Thrifty pal's happiness comes cheap

Y FRIEND very carefully spooned the Kung Pao chicken into the paper carron, then made room beside it for the extra white rice. She put the dab of steamed vegetables into another box and tucked her unread fortune cookie into her purse. "Supper," she cheerfully amounced. "I like this place because there's plenty to take home."

announced. "Tike this place because there's plenty to take home."

My once-a-month lunch partner always gets the leftovers. Out loudy we say it's because I live two hours from the restaurant, while her refrigerator is just a few blocks away. But we both know she gets the doggy bag because it's more important to her than it is to me. My friend is thrifty. Tight as a tick, you might say. She swears her financial ethic evolved while rearing five children, but I think she was born that way. She claims she's never coveted a single article of clothing and always saved string. I, on the other hand, have always been a spendthrift, I was in ninth grade when I bought my first sweater on installments. It feels like I've beautiff of the paying for it ever since.

My friend is a stay-at-home mom whose husband has a blue-collar, middle-income job Years ago the decided they didn't want to worry about money, so they pledged to always live within their means and except for a few medical crises, have done so.

This concept stunned me. No this friend of the standard properties of the standard properties

have done so.

This concept stunned me. No debt? No credit card bills?

Absolutely not, says my friend, who pays cash or does without. She stayed in the same house long enough to own it. Her 13-year-old car runs like a top. She always looks nice, but her clothes come from second-hand stores. Dining out is for special occasions, rice is a nightly staple, meat a treat. She doesn't have a home computer, the kids don't own video games, and the television is hardly ever on, until just a couple of years were on, until just a couple of years ever on, until just a couple of years set. Recreation means long walks, the children's school sports events. Scrabble and Monopoly on rainy weekends, books books and more books. The family has never taken an expensive vacation away from home, instead, summers are spent at public ball parks, swimming pools and the beach.

"We don't need that stuff," says my friend, waving her arm vaguely in the direction of the shooping center. "Buy, buy, buy — everybody's always trying to get us to buy things we already have. Why not use they at lith by 're worn out? Why do I need a bigger house when this one first. Why do I need a fancier car with more things to break when mine runs fine."

Gee, I don't know I thought it was the American way — the more you get, the more you spend, the more you for it new and sold it for \$100 eight years later. Now it's wast he American way — the more you get, the more you from a sender me wonder, could Madison Avenue be wrong? I looked out at my friend's carefully wasted old (Chrysler and was reminded of my 1965 Mustagn! Talk and the shoot of the shoot of

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REACH OUT:

Family Focus Center.

Sunday, February 28, 1999 · Section E Page 8

The Zia Eagles Razzle Dazzle drill team is one of the community activities that takes advantage of the space at the

San Francisco intervention program helps prostitutes break cycle of drugs and violence and get off the streets

How it adds up



PAINFUL MEMORIES: Visiting the Tenderloin district where she used to work as a prostitute, Tracey Helton sees the same drug dealers, prostitutes and johns that she worked with. "It's just like I never left," she says.

The local option: 'Send them to jail'

BY RICK NATHANSO Journal Staff Weiter

A LBUQUERQUE IS NOT among the 10 American cities that have programs to help women escape street prostitution.

querque Police Capt. Ruben Davalos, bead of the vice unit. And in Albuquerque, no money has been allocated to establish such a program, he said.

"You need rehabilitation for the girls on the streets. They need psychological help, they need help for alcohol and substance abuse, they have health issues, they have safety issues. You need diversion programs for the customers," Davalos said.

"We have one option — to send them to jail."

Davalos, who has been working in vice since 1981, has arrested prostitutes as young as 15 and as old as a 63. Their average age is in the mid-20s.

In general, he said, the vice unit deals with the same 35 to 45 women each year and another 40 "circuit girls," who travel from city to city. Most of the women ply their trade along East and West Central Avenue, he said, and that's where the five-person vice unit concentrates its efforts. The unit makes about 15 prostitution arrests each month, which includes about 20 johns, or male customers.

Davalos said there are two sentencing classifications for prostitutes. One is for an initial offense, which is a petty misdemeanor and carries a possible sentence of up to six months in jail. The other classification is for repeat offenses, which is a full misdemeanor and carries a possible sentence of up to one year.

"I can't think of any success stories," Davalos said when asked if street hookers eventually pull their lives together and walk away. "The only time prostituties get off the streets is if they go to jail for a long time, or if they're dead."



LIGHTING THE WAY: Norma Hotaling calls upon 20 years as a heroin addict and prostitute to convince women there is a way out of a premature, anonymous death.

By DELIA M. RIOS

BY DELIA M. RIOS
Newhouse News Service

AN FRANCISCO — Busted heroin balloons litter Fern Alley on the damp winter afternoon that Tracey Helton allows herself, for a very few minutes, to step back into that other life, the one that very nearly left her dead. Traffic on Van Ness Avenue moven soisily past this obscure alley, oblivious to what Helton sees. Over there, that's where the cops arrested her, cooking her heroin fix, a bust that cost her six months in jail. And there, that's where the trick woke her. It's as if she can see herself, see how skinny, sick and filthy she was.

The repulsion — and compassion — that the man should have felt, but didn't, echoes in her voice.

"He approached me to do a date. Can you believe that"
Her early 20% were lived like that and, at 28, she doesn't want to give that life one more minute. Shivering in the alley, Helton wonders, "Was sit really that bad?" There is pain in the question, just as in the plea she used to make to God. "Please, please..."
She was a fallen woman. That's what she thought.

Joint frustration

Joint frustration

A remarkable 380 women and 126 girls have, in the language of the local criminal justice system, "successfully exited prostitution" through the city's First Offender Prostitution Program. It was formed only four years ago out of the joint frustration of a former prostitute and the cop who once arrested her. They'd found themselves caught in a revolving door of prostitution arrests, with players and outcomes maddeningly, and tragically, predictable.

These are not Held Fleiss call girls, nor politized women lobbying for legalized prostitution. These are women and girls subject to the vagaries of pimps, street violence women whose every experience on the street lells them they are nothing.

Success may be measured by a drop in the 40,000 to 5,000 prostitution arrests every year in San Francisco, or by dents in \$2.8 million police and court costs. Success may be tangible in the public health system—up to 30 percent of prostitutes carry the AIDS virus, and treatment of each uninsured patient until death runs more than \$15,000,00 r success may be measured in the foster care system, where monthly care for one child can cost \$1,400 — and prostitutes have, on average, two children.

But how do you measure what it means to Heldro to know that a soft bed and warm blankets wait for her now, not a cold doorway and the rustling of rats? How do you calculate the value of reclaiming a sense of confidence, self-worth, and potential

See PROGRAM on PAGE E6

Want to end sexism in language? Just make it 'they,' singular or plural

Bells HAVE BEEN tolling for he the generic masculine pronoun for years. Why have so many grammarians turned a deaf ear?

In A Dictionary of American Usage (\$35, 1998, Oxford University Press), author Bryan A. Garner, a lawyer and lexicographer, believes the term eventually will be replaced by a catchall they, to be used in both singular and plural they, to be used in both singular and plural they.

COMMENTARY

"Speakers of American English resist this development more than speakers of British English, in which the indeterminate they is already more or less standard," he writes "That it sets many literate Americans' teeth on edge is an unfortunate setback to what promises to be the ultimate solution to the problem."

language, still on the books in so many places, like many another archaic law. A small item tucked away in Psychology Today a couple of years back helps put "he lie to arguments that the linguistic leap from he to they will send people into tallspins of confusion. The genderless" plural singular," already in widespread use in conversational English, was studied in written English. University of Wisconsin researchers found that substituting they for he did not

slow subjects down in their reading of sentences a bit.

The headline for the item? "Don't Read This if You Teach English."

Au contraire.

Au contraire.

To argue that those teaching the lay of the language are the very people who need to read such items. The tacit understanding has been that he is understood to be a "common-sex" pronoun; that arguments that the term is not all-inclusive are small-minded, petty, unimaginative. (At least that was the

unspoken subtext when I raised such issues as a student in the mid-80s, before nonsexist language guidelines were widely adopted.)

But who can seriously argue that he has abilities far beyond other singular pronouns, when the evidence so clearly suggests otherwise?
It's only common sense to see that he is not "common-sex."
Why is this foolish.

not "common-sex."

Why is this foolish consistency being kept on the books? A STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR

Program helps prostitutes break cycle, get off streets

Prom PAGE 28

because you are mastering how to rent an apartment, keep a checkbook, write a resume or dress appropriately for the office? How do you register the falling away of fear, when the days no longer carry the threat of a beating, a rape, a kinife, a gun?

As former prostitute Betty Ricks, her usually commanding voice barely above a whisper, says to a roomful of arrested johns, "Now I'm a woman of dignity and class."

johns, "Now I'm a woman or dig...., class." That is not a place arrived at easily.

Reaching out

Reaching out

Just being there in the same room with, 60 johns, their eyes focused uncomfortably in front of them like people in elevators, takes uncommon courage Ricks is 44 now, and the men before her might as well be a lifetime of johns.

"You're not a man anyway" she tells them. "You're not a man anyway" she tells them anyway in the see prostitutes is torn away. If they allowed themselves to think that women like Ricks really though them bandsome, or admired their sexual prowess, they know now that the women do.

"A lot of times we stumble into prostitution," Helton tells them, quickly disabusing them of stereotypes by revealing that she'd atended the University of Cincinnati, she'd been to Europe, she had a family that loved the rin Ohio But she became addicted to drugs and, she says, "You were all there waiting for me."

On the street, prostitutes can be bitter, suspicious rivals. Working alongside other women is not in their experience. But largely through the example of Norma Horaling, the co-founder of this program, women who want to leave prostitution or hear singular didictions are sawon' a tou. The suspicious rivals. Working alongside other women is not in their experience. But largely through the example of Norma Horaling, the co-founder of this program, women who want to leave prostitution or hear singular didictions are sawon' a tou. The suspicious rivals. Working alongside other women is not in their experience. But largely through the example of Norma Horaling, the co-founder of this program, women who want to leave prostitution or me and the same and the

out to others like aposites, impioring and prodding until they lead someone else off the streets.

Kristine Duran came to the program because of drugs, having spent 17 of her 44 years in California prisons, and now counsels other women.

"I never felt so loved as I do by these women." Duran tells a support group one might. "Norma just loved me. She didn't even know me."

The police have become partners in these salvation efforts.

Not just a hooker



A LIFE SAVED: Ravin Koontzy, 19, hid under the covers of her jall bed when counselors first approached her. Today, she has a job as a receptionist and she calls Norma Hotal-ing her guardian angel.

Ing her guardian angel.

Mike Lawson just sat in the car with her after he'd made the arrest. She worked the Tenderlon district of the city, a heroin and cocaine addict. But he saw beyond that, even if he didn't know the specifics, to the woman who had come from Texas, the woman who had nutrued a gurlhood passion for ballet.

"He took time to talk to me like a human being, not a prostitute or a whore," says Burris, who now, at 4J, is expecting her first baby and is working as an office manager and bookkeeper for the program that reached out to be 500,000 to There are thought to be 500,000 to 500,000 women and gris selling their bodies of the selling the s

Jane Doe written on them," she says, in an oddy flat tone.
It is the storytelling tone all these women assume, as if they were narrating some other woman's life 'vet emotion seeps in. There is disdain in their voices when they say those two ugly words, prefacing them with phrases they know others use, as in, "She's just a hooker" or others use, as in, "She's just a hooker" or

when they say those two ugly words, prefacing them with phrases they know others use, as in, "She's just a hooker" or "She's just a hooker" or "She's just a hooker" or "She's just a whore."

They offer their lives up as living lessons — look at what I vas, look at what I ves look at what look at look at what look at look at

Hotaling had gone back to school, and graduated magna cum laude with a health education degree, when she heard about police Lt. Joseph Dutto. Newly head of the Vice Crimes Unit, he had come to the conclusion that the system was failing everyone, including the prostitutes. No one was doing anything to address why women and girst hurn to street prostitution and drugs and, to make it worse, it discriminated against them. It was time that police started arresting more customers, dealing with the demand and not just the supply.

Dutto had made some of the 30 arrests on Hotaling's record. But as 1995 began, they, together with Assistant District Attorney Teri Jackson, formed a partnership to create the First Offender's Prostitution Program. Initially, they intended to intervene with the Singh Market Schotzer.

Instead of going to court, the men would give up a Saturday for a series of lectures from cops, prosecutors, health educators and former prostituties. It's an attractive option, since most men arrested on a first prostitution offense in the city are 25 to 40, college educated, employed and earning more than \$30,000. The lectures are intimidating, with nononesse detailing of the fires, jail time and public humiliation that future arrests will entail and vivid color slides of diseases they can pick. Apparently, they are lated them, is, "Stay of the streets of San Francisco, gentlemen" Apparently, they are lated them, is, "Stay of the streets of San Francisco, gentlemen" Apparently, they are lated them, is, "Stay of the streets of San Francisco, gentlemen" Apparently, they are lated them, is, "Stay of the streets of San Francisco, gentlemen" Apparently, they are lated them, is, "Stay of the streets of San Francisco, gentlemen" Apparently, they are lated them, is, "Stay of the streets of San Francisco, gentlemen" Apparently, they are lated them, is, "Stay of the streets of San Francisco, gentlemen" Apparently, they are lated them, is, "Stay of the streets of San Francisco, gentlemen" Apparently, they are lated them

treatment that produce the control of trickle down economics," Coleman observes. "The men are paying to the prostitutes but not for the services they expected." At least nine cittes have modeled programs after what San Francisco has done including cittes in Canada and England. There are invitations to conferences on sexual exploitation held in places like Beining, Stockholm and the United Nations in New York A French documentary crew just spent weeks with the program. Harvard's John F Kennedy School of Government recently recognized the program with a \$100,000 "Innovations in

Government" award that was presented in Washington.

The part of the program that touches prostitutes, that brings them in and convinces them to stay, was created by Hotaling. She started SAGE—Standing Against Global Exploitation—as a central partner in the city's prostitution program. It is decidedly female, with much of the staff having begun there as clients. SAGE is part community outreach, part counseling service, part job training, part drug treatment and part health spa—offering massage, yoga, and breathing exercises that focus on the women's sense of well-being. As Helton cracks, "In ever had a massage, Everytime someone talked about massage, they wanted me to take my clothes off."

The message to prostitutes is that these are women who understand them, and who do not judge them. The moment a woman walks through the door, she is treated like a success All this is a lifeline for women who, for too long, may not have had anyone show enough interest in their welfare to even ask, "How are you?"

That's why Helton would wait impatiently outside SAGE's doors for them to open. And why Ravin Koontzy, just 19 showed up one day last June to volunteer and has been back every day seline. She made every day selling crack got as old as being on the street from 8 in the morning until 8 at night Had it not been for the city's program, she might have become one of those girls who starts using the drugs they sell, and who then end up selling themselves to pay for what they end Koontzy calls Hotaling her guardian angel.

Koontzy calls Hotaling her guardian angel.

angel in Believes that she was meant somehow to do this work, that's why she led the life she did. Her sense of mission infuses the program. Lawson, the police sergeant, likes to read johns a letter from a 17-year-old crack addict, who is now clean. He tells them that all they see of these girls is the cosmetic cover. They don't see them like the police do, so sick and afraid to return to their pimps without money that they beg police to arrest them. Sometimes he can't get through the letter, and Hotaling reads it.

"Thank you for letting me live," his

retter, and Hotaling reads it.

"Thank you for letting me live," his voice cracks over the teen-ager's words. Helton feels the fragility of new life every day. She lived in a fantasy world for so long to buffer the pain that the anxiety creeps up on her that maybe this isn't real either. Walking down the street, riding the bus, or just after arriving to work at the SAGE offices, she needs a few moments to steady herself.

She repeats a new prayer now.

"I'm OK. I'm OK."

SENIOR CALENDAR

NUTRITION

MEADOWI ARK

MEADOWLARK
RIO Rancho, call 891 7224
Monday: Fishing club, 10 a.m. General programming, 1:30 p.m. Real writers get published, 1:30 p.m. Lunch—sloppy Joe's, Tuesday: Registration for March Lasses, 9. a.m. Registration for March trips, 1:30 p.m. Les Miserables at Pope-joy, 6:30 p.m. Lunch—sweet and sour pork. Wednesday: Bingo 1 p.m. Exercise, 2 p.m. Pinochie, 6:30 p.m. Lunch—meatloaf. Thursday: Computer users group, 9:30 a.m. Jug Band, 1 pm. Intermediate line idence, 4 p.m. Lunch—Swiss steak tomato sauce, Friday: Woodcavers, 9 a.m. Intermediate line dance, 9 a.m. Idalian, 1:15 p.m. Lunch—Luna celery casserole.

HIGHLAND

NORTH VALLEY

Friday:

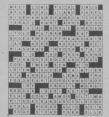
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