987, the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences published a report called “Homelessness, Health and Human Needs.”

It found that there are three relationships between homelessness and health. One is that poor health causes homelessness, for two reasons. One reason is economic: Most personal bankruptcies are health care bankruptcies. The other has to do with symptoms of illnesses and people who get squeezed out of housing.

Secondly, homelessness, in turn, causes more health issues, with exposure to diseases in shelters and vermin on the streets and violence on the streets, and exposure to the elements.

The third is that homelessness complicates all the elements and all the things you need to do to treat people. Add those up, and it’s a major public health problem.

A.W.: *You talked about how our understanding of the health issues faced by homeless people has been refined. What do you think caused that refinement of understanding to take place?*

J.L.: Science is part of it. The science has evolved. That’s not unimportant. Brain chemistry, neurology,

the understanding about the effects of trauma in particular has gotten much deeper in the last decade. For us, a more important part of it has been asking people who have experienced homelessness to help define the issues. Our focus on violence, for example, achieved a new clarity for us when the National Consumer Advisory Board put together a survey it does for people experiencing homelessness and across the country on violence. Almost everyone on the streets had witnessed violence in the course of their homelessness.

A.W.: *By involving homeless people so much - asking for their perspective, their input, their opinions - is to genuinely treat them as human beings, something I think a lot of people forget because of their appearance, because they live outside.*

J.L.: That’s true. Yes. We have tried to involve our patients at every stage of our work, and that starts with outreach and really being sensitive to people’s situations in the exam room. Much earlier in our career we talked about patient-centered care and goal setting. It goes on and on to patient satisfaction surveys to consumer advisory boards, which operate on a consensus model, so that their voices carry every bit as much weight as everybody else’s.

A.W.: *I was reading the council’s most recent quarterly newsletter, In Focus, about the importance and effectiveness of case management. The reason good case management is so effective is that it creates a one-on-one relationship and treats homeless people with compassion and respect.*

J.L.: Absolutely. It’s not just compassion. It’s respect. Those two together are what makes the difference.

A.W.: *How so?*

J.L.: Just feeling sorry for somebody - one way to express compassion - can be condescending, for lack of a better word. But feeling respect for somebody is an expression of justice. It’s an expression of understanding. It’s an expression of the quality of all human beings in the face of our mortality. It’s giving a fellow human being his or her due.

We’re not about charity. We’re about justice. Ultimately, that bleeds over to our understanding of what health care reform still needs to be. It needs to be universal. At best, with the Affordable Care Act fully implemented, there’s still 27 million who are uninsured in this country. A lot of those will be homeless people who for one reason or another aren’t eligible or not enrolled. That goal we set for universal health care coverage and accessibility to quality care still remains elusive.

A.W.: *You’ve advocated for many years that housing is an essential part of health care, yet the funding for housing and health care are entirely distinct. How do you think health care programs, like hospitals or Medicaid, should use some of their funding to ensure their patients live in affordable housing?*

J.L.: Not enough is happening yet, but we are beginning to see some glimmers of the understanding that housing is health care and that it is a wise health care investment to make sure that patients are adequately housed. Some managed care organizations are spending their money on housing, or a less profound but equally important intervention like respite care. New York state is beginning to spend some of its Medicaid dollars. The problem is that we have split social and health needs apart from each other in the major federal streams. HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development) and HHS

(Department of Health and Human Services) spend money on very different things. A lot of people have tried to put those together at the local level. We need to understand that housing is health care, and that if we want a healthy population, make sure that it is adequately housed.

A.W.: *There are at least two competing values for delivering good and effective health care. One is doing it out of the kind of compassion you’re talking about. But health reform has generated a lot of conversations about creating health care programs that are “evidence based” or have “measurable outcomes,” a way of measuring effectiveness, etc. Do you think anything is lost when we talk about health care like that?*

J.L.: It does matter. It has to do with the quality of those services. A lot of the focus of the ACA (Affordable Health Care) is on patient-centered medical homes. That’s what we have been doing for 30 years now. We have been developing medical homes for people who are pretty much excluded anywhere else, (homes) that are compassionate and respectful. We look to what is achievable within the patient’s own frame of reference. When we make a referral, we fully recognize the case management (needed) to help make that referral really work - that there are warm hand-offs, careful care transitions, discharge planning so that one person moves from one sort of provider to another.

A.W.: *What do you think needs to change in this country - socially, politically - for the United States to create universal health care?*

J.L.: It’s the political power of the insurance companies and the for-profit health care providers. That’s clear and simple, I think, to anybody who looks at it. They command something like 17 or 18 percent of the nation’s economy. Somewhere between 20 and 30 percent of their profit goes into shareholder profit and other wasteful administrative costs. Health insurance executives are among the richest people in the country. It’s the one percent defending itself.

A.W.: *The vacancy rate in Portland, like many other West Coast cities, is lower than two percent. The rental market is incredibly tight, and landlords are raising rent. Housing, even though it is something that everyone needs to survive, is driven by capitalism.*

J.L.: Absolutely. It’s capitalism run amok. Our economy treats housing and health care as commodities, as things to be bought or sold for profit, not as the fundamental human right that we understand they are. They are necessary for our survival. They’re so basic. I try to talk about Abraham Maslow’s needs hierarchy. Shelter, food and clothing are right there at the bottom, before you can advance economically or psychologically. It’s a fundamental need that the capitalist system does not accommodate willingly.

The McKinney-Vento act [the McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures immediate enrollment and educational stability for homeless children and youth] got passed in 1987 because Mitch Snyder was starving himself to death (in Washington, D.C.). Many people were expressing a lot of outrage of this sudden influx of homelessness when Reagan cut the HUD budget by 75 percent. What we lack now is that sort of powerful grassroots movement. We need to see more on that political front around housing.

Courtesy of INSPngo / Street Roots

Mary Watts: A Mother for Del Paso Heights

By Cathleen Williams

The neighborhood of Del Paso Heights has always been isolated, cut off from downtown and the new towers near the Capitol by the swift green snow melt of the American River, flowing westward from Folsom Dam on the way to its confluence with the Sacramento River.

Del Paso still is isolated and struggling, its main strip only recently spruced up with a fancy divider and trees, cutting across an otherwise exposed expanse of small apartments, aging frame and stucco houses.

I find Mary Watts there on a recent Monday morning, seated in a capacious chair in her living room, a 2 month-old baby sprawled, sleeping, across her chest.

“His name is Jonah,” she tells me, “A powerful name. His mom came to me, “I have no one else to watch my baby.” And I replied, “Oh, Lord, I’m doing it again.”

She beams at me in the shadowy quiet, her voice soft, her face creasing into a smile. Everywhere in the neighborhood she is known as “Mother Mary.” “We are one nationality. All of us,” she explains, “We are here just to love our children. And including the homeless – they didn’t choose their way of life. Hard to understand, all this hatred.”

Mary’s life story begins in Mississippi, on June 30, 1943. “Little town called Byhalia, 30 miles out of Memphis, Tennessee. My father and mother farmed and worked in the cotton fields. They wanted a better life – moved us kids to Cleveland, Tennessee. I went to a Catholic high school, started at Tiffin University, majoring in psychology, then started raising a family. I worked in computers early on – oh, those old machines! And then I moved to California in the eighties.”

“California – the godly land. Shocking, it was so prejudiced. I had a hard time finding a job – even with my work experience. Got on welfare – also shocking, the way they treated you. I had to learn where to find food boxes.

“But it’s even harder now. Homeless under the bridges, kids sleeping in cars, don’t even

have their own toothbrushes. So many out there. In this little square inch. Now, mothers just don’t know what to do.”

Mary’s keen understanding of the deepening difficulty of survival in our communities reflects the confounding and outrageous puzzle of our times – as poverty rates rise, government leaders have turned their backs on the hardship and suffering faced by children and their parents.

The number of families with children in poverty has risen to more than 6.7 million, even as the average monthly case load of families receiving aid (TANF) has fallen from 4.7 million families in 1996 to 1.7 million families in 2014.

In California, in 2015, about 65% of poor families received support – the amount provided is only about half of the federal poverty level of \$1674 per month. TANF benefits cover only a fraction of housing costs – it is now less than the estimated cost of a modest two bedroom apartment in most states.

Unbelievably, the number of households with children with monthly cash incomes of less than \$2 a day (considered to be extreme poverty) has more than doubled since 1996. Of course, tax credits and non-cash benefits (like food stamps and Section 8) lower these numbers, but do not change the picture as a whole, since many cannot qualify or access these benefits. (In the six counties of the Sacramento region alone, more than 110,000 residents eligible for food stamps go without. The benefits lost by these people equal more than a quarter of a billion dollars per year.)

About 48% of households in extreme poverty were Anglo Americans, 25% were African Americans, and 22% were Latino. When it comes to poverty and hunger, as Mary Watts says, we are all one nationality.

Decades ago, Mary found her way to the TLC Soup Kitchen in Del Paso Heights, following in the footsteps of her mentor, Momma Marks. She worked in the kitchen, cooking for 800 people every Friday night.

Today, the TLC Soup Kitchen gives out 2,500 loaves of bread, produce, and whatever they can find, every week. “The Soup Kitchen was the furthest from my dreams,” she tells me. “I had dreams of travel. But the true satisfaction is helping people. Neighbors bring us food, churches, organizations too. See that 25 pound bag of sugar? Someone just dropped that off.

“We get so much help, too. My own kids and grand-kids – we’re a small army. And I have twenty great-grandchildren coming up! Run out of food? You can ring this doorbell at midnight. We don’t turn away anyone.”

This year, TLC Soup Kitchen and Mary Watts will be honored by Farm To Every Fork, the coalition of community organizations that celebrates Sacramento’s communal commitment to end hunger with a gala dinner, to be held this year on September 10, 2016.

For more information and tickets, contact the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee at 916- 862-8649, or email at shoc_1@yahoo.com.



Mary Watts Photo Courtesy Tracie Rice-Bailey

BUILDING SOLIDARITY FOR RENTER'S RIGHTS

By David Roddy

Being poor is never easy. And Sacramento's ever rising rents makes substandard housing and soul-draining low wage work all the more arduous. Sacramento's rate of rent increases-- up 10% between January 2015 and 2016--is the second highest in the nation. Tied with the infamously expensive San Francisco and topped only by Portland. According to Yardi-Matrix, a real estate analysis firm, by the end of 2016 rents will increase by another 8.8%. Additionally, last year the Corporation for Enterprise Development found that almost 40% of Sacramento residents lack any sort of financial cushion to avoid joining the 12% of residents living below the poverty line. For Black and Latino/a households, this number jumps to nearly 70%. Ever rising rents create an environment of fear for many Sacramento workers, where the threat of poverty is already one job-loss or medical emergency away.

Historically, regulations that govern rent and housing conditions have been hard-won by tenants and communities organizing for their own interest, creating power in numbers to leverage against their landlord. But solidarity, the sense of mutual camaraderie from shared struggles, has become increasingly alien over the past thirty years. The decimation of unions, the cutting of welfare programs, and the defunding of regulatory bodies have all contributed to a culture of desperation and fear. Solidarity, however, cannot be suppressed, as long as the conditions that bring people together against a common antagonist exist.

In 2007, workers and tenants in Seattle organized the Seattle Solidarity Network, spurred on by organizers of the local Industrial Workers of the World. The Network soon began leafleting neighborhoods and workplaces, taking direct action against employers and landlords abusing the law to steal wages, evict tenants, or reduce property maintenance costs. Solidarity networks have since blossomed

across North America, from Vancouver to San Diego.

In the early spring of 2015, a group of union organizers, public service workers, radical socialists and anarchists came together to organize the Sacramento Solidarity Network. I spoke with Chels Wright, an organizer and member, about what he has learned about housing in the region from those most vulnerable to abuse.

"Personally, our work has given me an inside look on the conditions of tenants in low-income areas and the mindset of hopelessness and depression they are forced into."

Chels relates two main struggles of Sacramento tenants: living in unsanitary conditions, as landlords skirt housing laws to avoid the costs of upkeep, and the evictions of tenants whose homes are being sold to be redeveloped for more affluent renters.

"There is a surprising number of people here in very precarious situations that face often illegal real estate practices. Many big time landlords who own properties in Sacramento often refuse to do repairs, fix infestations, or remove mold."

"There's also a thriving business of property flipping. One tenant we met, their landlord was trying to illegally evict them by claiming they did not pay rent--even though the tenant had receipts to prove she did. We found out that the landlord was working under a company that is notorious for kicking out tenants in low-income areas, renovating the property, and putting it back on the market for twice the cost."

It is within this context of working with Sacramento's most desperate residents that he increasingly turned to radical explanations for the degree of poverty around him.

"Capitalists will do just about anything to squeeze profit out of somebody, even if that means kicking them out into the street.

I do not think this is an issue of particular capitalists being immoral, I think that's just the morality that class society creates."

This realization that the struggles of working class tenants lies within the structure of an unequal society--and not simply the result of a few nefarious landlords--has a deep history within the struggle for decent and affordable housing. Socialist agitator Upton Sinclair wrote of the desperate living conditions of Chicago immigrant workers in the 1906 novel, *The Jungle*. In the 1930's, Communist Party members worked to fight evictions and organize tenants in Harlem. In the late 1960's, The Black Panthers included the right to decent housing in their Ten Point Program. Most recently, activists ignited by the Occupy movement fought evictions from foreclosures across the country.

Chels notes that he has experienced a culture of desperation among low-income tenants, a sort of society-wide learned helplessness birthed in the absence of working class organizations.

"A lot of the people we meet have very little hope of anything changing and do not know about their ability to fight back " even when the law is often already on the side of tenants. "We haven't really had to do any really big actions like blockading an eviction or anything, but that's mostly because we often have the law on our side--the landlord is often breaking some sort of law, and threatening them with legal and civilian actions usually put them in their place."

Rebuilding solidarity is paramount in the effort to make housing safe and affordable. The formation of solidarity networks in America is indicative of a broader shift towards class consciousness among workers. By recovering economic rights won from past struggles, tenants reclaim and harness the power of solidarity and gain momentum towards winning expanded rights that guarantee decent and affordable housing for all.

Affordable Housing Crisis continued from page 1

In order to provide relief to low-income families struggling with the high cost of housing, the Sacramento Housing Alliance, and its members, including the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, are calling on state leaders to approve measures for increased construction of low income housing, including:

- Invest at least \$1 billion from the state's General Fund surplus into established state programs prioritizing the lowest-income households.
- Expand and improve the California Low Income Housing Tax Credit, which, in conjunction with the federal tax credit program, encourages the construction of affordable rental projects by enabling low-income housing sponsors and developers to

raise project funds through the sale of tax benefits to investors. Currently the ceiling is 94 million a year, while demand for the credits is twice that amount. (Assembly Bill 2817, Senate Bill 873)

- Give state voters the opportunity to approve a new low income housing bonds.
- Create an ongoing, predictable revenue source of at least \$500 million annually for the production and preservation of homes affordable to lower-income households.
- Prioritize public funding resources for extremely low-income households and preserve existing single room occupancy (SRO) units as part

of an overall strategy to prevent homelessness.

- Prioritize and expand the project-basing of federal rental subsidies including Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8), Shelter Plus Care, and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) for permanent supportive housing.

This report was produced by the California Housing Partnership. Local policy recommendations provided by Sacramento Housing Alliance. For questions about Sacramento County's housing need, contact:

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The Keith-Muhammad family is homeless in Sacramento because their income isn't enough to cover the \$1200 per month average housing rental rate in Sacramento: They have been on the waiting list for subsidized housing for several years. They don't qualify for cash assistance (TANF) because the husband works and earns \$1000 per month. They have not found a shelter able to take them in, all together as a family, for any reasonable length of time. Photo Courtesy Cathleen Williams

HELL ON WHEELS

By Suzanne Hastings

Life on the streets for people in wheelchairs is extra difficult.

His name is James L. Aycock – “Wheels” – to his friends. Wheels is a double amputee who has spent time on the streets of Sacramento. Wheels wasn’t always homeless. Like many homeless people he has had jobs. He was a driver and an electrician for a company in Arizona. Before that he was a fisherman in Alaska before he became sick with diabetes

James was raised in a home for boys from the age of 4. He was in and out of foster homes until he was 14. He always felt like an outsider in these homes. Finally he left to become a fisherman in Alaska. Living in Alaska was tough. And it turned a boy into a man, but when he became sick with diabetes, just being able to help himself was hard.

I met James for his interview in mid-town. One of the first things I noticed is how hard it is for a person in a wheel chair to get down the sidewalk which is very uneven and narrow in places. This gave me an idea of just how hard life is for people who are dependent on wheelchairs to get around. Wheels is a double amputee, and as of right now there are no programs for amputees. Wheels has also been homeless in San

Diego where he said he was beaten by police. “There are programs for people with mental health issues, but none for people who are amputees,” James explained.

One night, last winter, Wheels and two companions were roused from their sleeping place, which was a school; there was an awning that protected them from the elements. Cops came by and made them move along. One of Wheels’ companions, “Raptor Man,” explained they were not sleeping in their usual place because they did not feel safe with some of the other people they were around.

Wheels depends on his two companions, Raptor Man and Dee. He trusts them with his life. They were at the “Right-2-Rest!” protest at City Hall that started last December. During one of the raids by the Sac PD, Wheels was moved out into the rain. His caretaker, Raptor Man, was arrested. Wheels was left out in the rain with no one to care for him. Wheels was moved to a tent, but there was an inch of water in it, causing his foot to rot. Raptor Man had pleaded with one of the police sergeants to let them stay under the City Hall awning. First, James lost his toe, then later his whole foot. The sad thing about this is that his foot was starting to heal. But, being harassed all the time and the stress caused his foot to grow worse.

Wheels was taken to an emergency room last March.

There he was told to just bandage his foot and put cream on it. He had to argue with the hospital to be admitted. The foot that was later amputated had “bust open like the pod on ‘Alien’,” explained Raptor Man. How much more did this hospital need? This is just another example of the dehumanization of the homeless. The only redeeming part of this is that Wheels received a new wheelchair; his old one had been falling apart.

The city formed something called a “Task Force,” but it seems they just have more people to come out and harass the homeless. “With NASA, every time some little rock comes near the Earth, they have a whole room of scientists sitting around deciding what to do, but they still can’t figure out what to do about the homeless,” said Wheels. “There’s homeless vets who died on the streets. People ask if I’m a vet, I say ‘No, I never killed people.’”

It seems that people are given a choice, Stay on the street and eat, or live indoors and starve. So this is not an easy fix. Next time you are out, look at how many of the homeless are in wheelchairs. It’s hard enough for those who can walk.

Hell on wheels for those who can’t.

Community Groups Demand Audit of the Sheriff’s Office

By David Roddy

In 2014, over 4 million Californians voted to reclassify many non-violent drug and property crimes from felonies to misdemeanors, allowing offenders to be cited and released rather than being detained in a county jail before their trial. A study by the Public Policy Institute of California found that in the year fol-

lowing the implementation of Prop 47, there were 508 less people on an average day in a Sacramento County Jail. This reduction in jail population amounts to a saving of at least \$22,992,080, according to a report commissioned by the California Endowment Building Healthy (BHC) Communities Collaborative.

However, any potential reinvestment opportunities that

would prevent crime and reduce recidivism provided by these savings remains unknown. On June 14, members of Sacramento Area Congregations Together and other community organizations gathered at a meeting of the Sacramento Board of Supervisors to demand an audit of the County’s savings from Proposition 47.

Veronica Beaty, Land Use Policy Director of the Sacramento Housing Alliance (a member of the Building Healthy Communities collaborative), explains that the County “should see a shrink in the jail population after the passing of Prop 47--which we have--but what we are not seeing is a corresponding decrease of spending in jail infrastructure.”

Organizers are calling for an additional public review of County contracts with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The BHC report notes that in order to fulfill a contract with ICE, Sheriff Scott Jones reserves 165 beds at Rio Cosumnes Correctional Center for undocumented detainees, raising the possibility that funds are being redirected towards immigration enforcement.

The passing of Proposition 47 and the growing demand for community oversight of funds that can be used for preventing the conditions of crime, is indicative of a growing public sentiment against the “law and order” policies of the last 30 years. It also demonstrates that challenging the prison industry, which has destroyed so many lives, requires continued vigilance beyond legislation. Only by holding our government responsible for the effects of mass incarceration can we begin to rebuild shattered communities.



Protesters at the ACCE Prop 47 rally. ACCE is also a member of the BHC collaborative.

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Resources List

Night Shelters

452-7078

Women & Children

Maryhouse: 1321 No. C St. suite 32: Breakfast for Women and children 8am-9am. Day shelter 8am-3pm weekdays for women and families.

Wellspring 3414 4th St.: T&Th full breakfast: M-W-F continental breakfast for women and children. 454-9688

see Youth Services for young adults

Free Clothing

Sacramento Food Bank: 3333 3rd Ave. (at Broadway) 10am-2pm Mon - Fri. 456-1980

Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon St. Men: M-Sat 9-11am or 1-2:45pm: Women and Children: Thurs. 9 am signup, 9:30-10am bible study, 10 am - 12 pm shop. 447-3268

Glory Bound Street Ministry 4527 Parker Ave. Clothes Closet, Sundays 11:30 am all welcome. 452-7078

Medical

Mercy Clinic: For homeless adults, children: Nurse's office in Friendship park 7:30am & 12:30pm. or on North "C" St. next to fire station. 446-3345

Sacramento Dental Clinic: 4600 Broadway (Primary Care Bldg) Walk-ins 8 am - 12:30 pm 874-8300

Mental Health

Guest House, 1400 N. A St.: Homeless Mental Health Clinic, Tues/Wed/Thurs, 8-am only. Mental Health evaluation, medication if needed. Housing referrals for mentally ill, GA refs, SSI aps, refs to A & D counseling: 443-6972

TLCS Intake Offices: 1400 N."A" St. Bldg. A: Adults 18 yrs & up; Referrals to transitional living programs, independant living, mental health support services; SSI/SSDI application assistance; Walk-ins 8-11am M-F 440-1500

Genesis: Professional Counseling for life problems. Referrals. 401 12th St. (DeLaney Center). 699-1536

Youth Services

Wind Youth Services: Drop-In Center for youth (ages 12-24) experiencing homelessness: 1722 J Street, M-F 9am-6pm, S-S 10am-2pm: Emergency shelter for ages 12-17, call **1-800-339-7177**: Emergency shelter

for ages 18-24. Services also include: street outreach, case management, mental health; call **916-561-4900**

Crisis Intervention

WEAVE: Services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children. Referrals to court mandated battery intervention programs, Safe house, 24 hr. crisis line: 920-2952

AIDS / HIV

AIDS Housing Alliance provides residential care, transitional housing & permanent housing services to homeless persons living with aids. 329-1093 weekdays.

CARES (Center for AIDS Research, Education and Service): 1500 21st ST. Serves people with HIV and AIDS. Medical care, mental health, case mgmt, health ed and regional prevention/ed classes. 443-3299

Breaking Barriers: Homeless Outreach Program provides direct services to people living with AIDS and HIV. Transportation to social services, medical appointments, job interviews, and housing assistance. 447-2437

Harm Reduction Services: 40001 12 Ave.; High risk outreach; HIV, Hep-C testing; case management for HIV; free medical clinic, needle exchange. 456-4849

Alternative Test Site: Free anonymous HIV testing, Wed /Thurs. Call for appt. 874-7720.

Legal Aid

Disability Rights, CA: Free legal services for people with disabilities. Call for appt. toll free: TTY:(800)776-5746

Tommy Clinkenbeard Legal Clinic: 401 12th St. (DeLaney Center) Free legal assistance and advocacy for problems related to homelessness. 446-0368

Legal Services of Northern California, Inc: 515 12th St. (at E ST.) M-F 8:30am-12pm, 1pm-5pm. Problems with public benefits, landlord / tenant, divorce clinic. Call for appt. 551-2150

Welfare Rights: 1901 Alhambra Blvd. (2nd floor) M-F 9am-5pm: AFDC, Food Stamps, Workfare and Medical rep at hearings. 736-0616

Social Security Disability / SSI Lawyer Free Consultation (916) 658-1880

**About SHA**

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

For more info, or if you would like to participate, please call:

(916) 455-4900
http://sachousingalliance.org

909 12th Street, Suite 114
Sacramento, CA 95814

The SHA does not itself provide or manage housing.

Veterans

VA Outreach: 1-800-827-1000

Homeless VA Coordinator:
(916) 364-6547

Mather VA Social Works: help getting DD-214, any vet. (916) 843-7064

Sacramento Veterans Resource Center
7270 East Southgate Dr. 393-8387

Miscellaneous

Francis House Center 1422 C St. Must get a lottery number 9am. M,Tu,Th,F for Direct Services: ID vouchers, transp. assistance; In depth resource coaching by apt.; Veteran's advocacy; Notary services Thurs. call for apt.; Job Development Center M,Tu,Th,F 9:30am - 1pm. Family Rescue motel vouchers for qualified families Mon. 1pm. **(916) 443-2646**

Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services: 3333 3rd Ave. (south of Broadway) Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 10am-1:30pm, and Wed 4pm-7pm. 456-1980.

Social Services: 28th & R ST. M-F 7:30am-5pm. Call for asst. 874-2072

Employment Development Department (EDD): 2901 50th St. (at Broadway) M-F 8am-5pm. Unemployment, job services. 227-0300

Medi-Cal: 1-800-773-6467, 1-888-747-1222. Or see DHA eligibility workers 1725 28th St. 916-874-2256

Social Security Office: 8581 Folsom Blvd (East of College Greens Lite-rail stop, past the flea market) M-F 9am-4:30pm 381-9410: Natl line 1-800-772-1213

211 Sacramento
Dial 211
for tele-info & referral service

Califorina Youth Crisis Line:
1-800-843-5200

Health Rights Hotline:
551-2100

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 member of the Sacramento Housing Alliance. The paper's mission is to alleviate miscommunication between communities by educating the public about housing and poverty issues, and by giving homeless people a voice in the public forum. Homeward also informs homeless persons of shelter and occupational assistance, and acts as a creative self-help opportunity for those individuals who wish to participate.

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

Submissions and Editorial Policy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Poems by Karen Melander-Magoon

Revolutionary Poets Brigade, San Francisco, California

Earthquakes

There are more earthquakes
 Everywhere corporations fracture the earth
 Force-feeding the earth with chemicals
 Forcing water into her mouth
 Water that drills into her very bones
 And dispels itself in polluted waste
 Millenia of terrestrial infrastructure
 Crushed with the boots of corporations
 Companies oligarchies banks tyrants
 Birds fly over the earth
 Their brilliant songs
 And feathered grace
 Flies over rigs and drills
 Over once pristine waters
 Seeking resting places
 In disappearing trees and native growth
 Seeking the breasts of mother earth
 Fecund breasts of hills and mountains
 Offering generous nurturing
 From fruited plains
 Offering clean rains
 And unpolluted waters
 Birds fly into flying machines
 Into turbines airplanes windows
 Seeking
 The disappearing
 Home
 Of their ancestors

Birds of Morning

Birds fly like shadowed ghosts
 Among the buildings
 Along alleys of calm
 Street noises rumble beneath
 The morning city
 My love's spirit permeates the stillness
 Layered over city sounds
 A bell rings
 Welcoming the city to a new day
 Clothed in veiled whispers

Waiting for Birdsong

The birds are quiet this morning
 A small chirp in the distance
 A whistle over the urban hills
 The squawking parrots have already passed
 Or tribalized themselves in new locations
 Green hordes of beauty and chatter
 Once a community on Telegraph Hill
 Now ensconced in tribes
 Serenading the urban wanderers
 In parks across the city
 There are no birds perched on wires
 Outside my window
 None flying through the cloudless sky
 No broods of juvenile finches
 Trying out their wings
 The trucks rumble on the morning streets
 Murmuring into the stillness
 The morning waits

Full Moon

The moon was full
 Last night
 Hiding first
 Behind a blanket of fog
 Black sky sliding out
 Emulating smokestacks
 Over the opera house
 The night was strange
 Fog hiding the moon
 And ragged black skies
 A bowl of darkness
 Full of my own grief
 No stars
 To beckon the still universe
 Into a truce

Ten Thousand Times

Sometimes I want to
 leave my skin behind
 Stripped like an onion
 Left behind to be with you
 In your own void
 Sometimes I want to
 leave my skin behind
 To wrap you tight in one embrace
 Breathe life back into your soul
 Caress your face and smile
 Look once more into
 Your twinkling eyes
 Oh had I only done this
 Ten thousand times
 Ten thousand more
 Just for this moment
 When I must reach
 Into a bank of memories
 To feel
 Your joy

Tomorrow

Tomorrow hangs
 suspended
 Between my love
 And his spirit
 Each day begins
 As if it were a myth
 Even as the earth
 Rolls inexorably around
 A burning, indifferent sun
 Spinning towards its light
 And yet away
 As time and timelessness
 Remain in tension
 Lost in sorrow