

Leave the Guy Who is Doing Good Alone (Letter to Santa Cruz Sentinel
9/23/07)

Curtis Reliford is an exemplary local citizen. He is also a man of gentle demeanor, respectful of others. During the past two years, he has done this community proud by organizing and carrying out, under the auspices of the United Nations Association, the collection and delivery of several tons of relief supplies from Santa Cruz directly to victims of Hurricane Katrina in the state of Louisiana. The collection of supplies and the public education that accompanies his work has been carried out by Curtis personally from a truck parked somewhere downtown for a few days a couple of times each year.

On Sept. 9, when Curtis parked his truck and trailer and fed the meters in two parking spots on Pacific Avenue, some business owners or managers took exception to his presence because as they saw it he was interfering with business. The police were called and came; vigorous remonstrances were made; and Curtis, who as far as anyone could tell was guilty of no wrongdoing, was visibly shaken and made to feel unwelcome on a public thoroughfare in his own home town. What in God's name is going on here? People who live to serve others deserve better of us all.