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artwork by Tee Hoatson

WE ARE MOVING!!!!

SAN FRANCISCO, CA -- The walls that once were covered with posters, banners and slogans reflected more than 30 years of organizing now are bare. Old copies of the Street Sheet dating back to 1989 are digitized and then recycled or boxed up. Yellow tags mark the furniture to be carried out to the new office., the rest we leave behind.

The Coalition on Homelessness and the Street Sheet are moving at the end of September into our new location at 290 Turk St. We are sad to be

saying goodbye to the organizing base that has served us so well for decades but excited to be moving into a building owned by our sister organization, Hospitality house.

The building the Coalition on Homelessness is currently housed in has been sold. The new owners are tearing it down and replacing our base for organizing to end homelessness with a new apartment building.

On October 1 Street Sheet vendors will be picking up the new batch of papers from a

wheelchair accessible office for the first time. Inside we will be starting to decorate the empty walls of our new home with the history we've carried with us this far. The space is smaller so not everything will survive the move, but our collective memories will.

This move comes with unexpected costs...the transitional rent, a new phone system, wiring, the moving company, bulk shredding. It all adds up, and we've suddenly found ourselves trying to fundraise an additional \$20,000 to keep our

work happening through the end of the year. Because we don't take contributions from the city, we rely on small donations from our readers to stay afloat.

Please consider donating to our fundraiser at coalition.networkforgood.com/projects/78189.

And, if you currently organize with us or pick up Street Sheets at our location, don't forget that we will be in the new office starting October 1st! ■

SHELTER WAITLIST UPDATE: AS OF SEPTEMBER 15TH THERE ARE 1,105 SINGLE ADULTS ON THE WAITLIST FOR SHELTER IN SAN FRANCISCO

The “Wheeled Conveyance” Problem

J de Salvo

I have Bipolar I Disorder, which means I go through long periods of mania and depression; as opposed to BP II or Rapid-Cycling BPD, which present as extreme mood swings, my depressive and manic periods can continue for months at a time. When I’m manic, it can be almost impossible to sleep sometimes, and if I go long enough without sleep I start hallucinating and hearing voices. My illness has gotten worse over time, and after 25 years in the so-called “workforce,” I finally decided it was time to apply for SSI. Over the last ten years, as my manic episodes have become more severe, I seem to lose my job every couple of years anyhow, due to the fact that I become too dysfunctional to be a reliable employee. SSI isn’t easy to get, and if the application process wasn’t so long and difficult I would have applied long ago. Someone told me that if I applied for GA, the city would connect me with people who would help me to gather the necessary documentation to mount an effective case. Without this help, your chances of getting approved are close to zero. Even if you were to walk into the SSI interview in the middle of a full-blown manic episode, you still wouldn’t be approved without evidence that your condition is “ongoing.”

Everything was going fine, for a while. They assigned me an advocate to gather documentation, and a case manager/counselor with whom I was having weekly sessions—on the record, in order to further illustrate the “ongoing” nature of my problem.

Then one day, I showed up for my appointment, and there was a new sign on the door to the waiting room:

“No luggage or carts.
Only 2 bags will be checked.”

Ever since that day it has been a struggle just to keep my case open. My GA was cut off because I missed an appointment that I never received any notice of—my wallet was stolen, so now I can’t pick up my mail at General Delivery—but even if I had received the notice, it’s doubtful I would have been able to get inside the building to attend the appointment, because of the County’s new “no cart” policy.

I have a friend who lets me store my cart and other belongings at her apartment once a week, so I can go to my weekly sessions with my counselor, but she lives out by MacArthur BART in Oakland, which is one of the BART stations where the elevator is behind the fare gates, and there is frequent heavy surveillance there by BART Police. There’s really not much choice but to pay the \$17 that it costs to make the two round trips to Oakland involved to take

my stuff there and drop it off, go back to the city for my appointment, come back and pick it up, then take it back to the city with me.

I sell Street Sheets, so I usually have a little cash, but \$17 for BART more than once a week would really stretch my limited means. It’s shameful that San Francisco’s social services agency would concoct a policy like this that so obviously most affects the very people that need their help and services the most.

Yerba Buena Gardens, one of the few parks in downtown San Francisco that allows napping, has a similar new policy about “wheeled conveyances,” and even the SF Public Library has size restrictions on luggage and carts. How are unhoused people supposed to access public resources when we’re banned from the premises just for wanting to hold on to important possessions like blankets, tents, Street Sheets, clothing, and food. These are the items that are in my cart, and without it, I would have to decide which of them to forego.

Walgreens apparently has a cart policy, too, but I rarely see their security enforce it, especially if someone is just trying to eat. Recently, however, at a Walgreens on Mission Street, in the FiDi, I walked inside with my cart to get a sandwich and a banana, when I felt a hand on my shoulder, and heard the usual security guard greeting: “Sir...”. The guard told me that I had to either leave my cart outside, or leave the store.

Grabbing my sandwich and banana, I told them: “No problem, I’m just going straight through checkout.” I wheeled my cart over to the checkout line. There were only two people in line, and the line turned over quickly. For the 10-15 seconds that I stood in it, the guard kept repeating: “Sir...sir...sir,” desperately trying to get my attention, which I withheld, ignoring them completely. The cashier either wasn’t aware of, or didn’t care about our petty little dispute. She rang me up for my food, I swiped my EBT card, thanked her, and at last the defeated guard gave up; now I was already leaving with my purchase, so it would have been futilely redundant for them to tell me I had to leave, now.

At the door, I turned back towards the guard.

“You know, I know it’s your policy and everything, but I was just trying to get something to eat. I only needed to get to the very front of the store, then right into the checkout line, so it’s not like I was blocking anyone or anything. Besides, don’t you think it’s kind of a weird policy not to allow shopping carts into a store?” ■

ASK US ANYTHING

HAVE A QUESTION YOU WANT US TO ANSWER ABOUT HOMELESSNESS OR HOUSING IN THE BAY AREA? ASK US AT STREETSHHEET@COHSF.ORG OR (415) 346-3740 AND IT COULD BE ANSWERED IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS

The STREET SHEET is a project of the Coalition on Homelessness. The Coalition on Homelessness organizes poor and homeless people to create permanent solutions to poverty while protecting the civil and human rights of those forced to remain on the streets.

Our organizing is based on extensive peer outreach, and the information gathered directly drives the Coalition’s work. We do not bring our agenda to poor and homeless people: they bring their agenda to us.

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STREET SHEET STAFF

The Street Sheet is a publication of the Coalition on Homelessness. Some stories are collectively written, and some stories have individual authors. But whoever sets fingers to keyboard, all stories are formed by the collective work of dozens of volunteers, and our outreach to hundreds of homeless people.

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SUBMIT YOUR WRITING

STREET SHEET publishes news and perspective stories about poverty and homelessness. We prioritize submissions from currently or formerly homeless writers but gratefully accept all submissions to streetsheetsf@gmail.com

SPEAK YOUR MIND IN A PAID SURVEY!

The Coalition on Homelessness is conducting a survey asking YOU what you want to see **CHANGED** in San Francisco's **homeless services**

Survey is about shelter, mental health, & substance use



Friday September 20,



1-5pm



API Wellness (730 Polk, 4th floor)

\$20 Safeway Gift Card for your time!

SURVEY ELIGIBILITY: MUST BE TRANSGENDER/GENDER NON-CONFORMING & HOMELESS

WHY THERE'S A HOMELESSNESS CRISIS AMONG TRANSGENDER TEENS

Sarah Holder

Reprint from City Lab and Street Spirit

The decision to leave home wasn't easy for Greyson. After his mother was deported to Mexico, he'd been almost single-handedly taking care of his two younger sisters and his father, who was addicted to drugs. When he was 15, the family made plans to move from California's East Bay down to Mexico, too. As a trans person, Greyson was scared. He had heard horror stories of beatings and assaults of LGBTQ people.

"It's dangerous existing [there]," said Greyson, who didn't share his last name. "It was either get murdered, kill myself, or run away." He chose the third option.

That landed him in a homeless shelter in West Oakland for the next four days. There, Greyson found something he's never known: peers who welcomed him. "It was my first real taste of having queer family," he said. "It was wild how many there were."

From the shelter, Greyson went to two mental hospitals, and then a series of foster care group homes in the Bay Area. When he spoke to CityLab last month in Berkeley, he said he was about to be kicked out of the latest housing program in Walnut Creek. He hoped to find an apartment with his girlfriend. "I might actually end up homeless for a bit, which is going to suck," he said. "It's better than my family."

Greyson's story is just one in a chorus of many from trans and non-binary people who are unhoused, unsheltered, or unsure where they'll find a place to sleep next. Though trans people only make up a fraction of a percentage of the entire population of people living in homelessness, a significant proportion of transgender Americans—about a third, according to a 2015 survey—become homeless at some point in their lives. National figures from the 2018 point-in-time (PIT) count reveal that they're more likely to be unsheltered than other populations. And of all the trans and non-binary homeless people counted nationally, a 2018 National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) analysis found that California was home to half of them.

Nationally, an estimated 40 percent of unhoused youth in the U.S. identify as LGBTQ. In some California cities, that proportion is higher: According to San Francisco's 2019 PIT count, 46 percent of all unhoused youth are LGBTQ, nearly a quarter of whom identify as transgender and non-binary. In Alameda County, where the latest available de-

mographic data comes from 2017's PIT count and where they do not specify how many youth respondents were also LGBTQ, about 0.7 percent of the total number of unhoused youth identified as transgender. Preliminary data from Alameda County's 2019 PIT count reveals that homelessness has leaped 43 percent overall since then.

Greyson says that many queer youth, particularly those who have transitioned or plan to, become homeless the way he did—they're either kicked out of their house, or they flee because they don't feel safe there. "For younger people, there's a lot of family rejection that leads to them being homeless," said Nan Roman, president and CEO of NAEH.

But once trans and non-binary people become homeless, they're also more likely to avoid the shelter system than cisgender peers: 48 percent of cisgender unhoused adults were counted as unsheltered in 2018, according to NAEH, compared to 56 percent of transgender unhoused adults, and more than 80 percent of non-binary unhoused adults.

"For some people, being homeless is the worst thing in the whole free world, so they think, 'Why wouldn't you stay in a shelter?' But that's a very privileged perspective," said Christopher Rodriguez, the program manager at Castro Youth Housing Initiative with Larkin Street Youth Services, San Francisco's organization for homeless youth. "You could be raped in a shelter."

The connection between homelessness and sexual violence isn't just a problem for LGBTQ people, nor is it a problem that's less prevalent on the street: The National Runaway Switchboard estimates that within 48 hours of leaving home, a third of teens will be recruited into sex work. Rodriguez says that often, it takes just 72 hours for youth to be propositioned for sex. Many young people find life on the streets safer than shelters, and trans and non-binary people may avoid them because they're often misgendered or forced to go to the shelter that matches their birth certificate. That can cause psychologically damaging feelings of gender dysphoria, and can compound the violence and threats from other shelter residents.

"They don't feel like it's clear what kind of facilities they should use, and they don't think that the regular assessments that get used for everybody necessarily address what their problems are," said Roman.

In 2012, the Department of Hous-

ing and Urban Development established the Equal Access rule, which was meant to stop shelters and support centers from discriminating based on sexual orientation or gender identity. But in May, HUD published a proposed change to the rule, which would allow shelter providers to use an unhoused person's sex to determine where to—or whether to—house them in certain sex-separated facilities, depending on each providers' "privacy, safety, practical concerns, religious beliefs." HUD insists that the rule would still bar discrimination based on sex or gender identity, but this could make shelter conditions a lot worse, said Roman, and push more trans and non-binary people onto the streets.

For trans people just as much as anyone else, Greyson says the core problem is intergenerational poverty and lack of affordable housing. Trans and non-binary people are particularly economically vulnerable: They're three times more likely to make less than \$10,000 per year, according to True Colors United, a national advocacy organization for LGBTQ unhoused youth; trans people of color are four times more likely to be unemployed. "Without [housing], you can't get a job, you can't get mail. You're basically stuck if you're homeless, and it's that way on purpose," he said. "The government and society doesn't want people at the bottom to rise any more than they're allowed to. I think a lot needs to change."

HOW TO MAKE A SAFER SHELTER

Bobbi, who is 23 and declined to share her last name, went up to San Francisco from San Jose last year, arriving with a few friends to visit the S.F. Art Institute. She fell in love with the city immediately—the energy, the hills, the beaches, the people, the neighborhood bars in the historic Castro neighborhood, which has long been a haven for the LGBTQ community. But outside one of those bars one night out, she and her friends were "confronted by this older white guy," she said. There was an altercation; Bobbi defended herself, she says, and landed in jail for three months.

After her release, she turned to Larkin Street Youth Services, a San Francisco-based organization that runs housing programs and shelters for unhoused people ages 18 to 24.

For Bobbi, the shelter environment at Larkin Street's 40-person "Lark-Inn" was just too hectic. She returned to San Jose for a time, couch-surfing and crashing where she could, as she had

since she was 15. "Everything was just kind of bland there for me," she said. "I kept thinking where was the last place where I was genuinely happy, and I kept thinking: San Francisco." So she returned, and was readmitted to the shelter.

For most of her life, she had identified as trans, though she kept that information mostly to herself. But when she confided in one of the shelter leaders, he told her about a new program Larkin Street was developing—a transitional house built specifically for trans homeless youth.

The Larkin Street house, a light-filled Victorian home in the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, opened in March. Run by Larkin's Castro Youth Housing Initiative, it's the only program like it in the country, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. Six trans youth ages 18 to 24 can live there at once, and can stay for up to two years, during which time they're paired with case managers and connected with social services, job training, and education. They're also given HIV prevention tools, supported if they choose to medically transition, and equipped with savings accounts managed by Larkin Street.

"It's a client-led path, so the clients will tell us what they want, and we'll help them work on it," said Larkin Street's Rodriguez, who is also the director of the house. "The ideal would be they go to a two-year college, work in a coffee shop in the weekends, save up some money, and at the end of two years, they'll get their [associate] degree, we'll give them back their savings account, they'll move into a roommate situation with a friend that they met in our program ... and just move on. And have only one experience of homelessness."

By focusing on comprehensive support in this critical time in a young person's life, Rodriguez says Larkin wants to reduce long-term homelessness. "Half of the chronically homeless adults were homeless when they were in the transitional age youth bracket," he said.

Bobbi was wary of moving into such a brand-new program after the chaos of the shelter system—"I'm a bit of a control freak," she says—but she says she feels safe there. A garden, tended to by local volunteers, blooms outside. There's a large TV in the dining room, where Bobbi says she and her roommates gather to watch Netflix.

For those who can access it, the program could be transformative, but it has only six beds. (When CityLab visited in August, only four were taken.) In the East Bay, where Greyson lives, there continues on page 6...

'WE WILL BECOME HOMELESS': U.S. RESIDENTS FEAR HOUSING RULE CHANGE COULD FORCE THEM OUT OF HOMES

Carey L. Biron

A proposed US housing rule change which would deny public housing assistance for "mixed-status" households — those in which at least one member is an undocumented immigrant — could make entire households homeless.

Fears are mounting across the United States over a proposal by President Donald Trump's administration that would force tens of thousands of families to choose between splitting up or being homeless together.

The proposed rule change, on which a national public comment period ended in July, would deny public housing assistance for "mixed-status" households — those in which at least one member is an undocumented immigrant.

Housing secretary Ben Carson said in May — when the change was first proposed — that it was a necessary move to reduce long wait times for housing assistance.

But housing researchers and advocates say the proposal would not have the desired effect and would instead lead to higher rates of homelessness.

Analysis from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development said the rule change would affect more than 108,000 people.

That includes 55,000 children, many of whom are American citizens with an undocumented parent, according to the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA), a national non-profit focusing on affordable housing.

That is the situation facing Cari Torres in Los Angeles, California. The single mother from Jalisco, Mexico, is undocumented, but her son was born in the United States.

"If the rule goes on, we will be homeless, my son and I," she said, noting that rental rates in Los Angeles are very high and affordable housing largely unavailable.

Torres, 37, said she and her son would probably be forced to stay with friends: "I don't know, and, honestly, I can't imagine how bad this could be."

She added that many other people she knows are in a similar situation and are "afraid of what

could happen".

Like many U.S. cities, Los Angeles is already dealing with an acute housing crisis. The city's homelessness rate rose by 16 per cent in the past year alone, according to government figures released in June.

"There are over 50,000 people in the county experiencing homelessness, and we're going to add something like 20 per cent more through this policy," said Bill Przylucki of People Organized for Westside Renewal, a community development group in Los Angeles.

"And the people who would be added are folks who are even more vulnerable because they would face challenges to employment and accessing benefits because of this status issue," he said.

U.S. taxpayers do not subsidise housing for undocumented immigrants under current policy; rather, subsidy rates are prorated depending on the number of eligible members in a household.

The rule change would do away with that prorating, instead making the entire household ineligible if a single member is undocumented.

In a May meeting with lawmakers, Carson said he sees the prorating process as "giving aid and assistance to people who are here illegally".

He also noted that residents who

lose housing assistance under the new rule could get deferrals of up to 18 months to give them time to find somewhere else to live.

The housing department did not respond to a request for additional comment.

The proposal brought in more than 30,000 responses during the recent two-month comment period, which Przylucki characterised as unusually large for a housing policy.

He also said 90 per cent of those comments — which were publically available — were negative.

Several pending legislative changes from Democratic lawmakers, floated since the proposal was made public, would bar the housing department from implementing the change.

For now, community advocates like Przylucki are pushing back against what he said is a wave of fear and misinformation, explaining to residents that the proposal may not go forward, while planning for people to remain housed if it does.

"Fear has been effectively instilled on this and, of course, housing authorities are very concerned about that," said Sunia Zaterman, executive director of the CLPHA, whose members manage about 40 per cent of U.S. public housing.

"I think we've reached universal

consensus that we have a (housing) crisis. And the scarcity of resources is what is making the waiting list so long — not mixed family status," she said.

As with any U.S. regulatory change, the housing department is required to go through and respond to all submissions received during the public comment period before it decides on its next step.

Zaterman and others said that process would typically take several months.

"A lot of costs in the public sector are related to housing instability and homelessness, and to have a policy that clearly would result in exacerbating that problem is contrary to everything we stand for," said Zaterman.

On Monday the Trump administration also announced that starting in October, it intends to make it more difficult for legal immigrants to become U.S. citizens or get residency if they have used public benefits, including housing assistance.

"If implemented, the rule will grant immigration officers the authority to punish immigrants for accessing services legally," said Ali Noorani, executive director of advocacy group the National Immigration Forum, in a statement. ■
Courtesy of Reuters / Thomson Reuters Foundation / INSP.ngo



UNSOLVED: HIT AND RUN ON BAYVIEW HOMELESS WOMAN

TJ Johnston

A woman who is probably experiencing homelessness was struck by a driver in the Bayview District, an eyewitness said.

Kyle Borland, a freelance publicist who lives in the neighborhood, recounted an apparent road-rage incident near Third Street and Wallace Avenue last month on Twitter.

“Holy shit! This driver just TURNED AROUND to hit a homeless woman twice in front of our apartment,” he posted on August 18.

Street Sheet contacted Borland, who saw the incident from his house. The victim was an unidentified African American woman, who appeared to be in her late 40s or early 50s, and was carrying a sleeping bag, a book and a bottle of Pedialyte, he said.

“My partner and I were picking up a delivery downstairs,” Borland said. “The driver was at the light, waiting to turn right or left on Third when the homeless woman crossed the street in front of him. For some reason, she stopped in front of his car and didn’t move.”

“They proceeded to yell obscenities at each other, and when he finally went around her, he did a U-turn in the intersection to hit her in the street,” he said.

Upon impact, the woman and her possessions were sent flying in the air. The driver attempted to run her over again until Borland yelled out to him, then drove away. The victim rose quickly, appeared to be disoriented and

declined any assistance in gathering her stuff before storming off, Borland said.

Borland added that he reported it to the police, who told him that they couldn’t take further action without the victim available or the license plate on the vehicle.

Were it not for Borland’s tweet, this incident would have remained unknown. It stands in sharp contrast with Paneez Kosarian, an Embarcadero resident whose attack by an apparently mentally ill, homeless man in her condo drew media attention and turned into a flashpoint in neighborhood opposition to a new navigation center.

Assaults and other crimes against homeless people are seldom reported, much less solved, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. The Washington, D.C.-based advocacy organization tallied 1,769 attacks on unhoused people throughout the U.S. since 1999. The national coalition also noted that homeless people are more likely to suffer violent crimes than the general population.

However, the physical safety of unsheltered folk should be addressed, Borland said. In his Twitter thread, he wrote, “As San Franciscans, we do a lot of talking. We discuss the mental health and violence ‘of the homeless’ and the solutions to these ‘issues.’ But, no one questions the psyche of comfortable, housed humans who go out of their way to attack and vilify the vulnerable. We should.” ■

FORTY-FIVE EMPTY BEDS

Darnell Boyd

Why did S.F. officials intentionally leave 45 beds meant for people with mental health issues empty?

How dare they leave our most vulnerable population on the streets. They had 45 beds, and they complained about homeless people screaming in Union Square, Market Street, and Sixth Street. These officials went home to their comfortable beds every night for months knowing that there are 45 warm beds that is sitting empty and staff lied about the 45 beds.

What is happening to the community spirit we have? It’s slipping away day by day and when it’s gone it won’t be back. We must reach out our hands and help each other before it’s too late.

I wonder how many homeless people have died as a result of being denied one of those empty 45 beds? It’s time to put away our differences and help solve this problem. ■

TRANS FOLKS OUT, ON THE STREETS

Sarah Holder

continued from page 3... are no shelters specially carved out for trans unhoused people. But even traditional shelters can retool their programming to be more inclusive of trans and non-binary people, says Roman. Along with the Equal Access Rule, HUD published guidance for shelter managers on how to use inclusive language, create appropriate facilities, and maintain confidentiality around what medication people are taking and what sex they were assigned at birth. Under the Trump administration, this guidance has been removed from HUD’s website, but it’s still up on the NAEH’s site.

More data on the magnitude of the problem is needed, Roman says, in order for there to be more resources dedicated. Point-in-time counts are infamous for undercounting all homeless populations, especially unhoused youth, who may be staying with a friend on the night the count is conducted but are still technically homeless. And trans and non-binary people are likely to be particularly wary of sharing personal information about themselves with people conducting the counts.

Roman says she was surprised that, based on NAEH’s analysis of the 2018 PIT count, transgender people were not technically disproportionately homeless: They make up 0.6 percent of the entire U.S. population, and 0.5 percent of the unhoused population. But Greyson and other trans homeless youth said that this reflects the flaws of reporting rather than the reality of the situation. “It’s wild recognizing how many people in my [trans] community are homeless, and also of color,” he said.

Transgender and non-binary people “were found in almost every state and two-thirds of the Continuum of Care in the U.S.,” NAEH’s analysis of 2018 PIT count data found. L.A. had the highest number of transgender people experiencing homelessness.

The concentration of unhoused LGBTQ people in California cities like L.A. and San Francisco can be explained in part by the historically welcoming nature of those places, says Rodriguez. “Everyone’s like, ‘I’m seeking safety and I came to San Francisco’ because that’s what we’re known for,” he said. “They’re often surprised that we’re in a housing crisis.”

THE ROAD TO “NORMAL”

Greyson spends a few afternoons a month at Youth Spirit Artworks, a Berkeley-based nonprofit jobs training

program for homeless and low-income youth that uses art for skill-building. Warm and soft-spoken, he’s beloved there. A peer lit up when they saw him sitting at the table outside. “I love you, Greyson,” they said.

The community Greyson has found there, like the one he found in those first days at the West Oakland shelter, is another valuable source of support. It’s those kinds of connections that places like the Larkin Street transitional house want to foster, too.

“What we do here is provide mutual support from peers,” Rodriguez said. “Chosen families are very important ... finding a group of friends that have something deeply in common that will come help you in the middle of the night.”

That chosen family—along with therapy—can help youth address the severe mental health issues that afflict the trans community: A 2018 American Academy of Pediatrics study found that 50 percent of adolescents (ages 11 to 19 years old) who had transitioned from male to female had attempted suicide. “Literally every trans and queer person I know has mental illness; most of it is PTSD,” said Greyson, who adds that more trans-centered housing options would help a lot. “If you’re trans you’re already turned away enough. You might as well be with people who understand the struggle you’re going through.”

After a few months in the house, Bobbi feels she’s on the right path to start a new life. “For the longest time, it was like, about surviving,” she said. “Just wondering where I was going to stay at night. This has been kind of the first time I’ve been super-stable and I feel like that’s something that’s given me the freedom to explore what I want.”

Growing up, Bobbi says, her parents were homeless; her aspirations always revolved around making a lot of money and having somewhere to stay. Now that she’s been saving up and has a roof over her head, she’s realized that “I could do so much more than that.” She’s getting her GED, and will use it to apply for a scholarship to the Arts Institute. There, Bobbi wants to study culinary arts, but she’s also exploring hair and makeup—she’s been practicing on her roommates.

“‘Normal’ has such a negative connotation to it, but that’s my goal,” said Bobbi. “I want to come home after a 9-to-5 and just think about work. I want to have these things, and finally feel normal and complete.” ■

SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR

SEPT
19

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF TENANT POWER AND RESILIENCE

WHERE: GRAND THEATER / GRAY AREA
2665 MISSION STREET @6-10PM

You are invited to join Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco for its first benefit celebration, honoring four decades of power and resilience. Your ticket purchase and participation supports the mission of Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco to ensure that no one is evicted because they did not know their rights.

ACCESS: The Gray Area Theater is fully ADA accessible and low chemical scent

SEPT
19

LONGTERM SUPPORTS TOWN HALL ~ AYUNTAMIENTO APOYO A LARGO PLAZO

WHERE: SAN FRANCISCO MAIN LIBRARY 100 LARKIN STREET @9:45AM-NOON
CARE AGENDA: Expanding LTSS for All
Join us for a town hall about the solving the State’s need for affordable long-term supports and services so that we may all live and age with dignity.

Food, childcare, Spanish interpretation and other accommodations will be provided. Please contact Senior and Disability Action to RSVP.

SEPT
20

SURVEY DAY FOR TRANS & GNC HOMELESS FOLK!

WHERE: API WELLNESS (730 POLK STREET, 4TH FLOOR) @1-5PM

Speak your mind about what you want to see changed in San Francisco’s homeless services and get compensated for your time with a \$20 Safeway Gift Card. This survey is about shelter, mental health and substance use services.

Eligibility: you must be transgender/gender non-conforming and homeless to participate!

SEPT
21

PUNKS WITH LUNCH TURNS 4!

WHERE: OAKLAND METRO OPERAHOUSE
522 2ND ST, OAKLAND @7PM-12AM

We turn 4 this year and we would love for y’all to be a part of the celebrations!

Cult Mind & Younger Lovers & Godstomper & Grosero & The Leave Me Alones

We will have raffle prizes and vendors! And as always, we will have our usual narcan trainings and harm reduction supplies for our event!
ACCESS: The Oakland Metro Operahouse is wheelchair accessible and ADA compliant.

SEPT
21

SIRENS FOR ST. JAMES: COPYSLUT&MOIRA SCAR&MYSTIC PRIESTESS&RIITA

WHERE: THE PHOENIX THEATER, PETALUMA CA
UASO North Bay & Nor Bay Pyrate Punx present our 2nd annual queer showcase to benefit sex workers! Kochina Rude returns as your hostess. Our lineup will melt your ears & hearts with post punk, darkwave, and cabaret rock sounds. We are SO LUCKY to host the incredible Moira Scar, Mystic Priestess, Copyslut and Riita!
ACCESS: Tickets are \$5-20 sliding scale, and your admission comes with raffle tickets. All ages! No one turned away for lack of funds.

SEPT
24

WE’RE NOT PREY: MARCH FOR OUR RIGHT TO STAY!

WHERE: 1 BUSH STREET, SAN FREANCISCO @12-2PM
Join tenants living under SF’s largest landlord, Veritas Investments, as we march to stop excessive rent hikes at 20 buildings across the city. Ultimately, we march for our right to just stay, and we march against the feeling of helplessness that we can’t do anything about losing our community, our neighbors, our families.
ACCESS: This is an outdoor event

SEPT
25

CLIMATE STRIKE

WHERE: MEET AT MARKET & MONTGOMERY, 7AM-5PM
We invite everyone to join us during the Climate Strike in September. In addition to actions during the rest of the week, on September 25th, we name those responsible for destroying life as we know it. We call on you to speak the truth of our awakening to all those who are still caught in the nets of profit. Join us to disrupt business-as-usual in the offices of those institutions profiting off the destruction of the system of life we need to simply survive.

Other options on this day include creating 20 street murals, each one representing a part of the whole vision we have for an immediate transition to the resilient, sustainable, and safe world necessary for survival. Join us to dream, paint, and share how we move forward at this time.

OCT
3

SDA ANNUAL CELEBRATION 2019

WHERE: THE RUEFF ROOM AT A.C.T.’S STRAND THEATER @5:30-8PM

Senior & Disability Action’s annual fundraiser will be held on Thursday October 3rd from 5:30pm to 8:00pm at ACT’s Strand Theater, 1127 Market Street, in San Francisco. The event will include entertainment, wine and food, and a short program, as well as a drawing for donated prizes and a silent auction. Join us in celebrating SDA!

NAVIGATION CENTERS AREN’T THE ENEMY

Tracey Mixon

Recently, San Francisco has decided to add two new navigation centers, scheduled to open up later this year, in the Embarcadero and the Bayview. Both of these sites have strong opposition. The Embarcadero SAFE Navigation Center has been at the center of controversy since its inception. It was approved by the San Francisco Port Commission in April of this year, despite an appeal by Embarcadero residents that was denied. These residents have now gone on to file a lawsuit and temporary restraining order to block it from being built.

What makes this situation even more troubling is the assault of a woman on July 11 by a homeless

man as she was trying to enter her apartment building. I can only imagine how this woman was affected by this. As a woman, I was personally shocked by the video. However, this appears to be an isolated incident.

Housed individuals are not the only victims of violent crimes. In fact, they are more likely to be victims of crime. On August 2 in West Oakland, a woman reported being threatened at gunpoint befor her attackers set her vehicle on fire. On August 9, in Portland ME, a man was indicted for stabbing a homeless couple. In 2018, a San Francisco man was accused of random attacks on homeless individuals, one of which

was a homicide.

The homeless have been demonized for so long that individuals who have never experienced homelessness tend to believe the false narrative that most homeless people are violent or are drug addicts. The actions of one individual should not determine whether or not these new navigation centers are opened.

Instead of making them feel unwelcome in a city that many homeless people have called home for most of their lives, we should all do more to embrace them. They need the resources to help them achieve stable housing. Mental

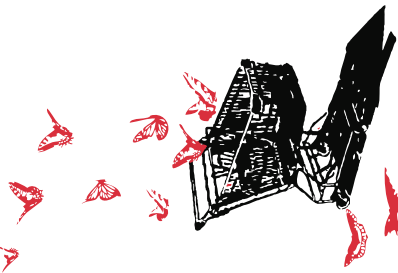
health treatment and substance use treatment are often due to being unstably housed.

I often wonder if the individuals that are making all of these complaints about the navigation centers have ever tried to talk to a homeless person let alone help them. I have never personally considered them a threat to myself or my family. Homeless people are not the “boogie man” in the dark ready to attack.They are human beings and deserve to be helped. Don’t fight against the homeless. Try to see if there is a capacity for you to help them find housing. ■

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Coalition on
Homelessness
San Francisco



Name: Sheldon Young, 59
Date: 13 June 2019
Place: Washburn between Howard and Mission Streets
Without a home: 2.5 years

“What do I miss the most (about being with a home)? Going to the bathroom. Going to the bathroom without being disturbed or without having to hide between somebody’s cars, or behind a tree. That’s what I miss the most.”

“My health is going bad (from being on the street) and when I get out of the hospital I have to have someplace to go aside from laying on the concrete (but I don’t).”

“They (the police) come through, not everyday but most of the time. In this case the police didn’t stop or nothin’, but he’s letting you know he will come back later on today, you have to move. I get’s up, back my stuff up because I know they’re coming. Not everyday I back it up, but most of the time and leave.”

“The majority of the time between the homeless there’s community but everybody, you know, has to try and do the best they can for themselves. But there is community, like the one living next store to me, I know him. If I have to go somewhere and leave my stuff up he’ll watch it, and vise versa. Trust. You can’t leave you stuff with just anybody, you don’t have that much as it is.”

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Jim Beller 9/12/2019