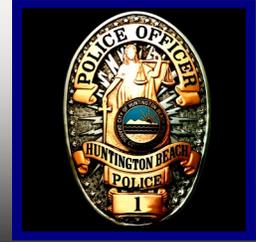


REACHING OUT

EFFECTING CHANGE ONE PERSON AT A TIME



H U N T I N G T O N B E A C H P O L I C E D E P A R T M E N T

A HOUSING JOURNEY - PART II

IN THE JUNE ISSUE OF REACHING OUT, YOU WERE INTRODUCED TO A WOMAN WHO OBTAINED A HOUSING VOUCHER. WE WERE NOT SURE WHAT WOULD BECOME OF HER. HERE IS HER STORY.

Sheri lived in Huntington Beach for the first 24 years of her life and attended Golden West College. Having been taught how to paint and repair cars by her father, she was able to obtain a coveted position with a major aerospace company as a mechanic - the only female one. She is proud of the work she did on the C17, MD11 and MD80.

After having moved to another city, she married and had two daughters. Although her marriage did not last, Sheri enjoyed a happy relationship with her girls as well as her mother who still lived in Huntington Beach. In the mid 1990's, she could no longer tolerate the neck pain she routinely experienced and underwent surgery. As a result of the surgery, subsequent migraines and brain infection, she could no longer work long hours at the job she loved. Unable to afford her home and believing she would not be long for this life, Sheri deeded her home to her parents and asked that they give the proceeds of any future sale to her daughters.

From that point forward, Sheri rented rooms with her small pension. In 2003, she suffered the loss of a daughter as a result of a devastating car accident. She began to experience a mental health decline. Thereafter, living in her car was often her best option. In 2010, her mother fell ill and Sheri was able to nurse her until her death. Sheri's mother died on the anniversary date of her daughter's death, something that gives her comfort.

Things began turning around for her when the City's Homeless Outreach Coordinator, a member of the Homeless Task Force, referred her to mental health services. Sheri made the call, did everything she was told, and wound up with a housing voucher. Unfortunately, she was unable to do the legwork required to find a manager that would accept the voucher. Sheri then met the City's Homeless Case Manager, Ashley Beckman, another HTF team member. The HTF's goal is to get homeless off the street and they have been quite successful. Ashley was able to get Sheri connected to an apartment manager that accepted her voucher. Sheri now lives in a clean, comfortable unit nearby. Tearing up, she says, "I'm so grateful. Now my daughter and my granddaughter can come to visit me."

When asked what she would like the Homeless Task Force to communicate, **Sherri** said, “Go through the system. It works. Reach for help. It’s there. Get away from whatever it is that is keeping from housing. You’re worth it. Be kind to yourself because it’s rough out there.”



Sherri is pictured here with her best friend, Niki Barbara Sue. She wants to let everyone know that, as hard as homelessness is, there are truly kind people out there. For example, her dog groomer, Denise, gives her a discount. Last year, a friendly stranger invited her to have Thanksgiving Dinner at his home with his family. She also believes her luck is turning. She was the 20th caller to a KLOS giveaway and now she is set to see Steve Winwood at the Hollywood Bowl next month.



HTF outreach workers who hope to meet homeless individuals whom they can help get off the streets



Looking forward to returning to Ohio where he will be greeted by family



Our awesome Coast to Coast volunteers helped get this young man off the streets during their early morning outreach with our HTF officers