

What is the one essential thing we human beings need in order to live? Air? You can only hold your breath for a few minutes before passing out and going ^{True} unconscious. Water? A few days without H2O and we're toast! Food? starvation takes a bit longer to kill the body than dehydration, but ^{food is} it's critical. ~~to have clean air~~
Now, suppose you have clean air, ample water and a good food supply. What else does one need in order to live a meaningful life? I'd say, above all else, hope is a human essential.

There are dark places where hope dims, such as ~~in~~ Dante's Inferno, where the entrance to Hell reads: "All hope abandon, ye who enter here!"

^{I've almost} I confess I have ~~at~~ times lost hope over the seeming gridlock and indecision about how to solve our homeless problem.

But, Yesterday, I attended a news conference that gave me hope. The conference was held at the Betty Kwan Chinn Center and was composed of a wide diversity of personalities and organizations. ^{These people} ~~This gathering~~ assembled in order to address a longstanding problem in our community—Homelessness. As many of you know, the homeless persons on the Palco Marsh are scheduled to be relocated on May 2nd. The estimated 140 persons camping there are going to be cleared off that property in order to make room for the WaterFront trail. I fully support the need to move those people; but as soon as you make a ~~bold~~ decision, problems arise. Perhaps ^{the} most significant problem is that many of those people have nowhere else to go. ~~Now~~ there is the Rescue Mission, but not all 140 persons can fit there. Neither will they all fit into the St. Vincent de Paul cots, nor other places. But along comes a proposal from a seemingly unlikely group: The Humboldt Coalition for Property Rights has arranged to secure the use of The Mercer Fraser parking lot at the corner of Third and Commercial Streets for 6 months. On this property will be placed five 40x8 foot shipping containers that will be retrofitted with a few amenities like beds, lighting and locking containers for ~~clothing and~~ personal items. Portable toilets and trash bins will also be on site. Betty Chinn's showers are not too far away, and amazingly, some sort of arrangements are offered for the dogs of the homeless.

^(CPR) Having heard the proposal from Lee Ulansey and Alec Ziegler of the Humboldt Coalition for Property Rights, representatives of City and County Government, the Betty Chinn Center and Department of Health and Human Services, I have hope that this arrangement may help clear some of the homeless people out of the ^{can lift} ~~areas around the Mall and Marsh~~, and allow them to have the type of housing and support that ~~the homeless themselves out~~ of hopelessness.

Abe Lincoln once wrote: "In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free—honorable alike in what we give and what we preserve. We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope of earth... The way is plain, peaceful, generous, just—a way which if followed the world will forever applaud and God must forever bless."

That at least, is what I hope for Eureka, our county, ~~and~~ our country.

This has been Dan Price for Community Comment