



Morris Re-Elected Chair of Authority

At Thursday's meeting of the Convention Center Authority, Art Morris was elected as Chair, Laura Douglas as Vice-Chair, Kevin Fry as Secretary and R. B. Campbell as Treasurer.

Morris expressed surprise that none of the approximately 30 persons in the audience chose to speak during the public comment periods. A wag in the audience offered "Don't get used to it" to the amusement of all.

NEW ERA EXPLOITS SEX TO BOOST CIRCULATION

The faltering evening paper on Jan. 23 ran a front page, five column headline "Sex for sale. Dozens of local women on Internet's Craigslist offering 'erotic services'."

***WATCHDOG:** The *New Era* is supposed to be the conservative newspaper that espouses 'family values.' What sort of values is the *New Era* inculcating in our teen age girls and boys when youngsters encounter the top of the front page of the evening paper devoted to smut?*

Homeless and Destitute Flock to St. James for Breakfast

For over 20 years, St. James Episcopal Church has been serving free breakfasts.

Clark McSparren, one of the lead volunteers, said it all started with the homeless knocking on the pastor's door offering to work for food.

That gave them the idea – and the impetus – to start offering free breakfasts under what they're calling the "Anchorage Breakfast Program."

Today, the Church serves an average of about 100 people a day, according to McSparren. Thursday morning was particularly busy, with the count totaling 133.

"We serve coffee, tea, OJ, cereal, [and] oatmeal," he said. "It's a cold breakfast."

One young woman revealed that she has been homeless "since the end of September" because she could not pay her expenses after her husband "stopped paying spousal support."

Another said he was left homeless after he had a heart attack and expensive medical bills forced him into bankruptcy.

One man was quite frank about why he became homeless. "I'm in my position because of drinks and drugs," he said. "I made some bad choices – spent a whole paycheck on drinks and drugs, didn't care about paying bills."

Rotary Club Told Density Does Work

At the Rotary Club's Wednesday meeting, Metta Barbour, Executive Director of the Lancaster Coalition for Smart Growth, spoke of the need for intelligently balancing the urgency of protecting agriculture and farmland with the inevitability of growth.

"'No growth' is not an option," she said. "Balance is the key to growth management in Lancaster County."

"Density can create vibrant, great places to live," she said. "Density that is well-designed

creates great neighborhoods and attracts a growing market segment."

Barbour continued, "Density creates transportation choices when density is more than 7 homes per acre. Density means fewer trips, shorter trips, and less dependence on cars."

"Higher-density development also requires less infrastructure," she argued.

Barbour pointed to Summit Hills in Mountville as "an example of where density supports property values."

Letter: Not Enough Detoxification Beds Available

At the Jan. 28th meeting of the Drug & Alcohol Commission, I raised the issue that there were not enough detoxification beds in Lancaster.

I had a young woman show up drunk at my church. I took her to Lancaster General, which is a block away from the church. She was refused at General because they do not have any detox beds. I was told to take her to Regional. I took her to Regional. Regional refused her because they did not have enough detox beds.

The woman had a large knife; and was threatening to kill herself. I called Crisis. The worker at Crisis that answered the phone told me that I may not "302" the young woman. The worker told me that the Director of Crisis refused to authorize a "302" because the woman was voluntarily seeking help by coming to church;

and allowing herself to be driven to the hospital. I was told by the hospital staff at Regional that I may drive the young woman myself two hours away if I wanted. I would like to know, "Why was it my job to drive the woman 2 hours away?"

The bureaucracy in Lancaster is greedy for more tax money, when they are not even effectively using the funds they are given now. The bureaucrats would rather see an addict go in and out of prison and rehab every year for twenty years; as it guarantees them a salary.

I would ask that the long-term effectiveness of Lancaster County D&A programs be reviewed; and that Lancaster County examine better alternatives than incarceration for women that have substance abuse and mental illness.

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