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WE ARE UNSTOPPABLE ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE



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CONTRIBUTE TO STREET SHEET!

We are always looking for new writers, photographers, poets, artists to help us spread the word on the street! Share stories about your experiences of homelessness in San Francisco, about policies you think the City should put in place or change, your opinion on local issues, or about something newsworthy happening in your neighborhood!

PROMPT:
What would you do on your first day as Mayor of San Francisco?

SUBMISSIONS: You can email your work to qwatts@cohsf.org or submit in person or by mail at the Coalition on Homelessness at 280 Turk Street, San Francisco CA 94102. Paid opportunities may be available to contributors who are experiencing homelessness. Ask the editor to find out more!

PROP C HELPS ACQUIRE HOTELS

Simone Manganelli

The most direct way to permanently solve homelessness is to provide homes for people to live in. Every San Franciscan deserves to live in safe and permanent housing, including those who don't currently have a home.

One of the promises of Proposition C was to find permanent solutions for people experiencing homelessness. This past October, the City purchased three hotels using Prop. C funding for just this purpose. The first was the Mission Inn in the Outer Mission neighborhood. Throughout the pandemic, the hotel was already being used as a temporary residence for previously unhoused veterans. If you're a Will Smith fan, you may also recognize this hotel from "The Pursuit Of Happyness," a movie set in San Francisco that was released in 2006.

In October, the City also approved the purchase of the Eula Hotel in the Inner Mission. The Eula Hotel will provide 25 units of housing for youth, and The Mission Inn in the Excelsior District will add 52 units of housing to the City's permanent supportive housing portfolio. The Mission Inn's capacity can also be expanded to provide even more housing in the future.

An apartment complex in the South of Market neighborhood originally built for students in 2015 called the Panoramic has also been approved for purchase. It has the ability to house homeless families, a rarity in San Francisco. Out of 160 total units available, 40 are large, three-bedroom units, appropriate for larger families. Like the Mission Inn, this

property has also served as a home for formerly unhoused tenants during the pandemic. Many of these residents called in to a Board of Supervisors meeting, also in October, to passionately advocate for the City to acquire the property and maintain it as permanent supportive housing.

I chatted with one of the current residents of the Panoramic, Couper Orona, a street medic who lost her home while working as a firefighter in Sacramento ten years ago. Couper has been living at the Panoramic for almost a year, and it's been transformative. "The ability to be warm, not worry about the elements, means I can relax," Couper told me. "That's a lot of stress being on the street, and being a female on the street is even more stressful. One thing less I have to worry about. You don't have to look behind your back."

The Panoramic has been transformative for other residents, too. According to Couper, "a handful of folks that were out on the street now have housing. It's amazing to see the change that they have come through. These are folks that wouldn't take a shower for a long time or were howling at the moon. I see these folks inside, they've taken a shower, they've taken pride in themselves. It's a trip because five of the folks never really even talked to people—now they're having conversations, sitting in the lobby. Amazing to see what having a home can do. They were basically untouchable before. Something so simple as being able to lock your door."

DONATE TO KEEP STREET SHEET GOING STRONG!



coalition.networkforgood.com

WANT TO GET INVOLVED? VOLUNTEER WITH US!

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CONTACT:

QWATTS@COHSF.ORG

The pandemic has been hard on Couper's housing search. She told me she's been "on every housing list possible. I didn't even get into a [shelter-in-place] hotel." And while the funding from Prop. C was finally released in September 2020 after litigation ended, Couper says that it still doesn't seem like the City is doing enough to really help the most vulnerable San Franciscans. "I deal with folks out on the street every day, every night—I haven't seen that money trickle down to the streets, no relief for the people that are outside on the street." It's "disheartening and disappointing," she says.

You may remember Couper from when she participated in a 2020 protest calling out the City's lack of dedication to its unhoused residents by occupying a vacant home in the Castro. As usual, instead of helping a neighbor in need to find housing, some of the nearby residents called the police, who quickly surrounded the building. Couper points out how the police were "protecting the property, not the people."

"I love the City but I'm embarrassed by

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 agendas to us.

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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Our contributors in this issue include: Jesse Mentken, Johanna Elattar, Simone Manganelli, Alastair Boone, Jordan Davis, Paul Boden and Western Regional Advocacy Project

my city," she continued. "[They] used a battering ram to knock down the door, didn't ask us to get out."

Which brings us back to the Panoramic, and how the prospect of permanent housing funded by Prop. C can be life-changing for long-time San Francisco residents, by focusing on the needs of residents themselves. "All in all, I want to say that the Panoramic and the way that they run the show there—it's really positive for people," Couper says. "[Residents] have a life and are a part of the community; [they] were these people sleeping under a tarp on the side of the street. Amazing to see the change in people just because they have a place to live. Happy to be inside, chilling inside in their apartments. We have to remember their human side, and not worry about property values. These are people that have a heartbeat that are living—we need to take care of them. No matter where you are, we are all San Francisco residents. Just because you have a hiccup in your life and you're living on the street, these are people that need to be paid attention to." ■

ONE DAY IN DECEMBER

Johanna Elattar

The snow is falling, and the world is quiet. I feel like the only person left in the world. Snow absorbs sound, the quiet that only comes with the snow. I stand on my porch, watching the snow flakes flutter in the streetlights, and fall to the ground. I start to get cold after a while, and I go back into the darkness of the house. I hear a Christmas song, and I remember that I'd left the TV on in the bedroom. It's a commercial for a charity, and the song is sad. The ad ends, and it's replaced with another, this one is for diamonds. The sad pictures and pleas of the charity are quickly forgotten, and replaced by a happy couple and a huge diamond ring. The problems of the world are erased by a happy family opening gifts on a Christmas morning.

I grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and there's no place like New York during the holidays. My family wasn't well off, but we had the basics. At Christmas, my mother would decorate the tree by herself (she insisted on that), but we didn't mind. My brother and I were more interested in what will be under the tree, not with what's on it. I was about 13 years old when my friend Julia told me that she and her father were going to the city (that's NY speak for Manhattan), to shop and look at the amazing Christmas window displays. She wanted me to go with her and her dad, and I couldn't be happier. I'd gone to see the window displays once when I was much younger, and I wanted to see them again.

After lots of begging and bargaining, my mother finally gave me permission to go to Manhattan with Julia and her father. My mother never liked Julia's family, and to this day, I never found

out why. I woke up extra early on the day of the trip. Julia came upstairs to our apartment and told me that her father was waiting for us downstairs. We were taking the subway into Manhattan. I grabbed my little purse with the \$34 that I've saved in it, I was so happy to be going on a special trip with my friend.

I never liked the subway, but Julia's dad refused to drive into Manhattan. Manhattan is crowded and the traffic is horrible, my father was the same way. Julia, her father, and I arrived in the "city" a little before 11:00 in the morning. Her father took us to a little diner for a quick bite and then we walked to the Macy's on 34th Street. The windows were amazing, and I took some pictures of the windows with the camera that I got last Christmas. The day couldn't be more perfect.....until it wasn't.

While we walked, I saw many people sitting and sleeping on the sidewalks. As a child growing up in NYC, I was used to seeing the homeless on the street, the subways, and in doorways. However, what took place that day when I was 13, had a profound effect on me. Julia and I were looking at one of the Christmas windows near Rockefeller Center, and we decided to ask her dad if he'd take us ice skating. Julia's father was looking at a window that was a few steps away from us. Julia went to ask her dad, and I stayed behind. I suddenly heard Julia's father yelling at someone, but he wasn't yelling at Julia. He was yelling at a man who was wearing a shabby coat, and boots that looked like they were falling apart. The man was selling a newspaper for the homeless, and all he did was ask if Julia's dad would like to buy one. A publication much like the one you're reading now.

Julia's dad was telling the man to get away from him, and to get a "real job". The shouting and abuse towards the man, continued for a couple of minutes, but felt like forever to me. The homeless man wasn't yelling back at Julia's father, but just stood there with his papers, in a state of shock at what was

happening to him. I stood there myself, and watched in horror as Julia's dad grabbed the man's papers,

and threw them in a puddle, ruining them. He then spit on the man and called him trash before he walked away. Before I followed Julia and her dad, I apologized to the man who was trying to salvage some of his papers in the puddle. I took out some bills from my purse, and gave them to him. I couldn't walk away without doing something, even if I knew that I couldn't take his pain and humiliation away. The man smiled at me and said that it was OK, and that he was used to people like "my dad". I made sure to tell him that this person was not my father. I didn't want to be associated with anyone who was cruel and ugly. I ran to catch up with Julia and her father, who walked on without noticing that I stayed behind to help the paper seller. I couldn't believe what I'd just witnessed. I didn't understand why Julia's dad reacted this way to someone who was just trying to make a living. Not just screaming at this poor man, but destroying his papers, so he can't make any money that day.

Julia's dad took us ice skating, and I went along, but I was just going through the motions. All I wanted to do was go home. I felt utter disgust and anger at Julia's dad. Julia didn't react at all to what happened. She was just her usual happy self, and I guessed that her father's behavior was the norm to her. She asked her father if we could go to FAO Schwartz, and other places. I just smiled politely, said please and thank you, but I hurt inside.

The outing was coming to an end, but not before one more incident took place. We were taking the subway back to Brooklyn, and as we entered the station, we saw several police officers going in and out, as well as an ambulance. I thought that someone must've gotten hurt, but we continued walking towards the Brooklyn side of the station. Julia's father was curious about what was going on, and he stopped a young

police officer to ask him about the situation. The officer told him that a homeless woman had frozen to death in a dark corner of the platform. The weather was pretty frigid at that time in NYC, and she just fell asleep and never woke up.

I was hurt by what I'd heard from the young officer, and I just wanted to walk away, but couldn't. Julia's dad laughed at what the officer was telling him, and said, "All this for a frozen rat?? God, I thought it was a human being that was hurt when I saw the ambulance!". I saw the look on the police officer's face, a look of utter disgust at what he was hearing. He shook his head and walked away from Julia's father. Her dad asked, "What's his problem?", and to my surprise, Julia laughed, as we walked down to the subway platform to wait for the Brooklyn bound train.

That night, I felt immense sadness, not just for what I had seen, but because I didn't understand my friend's insensitivity to what was happening. My friendship with Julia never went beyond that day in Manhattan. I didn't understand how lack of compassion for the homeless that we came across on our trip there. My mother asked me why I didn't see Julia as much anymore, and I never gave her a straight answer. I didn't want to tell her about Julia's father and his lack of compassion for his fellow human beings.

I've thought about the events of that day through the years. I thought about the man selling the papers, and the woman that froze to death. I wondered what they were like as children, if they had siblings, and what could've happened that left them homeless and destitute on the streets of New York? I think about that day often. I think about how the red, green, and gold of the season hides the painful realities that many don't want to see and acknowledge. My wish is for us to have mercy on each other and to be grateful for what we have. Love is the best gift we can give each other. Happy holidays, everyone. ■

THIS WINTER SEASON.. GIVE THE GIFT OF HOME

This year alone, our work resulted in...

- 3,000 homeless households becoming housed
- Over 2,000 extremely vulnerable folks experiencing homelessness to have a shelter in place hotel
- AND LOTS MORE!

Coalition on Homelessness
San Francisco



VISIT COHSF.ORG OR
SCAN TO DONATE

SCAN ME

A RADICAL GUIDE TO

SUPPORTING HOMELESS PEOPLE
DURING THE COLD SEASON
(AND ALL THE TIME)

As yet another atmospheric river heads for San Francisco, unhoused San Franciscans are getting ready for a cold, wet holiday season. Unsheltered people bear the brunt of our changing climate, as tents are not an alternative to safe and permanent housing. Keeping dry is an unending challenge during wet and rainy months.

While there is increased need in unsheltered communities during the winter months, support is also needed year-round. Homelessness does not end when Spring begins—your unhoused neighbors will still need your solidarity when the spirit of holiday giving evaporates with the winter rains. All of the organizations and individuals listed work hard year-round to uplift unsheltered communities and need your support.

This guide was created to shed light on some ways you can support homeless communities in San Francisco, and was inspired by our sister paper *Street Spirit* in Oakland. The organizations listed work directly with unhoused people to meet their immediate needs, and many have homeless leadership. In the spirit of mutual aid, we have also included opportunities to support individuals who are fundraising for themselves, as well as ways to meet people and provide support in person. Working together as a community goes much further than simply providing charity from the comfort of home.

AT THE CROSSROADS

<https://atthecrossroads.org/>

At The Crossroads reaches out to homeless youth and young adults at their point of need, and works with them to build healthy and fulfilling lives. By bringing their services directly onto the streets, we cultivate long-term, unconditional relationships with young people who would otherwise be disconnected from consistent support.

SUPPORT: In addition to making a monetary donation, consider hosting a drive for supplies to distribute to homeless youth. At the Crossroads accepts donations of new or very gently used clothing of all sizes, shoes, messenger bags, backpacks, full-sized and travel-sized hygiene items, food, and more. If you have a connection to a business or manufacturer that may be able to donate any of these items, email getinvolved@atthecrossroads.org to let them know!

BURRITO PROJECT SF

<https://burritoprojectsf.org/>

A community-supported group that gets together to make and deliver burritos to the community in hunger or living on the street. The group is 100% organized by volunteers and is passionate about bringing people together to make a difference. 100% of donations go towards purchasing ingredients and supplies to make and deliver food.

VOLUNTEER: Visit their website to sign up for a shift delivering burritos to unhoused neighbors!

COALITION ON
HOMELESSNESS
(publishes Street Sheet)www.cohsf.org

The Coalition on Homelessness (COH) is a non-profit organization that advocates for the rights of homeless people in San Francisco. Since 1987, they have organized grassroots campaigns to advocate for policy change and create permanent solutions to homelessness. Through outreach, they build community and work to protect the human rights of those forced to remain on the streets.

DOPE PROJECT

<https://www.facebook.com/DOPEProject/>

DOPE Project works to uplift the voices and experiences of people who use drugs and bring harm reduction strategies to scale. For more than 25 years, they've worked with communities to create, sustain, and expand evidence-based harm reduction programs and policies. The DOPE Project provides naloxone distribution at over 20 sites per month, at needle exchanges, drop-in centers, methadone clinics and in single-room occupancy hotels in San Francisco. They also provide overdose prevention groups and naloxone distribution as requested at organizations that provide services to drug users. Trainings on overdose prevention are available to service providers in San Francisco who want to learn how to help their program participants stay safe. All DOPE Project services are provided free of charge. Additionally, the DOPE Project networks with overdose prevention programs across the US in order to foster a community of naloxone providers. They provide assistance to any program that wishes to start distributing naloxone or providing overdose prevention groups and can provide resources and connections to other programs doing this work.

SUPPORT: To get involved or to get sup-

port email dope@harmreduction.org

EL/LA PARA TRANSLATINAS

<https://ellaparatraslatinas.org/>

Location: 2940 16th St, #319 San Francisco, CA 94103

El/La is an organization for translatinas that works to build collective vision and action to promote our survival and improve our quality of life in the San Francisco Bay Area. Because we exist in a world that fears and hates transgender people, women and immigrants, El/La fights for justice. They respond to those who see us as shameful, disposable or less than human. They are here to reflect the style and grace of our survival, and to make new paths for ourselves.

DONATE: Cash donations are best since and go toward a financial program for those affected by the pandemic. They distribute VISA gift cards so impacted folks can buy what they need in food, medicines, etc.

FAITHFUL FOOLS

<https://www.faithfulfools.org/>

Faithful Fools is a community. They are often called upon to be the "space in-between." They are there when other agencies can't be. Sometimes it takes too much time to arrange for a taxi voucher to get to an appointment, so they provide a ride. Providing extra dollars for an extraordinary expense sometimes doesn't fit within a traditional non-profit's budget. That might be paying for the cremation of someone whose family is struggling with medical expenses or it might be paying for a background check in order to get a job. That's when Faithful Fools steps in. They maintain the human resources to accompany people when needed and maintain a small assistance budget to help with the expenses that can make the difference between being housed and being homeless.

DONATE: Operating expenses like utilities and salaries are often not covered by grants, so Faithful Fools depends upon donations for the bulk of our budget. The majority of donors give a few hundred dollars a year (some give \$10 or \$15 a month) and it all makes a difference.

GET INVOLVED: Faithful Fools organizes Street Retreats to offer education about life on the street in the Tenderloin. Email fools@faithfulfools.org to participate

HOMELESS YOUTH
ALLIANCE (HYA)<https://www.homelessyouthalliance.org/>

HYA develops relationships with youth and young adults aged 13-29 who live on the street in the Haight Ashbury neighborhood of San Francisco. This neighborhood is an international destination for youth who come seeking refuge from abusive families, alienating foster care and group home situations, and juvenile justice system involvement. These homeless young people encounter constant threats to both their physical and mental health while on the streets.

SUPPORT: HYA accepts monetary and in-kind donations (including clothing, food, hygiene supplies, dog food and other pet care supplies, sleeping bags, tents, tarps, blankets, office furniture and supplies, clean and unopened needles and other medical supplies).

VOLUNTEER: HYA is looking for volunteers to support with community clean up days in Golden Gate Park on the last Friday of every month, and for support with freecycling needed goods from craigslist and other platforms to be distributed to community members. Email kenn@HomelessYouthAlliance.org to get involved!

MARTIN DE PORRES HOUSE
OF HOSPITALITY<https://martindeporres.org/>

Martin's, as it is affectionately known, is a free restaurant, serving breakfast and lunch during the week and brunch on Sundays. Their mission is to serve in the spirit of compassion, understanding and love. They are a community of people with diverse spiritual practices although our roots are in, and they continue to be inspired by, the Catholic Worker Movement. Each person who comes to Martin's is a guest and is to be treated as such. All donations go to benefit those for whom the money is intended and we receive no Church or government funds. Martin's is operated 100% by volunteers since it first opened in 1971.

VOLUNTEER: Martin's is staffed entirely by volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering call 415-552-0240 during normal hours

PEOPLE'S PARK

www.peoplespark.org/wp/

People's Park is a historic plot of land in South Berkeley that was occupied by community members, activists, UC Berkeley students, and others in 1969 to reclaim the park from UC development. Thanks to these efforts, the land was returned to the community and has been a radical community gathering place for the last 52 years. The park is fertile ground for political organizing and cultural change, a crucial site of refuge for unhoused people, and an important community gathering place for the neighborhood.

NEEDS: The People's Park Historic District Advocacy Group is currently fundraising for their legal fund to defend the park against UC Berkeley's plans to build a 12-story student housing project. Their long range purpose is to establish a People's Park Historic District to protect, preserve, and enhance public understanding of the irreplaceable open space and of the significant architectural and cultural landmarks and historic events unique to the Southside campus area of UC Berkeley. You can donate to their legal fund on GoFundMe at: bit.ly/PP-legal

They are also fundraising for the continued growth and development of the gardens at the park. You can donate to their garden fund on GoFundMe at this link: bit.ly/PP-

garden

Lastly, People's Park organizers are collecting Christmas gifts to distribute to the people who live and spend time in the park. They are looking for anything that might make a nice gift, as well as socks, shoes, coats, tarps, and tents. Gifts can be dropped off in person (or mailed to):

Grassroots House
C/O People's Park Council
2022 Blake St Suite A Berkeley CA, 94704

POOR MAGAZINE
www.poorpress.net

POOR Magazine is a poor, Houseless, indigenous people led movement dedicated to creating art, education media and self-determined solutions to the crisis of homelessness. Find their recent book projects at the link above.

"Homefulness is a homeless, landless peoples solution to homelessness—we share the medicine of Homefulness with the world #HomefulnessTheWorld"

NEEDS: You can support the work of POOR Magazine by contributing to their GoFundMe: bit.ly/poor-mag. Or support by buying one of their books. They have eight new titles available for purchase online, such as The Homefulness Handbook, Chimali, Crip Lyrics, What's My Address, and more. Find them online at www.poorpress.net

ST. JAMES INFIRMARY
<https://www.stjamesinfirmary.org/>

Location: 730 Polk Street 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109

The St. James Infirmary is a clinic for Sex Workers run by Sex Workers. They increase access to primary healthcare and social services for Sex Workers throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, formalize communication and collaboration among individuals and agencies who serve Sex Workers to better serve our community, and promote peer-based public health initiatives on behalf of Sex Workers, which may be used as a model for improving occupational health and safety standards and developing comprehensive medical and social services for Sex Workers around the world.

SUPPORT: Visit the SJI website to donate and support their incredible programs. You can also support by donating clothing, sex worker supplies, toiletries, gift cards and other materials to be distributed to the community.

VOLUNTEER: Do you have Clinic experience, Healthcare related skills or amazing ideas on ways you want to help serve our Community? Can you commit to 6-10 hours a month (includes shifts and monthly volunteer meeting)? Join a team of dedicated volunteers in providing to the sex worker community. St. James Infirmary prioritizes people with experience in the sex trades in the volunteer program; allies are also welcome to apply, with the understanding that St. James Infirmary is a peer-based clinic. Visit their website to submit an

online application.

TGIJP
<http://www.tgiip.org/>

TGI Justice Project is a group of transgender, gender-variant and intersex people, inside and outside of prisons, jails, and detention centers, creating a united family in the struggle for survival and freedom. They work in collaboration with others to forge a culture of resistance and resilience to strengthen us for the fight against human rights abuses, imprisonment, police violence, racism, poverty, and societal pressures. They seek to create a world rooted in self-determination, freedom of expression, and gender justice.

DONATE: Make a donation through TGIJP's website to support their ongoing organizing work!

**WESTERN REGIONAL
ADVOCACY PROJECT
(WRAP)**
<https://wraphome.org/>

WRAP was created to expose and eliminate the root causes of civil and human rights abuses of people experiencing poverty and homelessness in our communities. They aim to unite local social justice organizations into a movement that is inclusive and shares power with all members of the community, hold the federal government responsible for restoring affordable housing funding and protecting poor and homeless people's rights, develop effective and socially just solutions to all barriers that prevent the ending of homelessness, and ensure the policies and priorities of local, state and federal governments are grounded in the common truths of poor and homeless people. As a regional organization, WRAP has the power of collective mobilization, which incorporates local issues into an inclusive framework. All of their efforts are grounded in the experiences of those living in poverty and or working to address homelessness.

SUPPORT: WRAP is always looking for support with street outreach, fundraising, research, IT Support, setting up public speaking and art events, and media. Call 415.621.2533 to volunteer! Monetary donations are also very much appreciated!

YOUTH SPIRIT ARTWORKS
youthspiritartworks.org

Youth Spirit Artworks (YSA) is an interfaith "green" art jobs and job training program located in Berkeley, California. Founded in 2007, YSA is a non-profit organization that is committed to empowering homeless and low-income San Francisco Bay Area young people, ages 16-25. YSA's mission is to use art jobs and jobs training to empower and transform the lives of youth, giving young people the skills, experience, and self-confidence needed to meet their full potential. YSA is also the publisher of Street Spirit!

NEEDS: You can support the ongoing work of Youth Spirit Artworks by donating online at this link: youthspiritartworks.org/donate. Checks can be sent to: 1740 Alcatraz Avenue, Berkeley CA 94703

**SUPPORT COUPER:
SAN FRANCISCO
STREET MEDIC**
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/couper-street-medic>

Help raise funds for unhoused San Francisco residents who need medical and hygiene supplies. Couper is an unhoused SF resident who is known to many as the Street Medic. As a disabled firefighter, she uses her skills to help unhoused folks throughout the city. All donations will go directly to Couper so she can buy medical supplies, hygiene products and basic necessities for the people she interacts with and helps on a daily basis.



TJ JOHNSTON
bit.ly/housing-tj

TJ Johnston is a tireless San Francisco journalist who reports on poverty and homelessness. He is also the assistant editor of the Street Sheet. His influential reporting is informed in part by his own experience as a homeless person in San Francisco. TJ lost his bed at a local shelter when COVID-19 hit. He has since been able to find housing, but needs just a little help to get through the year with a stable place to stay. His community is fundraising to help him pay rent through the end of this year.

MARKAYA SPIKES
bit.ly/za-moria

Markaya Spikes is a single mother who is crowdsourcing birthday presents for her 10 year old daughter, Za'Moria. Spikes writes:



"Za'Moria is a brilliant 10 year old who has faced a lot of difficult struggles, the main one was being unhoused in one of Oakland largest encampments for seven years. But she showed herself to be truly resilient to it all by keeping up her happy helpful spirit. In June, we finally obtained stable housing which is an awesome gift because Za'Moria will be able to spend her holidays and birthday, which is December 30th, in her new home."



DERRICK SOO
bit.ly/solar-huts

Derrick Soo is an unhoused activist who is planning to run in the Oakland Mayoral race in 2022. He is raising money to support his encampment community, the 77th Ave Rangers, in various ways. The 77th Avenue Rangers is one out of 40 encampment communities in the City of Oakland that receives sanitation support and services from the city. The Rangers Community has the distinction of being Oakland's only "Independent" self-governed site, says lead organizer Derrick Soo. Soo's advocacy coupled with COVID interventions has reduced the Rangers Community from a Pre-COVID population of 32 down to a current population of 12.

On the encampment's GoFundMe page, he is currently raising money to buy a Conestoga Hut Shelter, which will provide greater protection from the winter cold than store-bought tents. Additionally, they are putting together a winter wish-list, which can be found on their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/sooderricks/>

Soo notes that the Rangers Community receives shower and laundry services, paid for by the City of Oakland, every Sunday from 2pm-6pm. The services are open to the public and free for any person in need.

LEGAL DEFENSE CLINICS

COMING SOON TO A CITY NEAR YOU

WRAP

After fifteen years of planning, strategizing, connecting, and building, Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) is proud to announce a huge step in our work: the official launch of the Legal Defense Clinic (LDC) Project! With the support of the National Homelessness Law Center, WRAP's local member groups are developing a national network of legal defense clinics that promote access to justice by bringing dedicated legal services to the neighborhoods where unhoused people live. These are the neighborhoods where WRAP's local member groups have built deep relationships with unhoused community members, and they are the heart of the national movement for "House Keys Not Sweeps," a coordinated effort to protect the rights of those living in encampments while advocating for homes for everyone.

WHY WE NEED THIS PROJECT

Activities such as sleeping, sitting, eating, and standing are necessary for survival. But too often, these activities are illegal in public spaces, forcing unhoused people to violate laws in order to simply exist. Before

citations stack up, such violations are of such a low level that people rarely receive legal representation. Without representation, unhoused people do not receive an adequate defense. They are left with a criminal record that prevents them from obtaining housing and other services, accumulating citations, fines, and warrants and often ending up in jail or prison—perpetuating an unending cycle of criminalization and trauma.

Our legal system has long been weaponized to concentrate power and wealth in the hands of the privileged. It is no coincidence that the same people targeted by discriminatory laws in the past and present are dramatically overrepresented in our unhoused population. Oppression under modern anti-homeless, anti-poor laws continues to be stratified along lines of race, class, ethnicity, immigration status, gender, and disability, with impacts magnified along intersectional lines. For example, Black, Brown, and Disabled persons experience homelessness at disproportionately higher rates than white, non-Disabled persons, and they are also more likely to be punished—and punished more

severely—under anti-homeless laws.

HOW IT WORKS

To protect our communities while building toward a more just world, WRAP's members and the Law Center are partnering to develop a coordinated network of local legal defense clinics in WRAP's member cities, with planned expansion into a national model of community organizing and legal services collaborations. Through years of street outreach, WRAP member groups have identified the following key issue areas for LDC legal counsel focus: anti-homeless tickets and arrests, parking citations and vehicle tows, stay-away orders, trespassing, private security harassment, property confiscation, and warrants for all of the above.

The first step in establishing legal representation is for organizers from WRAP's local member groups to conduct outreach in their communities. Outreach entails establishing close communication with unhoused neighbors, providing mutual aid support, conducting surveys about experiences with law enforcement and unmet legal needs, and taking people's concerns seriously. Through outreach, organizers connect people who have been targeted by anti-homeless policies to their local LDC. After an intake and initial connection with an attorney, people retain legal representation, and LDC staff and WRAP member group organizers jointly support community members through the entire legal process.

With a larger goal of systemic change, LDCs play a key role in ensuring that legal work helps build power in our communities. Legal staff and organizers collaborate to track patterns of rights violations in real time, developing an evidentiary record and foundation for impact litigation and policy advocacy. Organizers bring this information to community meetings, where community members strategize about how to take longer-term collective action, such as mounting organizing-based direct action campaigns, pursuing impact litigation, and/or engaging in policy change processes and other forms of advocacy.

THE IMPACT

By establishing legal representation, the LDC Project interrupts traumatic cycles of criminalization and fills a fundamental gap in legal advocacy for unhoused individuals. For instance, in LA, WRAP member group

LACAN's small-scale legal defense clinic work has resulted in dismissals in an overwhelming majority of cases—a truly transformative outcome for people who are criminalized for basic survival.

On a collective level, by tying outreach, direct action, and legal strategies together to inform larger impact litigation and policy change efforts, the LDC Project adds critical tools to our movement to interrupt the criminalization of people surviving while unhoused. Further, by scaling up the LDC Project nationwide in a coordinated network, we are fundamentally stitching together local groups, building power amongst even more unhoused people and bolstering grassroots organizing against the criminalization of racialized poverty. This project builds on a long legacy of abolitionist, anti-criminalization organizing led by frontline communities!

WHAT'S NEXT

WRAP members have implemented the LDC model at a small scale in LA and San Francisco, including building relationships between organizers and legal staff, creating organizing and legal materials, and establishing procedures and protocols. Our task now is to create continuity between individual sites while adapting to local conditions, building a network of consistent, connected LDCs in multiple cities. As of October 1, 2021, the LDC project is staffed full-time by an Equal Justice Works fellow and soon-to-be attorney. By the end of 2022, we aim to have LA and San Francisco clinics fully operating. Throughout 2022, we also plan to lay groundwork to build LDCs in one or two additional WRAP member cities, with planned expansion over the next few years into a national network. Ultimately, our goal is to build the infrastructure and resources necessary to enable many more local groups who are accountable to their communities to operate clinics; in this way, the LDC Project supports our local communities while simultaneously contributing to our national movement for House Keys Not Sweeps.

WRAP and our members and supporters are fighting for an END to criminalization and for the right for housing for all. We could not do this work without the support of all of you. Please help us reach our goal of raising \$25,000 by the end of 2021 to continue the fight for systemic change! ■

HOUSE KEYS NOT SWEEPS

LEGAL DEFENSE CLINICS

- Individual Representation
- Impact Lawsuits
- Overturning Oppressive Laws

LAWYERS, ORGANIZERS & POOR PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER TO CONFRONT AND DISMANTLE THE CRIMINALIZATION OF HOMELESSNESS

UNITE THE FIGHT

A VICTORIOUS END TO THE FIGHT FOR #30RIGHTNOW

Jordan Davis

After two and a half years of organizing and movement building, the #30RightNow campaign has come to an end here in San Francisco.

The movement to implement a 30% of income rent standard for all housing for formerly homeless San Franciscans ended with a victory rally in front of the Department of Public Health (DPH), which, 48 hours before, was slated to be a protest against the same department refusing to implement the standard in the few supportive housing sites they fund.

Indeed, it was the second time a protest turned into a celebration. The first time was in May, when the mayor announced a plan to transition all supportive housing to cost no more than 30% of a tenant's income in this year's budget cycle, months after she signed—but did not pledge to immediately fund—legislation that would call for said standard. However, even though all rents in supportive housing under the Homelessness Department were lowered to 30% of income effective in August 2021, DPH refused to implement the policy, which led to the campaign having to go overtime. We called into Health Commission meetings and Our City Our Home Oversight Committee meetings, and mobilized people to speak out at Conard's public board meeting. It

was difficult due to the fact that the health department blocks emails to its workers, so we had to commit to alternatives to get the word out, which led to having to plan a protest.

As we conclude this campaign, I would like to give a few reflections and lessons on this campaign.

1. Hunger strikes are always a really powerful method of getting attention to an issue; although one hunger striker is powerful, a collective hunger strike can be even more effective, especially as issues get more difficult. I wish it could have been more of a collective effort, although I did not want to necessarily endanger the health of my fellow tenants.
2. Allies are important, but there are no fairy godmothers in activism. As a supportive housing tenant, I have often had to fight a lonely battle at the beginning alongside one other advocate, and it was a struggle to be taken seriously at City Hall.
3. Relationships are important as well. I am lucky that I served on a commission and was already known to many in the housing, homelessness and disability justice fields. I hope that future leaders help cultivate these important relationships.

4. There has to be a lot of solidarity from outside of supportive housing. Many supportive housing tenants deal with multiple barriers to organizing publicly, though this campaign has been universally popular among our base. But to those supportive housing tenants who came out, thank you so much, and I hope this victory inspires you to keep fighting.
5. I was so glad when, in the run-up to the #30RightNow victory last year, the Bay Area Reporter highlighted Adriana Kin Romero, a trans-Latina who was already benefiting from the rent reductions in supportive housing. As a white transgender woman, I was happy to see her get centered and photographed, as I should not have been the only tenant voice featured.
6. Some people who have signed on have done a lot, while others have just signed on. Thank you for being part of this diverse coalition, especially to those of you who showed up and sent emails.
7. Sometimes, going back to the basics may be the simplest way to win. Giving people the tools to send emails and a way to post photos of themselves was

the bread and soy butter of the campaign.

8. The pandemic could have derailed our campaign in its infancy. However, if there was one good thing to come out of the COVID crisis, it was a renewed call for economic justice and resistance to the austerity measures of the past. We may have even become stronger in having to do everything remotely.
9. As a white person, I need to learn more to step up and step back. With all that said, I did my best to make sure that Black and brown voices were centered here, especially in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder.

But most of all, I close by saying that no matter how rocky the campaign has been, I hope we can all agree that the floodgates have been opened for autonomous tenant organizing and winning, and for all the supportive housing tenants who are reading this letter, the sky is the limit. I don't know what is next for us, and I may not necessarily bottomline the next major battle, but the future is in your hands. If you want some tips to help organize, or are looking for ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me at 3orightnow@gmail.com.■

ARE YOU STILL AWAKENING?

Jesse Mentken

So this is me catching up to myself, and this process of endless awakening is really the same path towards finding a home.

We all must navigate a society that endlessly attempts to diminish our relationship to soul-spirit-body-heart-mind-God-earth.

I say that it attempts to diminish the relationship, which is very different from stating that it diminishes the soul itself. That never takes place, even though we all believe it does somewhere in our deepest suffering.

The sun is as radiant today as it was the day I was born. And I write these words right after realizing that even though I am living in San Diego, it is a very cloudy, chilly, November morning. But the sun is simply covered up a bit.

I actually adore the changing

weather and seasons. I grow tired of endless 75-degree sunny days with blue skies and only a few clouds. If the sun is the radiant soul, then go ahead and put some clouds in the way. I am fine with that. I am fine with the rain as well. I am fine feeling cold now and then because then the summer sun will resonate with my shivering body in a sacred way, reminding me that the nights never last forever.

I mean, really, there is no night or day, is there? Am I going to be some white, blessed pure angel drinking nothing but herbal tea my entire life and looking at some other sacred soul puking in the gutter and thinking he is less than me?

The so-called "homeless" are not simply solitary islands of poverty disconnected from the world around them and the community of which they are members. Their poverty—whether it is poverty of a lack

of basic needs being met or poverty of the soul—is not millions idiotically impoverishing themselves.

We all are collectively impoverished and this needs to be accepted and embraced as a collective tragedy. If you are all that, then offer me your sacred soul sun love to my dark, dark homeless night. I invite you. But you may have only a moment of transcendence in your day. I wish you have more so that you can offer me as much as you and I both have always deserved.

The other day I met a possibly homeless woman a few blocks from my home. I asked her how she was and she said she was happy to have woken up this morning. I asked her, "Are you still waking up?"

Jesse Mentken is a 57-year old white Jewish Buddhist poet yogi survivor of incest, homelessness, solitary confinement and years

of psychiatric hospitalization. He has lived in San Diego for eight years, but is about to hit the road and hopes to create an economically sustainable creative sacred life in a hyper-capitalist society. Any donations by Venmo @Jesse-Mentken will be acknowledged as energetic blessings (and will also help Jesse do the laundry).

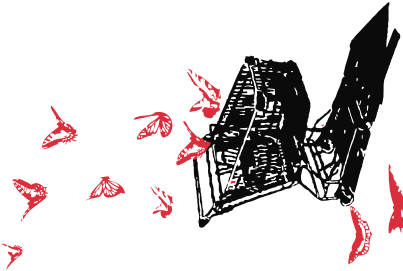
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STREET SHEET ANNUAL POETRY ISSUE

Send your poetry submissions
to qwatts@cohsf.org by
December 20th to be included
in our annual Poetry Issue,
celebrating the poetry and
creativity of unhoused San
Franciscans and their
neighbors. All are welcome to
submit!

STREET SPEAK

EPISODE 10: WHAT IS THE OVERDOSE CRISIS AND WHY SHOULD I CARRY NARCAN?

The overdose crisis claimed the lives of 700 San Franciscans in 2020—twice the number of COVID-19 deaths during the same period. We speak with Ashley

Fairburn—a harm reduction worker at the San Francisco AIDs Foundation—about what the overdose crisis is, the disparate impact it has on homeless San Franciscans, and how we can practice harm reduction in our own communities.

Learn more!

The San Francisco AIDs Foundation has so much helpful information about the overdose crisis and many programs to help keep people who use drugs safe. <https://www.sfaf.org/>

Support for Street Speak comes from our listeners!

Please donate to us online at <https://coalition.networkforgood.com>



SCAN ME