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A historic home on the east end of Long Island, New York (Wikicommons/Americasroof)



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Think again if you equate the fabled Hamptons — Southampton, East Hampton, Bridgehampton — on the east end of Long Island with unabated trouble-free luxury

living for the moneyed set. True, sumptuous beachfront mega-mansions with as many as 14 bedrooms and 13 bathrooms keep attracting hedge fund billionaires for whom $100 million and up for a sprawling home is loose change.

True also is that initiation fees at private golf clubs for swinging capitalists are in the six figures where Shinnecock Indians worked the land for thousands of prehistoric years.

Hold on a minute, though. Amid the high-priced positives are some irritant negatives that the harried one-percenters must endure.

First, the goats. Police were summoned in early August by estate-owners grousing that herds of the long-eared creatures were trespassing on local lawns. Their shepherd, reported the alert media, was Billy Sutton, a free-spirit with a start-up business: Billy's Goats Lawn Service. The mammals were well-trained to spiff up the acreage by munching grass and weedy flower beds. Except for a bleat or two, they did their pristine toil in silence. It was Sutton's hope that word would spread and ecology-minded estate-owners would embrace goats over contractors and their polluting and blaring power mowers. Instead, the officers ticketed Billy, and his chewing goats became scapegoats.

Higher up on the Hamptons' outrage list are the aerial noisemakers: helicopters that taxi the well heeled for about 35 minutes from Manhattan for fares in the $800 range. It's the Uber of the skies, with whirlybirds hauling mostly weekenders not about to suffer four-hour car trips on the jammed roadways to Southampton or, worse, fighting for a seat at Penn Station on the Long Island Rail Road packed with smelly scruffies and their surf boards.

Last year The Wall Street Journal reported that 26,000 noise complaints were filed against the buzzing and low-swooping helicopters that wrecked the quietude.

How horrendous does it get? The Journal quoted a member of the Quiet Skies Coalition that the ruckus "vibrates the glassware." At summer's end it can only be guessed how many Hampton cocktail parties hosting the richies were devastated by broken Waterford ready to be filled with Dom Perignon. It's unlikely the year-round locals have the political power to take on the summering copter set. If they did it would have happened by now.

Not far to the north of the Hampton beaches, getaway mansions and galas are low income neighborhoods where the help can be found: the largely Latino and Hispanic laborers who do the privet hedge trimming, leaf blowing, weed whacking, grass cutting, fairway mowing at the golf clubs, house painting and pool cleaning on the outside and bed making, cooking, vacuuming, ironing, dishwashing, baby sitting and toilet cleaning on the inside.

Similar to Michael Harington's 1962 classic *The Other America*, the Other Hamptons can be found where many in the off-season population of about 10,000 deal with the high cost of getting by: poor people. Recent data reveals that 51 percent of students in East Hampton public schools were from Hispanic or Latino homes. It's unknown how many are children of the undocumented, though an official at Stony Brook Southampton Hospital told me that some 30 percent of those coming to the emergency room have no papers. None are turned away.

Nor are they refused help at Heart of the Hamptons, a non-profit food pantry to which hungry citizens come Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 10 a.m. and noon where the shelves are well stocked with food donated from local farms and stores, including The Blue Duck Bakery.

The director of the pantry is Hilton Crosby who is 38 and who earned a master's degree from Georgia Southern University. His wife, Mary Crosby, is a nurse at The East End Hospice. Hilton told me that 1,319 low income men and women in crisis are regulars at the pantry, with many coming also for the clothing, medical and other assistance programs. The budget is $150,000, with the pantry given free space by the Basilica of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Southampton.

"Our mission," Hilton told me one morning before the patrons poured in, "is to help people in need in our community. We prefer to focus on a person's need rather than who they are." That means, to his credit, that he cares nothing whether a person is "legal" or "illegal." All that matters is that they are hungry.

To the west and east of Southampton are similar centers, including ones operated by St. Ann's Episcopal Church, St. Rosalie's Parish and St. Therese of Lisieux Church. The need for food and other aid begins to rise after Labor Day when summer ends and the tanned wealthy vacationers depart and the jobs keeping them happy vanish.

In addition to the tensions of living in poverty, undocumented immigrants who fled El Salvador, Honduras and other unstable Central American countries live in fear of being rounded up for deportation by agents of the federal Immigrant and Custom Enforcement. Their aggressive sweeps and swoops, largely brought on by the "zero tolerance" zests of the Trump administration, caused New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo to take a stand. During a Aug. 29 debate at Hofstra University he said that his state is "suing Donald Trump for ripping babies from the arms of their mothers. New York state is the state that says we will not cooperate with ICE, they're a bunch of thugs."

As the hazes of another Hamptons summer waft away, instead of a tale of two cities, we have a tale of two cultures: wealth and poverty, linked together in a mutuality where the rich need the poor and the poor need the rich. Until global warming causes the waters to rise and Long Island to submerge, it's likely to stay that way.

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