

Hello this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment

There are many problems facing Humboldt County. The large number of homeless people wandering our streets is one of the biggest, and drug use is the number one contributing factor to why this culture exists. Over the years I have used this forum to voice my opinions on why we seem to have more than our fair share of people living on the streets. I strongly believe that the marijuana industry has been instrumental in attracting more and more druggies to our area. I'm sure the easy money they thought they could earn in the marijuana industry isn't there, and then they are stuck here without the means to leave. Our mild temperatures, and the welfare programs we have in place, also entice these types of people to stay. I have always said that I wish there was a way to differentiate between those who want a handout, and those who want a way out. I have compassion for the poor; the lazy, not so much. Two weeks ago the Betty Kwan Chinn Homeless Foundation opened a Day Center in Eureka that will provide services to the homeless. These services include: Street Outreach, Case Management, Life-Skills Workshops, Mental Health Services, Transitional Housing, along with a Learning Center, a Commercial Kitchen and a Kids Program. Last year Betty Chinn and her volunteers served 292,000 free meals, got children to school on a daily basis, helped adults to medical appointments, as well as placed 31 families and 23 individuals in permanent homes. They purchased bus tickets that allowed 267 adults and children to go home: not one of these people has returned. How do we help clean up our streets? We need to stop complaining about the problem and donate to the Betty Kwan Chinn Day

Center. This facility gives the homeless person a chance to change and become self-reliant. They can use computers, learn how to apply for a job, and receive their mail at the center. Just having an address is huge when trying to get back into the workforce. The Life-skills workshops are a perfect way to help those who want to help themselves. This is where a person can “learn to fish” and become productive in society. When you donate to the Betty Chinn Day Center, all of your money helps our poor get back on their feet and off our streets. During the Christmas Season, every organization solicits donations, and it is the time of year we are more apt to give. Many organizations have outlandish expenses, and only a small percentage of your gift goes to the cause. Betty Chinn’s Foundation keeps the money local and 100% of it is used to help the poor. I urge everyone listening to consider making small changes this season. Instead of buying a \$4 cup of coffee every day, brew it at home for the rest of the month and give that \$100 to Betty Chinn. Instead of overbuying for your family, cut back by one gift per recipient, and use that money to help the Betty Chin Day Center. If you are able to give \$500, \$1,000 or more, please consider opening your hearts and wallets. The Eureka Nazarene Church is collecting funds specifically for the Day Center. Please mail your donations to the Eureka Nazarene Church, 2039 E Street, Eureka, CA 95501. Write Betty Chinn on the envelope. This is a perfect way to show love and compassion and at the same time, help clean up our streets.

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