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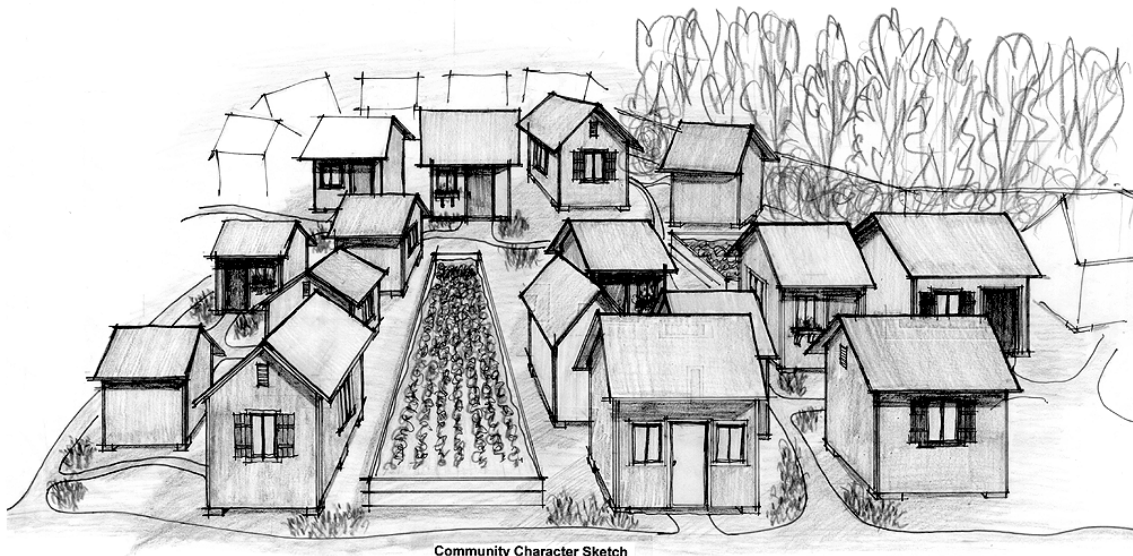
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Safe Ground Moving Forward



Community Character Sketch

Artistic rendition of a possible Safe Ground village using Tuff Sheds - by Kerrin West of Studio 81 International - Sept. 8, 2009. Safe Ground Sacramento is exploring alternate inexpensive small housing models to use instead of tents. They have purchased one WorldShelter U-Dome and recently a Tuff Shed small cottage that is on display at Loaves & Fishes.

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Foreclosures Mark Pace of Enduring US Housing Crisis

Street News Service www.streetnewsservice.org

By Tom Brown
Reuters

MIAMI, FL - Every 13 seconds in America, there is another foreclosure filing. That's the rhythm of a crisis that threatens to choke off hopes for a recovery in the U.S. housing market as it destroys hundreds of billions of dollars in property values a year.

There are more than 6,600 home foreclosure filings per day, according to the Center for Responsible Lending, a nonpartisan watchdog group based in Durham, North Carolina. With nearly two million already this year, the flood of foreclosures shows no sign of abating any time soon.

If anything, the country's worst housing downturn since record-keeping began in the late 19th century may only get worse since foreclosures, which started with subprime borrowers, have now moved on to the much bigger prime loan market on the back of mounting unemployment.

In congressional testimony last month Michael Barr, the Treasury

Department's assistant secretary for financial institutions, said more than 6 million families could face foreclosure over the next three years. "The recent crisis in the housing sector has devastated families and communities across the country and is at the center of our financial crisis and economic downturn," Barr said.

A September report by a foreclosure task force appointed by Florida's Supreme Court pointed to a shift in the root cause of foreclosures: "People are no longer defaulting simply because of a change in the payment structure of their loan. They are defaulting because of lost jobs or reduced hours or pay. Florida had the nation's highest rate of homes -23 percent - that were either in foreclosure or delinquent on mortgage payments in the second quarter, and the report said "the latest news for Florida is horrifying."

A recent pickup in sales and home prices in some regions has been heralded as a sign that the crisis in residential real estate may be close to bottoming out, after the steepest price decline

since at least 1890. But nearly half of recent sales have been attributed to foreclosures or "short sales" at bargain-basement prices.

Even as the U.S. economy seems to be recovering from its worst recession since the Great Depression, mortgage delinquencies continue to rise. And that adds risk to any relatively upbeat assessment, since foreclosures depress the value of nearby properties while eroding the net worth of homeowners and the tax base for communities nationwide.

The Center for Responsible Lending says foreclosures are on track to wipe out \$502 billion in property values this year. That spill-over effect from foreclosures is one reason why Celia Chen of Moody's Economy.com says nationwide home prices won't regain the peak levels they reached in 2006 until 2020. In states hardest-hit by the housing bust, like Florida and California, the rebound will take until 2030, Chen predicted.

"The default rates, the delin-

quency rates, are still rising," Chen told Reuters. "Rising joblessness combined with a large degree of negative equity are going to cause foreclosures to increase," she added. Anyone doubting that the recovery in U.S. real estate prices will be long and hard should take a look at Japan, Chen said. Prices there are still off about 50 percent from the peak they hit 15 years ago.

Jay Brinkmann, chief economist with the Mortgage Bankers Association, said foreclosures are expected to peak in the second half of 2010. But that forecast is based on a projection that unemployment will begin falling after topping out "barely in double digits by the middle of next year."

Last week the Labor Department reported the unemployment rate rose to a 26-year high of 9.8 percent in September, in the latest evidence that a turnaround in the jobs market is the missing link in the economic recovery.

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Homeless Resources
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How the U.S. Can Adopt a Healthcare System That's Fairer and Costs Less

An Interview with T. R. Reid about his new book on healthcare systems.

Street News Service www.streetnewsservice.org

by Adam Hyla
Real Change News

Who pays – literally and figuratively - for the threadbare patchwork of American health insurance coverage, a system that drop-kicks 700,000 people each year into bankruptcy? T.R. Reid's book couldn't hit the shelves at a better time. "The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper and Fairer Health Care" offers a look at how other wealthy democracies - such as France, Japan, Canada, Germany and the U.K. - provide health care for their citizens that is cheaper and more cost effective than in the U.S. Real Change Editor, Adam Hyla, speaks to the in demand author.

SEATTLE, WA - Anger and taunting in the public forum. Accusations of fascism. Gun-toting men waiting for their congressional representatives in the parking lot. Rumors of proposed government death panels - rumors that opponents of reform did virtually nothing to quell. The discussion, if it can be dignified with that word, over the state of the nation's health care system is scuttling along the slimy sea floor of American politics.

Which is why it's an ideal time for some actual information. What is it costing us to look after our nation's sick? Who pays - literally and figuratively - for the threadbare patchwork of American health insurance coverage, a system that drop-kicks 700,000 people each year into bankruptcy because they couldn't pay their medical bills? That, because they couldn't see a doctor, puts another 20,000 in the grave? Are we really faced with a choice between things as they are and that conservative bogeyman, "socialized medicine"?

For such apt questions, T.R. Reid's book couldn't hit the shelves at a better time. "The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper and Fairer Health Care" (Penguin Press) is a look at how wealthy democracies like ours - France, Japan, Germany and the U.K. - provide health care, and the choices they faced as they constructed systems that are each unique but that all do a better job of keeping their citizens healthy, and for less money.

What do those countries have that we don't? Each has decided that it has a basic duty to look after the health of its citizens.

Reid's book would be just an exercise in comparative policy studies but for having busted his shoulder while in the U.S. Navy. A military surgeon had bolted the joint back together, but that was way back in 1972. "By the first decade of the 21st century," writes Reid, "I could no longer swing a golf club. I could barely reach up to replace a light bulb overhead or get the wine glasses from the top shelf."

And so, "hoping for surcease from sorrow," Reid takes his shoulder on the road. The result is a readable, informative, clear-headed look at health care elsewhere in the industrialized world, accompanied by the persistent questioning: Why not us?

REAL CHANGE (RC): When did you begin this book?

T.R. REID (TR): I'd like to say that in the spring of 2006 I knew that in the fall of 2009 our country would be obsessed with health care, but I really can't say we planned it that way - we really lucked out. The timing worked out fine. I actually delivered the book a year late, and my editor was mad at me for being so late, but now I tell her I planned it like this. [laughter]

RC: Eighty-five percent of Americans tell pollsters that health care is a basic human right, yet so far in this national debate, that doesn't seem to be very well reflected.

TR: Yeah, every time we take on this issue the basic moral question gets lost in a discussion of winners and losers, hospital company profits and insurance company earnings. That's always happened in our country. Every single country I visited made the basic moral commitment that every single person in our rich country who needs access to health care should have access to it. The richest country in the world has not made that guarantee.

I came off my 'round-the-world' tour pretty optimistic: I think if we do make that commitment we can provide it for all, because all these other countries have.

RC: Why haven't we made that commitment, why are we so down in the weeds?

TR: I don't know. I really struggle with that. With my book, I had three main tasks: to explain how other countries cover everybody at reasonable costs, and I think I got that; the other was to explain why other countries cover everybody, and I think I got that. That raises the question, why hasn't the world's richest country made this commitment?

I think my final assessment is that most people don't know. Most people don't know that 20,000 Americans die every year because they can't see a doctor. They don't know that an appallingly large number of people [around 700,000] lose everything they have because they get sick or get hit by a car. If they did, they wouldn't stand for it; they don't want to live in that kind of society.

Do you know how many people in Britain go bankrupt because of medical bills? Zero. France? Zero. Canada? Zero. Japan? Zero. No other country lets that happen.

RC: You write that the French system

expresses this fundamental French notion of solidarity. What does our system say about us?

TR: Our system is designed to make sure that successful business people - entrepreneurs, those who create jobs and prosperity - that they stay healthy. If the primary goal of your society is good jobs and economic growth, you reward people who create those jobs. That's fine - let rich people get good health care. The problem with it is that tens of millions of Americans don't even get in the door.

I talk a good deal in my book about the long lines in Canada, where if you have an acute illness they treat you, but if you can wait, you wait. I complained to this economist in Canada about people waiting for months, and he replied, "We don't mind waiting so much so long as the rich Canadian and the poor Canadian have to wait about the same amount of time." Whereas in America, we take it for granted that rich people are going to get better care than poor people.

RC: Are we rewarding prosperity by making sure that insurers make a profit?

TR: Yes. We were taught in school that the competitive, for-profit system is the best way to achieve anything - that there are built-in efficiencies. This doesn't seem to be true in health care because the American for-profit free enterprise mechanism is the most wasteful in the world; there's no question about that. Our for-profit companies' administrative costs are about 20 percent; in France, administrative costs are about 4 percent. Japan has about 3,000 insurance companies and their administrative costs are 5 percent. All the other countries with private plans but that are non-profit are vastly more efficient than for-profit free enterprise American plan.

RC: Is there a single reason why all these countries have lower cost?

TR: Yeah. In all these other countries, everybody is in one system. It doesn't mean single-payer: Japan has thousands, Germany has 200. But there is one set of rules, one set of forms, and basically one set of prices. Everybody basically gets the same care at the same price. In the U.S. we have one system for veterans, one for Native Americans, one for people over 65, one for members of Congress. We have one for children under 16 at 140 percent of the poverty level, and one for children under 16 at 150 percent of the poverty level. We just have health care systems overlapping one another, competing health care systems, each with their own plan.

I went to this giant hospital in Canada: 900 beds. I asked to see the billing office. The billing office was two part-timers. A billing office in the U.S. for a hospital of

that size is going to have 70 full-timers, maybe 100.

RC: What about overpaid doctors?

TR: We certainly pay doctors, hospitals and drug companies more than anywhere else in the world by a huge margin. The same pill made in the same factory costs \$1.20 a pill in American and 20 cents in Britain. We pay vastly more than anyone else, and as we've seen this summer in Washington, if you say, "Wait a minute, let's cut the payment," it gets very complicated.

RC: What have been some of the greatest mistruths you've heard in the health care debate?

TR: Well, first, the argument that it's all socialized medicine over seas. A lot of rich democracies offer everybody high-quality care with private hospitals, private insurance, and private doctors.

In some ways, a lot of countries are less socialized than the U.S. Here everyone goes onto government Medicare when they turn 65. In Germany Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, a lot of people stay on private insurance from cradle to grave. They claim that it's all a big government nanny state: No, that's not true.

And the idea that these other countries shove Granny off a cliff: We know that's wrong. In all the other rich countries a person turning 60 has a longer life expectancy than an American of the same age. People live longer and healthier in other countries.

But the biggest mistruth is that other countries ration medical care. The fact is, the U.S. rations medical care every single day.

When insurance companies deny a claim, saying we won't cover that, that's rationing care. When they say we won't buy that drug for you, you've got to buy the cheap drug, that's rationing care. When some people get the greatest care in the world with no waiting, and others, tens of millions, don't even get in the door: That's rationing.

The argument that we don't want reform because we don't want to ration care is just nuts. We're already doing it, and in the cruelest possible way.

RC: Yet so long as some people are covered well, we've been kind of OK with it.

TR: Yeah, that bugs me in this debate, the idea that "Hey, I've got my insurance, just leave me alone." That seems un-American to me. When politicians tell you not to worry, if you're happy with your current coverage you'll be fine, that's not

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Moving Forward

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Safe Ground Sacramento may have lost the piece of ground on C Street, but the organization and the homeless people that are involved in the campaign can't seem to be thwarted, they can't be stopped. Safe Ground continues forward toward their goal of decriminalization of homelessness and establishment of a self-governing campground (or more recently envisioned tiny house community) with water, garbage service and sanitation, with some basic services.

Safe Ground for a Time

Last issue of Homeward Street Journal reported that Safe Ground campers had leased a vacant lot from Mark Merin on C Street on August 21. Four days after they found their new home, police served them an eviction notice. On Sept. 2 police stormed Safe Ground enmass and tore down over 30 tents and confiscated them along with sleeping bags and other "evidence" of camping. That same afternoon many of the tents were replaced by supporters and by evening most of the campers returned, having no other legal place to go. Two days later anywhere from 18 to 22 police descended upon the C Street lot and arrested 17 people for the crime of camping. After the arrestees were released they had a meeting to decide whether to move or stand their ground. They decided to stand their ground and moved back on to the lot but this time they moved out every day before 7:00 AM. September 12th the police came in before 7 am and arrested, this time, 15 homeless people. Upon release, only a few of the Safe Ground residents went back to the C Street lot and they stayed there without tents and at night only. A rotating pair of supporters spent every night with the homeless people that had decided to stay.

One neighbor and the City of Sacramento filed two separate lawsuits against Mark Merin and his wife, the owners of the vacant lot. The remaining Safe Ground residents decided to vacate the lot on September 20, before these cases went to trial so that Mr. Merin would more likely not have to suffer worse consequences. Mayor Johnson also urged the campers to vacate and promised to work hard on establishing a legal option for them. He said that they should obey the laws until that time. They were not ever able to obey the anti-camping ordinance because



Rally outside City Hall, everyone carrying signs "Where do we go now?"

there is not enough housing or shelter and it's against the law to camp on public property and against the law to camp on private property for more than 24 hours.

When the people that were arrested (sometimes twice) showed up to their court date on October 15, they found out that they were not going to be prosecuted by the DA. The next day the confiscated tents, sleeping bags and the rest of their property was released from evidence.



Safe Ground meets Dignity Village - Tracie Rice-Baily and Timothy McCarthy from Dignity Village in Oregon

Pleading with City Council

Safe Ground Sacramento had a rally outside of City Hall and marched around the building on September 10, chanting for leniency for the Safe Ground residents, to quit the arrests and harassment, and for "Safe Ground Now!". Supporters have scheduled meetings with City Council Members and County Board of Supervisors to introduce them to and try to convince them that the Safe Ground

plan is both needed and would be a benefit to Sacramento. Safe Ground Sacramento's homeless members started testifying at City Council meetings every Tuesday during open comments session. They continue to do so almost every Tuesday. They are not only talking to the council members, the Mayor and the City Manager, they are also talking to the public that watch the meetings on TV.

Community Support

After the C Street Safe Ground site was lost, Safe Ground still continued in vitality. Supporters continued to increase. The Democratic

Party of Sacramento passed unanimously a resolution in favor of Safe Ground. They said they would also work towards its realization by using the issue when interviewing candidates and using their influence in many other ways.

In September of this year, Safe Ground Sacramento received the prestigious California Reinvestment Coalition Panther Award "for outstanding efforts to create safety and community for the homeless". The award was accepted by Sr. Libby Fernandez, Executive Director of Loaves & Fishes and John Kraitz, Board member of Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, who both educated the ceremony attendees about the realities of homelessness.

Timothy McCarthy from Portland, Oregon's Dignity Village came to visit and support Safe Ground Sacramento by sharing his many years of experience, from starting a tent city for homeless people to helping to maintain a self-governing community that started as a tent city and became a village of small houses for about 60 people.

Supporting the Community

Not only did they gain supporters, Safe Ground homeless people became involved in other community activities. On September 21 many homeless people were hired to picket for two county labor groups. They saw the connection of possible layoffs and the need for Safe Ground because if laid off they may eventually end up needing some safe ground.

United Nations World Habitat Day was celebrated in Sacramento on October 5 with a Habitat for Humanity Build. This event was called "Safe Ground ... Homeward Bound" to show connections between homelessness and the call for a "Safe Ground," the foreclosure crisis and the need for safe, decent and affordable housing in a sustainable community environment. In order to highlight these issues, homeless people from the Safe Ground community worked all day side-by-side with members of the community, elected officials and corporate leaders to help build the Sacramento Habitat for Humanity's home on Forest Street in Sacramento.

Camp-a-Night Campaign

Okay. Its illegal to camp on public property. And it's against the law to camp

on private property for more than 24 hours. Safe Ground Sacramento has been emailing, facebooking, tweeting, having Sacramento Bee articles written about, their new call to action, a call for land owners to allow the Safe Ground campers to stay on their land for one day at a time. They would stay one night and then travel together to the next participating vacant lot, possibly in an orderly parade. This is still a hard way to live, but this dedicated group of homeless people desperately want to live without disobeying the law. They don't want to get citations or be arrested for sleeping outdoors, and that's the only place they have to sleep.

Now

After the Safe Ground residents left the C Street lot, they found places to stay together more out of sight, not any more legally than when living on Merin's lot. They moved around a lot, taking all their possessions with them when they woke up in the morning. When the rains recently started, they naturally went to the only place they could find to be protected from the coming storm - under a bridge. Soon after they arrived under the bridge, knowing that the rains would start that evening, police came by and told everyone they had to leave immediately. Many left, and none had their tents back from impound, yet. Some stayed under the bridge and were woken up at 2 AM by a police honking and shining a spotlight on everyone. They were able to stay that night without further harassment until the next day. Of course they attended the next City Council meeting to plead for some mercy, to no avail.

Mayor Johnson has kept his promise as far as helping to bring about a legal Safe Ground. He has convened a task force made up of interested parties to come up with a plan that they sometimes call "Stepping Stones" to appease the members that didn't want to become a part of "Safe Ground" for some reason, but are willing to work towards a legal tent community. There are several Safe Ground Sacramento members on the task

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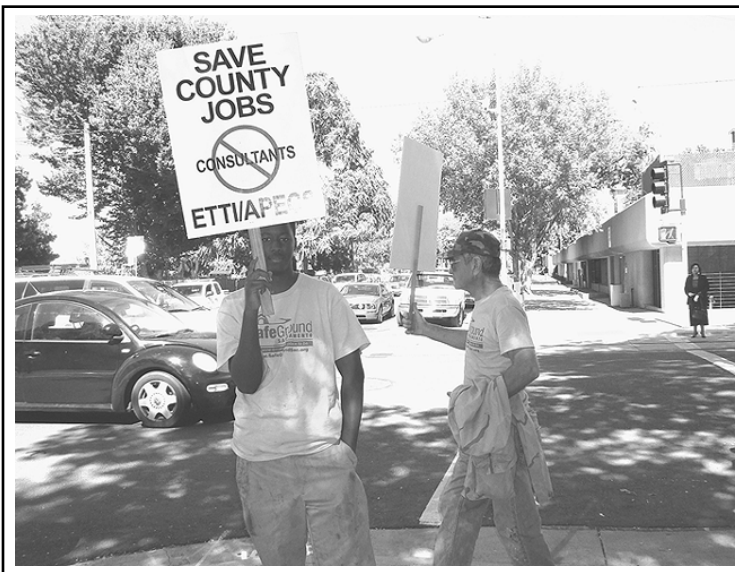


Safe Ground Sacramento and Tuff Shed personnel after delivering Tuff Shed cottage.



Carmen and Tracie on World Habitat Day - photo by Tamie Dramer

Safe Ground Goes Picketing with County Workers



by Lillian Hanson

On September 19, 2009, a group from Safe Ground went to work picketing at the Sacramento International Airport. The public responded well, honking their horns, waving their hands, talking and joking with the picketers. It was a hot, hot day and the picketers worked at the loop. They picketed on behalf of the Association of Professional Engineers, County of Sacramento and the Engineering Technicians and Technical Inspectors, who are representing Sacramento county employees whose jobs are threatened by budget cuts.



These two bargaining units have hired the Safe Ground homeless to protest the outsourcing of jobs at the Sacramento International Airport..

The employee groups want the county to see if any of the county employees who are facing layoffs can work on the massive construction project at the Sacramento

International Airport. The employee groups unsuccessfully asked the county to audit consultant contracts at the airport to see if any of the jobs could be performed by county workers slated to lose their jobs. Amy Marie Smith, president of APECS, said that she finds it hard to believe that there aren't at least a few more positions that could be filled with county workers.

In August, a Superior Court judge ruled in favor of the county in a dispute to stop the county from contracting with three companies for work at the airport. Mark Merin, the attorney representing APECS is also representing homeless people in finding a Safe Ground for the homeless to camp in Sacramento. Mark hired around ten homeless people to picket for the two bargaining units

"Why retain homeless people to picket? First of all they're available, but when county employees are laid off, where do they go? They may lose their homes. The connection is pretty obvious," Merin said. "That's the point we're making. You lay off county employees, you increase the number of homeless people in the county."

The homeless themselves are very happy to have the jobs which pay \$40.00 a day plus lunch. Beginning Monday, September 21, 2009, they marched around the County Administration Building at 700 H St. for around two weeks carrying signs with APECS and ETTI

and calling for the saving of county jobs. Friday, October 2, 2009 was the last day for the picketers.

Tipper, one of the picketers had this to say: "I'm having a lot of fun talking to the people. It's a good opportunity for us to be visible, a lot of people agree, a lot of people are honking their horns with thumbs up."

Carmen says that the police are smiling and waving at Safe Ground picketers. They're saying "good job, we may be the next one to lose our jobs." The police in the paddy wagon shook their fist at them and said "good job!" Carmen said that the very policeman that had arrested her earlier at the Safe Ground camp told her "You're doing a good job." Carmen added "The cops are now applauding the homeless instead of arresting them." Another of the picketers, Jim, commented "We have been called Bums by Mr. Hernandez's lawyer who did not understand that we are hard-working people willing to work but currently many of our people are unable to find jobs because of the economic situation. However, we still need a safe place to live."

People ask "So what exactly do you want from us? How can we help you?" The picketers reply "just honk your horn with thumbs up. The county union officials are coming by hugging them and saying "thank you." People are responding well to the group

Will, another picketer says "Forty bucks a day and lunch is worthwhile. It's an opportunity to represent the union as well as ourselves. It's good to be active and involved in the community. We're providing a good service and the guys are doing a good job."

Carol said, "I've been with the camp from the beginning. The boss is great and they buy us lunch. People are honking their horns and waving at us."

Hawk says "The money's coming in handy for stuff I couldn't buy otherwise."

Another picketer, Henry, had this to say "I'm eating, I've got cigarette money and I feel productive."

The youngest member of the group, Chris had this to say "I feel good about it, especially since I'm the youngest, I'm 19 years old."

The homeless picketers feel better about themselves because "they're now on the other side of the tracks. This has lifted moral quite a bit among the picketers. The work is giving them back their confidence and empowering them."

Tom Mrizek, vice-president of ETTI, had this to say, "They were wonderful people to work with at the time. I'm hoping that the unions can give them a donation by the end of the year to help them find a safe ground."

All in all, picketing for the Safe Ground homeless has given them a good public image as well as helped out the county workers. I think that there's a lot to be said for a group of people who go to work on time in spite of the fact that they have no home to call their own other than the ground they sleep on. Sacramento, wake up and give these people a Safe Ground. Where do they go now?

The group has expressed a desire for more work and you never know, another job may come their way. The group can be contacted by phoning (916)442-2156.



Letter to Editor

Dear Everybody,

Homeless since July of 2009 because my identity was stolen - all my cash and credit gone (claim filed with Sacramento Sheriff's Dept., still under their research, with name, address, and place of employment of the thief registered with them.) filed six months ago.

\$20,000 BMW. paid in full, stolen by apartment complex that evicted me and impounded my car.

So, homeless, hungry and broke. Foodstamps delayed over 14 days - still awaiting approval, still hungry.

Donations should reflect more of our needs instead of the donor's leftovers.

Government assistance programs need to go portable. We cannot afford the bus passes to meet the required 2,3,4 appointments necessary for your paperwork. Please come to us with your laptops. We trust you to not print us a receipt.

The portable offices can address our survival needs - food, shelter and education. You can save a lot of money, vacating these offices where you are paying for a lot of useless space.

Invest in vans and serve us as we need to be served instead of at your convenience.

This advice, direction, is free to you because I know you wouldn't pay me anyway. Godspeed

Carol Lee



Census 2010 is coming in March

April 1, 2010 is the official Census day for Census 2010. Every ten years the United States Government tries to count everyone in the U.S. A 2010 Census questionnaire will be sent to every household in the country and one person from that household will be required to fill out a short questionnaire for themselves and for each household member. This coming census will be the shortest questionnaire ever since the very first census was taken in 1790. There will be only basic questions that will be asked: name, sex, age, date of birth, race, ethnicity, relationship and does the person live there permanently or part of the time. The first person in the household will be asked if they own their home, what type is the dwelling, telephone number and how many people are living or staying in the house. The questionnaire should take only 10 minutes for the average household to complete.

A Complete count of everyone that lives in the United States of America is their goal. It will be a major effort, employing a humungous work force to get the job done. It is important that everyone is counted for many reasons. The count will affect at least \$300 billion worth of funding being allocated to everyone's community for neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation and more. The census is also used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and to redistrict state legislatures. California could actually lose representatives if the population is undercounted. Census information is used for planning decisions by community and civic

organization and service providers, determining where roads will go and new schools will be built, and is even used by homeless and housing advocates.

Your responses are protected by law (Title 13, U.S. Code, Section 9). Census Bureau employees take an oath to protect confidentiality and are subject to a jail term, a fine, or both for disclosing any information that could identify you. The FBI are not even allowed the information for finding people they are looking for. Even if a person is not in the United States legally, they can fill out the questionnaire and know that the information isn't going to be used against them. Everyone is required to fill out a questionnaire.

Some populations are harder to count than most. Just a few of the hard to count populations are Native Americans, foreign born/recent immigrants, renters/group quarters, migrant farm workers, and the homeless population. Some reasons that counting these population groups are more difficult are that some move around more than others, some groups do not easily trust the government and some have language barriers. The Census 2010 are going to work with community groups, homeless shelters and homeless service programs to help make counting homeless people easier and more thorough.

So when your Census 2010 workers come around to the homeless population, be proud to be counted because it's important and so are you!

SAFE GROUND

On July 1st 2009 a group of homeless campers and supporters began to resist Sacramento's arrests of homeless people for sleeping anywhere, whether camping on private ground with the consent of the owner, or on public property. The City cannot enforce this ordinance. It makes no sense.

The dusk feels reluctant
this evening in August
at the campsite six o'clock
sifts down like dust
as the buses of the Amador line,
long distance, rumble quietly
to the cement barn
on the corner that is their home.
At the end of the street,
from the steep embankment,
we hear a night freight -
each metal panel
each steel coupling & wheel
grinding & abrading
while drowsy voices
of homeless campers
talk about arrests
& what the police are likely to do
whether they'll break
the tents or not:
"you will be handcuffed
for your own protection."
We discuss the holding cells,
the separation, yet we're relaxed
in our borrowed chairs
under the sumac trees that found
this unwanted ground, fast growing
their leaves like fronds
offering free shade
to anyone below.

They raided before dawn.
They took everyone
& all the signs of their life.

by Cathleen Williams

WHAT CAN

1

QUESTIONS DO?

HELP BUILD BETTER COMMUNITIES

The 2010 Census is coming in March!

Better healthcare. Better schools. Better roads. All that is within your reach when you fill out the Census form and mail it back when it comes in March. 10 simple questions. 10 minutes that will help decide how more than \$400 billion in Federal funds get dispersed to your community every year.

For more information, go to www.2010census.gov

United States
**Census
2010**
IT'S IN OUR HANDS

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force and they are working towards not only trying to instill elements that they think are important, but are trying to reach common ground so that all interests can be satisfied or at least not opposed to a good plan. The Mayor has joined the ending homelessness effort and has spearheaded a new effort that strives to end homelessness in three years. Currently, there is much effort in focusing on getting a winter shelter even though it may not be at Cal Expo this year. This will be a great benefit to many homeless people and may save some lives, but still there won't be room for over 1,000 homeless people that will have no choice but

to sleep outside.

Winter approaches. The rains have begun and homeless people have trouble keeping dry. When a person that lives outdoors gets wet in cold weather, they stay wet and get colder. They need rain gear. They need changes of clothing and winter coats, socks, hats, gloves, tarps, tents, and actually, most of all, they need housing. If you would like to donate any of those items, you can bring the items to Loaves & Fishes and they will distribute the items to any homeless person that needs them. For more information visit Safe Ground Sacramento online www.safegroundsac.org.



At Safe Ground Rally
Safe Ground Members who were arrested for refusing to leave C St. site

The Universe is Round

www.chongonation.com

by the homeless science writer,

Chongo

The preceding three science articles have addressed progressively more deeply the question of what it is exactly that we mean, that is to say, what science means, with the use of the term "universe."

In the first of these articles, we explored the scientific origins of the use of the term universe, as well as the scientific revelations that were the consequence of the scientific efforts of the day. Next, in the second article, we explored the very shape of space itself (that is, the shape of the visible universe), discovering that what we ordinary call the universe is actually a four-dimensional sphere. In the most recent article, the one preceding this one, we explored the actual physical properties of a four-dimensional sphere, even analogizing these properties, through an illustration. (If you don't have the last illustration at hand, you can go to <http://www.chongonation.com>, click on either "Articles" or "Science Articles," page down and click on "The Shape of Space" article. The illustration is at the end of the article, at the bottom of the page.)

Now, in this article, we will explore just what the implications of a four-dimensional sphere are, and in particular, what these implications mean for each individual one of us; because, in actual physical fact, there is no single sphere that encompasses all, but instead, many.

Our individual light cone, our individual visible universe, being unique to its unique center, maps space and time, distances and angles uniquely with respect to the location of that unique center point, which is where each individual one of us, in either precise or general terms, always finds ourselves. Any other light cone, having a different center at a different location, will correspond to a different sphere and hence map all locations its own way, according to the displacement

ment of its center point with respect to the location of any other center point.

A light cone's mapping differing from each and every other light cone's mapping, however slight that difference might be, means that what is mapped as the north pole according to one light cone's "globe," is never mapped exactly, as being the north pole according to another light cone's mapping, nor is the south pole or any other location mapped the same, either. Each cone locates everything wholly uniquely to it. Thus, no light cone ever encompasses exactly the same region of the universe, that is, its history, as any other cone does. The extent of each is likewise wholly unique too.

What this means is that part of what lies within the Big Bang, according to the mapping for one sphere, would already lie outside of the Big Bang according to the mapping for any other, and visa versa. Likewise, each one of us is always located closer to the Big Bang in one direction than in the opposite direction, according to our displacement, again, however slight that displacement might be, from the north pole center point corresponding to any other individual light cone globe's unique mapping. It should be noted that gasping these two final concepts is critical to fully understanding just what it means for each light cone (visible universe) to be unique from all others. It is an absolutely essential point.

Each physically existent light cone having its own unique mapping of space and time, distances and angles means that there physically exists no single unique mapping common to all globes, regardless of the fact that in practice, outside of the most precise science and engineering, we generally use what is effectively a common set of measures, absolute for all, because the difference between any individual cone's unique mapping is so slight as to generally be insignificant. Ignoring this,

then because, each physically existent light cone being unique, there exists no physically existent mapping of space and time, distances and angles common to all globes, to use Einstein's well-chosen choice of terms, one must be stipulated, instead. And it is important not to erroneously confuse a stipulation with actually physically existing, like each individual light cone does, physically encompassing vast extents of time and space as well as its contents, reaching across billions of light years of space and billions of years of time. In contrast, a stipulation encompasses the meager extent of that time and space occupied only by the human brain, but is actually nonexistent beyond the shapes, as abstractions, that any stipulation is, residing in the mind alone, confined to its modest physical extents.

The geometric representation of the basis for the stipulation, as a stipulated mapping with respect to the north pole of any light cone's globe, comes in the form of something called a tangent. A line or lines stipulated as being straight, as defined by the tangent, can provide a basis for mapping space and time, distances and angles, with respect to many cones, albeit purely by means of a stipulation. Although it is nothing more than an abstraction, relativity's stipulated mapping, based upon a tangent, in fact, works impeccably. A tangent and the straight lines that are mapped with respect to it can be shared by different spheres, different light cones, and in this way provide the means for a common mapping of measures for all sharing the same unique motion (at rest, subject to the same gravity). Or, for different motion, provide a simple, universal means for translating the measures corresponding to the mapping for a common set of measures for one motion, to those of any other, which is an indispensable necessity for accurate physics.

A straight line, a flat surface, a flat three-dimensional space, or a flat four-dimen-

sional combined space and time (called a frame of reference), etc., is 'tangent' to a curve at a single point and a single point alone, which is the single point where the straight line(s) of the tangent intersect(s) the curve. In two dimensions, a straight line can be tangent to a circle. In three dimensions, a flat (straight), stipulated two-dimensional surface can be tangent to a sphere. In four dimensions, a stipulated, flat three-dimensional spatial moment can be tangent to a three-dimensional spatial moment of an individual light cone. A stipulated four-dimensional mapping of time and space together (again, a frame of reference) can be tangent to a four-dimensional 'light cone' sphere.

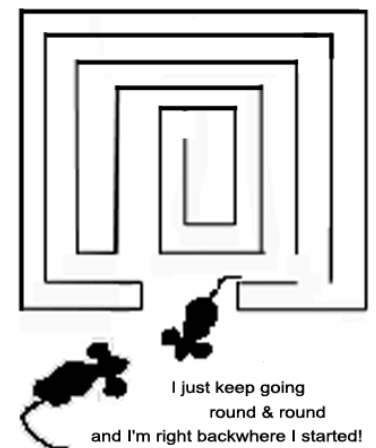
For all light cones sharing the same motion, the intersecting stipulated straight line(s) of the tangent establishing the stipulated mapping of space and time, distances and angles always has/have the same number of dimensions (though it/they can have fewer) as does the curve that the tangent intersects, regardless of the number of dimensions involved. The intersection of the straight tangent and the curve is always at a single point alone, which is a single spatial location at a single moment, again, regardless of the number of dimensions involved. In the case of the mapping of a momentary three-dimensional space of a four-dimensional frame of reference, intersection is at the "point" (vicinity) of the observer at that moment, though it need not necessarily be (that is, it can be applied to another observer, an observed event, or a set of them, in a different motion, establishing unique measures corresponding to that motion).

This stipulated mapping of space and time, distances and angles, and the rules for its application are the utter substance of relativity's flawless accuracy at mirroring reality, because that is what relativity does, it maps reality's space and time, accurately; for the motions

space and time, more accurately than any other body of ideas ever conceived. Indeed, this mere stipulation that is the substance of relativity, existing only within the mind and nowhere else beyond, is a fundamental foundation for describing everything in nature, space, time, and energy alike.

Isn't it just amazing what a mere stipulation can do? And, in case you don't know, it can put a satellite into orbit, allow us down here to use that satellite for pinpoint accuracy in a number of applications, and in their heyday, allow tube televisions to project a discernable image on a television screen, so that those of us who were fortunate enough, could watch Carl Sagan host one of the best television productions ever created, which was the series called "Cosmos." Indeed, this series provides the inspiration for many of the articles that will follow.

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



Healthcare System

continued from page 2

the right appeal.

RC: How much does a nation's health care system factor in the actual health of its populace?

TR: I think lifestyle and diet play a role. Japan has the healthiest population in the world: they live the longest and live longest without getting the chronic diseases of aging. Their diet is better, and hardly anyone drives to work: they walk or ride their bikes down to public transit. It's very hard to park a car in any Japanese city. Another factor noted by Japanese economists is that nobody's getting mugged or shot there.

But if you make quality medical care available to everybody, you get a healthier population. A major reason why we have a lower life expectancy, a lower rate of recovery from major diseases, is we leave millions of people out of the system. It's not that we have bad care, it's that we don't give everybody access to it.

For me, the worst and cruelest statistic I came upon in this book is infant mortality, the percentage of children who die in the first year of life. Of the 23 richest countries, America is 23rd: we're the worst. In Sweden and Japan, they have one-third the rate of neo-natal death that we do.

That's really tragic; to me, a rich country, if nothing else, has an obligation to keep its babies alive. That's - to me that's morally unacceptable.

RC: Often, we spend just as much, if not more money, catching problems later on.

TR: Yeah, in the NICU, the newborn intensive care unit. We do these \$600,000 operations on two-month-old babies and save a lot of them, but we wouldn't have to do that if we took better care of them leading up to birth.

All these other countries, as soon

as you get pregnant they send nurses to the house, they tell you what to eat, they really carefully monitor that pregnancy because they want to keep the baby alive. In the United States every day, every day, women come to the emergency room in the ninth month of pregnancy, ready to give birth, and no doctor has seen them. It happens all over.

RC: What's the case for a new president reforming health care first as opposed to, say, education?

TR: Two reasons. As President Obama says, it's a moral obligation to make sure that everybody who needs health care has access to a doctor. As you noted, most Americans agree with that.

And the other reason is the cost. The government pays about 46 percent of the cost of health care in America; we're paying vastly more than any other country. Obama says we're going to reduce the cost of government over time by fixing health care and he's right. We're pouring hundreds of billions of dollars down the drain every year. If Canadian bureaucrats can run their system on 5 percent administrative costs, but Wellpoint and Aetna have to spend 20 percent - we've let them get away with it because we don't like regulating private companies, but the fact is we're just wasting hundreds of billions every year on unnecessary admin costs.

For me, though, the moral argument is enough. In the richest country in the world, children go to bed at night with an asthma attack or an earache or a toothache because their parents can't afford to take them to the doctor. I don't think we want to be that society. If we were Ecuador or Madagascar, we wouldn't have the money to pay for everyone, but we do. Every other rich country has.

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Foreclosure Pace

Continued from Page 1

Since the start of the recession, the number of unemployed people has soared 7.6 million to 15.1 million. In Florida, unemployment is hovering at a nearly 40-year high of 10.7 percent, led by a steep decline in construction jobs.

Modifications & Monsters

Mortgage modifications, the centerpiece of a plan unveiled by the Obama administration in March to help as many as 9 million struggling borrowers hold onto their homes, have gotten off to a sluggish start.

The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, which regulates U.S. banks, said in a Sept. 30 report that banks and loan services stepped up efforts to help distressed homeowners in the second quarter, more than tripling the loan modifications that reduced principal.

"This trend represents a significant shift from earlier quarters, when the vast majority of loan modifications either did not change monthly payments or increased them," it said. Only a relatively small number of homeowners have seen financial relief from so-called "loan workouts" so far, however, and government officials acknowledge that far more is needed to reverse the national tide of foreclosures.

Help would be more than welcome in areas like Miami Gardens where there is a pervasive sense of anger about banks and the blight caused by foreclosures in a city that once boasted one of the highest homeownership rates in the country.

A predominantly African-American community of 111,000 people, just north of Miami, it now has a 13 percent foreclosure rate — the second highest in Florida — and a glut of shuttered or boarded-up homes.

"The banks were bailed out first. We all assumed that they were going to turn around and help other people but that didn't happen," said Ruby Milligan, 61, a teacher who took early retirement after suffering a mild stroke several years ago.

She received a foreclosure notice from Deutsche Bank in August last year, but still lives in her Miami Gardens home, fearing a knock on the door with an eviction order any time. Her retiree income is considered insufficient to qualify her for any modification of the adjustable-rate home-equity loan that she took out when the property was worth far more than it is today, she said.

"I feel that the banks should write these mortgages down," Milligan said. "They wrote these bad mortgages, they created these monsters." One way of easing the crisis would be so-called "cramdowns," a measure giving bankruptcy judges authorization to write down the principal on homeowners' mortgages.

A similar measure helped curtail family farm foreclosures in the 1980s, but Representative Brad Miller, a North Carolina Democrat, said the banking lobby killed it when it came up for approval by Congress earlier this year. "We fought that fight before and lost it," Miller said. "The industry will continue to oppose it."

Courtesy Reuters
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Obituary

Patricia "Hallelujah" Lilly
d. 7/2/09 aged 64
of natural causes

Tommy Ray Lucas
d. 8/16/09 aged 53
cause pending

Anthony M. Ferris
d. 8/30/09 aged 40
hit by vehicle

Robert "Vodka Bob" Cyr
d. 9/11/09 aged 52
found outside, cause pending

Maureen "Candy" L. Crespo
d. 9/13/09 aged 62
of cancer

Gerold Blacksmith
d. 9/15/09 aged 52
hit by vehicle

Anthony A. Ayala
d. 9/28/09
in sleep at his camp

Ronald Givan
d. 10/1/09
motorcycle accident

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HOMELESS RESOURCES

Night Shelters

Salvation Army: 12th and North B St.
30 days per year: Dormitory living, C&S:
Dinner, breakfast clothing for residents:
Men/Women: Sign-up SA patio weekdays
at 1PM. **442-0331**

St. John's Shelter: Women and
Children. 4410 Power Inn Rd. Call
between 10am & 3pm for space avail-
ability. **453-1482**

Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon
St. Beds for Men Only, sign up 6:30pm
at mission, Newcomers/Referrals have pri-
ority. 7:30pm Chapel Service with meal
afterwards, 6am breakfast for residents.
Showers / shaves 9-11am & 1-2:45pm.
open to all homeless men: **447-3268**

**SAEHC, Sacramento Area
Emergency Housing Center:** 4516
Parker Ave. 24 hrs: Family Shelter:
Families, single adults with children who
have no other resource: Women's Refuge,
single women, no children: Call for
screening/space availability **455-2160**

Day Shelters

Friendship Park: 12th St. & North C:
Weekdays 7am - 2:30pm: open to anyone:
Many services

Meals

Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon
St.: 7 days, **Evening meal**, Men/Women:
Church service 7:00pm required, dinner
following 8:30-9:15pm. Sunday 11am
service, lunch at noon. **447-3268**

Loaves & Fishes: 1321 No. C St.:
Lunch every day 11:30am-1pm. Tickets
available 7 am- 12:30 pm at Friendship
Park weekdays: at 8 am on Saturday and
10am on Sundays .

Women's Civic Improvement Center:
Seniors Only: 3555 3rd Ave. 11:30-12:30
lunch M-F **452-2866**

Helping Hands: 3526 5th Ave.
Sundays, 8-11 breakfast, sack lunch,
clothing

Food-not-Bombs: serves free food in
Cesar Chavez Plaza, 9th & J St., every
Sunday 1:30 pm. All Welcome.

Women & Children

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

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

see *Wind in Youth Services* for
young adults

Free Clothing

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

Union Gospel Mission: 400 Bannon
St. Men: M-Sat 9-11am or 1-2:45pm:
Women and Children: Wed. only. Call for
appointment to go in at 11am, 1 or 1:30pm,
or attend Bible study at 9:15am and get
clothing at 10am **447-3268**

Medical

Mercy Clinic: For homeless adults,
children: Nurse's office in Friendship park
7:30am & 12:30pm. **446-3345**

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, M,W,Th,Fri., 8-
11:30am Tues 8-11:30am 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, indepen-
dant living, mental health support services;
SSI/SSDI application assistance;
Walk-ins 8-11am M-F **440-1500**

Genesis: Professional Counseling for
life problems. Referrals. Next to
Friendship Park gate. **699-1536**

Youth Services

Diogenes: youth 16-21 yrs old. Hot
Line call **1-800-339-7177**

Wind Youth Center: 701 Dixieanne
Ave. Serves youth ages 12-20. Breakfast
and Lunch; Clothing; Laundry and
Showers; Case Management. Drop-in
Hours: M - F from 8:00am to 4:30pm and
Sat 10am to 2pm. **443-8333**

Crisis Intervention

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

**Sacramento Mental Health Center
(County):** 2150 Stockton Blvd (at T St.)
24hr. Will evaluate anyone for voluntary
or involuntary psychiatric care due to
danger to self or others. In-patient care
facility, drop-in. **732-3637**

AIDS / HIV

AIDS Housing Alliance provides res-
idential care, transitional housing & per-
manent housing services to homeless
persons living with aids. **979-0897** week-
days.

**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: 3640 40th
St.; High risk outreach; HIV, Hep-C testing;
case management for HIV; free medical
clinic, needle exchange. **456-4849**

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

Legal Aid

Disability Rights, CA: Free legal ser-
vices 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**

Miscellaneous

Francis House: 1422 C st. 9:30-11:30
am M-W & 1-3 pm M-F: walk-in or refer-
ral providing resource counseling, adv-
ocacy, vouchers for IDs, Dvr Licenses, Birth
Certificates, plus motel vouchers for qual-
ified families. **443-2646**

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: 8351 Folsom Blvd
(College Greens Lite-rail stop) M-F 9am-4:30pm
381-9410 Natl line **1-800-772-1213**

About SHA

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Alliance is a network of
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motes decent affordable housing
for low income households and
homeless people through adv-
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discourse.

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**Californina Youth Crisis
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551-2100

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