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*Real*

# CHANGE

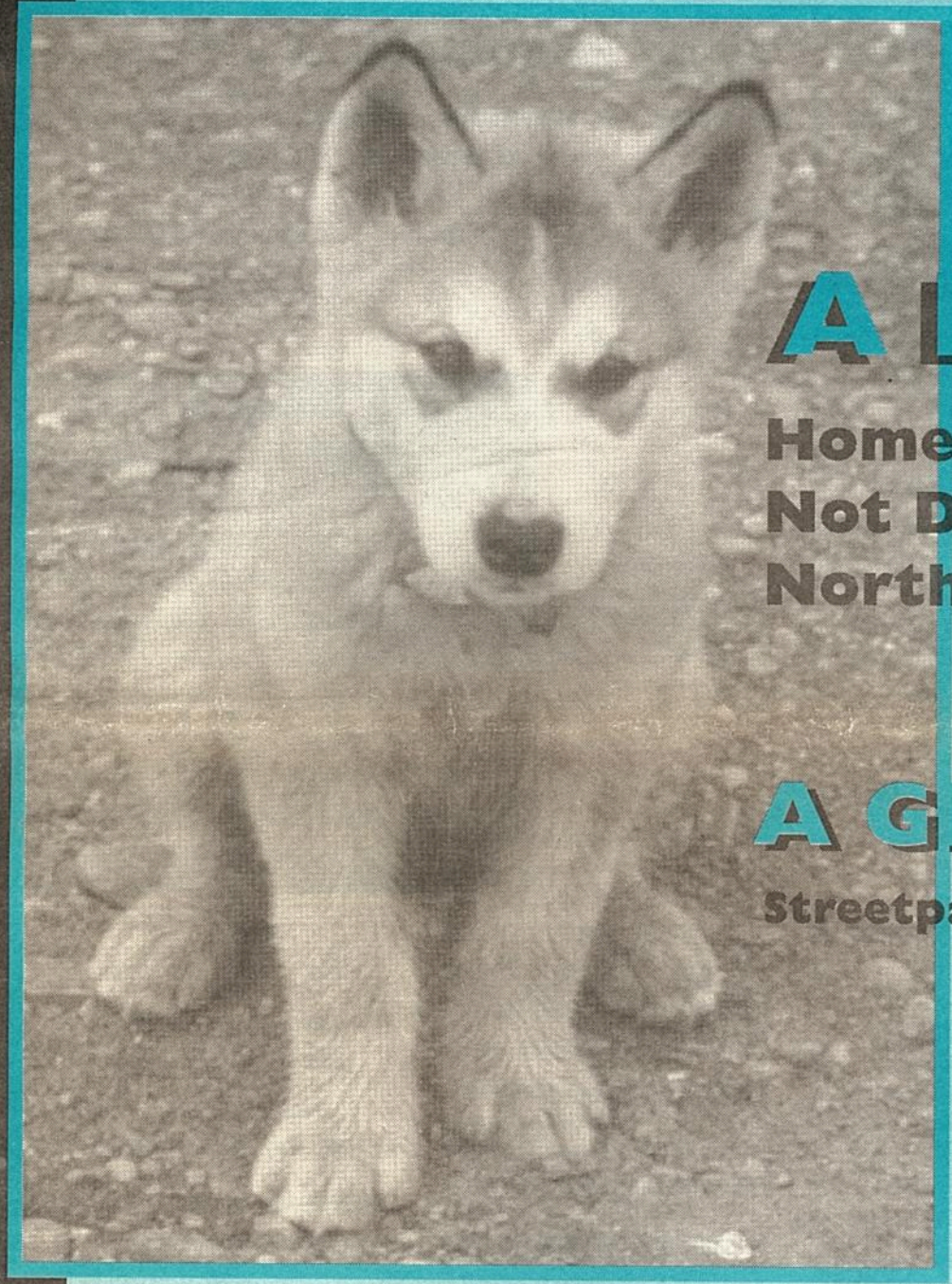
VOL. 4, NO. 1, JAN.

**\$1**

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*Puget Sound's Homeless Newspaper*

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## A Dog's Life

Homeless But  
Not Dogless in the  
North Country

## A Global Idea

Streetpaper Movement Builds

## Shelter Shortage

Local and National Numbers Spell Trouble

News,  
Poetry, Stuff  
that Matters



## Real Change

is a Washington State  
non-profit organization

Real Change is published the 1st of each month, and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Submissions are encouraged and should be mailed to "Real Change," 2129 Second Ave, Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 441-3247. Tacoma Office: 919 S. 9th St., Tacoma, WA 98405, (206) 593-2743

Email [rchange@speakeasy.org](mailto:rchange@speakeasy.org)  
ISSN 1085-729X

Articles should be received by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Annual subscriptions (12 Issues) are available for \$35, and support

Real Change.

All material copyrighted to author

Real Change vendors receive 75¢ of the \$1.00 paid for this paper.

### MISSION STATEMENT

Organize, educate, and build alliances to find community-based solutions to homelessness and poverty.

### Goals

- 1.) provide a foundation for grassroots organizing.
- 2.) publish the views of marginalized communities.
- 3.) create direct economic opportunity.
- 4.) build bridges with a broad range of allies in the struggle against poverty.

### Editorial Policy

Articles appearing in Real Change reflect the opinion and perspective of the author. We encourage the submission of journalism, opinion, fiction, poetry and artwork, and hope to create a forum where the many perspectives that exist regarding poverty and homelessness can find expression. The editorial committee reserves the right to edit any material for length and style. Articles considered libelous or which encourage violence, sexism, homophobia, or racism will not be considered for publication.

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## Vendor Code of Conduct

- 1.) Vendors must be sober while they represent Real Change to the public. Drug or alcohol use while selling the paper is not allowed.
- 2.) Vendors must wear their Real Change Badge in a clearly visible manner while they sell the paper.
- 3.) Abusive language or threatening behavior of any form is not acceptable. You represent Real Change, and reflect upon all of us while you sell the paper.
- 4.) The Real Change Badge, and the papers you buy, cannot be loaned or given to another vendor.
- 5.) Do not fight other vendors or panhandlers over turf. Either agree to share space, or find somewhere else to go.

Any of these actions will result in an immediate two week suspension as a vendor. Repeated suspensions will result in permanent termination of all rights to sell Real Change or be involved as a member.

Suspensions and terminations by staff may be appealed to elected vendor representatives, but are in effect until overturned.

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The only legitimate use of the Real Change Badge is to sell the Real Change newspaper. Vendors may not solicit funds or sell free papers, such as The Stranger or the Employment Paper, using this Badge. If you see this occur, please call 441-3247 with the badge number.

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# Over the Top in '97

This holiday season, *Real Change* set a goal of raising \$15,000 in donations to help us meet the increased costs of publishing twice a month beginning this February

## Timothy Harris

Since November 1st, *Real Change* has made it nearly two-thirds of the way toward our goal, receiving \$9,989.02 in donations. We warmly thank all those who have so generously done their part to help with *Real Change*.

If you have not yet contributed, your support now will put us over the top, giving us the resources we need in 1997 to be more effective.

Over 1997, *Real Change* will publish more, organize more, and be a better voice for the poor and homeless. Here's how.

Our publication schedule will double, with new issues coming out on the 1st and the 15th. We are also switching to an attractive magazine-style format, making us easier to carry and easier to read.

More frequent publication will mean that our vendors won't have to push stale copies anymore at month's end. Our news will be more up to date, and

our readers will enjoy us twice as often.

We have already hired a new half-time staff person, bringing *Real Change's* paid staff to the equivalent of two full-time people. Your donations will help ensure we actually get paid.

*Real Change* remains one of the most cost-effective non-profit organizations in town, helping the poor and homeless to help themselves. We figure that for every dollar that goes into our budget, we are able to put five into the pockets of the homeless.

But *Real Change* does more than simply publish a paper, and your donations help us with that as well.

Our Citizens Participation Project will expand to involve more people, both homeless and housed, in seeking solutions to poverty and homelessness.

Our Homeless Speakers Bureau will expand as well to reach more schools, churches, businesses and civic organizations with their message of empowerment. The speakers bureau is an effective means of putting a human face on homelessness while giving people the information they need to act.

*Real Change* is also a valuable national model as a means to create social change. We are leaders in

building a North American network of Street papers such as ourselves, and are one of the most successful activist papers on this continent.

We have made ourselves available to activists from other cities who have come to Seattle to learn about our model, and have published a guide to starting a street paper on our website. *Real Change* is actively working toward our vision of having an independent homeless paper in every North American city by the year 2000. Our work in building a North American Street Newspaper Association supports this goal.

Your donation to *Real Change* helps create work with dignity for the poor while building a broader vision of political activism and advocacy. If you haven't donated to *Real Change* in the past, I urge you to please consider doing so now.

Donors of \$35 or more will receive a complimentary copy of *"No Apologies: The Best of Real Change Poets 1994-1996."* This 36-page anthology of our favorite contributors will be something to treasure for years to come. Thank you for your support.

**"Your donation to *Real Change* helps create work with dignity for the poor while building a broader vision of political activism and advocacy. If you haven't donated to *Real Change* in the past, I urge you to please consider doing so now."**

## MAILBAG

2129 2nd Ave., 98121  
rchange@speakeasy.org

Dear *Real Change*,

This is in response to the Dec. ['96] article: "Drying Up the Square" which was, I believe, a classic example of slanting the facts to support a preconceived theory.

The column castigated the "Gallo Corporation" for providing fortified wines and by implication, malt liquor. Not fair to Gallo who in 1989 successfully asked the independent distributors to cease wholesaling Thunderbird and Night Train to big city downtown areas, including Seattle. They volunteered this due to community request. Consequently, many less T-bird and Night Train empties are now seen here. (A very small amount of T-bird is now available in comparison to before.) Gallo has never made the 40 ounces. They had and should be thanked for their social responsibility, not falsely accused!

The article also stated that "you can walk into any bar in Pioneer Square and get snookered." You can get loud and boisterous in these bars but owners, like all bar owners, do their best to keep customers from getting passed out and snookered like street drunks do. It's their license if they allow much of this. The article said that if you are "in rags," you

can't do what the bar patrons do. If someone gets high in a bar they usually don't piss, vomit and pass out in [the] street like the street drunks do. I've seen hundreds of the latter and very few of the former.

This is not to say that bar patrons don't cause even worse problems on the highways.

Edmonton Alberta was almost as inaccurately portrayed. Prior to their relaxing of restrictions in the downtown core, liquor stores opened at noon. This caused extreme discomfort for the alcoholics who were using Lysol, etc. The Liquor Commission then did allow that liquor store and no other, to open at 8:30 a.m. to accommodate the drunks. That hour is close to Sidran's 9:00 a.m.

Unlike what your article stated, they never restricted the sale of fortified wines and high potency beer in order to stop the consumption of Lysol, etc., they only opened the downtown store earlier.

Please let's have more accuracy and less wishful thinking!

Martin Paup  
Seattle

P.S. I still buy and enjoy your proactive and interesting paper.

## Real CHANGE

### Needs Your Support Now

**R**eal Change depends upon the grassroots support of our readership to do a whole lot with very little money. Every dollar donated to this paper winds up putting about five dollars in the pockets of the homeless. Best of all, your contribution goes beyond simple charity. We help people help themselves while they work for a more just world for everyone. *With your help, 1997, our third year, will be our best ever. Be a part of something important. Support Real Change in any way you can.*

### Real Change Matters. Here's What I Can Do.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron    | \$100 or more | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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If you donate \$35 or more, please indicate whether you want a subscription mailed to you. Yes ☐ No ☐

MAIL TO: REAL CHANGE, 2129 2ND AVE, SEATTLE, WA 98121

## Vendor of the Month

**O**riginally from Memphis, Tennessee, Marion Marshall, 40, has lived in Seattle now for three years. A survivor of domestic violence, Marion came to Seattle in order to make a new start for herself after courageously leaving an abusive situation.

"*Real Change* has helped to build my self-esteem," says Marion. "Believe it or not, selling the paper has helped me make more money in a short period of time than I ever have before."

Marion, who is currently living day to day in a hotel, says, "People don't think that I'm homeless, and I don't want to 'look' homeless. There's a negative stigma to being homeless."

"Selling the paper gives me time to think about what I want to do and how I can really change my life. I want to really encourage people to sell the paper, no matter how desperate their situation seems."

"Thank God for *Real Change* being in this city. I'm thankful for being able to sell the paper."

As vendor of the month Marion receives a \$25 prize, and a gourmet dinner for two at Common Meals. Heartfelt congratulations to Marion for being a *Real Change* Winner.





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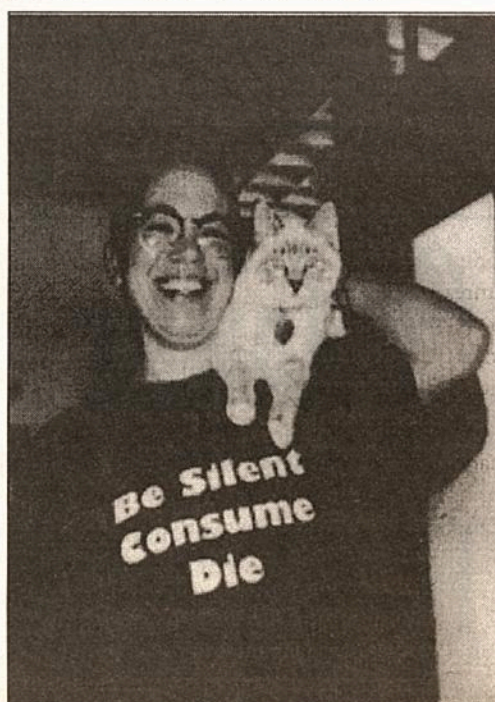
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the Real Change logo on  
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### Volunteer Listings

THE WASHINGTON LOW INCOME  
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tion and advocacy organization for low  
income housing. Call Kris or Laura at 442-  
9455.12/9

ARE YOU COMMITTED TO HELPING  
the homeless? If so, we need you! Rose  
House, transitional housing for homeless  
women, has a variety of volunteer opportu-  
nities on-site and off. For more information  
contact Ashley at 328-5730. 11/1

**VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED!**  
**SHARE**, a grassroots organizing effort of  
homeless men and women, facilitates nine  
self-managed nighttime shelters throughout  
Seattle. We seek volunteers to drive blankets  
and soup to and from these shelters in the  
early mornings and evenings, especially on  
weekends. This is a practical way to help  
homeless people help themselves. Contact  
Michele at #448-7889.

**IMMEDIATE STIPEND OFFICE**  
**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** Seattle Habitat  
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join the Habitat Family! Call Linda at 292-  
5240. 11/1

CHS-UDYC needs volunteer activity  
leaders, M-F 1-5. An excellent opportunity  
to share your creativity, and provide a fun  
addition to services for homeless youth. A 6  
month commitment to one 4 hour shift/wk.  
CHS welcomes a diverse volunteer corp. Call  
526-2992 for more information. 9/15

CHS-UDYC needs two volunteers to  
manage their food donations and their  
clothing bank. Requires a commitment to  
one 2-4 hour shift/wk. CHS welcomes a  
diverse volunteer corp. Call 526-2992 for  
more information. 9/15

**JOIN OUR TEAM.** Sound Medical Clinic,  
a non-profit clinic serving the homeless and  
working poor in downtown Seattle, seeks  
energetic, and/or experienced volunteers to  
serve on its board of directors. Great  
opportunity to contribute to the community,  
cultivate leadership, and help people in need.  
Call 667-2385. 9/5

**THE BABY BOUTIQUE**, located in  
downtown Seattle, offers quality new and  
used clothing, diapers, bedding, and baby  
equipment to homeless families. Volunteers  
needed to sort, fold, and display donations  
and to help parents select items from the  
boutique. Call the Homeless Children's  
Network at 461-3883. 9/1

from Seattle Volunteer, 784-7294

<http://www.speakeasy.org/~seavol>


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homeless shelters and other programs that serve low-income and  
disadvantaged people.

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## Still No Apologies

*A Gift They Won't*

### Real CHANGE

Seattle's homeless newspaper  
has released its first poetry  
anthology, entitled  
"No Apologies, Best of Real  
Change Poets 1994-1996."

The 36-page chapbook  
features the work of six  
homeless and formerly home-  
less poets who have been  
regular contributors to the  
paper.

"I've never claimed to be an expert on modern poetry, but this is the Real  
Thing with a capital RT. It's not grad students sympathizing with (or slum-  
ming among) down-and-outers, it's down-and-outers talking for themselves,  
with pride, anger, humor, wistfulness, nostalgia, and not a speck of malaise."

- Clark Humphrey, *The Stranger*

Proceeds from the sales of "No Apologies" benefit Real Change. The  
chapbook is available through Real Change for \$6.95. Stop by our  
Belltown office or mail us a check at 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121

Also available at: Elliot Bay, Left Bank, Fremont Pl. Books, The Globe  
Cafe, Queen Anne Ave. Books, Speakeasy Cafe, Bailey-Coy Books, Red &  
Black Books, Vandewater Books, and the Penny University.

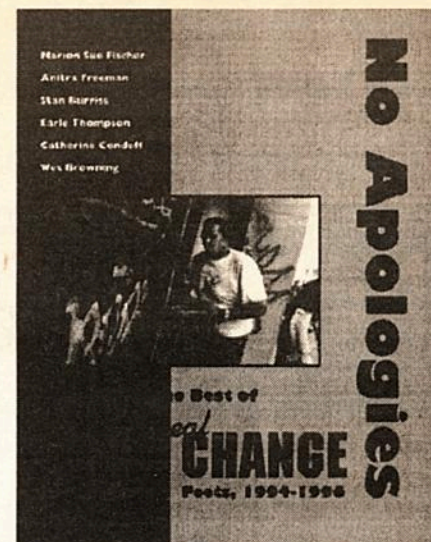
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Your Group**

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- Church Groups
- Schools (all levels)
- Civic Organizations

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A joint project of Real Change and the Homeless Women's  
Network. \$25 honorarium and one week's notice requested.  
Call 441-3247 for more information.





# An Idea Gone Global

## Streetpaper Movement Builds Internationally

BY TIMOTHY HARRIS

Representatives from homeless newspapers all over the world gathered in London last November for the second annual General Assembly of Europe's International Network of Street Papers (INSP).

The gathering, hosted by London's *Big Issue*, was also attended by North American observers from Chicago's *StreetWise*, Montreal's *Journal L'itinéraire*, and Seattle's *Real Change*. North American papers met for the first time in Chicago last August to begin forming their own North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA).

The London General Assembly made minor amendments to the INSP Charter, ratified a proposal for 1997 program, and heard reports from papers in the United Kingdom, Russia, South Africa, Australia, the Netherlands, and North America.

Continuing a practice that began last year with network-wide support for *The Depths*, a paper in St. Petersburg, Russia,

Community, it is clearly led by *The Big Issue*, Europe's largest and most visible network of street papers.

*The Big Issue*, which was founded in 1991 with a £400,000 grant from The Body Shop, claims a United Kingdom circulation of well over 300,000 papers a week. *Big Issue* representatives were in attendance from Manchester, Scotland, London, Wales, South Africa, and Australia.

A reception was hosted by *The Big Issue* London at its 4-story office building on Clerkenwell Road. The newspaper offers a variety of social services from the building, including housing search, drug and alcohol counselling, and computer training.

*Big Issue* founder John Bird gave the keynote address at the General Assembly, issuing a plea for homeless newspapers to publish general interest journalism in order to appeal to the largest possible market.

"The major point of street papers," said Bird, "is to provide the opportunity to earn an income. It is a business. Some papers do not fulfill that require-

"*The Big Issue* is not a homeless paper. It never has and never will be," said Bird. "It is a paper sold by homeless people. While we have a ghetto in the paper for the homeless called Streetlights, we want to break people out of that."

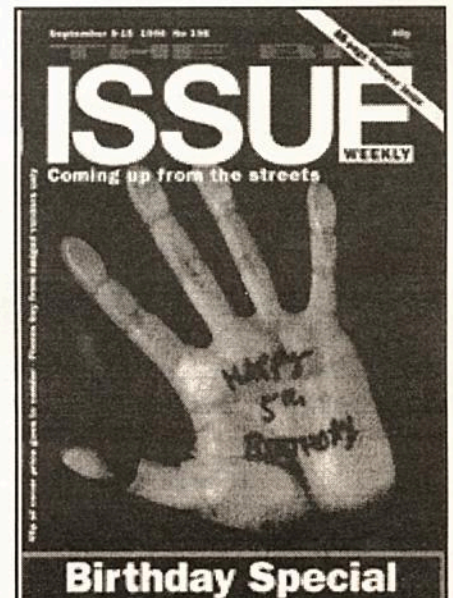
Streetlights is the one page the paper regularly sets aside for poetry and other writing by homeless people themselves.

Bird claimed that New York's *Street News*, which has inspired *The Big Issue* and numerous other papers since it began in 1989, is on the verge of complete failure because the paper is "unreadable." The New York paper has, in recent years, focused editorially on poverty issues, but has been racked by internal difficulties.

While no formal announcement was made, several lower-level *Big Issue* staff confirmed rumors that *The Big Issue* plans to begin a competing paper in New York City, probably before the summer of 1997.

### International Solidarity

Over the past year, more than £20,000 have been raised by INSP member publications for *The Depths*, a struggling paper in St. Petersburg, Russia. Equally important was the political support provided by the INSP, which let Russian authorities know that the eyes of the



*The Big Issue Scotland*, in particular, has provided extensive support to the Russian paper. The Scottish paper has raised £10,000 pounds for *The Depths*, and has committed to working closely with the paper for two years to provide technical assistance and political support.

"We were able to move from a squat to a new office, due to the support of *Big Issue Scotland*, who was able to pressure the St. Petersburg government," said Sokolov. "This proves the power of our network."

The INSP adopted *The Big Issue Capetown* for 1997, as well as *La Rue*, which has been under attack from competing papers. Of the six homeless papers now operating in Paris, *La Rue* is the only one considered ethical by the INSP. Network-wide financial support, however, is reserved for the Capetown paper, which is one of the few street papers that operate under third-world conditions.

Debi Diamond, editor of the Capetown *Big Issue*, reported that "homelessness is very urgent and serious in South Africa. In our country, it is about the destruction of the family unit."

The South African is beginning a newspaper in Capetown as part of organizing a day center for the city's homeless population. Presently, almost nothing exists for Capetown's homeless.

The majority of Capetown's homeless are laborers, classified as colored, who come from the farmlands. "In Black culture," said Diamond, "the community is still able to take care of itself, but this is beginning to break down."

About 40% of farmers pay their laborers in

alcohol. "When people become so damaged they have to move to the city, they only have a few years left," said Diamond.

"Work allows a person to become independent of patronizing charity," said Diamond. "The options are now washing cars, recycling, begging, or stealing. *The Big Issue* now offers another alternative."

Continued on page 14



INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF STREET NEWSPAPERS DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS MEET AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

the INSP adopted *The Big Issue*, *Capetown*, and Paris' *La Rue* as papers that would enjoy special support, including financial help and political solidarity.

### The Big Philosophy

While the network has, until recently, been funded by the European

ment. *The Big Issue* cannot just sit back and say, 'You've got it wrong.' We need to adopt papers and say, 'How can we help?'"

The *Big Issue* founder committed to spreading his paper's model of general interest entertainment journalism and corporate support, combined with social service support for vendors.

**"*The Big Issue* cannot just sit back and say, 'You've got it wrong.' We need to adopt papers and say, 'How can we help?'"**

**John Bird**

**Founder, *The Big Issue***



REAL CHANGE DIR. TIMOTHY HARRIS REPORTS ON EVENTS IN NORTH AMERICA. AT RIGHT ARE SHANNON BROWN AND JOHN ELLIS OF CHICAGO'S *STREETWISE*.

world were on this new project.

*The Depths* editor Valeriy Sokolov reported that their paper took the Russian government to a United Nations human rights committee, which acknowledged that "the Russian Federation violated the rights of the homeless and obliged them to change their practices." St. Petersburg officials are consulting with the paper on how to approach the homeless problem.



# A Dog's Life

## Homeless But Not Dogless in the North Country

BY MARION ANDERSON

In the spring of 1992, I left my home in Georgia to head north to Kodiak, Alaska, where a \$9 an hour job as youth counselor awaited. I left Atlanta with \$800 in my pocket and a job. After driving 5,500 miles in 10 days and paying \$3.00 a gallon for gas in Canada, sleeping in my car, and shelling out \$150 for a ferry ride, I made it to Kodiak with \$4 to spare.

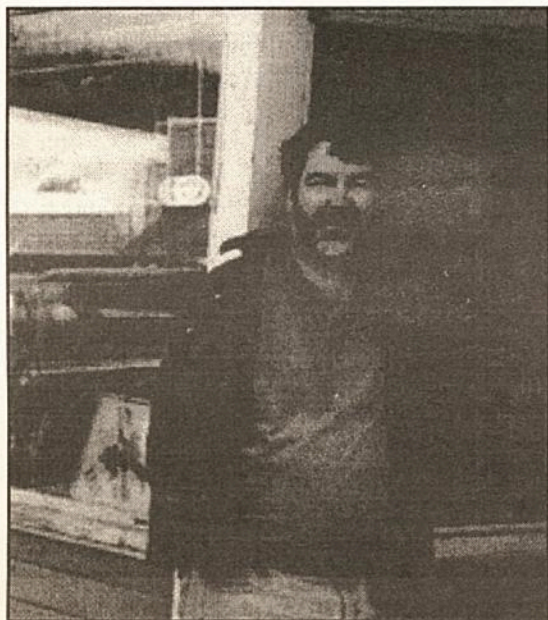
It didn't take me long though after arriving in Kodiak that I noticed a distinct change of pace from that of Atlanta. Kodiak is definitely a one-stoplight Island. What struck me most was the number of pick-ups, rather than sports cars on the island. And being chauffeured by those old pick-ups and new pick-ups were old dogs and new dogs. I finally realized something that I had never really considered before: people bought trucks just to drive their dogs around in.

Gradually after a couple of days in Kodiak and the slower life began to sink in I started to envy these locals that chauffeured canines around for company. It had been a long time since I had a dog. I had a collie in the sixth grade, but after he caught a car he was chasing, I let other things take priority or was prevented by a landlord. Again, even living in Kodiak I was prevented from having a dog by my landlord. But I sure wanted one

After a year in Kodiak and qualifying for maximum unemployment of \$212 per week, I was laid off the day after asking for a raise. I wanted out of there real bad. I left my dock on the bay with \$1,000 and headed back to Georgia, only to get as far as Anchorage.

### My Best Friend

I planned to stay a few days, see some movies, and get some equipment for camping on my way south. It was October and snowing. The campgrounds were closed and so I sought the best deal I could find in a bed and breakfast. I found a bargain. The owner allowed me to stay there until May as I looked for work and



MARION ANDERSON

collected unemployment.

Without going into the disappointment of not finding work in Anchorage for six months I'll just say that I didn't. By the first of May though, I had to move out as the rate for the room was \$80 a day. As I was packing up to go camping, a carpenter doing some remodeling work on the house showed up with a six week old malamut. He said I could have him if I wanted him. Since I was about to lose my room, I thought this would be a good time to get a dog for some company. Little did I know what trouble would come in acquiring a dog.

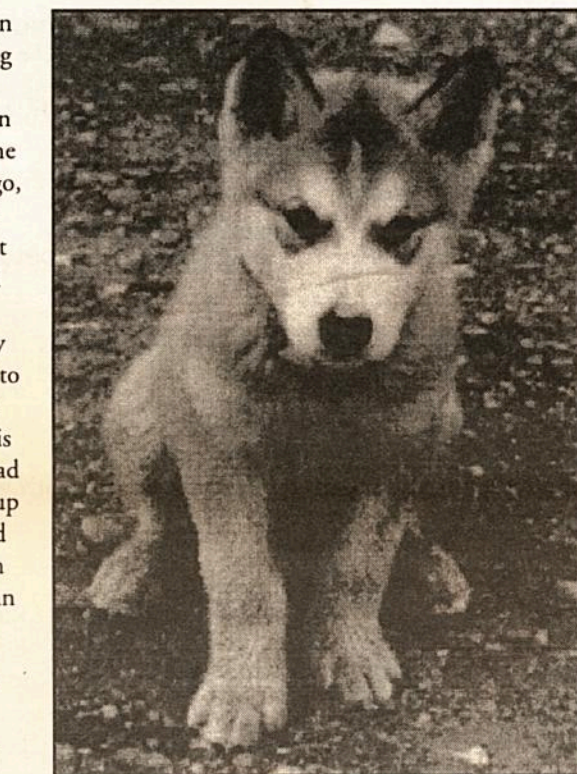
Problems began almost immediately. Zack, as I named him, was running around loose and would crawl under the neighbor's

fence to run with the big dogs next door. When it came time for me to go, I went out and bought a leash and collar and went to my neighbor's to ask for the dog. By this time she had Zack tied up and refused to give him to me. "Can you prove that he is your dog?" she demanded. I said, "Well

not without a witness from the guy who gave him to me; I can't. But let me ask you a question, 'Is he your dog?' He was not. Then, I said, 'Well if you say that he is not your dog and I say he is mine; it seems to me that we ought to be real close to identifying who the owner is. I hope that is not too logical for you.' Still she would not release my dog, and I went to the police to file a complaint. She made me out to be a dog-napper.

While I was at the police station, the neighbor relented and let Zack go. That day, I drove off to Homer to campout on the Homer spit with hundreds of eagles soaring overhead and on the beach. For the next two months I camped in various state parks around Alaska, trying to save enough of my unemployment check to drive down to Port Townsend, Washington. In June my sister flew up to Anchorage and we drove down the Alaskan Highway to Washington.

When I got to Port Townsend, we had four



TOO CUTE FOR WORDS. ZACK AS A PUP.

dollars between us, the same amount I had after driving

to Kodiak. I went out to unpack my car to and discovered a flat tire. When I asked my sister if she had a jack, she said "you mean we drove all the way from Alaska without a jack."

"Yep." I broke my jack in Anchorage when it slipped on the ice. I had bought a jack from Wal-Mart that would not work, so I returned it and got a refund to buy enough gas to get back to Anchorage to pick up my unemployment check. Trying to drive to Washington from Alaska on a few hundred dollars made having a jack seemed like a luxury.

A few weeks after arriving in Port Townsend I finally got my last unemployment check of \$212. That day, Zack

broke his leg and I had to rush him to a Pet E.R. That cost \$250. A few days later I got a gas voucher for \$25 and some ferry coupons from the Community Action Council to go to Seattle to look for work. When I filled up my car, it would not start. The car stayed in a garage for two months while I scrounged the \$400 for repairs.

In the meantime I had to get out of my sister's apartment because of the dog. I also had no car. Someone in Port Townsend that I did a little accounting for offered to let me stay on his day sailer with Zack. For about six weeks I slept in a floating dog house, curled up with my dog with a cast on his hind leg.

For awhile, I had to pick him up and set him off the boat to go to the bathroom to not risk letting him fall in the water. It was enough to make me feel sorry for myself. Then I met a blind man with a blind dog. Apparently no one wanted a blind dog except the person who couldn't tell.

### A McJob from McHell

Toward the end of September of 1994 it was getting cold on the boat. I started thinking about what I would do when I got down to my last dollar. I decided I would spend my last dollar on a cup of coffee at McDonald's. I asked the manager for a job and started washing dishes the next day. Dishes at McDonald's means scrubbing the grill and every piece of equipment in the place every night and for \$4.90 an hour.

My assignment was the "Mission Impossible." Clock in at 6 PM, by 6:15

**"For about six weeks I slept in a floating dog house, curled up with my dog with a cast on his hind leg."**

cook 45 hamburgers and two dozen quarter pounders. By 6:30 make, wrap and microwave for 16 seconds each, 20 cheeseburgers, 15 hamburgers, two without onions and one burger of the month. It's a rush. It's Friday night and two school buses drive in with 80 kids going to a game. It's deja vu every 15 minutes, while holding the onions and the mustard. A canine meal to go is just a plain burger for a dog.

The real dirty work gets going from 9 PM to 1 AM. Every piece of equipment that has come within a cow's hair of food had to be disassembled and cleaned. The worst part was having to clean a 500 degree grill, hot enough to fry a burger in 30 seconds. The grill not only had to be cleaned while hot but also with an acid that would burn your hands. Zack and I lived off of hamburgers and chicken nuggets. My career at McDonald's lasted only three weeks. It hurt just to shake hands.

When I think how my career at McDonald's started out with my last dollar and a cup of coffee, I wonder if I might have been better off by just spilling the coffee on me and then suing them. In the meantime with the gracious help of Dr. Rotchford and the MASH Clinic in Port Townsend I was able to get on General Assistance. I got this, about the same time as I got a pay check.

### No Dogs Allowed

The community action council suggested I go over to Port Angeles and stay at the Serenity House shelter. The night I arrived they asked me a hundred questions before admitting me. Such as, "do you have any weapons; are you carrying any contraband drugs or alcohol." I almost made it until I said, "it's just me and my dog and he can sleep in the car."

"Dog, did you say you have a DOG!!!, a resident intruded. Why you cannot stay here with a dog. Dog's are not allowed on the property." They did allow me to stay one night, while a volunteer volunteered to keep my dog for one night. I had to promise that I would keep my dog elsewhere after that night.

For the next couple of days I slept in my car. I went back to the shelter but it would not let me stay because the director said that I had not kept her informed of my plans over that week as



to whether I intended to come back or not.

She said, "We are not running a hotel here where you can just check in and out as you please." To this I commented, while kneeling, "So the Serenity House is not a Hotel, but you want reservations in order to stay here. Well excuse me, I thought this was a homeless shelter." Now I understand why homeless people would rather live under a bridge than stay in a shelter. To say the least I never stayed there again, but at least I wasn't DOG-LESS.

Toward November, Gary, the mechanic that repaired my car, put me in touch with someone offering a free place to stay for the winter. I stayed until February but had to keep Zack elsewhere. At times he was in a kennel, and but for most of the winter some people kept him on a farm. Again, he eventually got into trouble by chasing

cows and the rancher threatened to shoot him if he ever caught him chasing his \$10,000 bull again. That was the last day Zack stayed on the farm.

One Saturday I went out to see Zack and take him out to a beach to run around. When I got back to the farm, Michael, an 11 year old boy who was looking after Zack asked me for a ride into town. On the way to town he said, "Do you know what I would want if I could have three wishes?" "No" I said. Michael said, "I wish for World Peace and all the hungry people could be fed." There was silence for a few moments as I considered the profundity of that concern from such a young boy. Then I said, "Michael, that is only two wishes; what is your third wish." Michael said, "I'd like a dog just like Zack."

I thought, "Well when you solve World Hunger and find an answer to World Peace then maybe, I'll let you

have my dog, Zack."

Going to the dogs was not over. By March, I was living in a house and paying rent to the Jefferson County Counseling Service. I was trying to survive by working as a counselor on-call at the Kitsap Mental Health Department. They would call me to to come in for 4 hours or so 1 or 2 days a week. This would require driving 100 miles round trip for \$8 an hour. I never made over \$400 a month and when I did, I, of course, got no welfare.

By this time, my car was repossessed and was having to borrow my sister's car to get to work. When my dog got evicted from the farm for chasing cows, I had to take him to where I lived. I could not afford a kennel. The animal

shelter would only help house Zack if I was willing to give him up and this also had the risk of him being put to sleep; a crime for a private individual to do I might say but legal for animal shelter to do. As soon as the Counseling Service got wind of my dog at the house, I was served an eviction notice.

Fortunately, the day I was to move out I had gotten a job at the Rosario Resort and moved to Orcas Island for the summer. Again, I had to keep Zack in a kennel for most of the summer. Recently I was walking Zack on the beach at Birch Bay and met a man with his little three year old daughter. He said, "Honey, look at the dog." She said, "That's no dog, that's a Husky." My sentiments too.

"I thought, 'Well when you solve World Hunger and find an answer to World Peace then maybe, I'll let you have my dog, Zack.'"



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## Zack's Proverbs

1. The reality of hitting the bottom is not nearly as bad as the fear of hitting the bottom, particularly if you have a dog for company.
2. Poop happens. Get use to it.
3. It really doesn't matter, even in the short run.
4. Feed him, pet him dogs will love you unconditionally anyway.
5. Dogs can be expensive but at least they don't sue for alimony or fire you,
6. Sleeping with a dog will change your luck.
7. You meet the nicest people when walking a dog.
8. When consideration is given to housing the homeless it would be most gracious if consideration was made to housing their pets. A dog may not only be a man's best friend but maybe his only friend.
9. Certainly some people come from Venus, some even come from Earth. But just become homeless and you are bound to meet more than you care to from Uranus.
10. "To ere is human; to forgive canine." A Dog's Life

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## Hand Up, Please

Homeless is not synonymous  
with lazy, addicted or mad.  
Homeless means that I have lost  
The housing I had.

Maybe my company down-sized  
or purchased a new machine . . .  
Tell me how to pay the rent  
without my share of green.

Too qualified to do this job  
and not enough for that.  
I'm wanting to keep my stomach full.  
I've already shed my fat.

I need a place to take a bath  
before my interview.  
Employers don't want dirty folks.  
That can't be news to you.

Today I need a place to stay  
where I can safely rest  
so I can go to look for work  
appearing at my best.

I need a place to be home base  
to help me regain my feet.  
If I can't work to raise the rent  
I'm stranded on the street.

—Jim Bentz

## Face in the Mirror

I have nothing to give you.  
I am old.  
Nothing is so marked  
that it cannot cheat with its own nature  
and pass through your hands like fairy money.

I stand surrendered.  
The dogs are looking for me,  
and they will find me,  
because my house is paper  
and my hands are empty.

The clouds move fast like smoke.  
Tomorrow the sun reveals my secrets.  
The face in the mirror is faded, neglected.

There is nothing to be done or said.

—Elizabeth Romero

## Us

We are  
People

Who have  
Separated from

The Rainbow

Living lives

BEYOND  
the mapped realm

—Marion Sue Fischer

## Stir-Fry

I could stay away, yet  
I'm hungry today—  
such a simple thought,  
I've been caught

and dropped in line, here,  
and given mine:  
not my fate  
A single plate

is all, today.  
I'd walk away...

but I can't life, not even  
lift

a finger!

—Stan Burris

## Fillius Nullus—

### Child of No One: Fuck the Bastards

"You bastards," my mother used to rage,  
blaming us for her lack of power,  
Indignant, I would proclaim,  
"If we're bastards, you made us that way."

14-year-old Mae has lost respect for her step-dad:  
"He calls me names—a bastard, a cunt, a slut.  
He threatens, "It would be worth going to jail  
for the pleasure of beating you to a bloody pulp."  
But she went to jail—not him.  
And now he blames her for the cost of her detention—

a state strategy to enforce parental responsibility.  
He goads her to leave home.  
where she is a burden to everyone.  
She plots to live with her biological dad  
who tried to deny paternity  
to avoid paying child support.

Jeff claims, "I was raised by wolves."  
His step-brothers beat him unmercifully  
and threw him down the stairs.  
He protected his soul from the daily brutality  
by seeing his family  
as vicious creatures  
with no relationship to him.

This year the Democrats and Republicans  
battle over who can be the first  
to abandon all the poor little children in this country  
Send their mamas to work, make them marry—  
We can be proud that in this country  
we don't give handouts.  
If there is no money at home—  
let them starve.  
Compassion is a scarce commodity—  
a threat to national security.  
Don't waste it on the children—  
Fuck the bastards.

—Beth Harris



# Soup and Crumbs

## Annual Event Gets Away from Grassroots

Three hundred and fifty people gathered at Carpenters' Hall in Belltown on December 11th, to participate in the 11th annual Soup Line, a fundraiser for social service providers. The event raised about \$13,000 for 12 agencies including a number of shelters and other programs such as El Centro de la Raza and the Central Area Motivation Program.

### Bob Redmond

Governor Lowry was the keynote speaker of this year's event, delivering an electrifying plea for the poor. He followed the Total Experience Gospel Choir, two members of the homeless community, and a half-dozen political leaders who championed the cause of the poor and their own efforts to make change. Meanwhile, politicians ladled out Ivar's clam chowder to those in attendance, who were generally well-dressed, boisterous hand-shakers.

It is probably bad form to question such a well-meaning event, the "home team," as it were, but having given the facts, questions are all I have left. The Soup Line, it must be said, has left a hollow feeling in my stomach.

Maybe it was the soup server who barked "hurry up!" at me and my shabby blue flannel. Maybe it was the fact that I don't like Ivar's clam chowder anyway and it tasted like so much trickle-down. Maybe it was the fact that merely weeks before, the homeless women's forum held council in the very same space, and was as dynamic (and delicious!) as this was rote.

Maybe it was the fact that many in the crowd rudely schmoozed through the compelling remarks of the two poor, formerly homeless speakers, meanwhile giving full attention and standing ovations to several politicians. Maybe it was the fact that City Attorney Mark Sidran, one of the city's more repressive voices against the poor, was dishing out chowder.

Maybe it was the fact that a dozen years later, the Reagan Repression is still alive and kicking and a bowl of chowder can't satisfy a hungry man, nor a crust of bread feed a homeless woman. Most of all, maybe it was the fact that a "Soup Line" itself is nothing to celebrate, being rather a cause for a belly full of vitriol.

In his speech, Lowry said that the number one question state legislators face is how to cut property taxes. While hundreds of thousands of poor, elderly, blind or otherwise disabled Washington State residents will lose food assistance in the coming months due to President Clinton's welfare repeal law, somehow the top priority in Olympia is how to save the average homeowner \$2.70 a month. Lowry himself would save \$4.30, but he said, pummeling the air with his fist, his voice cresting strong to a rousing ovation, "You know what? They can keep the \$4.30!"

The outgoing Governor made the connection between the needs of the poor and the increasing role of politicians as puppets for the rich, but given the events of the past month, one has to

wonder if the cheers he received constituted real political will.

Consider that while City Council President Jan Drago championed the City's plan to spend \$6.5 million on a program to counter the Welfare Repeal Law, the City and County are contributing substantially to the *one billion dollar budget* for private sports enterprises, which includes the wanton destruction of a building the public still owes \$120 million on—and all this after the public voted down a stadium!! Taxation without representation clearly has a sequel. Meek efforts by County Councilman Ron Sims and others to question the propriety of this have been met with a plan to throw another 30 million dollars the Mariners' way.

Mayor Rice missed the Soup Line this year, but he's been a busy man. Rice barely missed out on the cabinet-level spot for Housing and Urban Development, I mean Development, this month. His denial may have been due to his part, unwitting or not, in saving Nordstrom up to 6 million dollars at the expense of that very same HUD.

And consider the latest allegation from the Displacement Coalition: the City Council has played another shell game with housing money: the Holly Park redevelopment has cost \$17 million, which came from a fund earmarked for other housing programs, and will result in a net loss of housing for the poor at Holly Park.

If these leaders do not lead, or listen, who will? Luckily, the Soup Line was not full of vacancy. A grumbling could be heard, if one listened. Anitra Freeman, one of the homeless community, spoke of self-help efforts by the

Street poet Stan Burriss spoke, hearkening back to the first soup-line days of this country, quoting the Seattle General Strike Committee of 1919. The strikers smiled in the face of guns, held fast to their resolve, and finally the

money-men got frightened: "What scares them most," said the strikers, "is that nothing happens...the businessman does not understand that sort of weapon. ... (We) speak of a new world that they are not at home in."

While folks shook hands and slapped backs and talked through Stan and Anitra's speeches, still a grumbling could be heard. Maybe those inside couldn't and still don't hear it, but the grumbling is getting louder and spreading through the homeless

minions to the middle class, through the piss-full alleys and into the emptier cupboards of the suburbs, grumbling from a hungry child and the teachers who try meanwhile to teach them, grumbling from the porches of the old and the imaginations of the many who say something must be done.



"SO ... SUPPORT THE POOR OFTEN?" POLITICOS SHMOOZE IT UP. PHOTO BY JEFF BARRECA.

homeless among themselves. Homeless folks have organized their own shelters, meal programs, computer classes, and writing programs. Freeman said, "Today, we find Seattle a splintered city, with thousands of its people scattered on the streets." She said that if these fractures would heal, the homeless must be heard: "We are your experts. Use us."

**"While folks shook hands and slapped backs and talked through Stan and Anitra's speeches, still a grumbling could be heard."**

## Anitra's Unheard Speech

This was the first poem I wrote in two years, as I finally came out of a long depression:

Out of Limbo  
I come  
to find  
myself  
scattered  
across the pavement  
I search  
creating  
with found objects  
a life.

We all create our lives with found objects. We do not always choose what happens to us - we choose only how we respond, what we make out of what we are dealt.

In the shelters and on the streets I shared the category "homeless" with people of many stories - depression; a car accident with no medical insurance; old age with no pension; a minimum-wage job and no savings; earning just enough over survival to be disqualified for housing subsidy, not enough left over from sheer survival to pay all the expenses of moving into an apartment; and more.

Most of these people were bright, creative, and caring; overwhelmed by unchosen circumstances, they were attempting to create a way out of it.

I have worked with many of these people to organize our own shelters, our own meal programs, our own educational programs. SHARE, Seattle Housing and Resource Effort, is a group of homeless and formerly homeless men and women who have organized self-managed shelters that run at a fraction of the cost of city or private agency shelters. WHEEL, a sister organization to SHARE, has repeatedly initiated programs developed by homeless women to serve the true needs of homeless women. We have here in Seattle a computer skill development program and a writer's development program begun and run by the homeless themselves. As I told one interviewer, I am both inspired and appalled by the amount of creative talent living on the street.

I value and appreciate all efforts made to help the homeless and the poor. I especially urge support of the truly grassroots programs begun and managed by the poor and the homeless themselves. I urge including the voice of the homeless in planning future programs. We are your experts - use us.

Today, we find Seattle a splintered city, with thousands of its people scattered on the streets. Together, we can create with what we find, a new life for us all.



# Snapshot of Shame

## One Day Survey Reveals Worsening Problem

By BOB REDMOND

In the lobby of the Carpenters Hall on December 11th, the Seattle-King County Coalition for the Homeless held a press conference. While a throng gathered for the annual Soup Line held in the main hall, the Coalition released statistics from their 17th annual survey on homelessness and called for communities to show more compassion for the homeless.

Coalition co-chair Scott Pinegar; Howard Finck, Executive Director of Friends of Youth; and a formerly homeless youth named Danette spoke in turn. Pinegar tried to focus the attention not on the media event but on actual solutions and dialogue towards that end: "Homelessness won't be solved by sound bites, but by sound public policy and sound public-private partnerships. These approaches begin with public awareness."

The survey found that on October 23, 1996, all the shelters surveyed operated at full capacity, serving 2,522 people, and turning away another 919 folks. The survey also counted 302 people sleeping in cars, parks, doorways, or otherwise outside. This number is down from 450 two years ago, but besides being an unreliable statistic, Pinegar says, the Coalition suspects more people are simply heading for the suburbs, as they have less chance of being harassed there. "The problem has not diminished but may be getting worse," said Pinegar.

Of the 2,522 clients actually served, one fourth were children, mirroring the national poverty rate for children, one of

the worst in the industrialized world. "I never foresaw the day...when I started 31 years ago, that youth advocates and homeless advocates would be one and the same," said Finck. He said that there has been a 43% increase in shelter beds for youth since 1993, which only points to the number of kids in need.

Finck went on to discuss the "crisis of welfare reform," and "the hardening of attitudes" towards the homeless and facilities to help them. He echoed Pinegar in describing a range of effective responses to the crisis, which include affordable housing; treatment for the mentally ill and chemically dependent; adequate welfare, child care, and health care; and more livable wage jobs, including education for workers to fill those jobs.

Danette, who was homeless and pregnant at age 15, testified to her difficult road but also the effectiveness of the programs that gave her a second chance. She graduated from high school early, and is now raising her 3-year-old son and helping counsel other teens at Central Youth and Family Services.

If communities could see the human face of homelessness, said the Coalition, maybe they would show the compassion of which they are capable. "Those in need are not the problem but are acting in response to overwhelming situations in their lives," said Finck. "We must call on Seattle and King County communities to step forward, demonstrate compassion, and support the homeless families, children, youth and individuals who need our help."

### Lesser and Lesser

Percentage of cities reporting an increase in homelessness: 71%

Percentage of cities that turn away homeless due to lack of resources: 81%

Average decrease in number of available shelter beds: 2.5%

Average amount of time it takes for a homeless person to get off the street: 6 months.

Average decrease in available transitional housing: 11%

Percentage of homeless who are mentally ill: 24%

Percentage of homeless who are veterans: 19%

Percentage of homeless who are employed: 18%

Percentage of cities in which families must split up to find shelter: 56%

Average percentage of income spent on housing by low-income households: 49%

Percentage of eligible low-income households receiving housing assistance: 28%

Percentage of cities that have stopped taking applications for at least one housing assistance program due to length of waiting lists: 68%

— All information taken from 1996 Conference of Mayors Report on Housing and Homelessness

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## Statement by S.H.A.R.E following 1996 Queen Anne Mud Slide

The Friday before Christmas, Seattle newspapers reported a man found dead in the mud. Without a home, he'd dug for shelter into a Queen Anne hillside that collapsed and killed him.

There were other homeless people camping with him. Are they still there? No one can say for sure.

This could have been prevented.

People need safe shelter. Over 1,000 every night in Seattle don't have safe shelter even after every space in shelters is full.

So people die.

When people in a morally strong city see needless death, they work to change it. SHARE calls on Seattle to make these 1997 New Year's Resolutions:

- Offer basic shelter for everyone now sleeping outside in Seattle.
- Make encampments of homeless men and women safe for themselves and others. It should be legal to camp outside until there is shelter for everyone inside.
- Respond quickly when reports are made living people missing in the mud.



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## Adventures in Poetry with © Dr. Wes Browning

### Food for Naught

*Q. What is a meta phor, anyway?*

*A. Metaphors are bready things.*

**G**ood metaphors are the sacramental bread for our eucharists of meaning. (Not to be confused with the sermons of those eucharists, which are like similes.) Unpopular metaphors are fruitcakes. Over-extended metaphors are burnt toast. The current metaphor will be a little pile of smoking ashes by the time I am through with it.

From what I have said so far, it should be clear that anyone who would write, and publish, poetry without metaphors would eat peanut butter with a spoon, in public.

The True Poet does not use just any metaphor. Plain white bread will not do. The True Poet is, him- or her- self, a baker. If s/he is going to use stale bread, it will at least be his/her OWN stale bread, not store bought.

Nevertheless, there are one or two excellent off-the-shelf metaphors suitable for use by the Lazy Poet.

### The Mother of All Metaphors

Grains barely need us to grow.

They are glorified grasses.

They are facts of life.

Facts that would fill fields forever

if we didn't bother to mow.

But from the field to the table  
hands must intervene.

As from the fields to the poet  
thoughts must intervene.

"Take this, and eat"

is not an abstract proposition,  
it is an offer of humanity,  
of hands AND thoughts.

Of course, as that poem illustrates so well by its deficiencies, poetry doth not live by bread alone. It also desires the meat of meaning itself, the cheese of rhyme, and the lettuce, tomato and onion of rhythm.

I will finish this month with a poetic cheeseburger:

### A Brief Defense of Free Bread and Circuses

Many people have thought  
free bread and circuses brought  
the Roman Empire down so low.

And the same also say  
that in a similar way  
our own will collapse, you know.

They say it's a shame,  
and the poor are to blame,  
for demanding those shows and dough.

But I know it's a lie,  
empires naturally die,  
with or without the side-show,

And in dying ooze pus,  
namely waste and surplus.  
For me? - I'd like my share to go.

**Contact Dr. Wes at [wes@speakeasy.org](mailto:wes@speakeasy.org), or visit his  
webpage at <http://www.speakeasy.org/~wes>.**



# Shelter Shortage

## Muni Trial Over But Problem Remains

A year ago the City of Seattle posted a "Notice and Order to Remove" on the Municipal Building at 4th and James—"This material will be removed in 24 hours." "Material" seemed to mean both the belongings of homeless people and the people themselves. As many as 100 men and women had been sleeping outside the Muni for as long as two years while the City followed an unofficial policy of tolerance.

### Michele Marchand

Three weeks prior to the Removal Order, a 62-year-old homeless woman named Vera, who had been sleeping in an alley in Belltown, was run over by a recycling truck. She lost both her legs.

...

The growing number of homeless men, women, and families in Seattle, King County, and Washington State far outpaces the provision of shelter; some people have no recourse but to sleep outside. Recent statistics from the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless show there were 155,165 incidents of homeless people and families turned away from shelter for lack of space in a year-long period ('95-'96) in this state. [See related article on the Seattle-King County Coalition for the Homeless "No Room at the Inn" press conference, this issue of Real Change.] City of Seattle staff estimate 2,200 people sleep on the streets of our fair city every night.

Meanwhile, the City's increasing and often ineffective effort to develop policies and ordinances to regulate the movement, behavior and sleeping areas of homeless people allows tragedies to happen. And, the City's nearly year-long effort to prosecute some of the individuals involved in the Municipal Building encampment recently ended with charges being dropped.

### So Why Sweep the Muni?

Mayor Rice cited an increased number of complaints of hygiene problems, drug use and drinking, and illegal activity around the camp for his decision to discontinue the Muni encampment last January. The City spent \$15,000 to remove what they termed "hazardous waste" from the Muni encampment. In an absurd act of City theatre, they called out the Hazardous Materials Team—moon-suited and with leaf blowers (!)—to perform for the media at a rally just before the notices were posted.

Ironically, that \$15,000 would've funded at least two years' servicing of a Honeybucket for those sleeping outside. An even easier—and cheaper—solution would've been to open the public restrooms at the nearby Public Safety

Building, already staffed 24 hours with security guards.

And that was the message from the homeless people sleeping outside: "Give us the tools to do this safely and well!"—access to restrooms, the cooperation of police, and brooms and garbage cans in the morning. The day before the notices were posted 10 men and women who had been sleeping at the Muni delivered a letter to the Mayor: "Each of us has been sleeping here a long time (at the Muni Building)," they wrote. "It has been our home. Please meet with us before driving us away...Thank you."

A loosely-formed coalition of activists and advocates also requested a meeting, as did the Seattle-King County Coalition for the Homeless. No meeting with the Mayor was granted, although Jim Hammond, Rice's aide, met with people *after* the notices went up.

## CITY OF SEATTLE NOTICE AND ORDER TO REMOVE

DATE POSTED	TIME POSTED	LOCATION/ADDRESS
1/18/96	6:00pm	Municipal Building 600 - 4th Ave

THIS IS NOT AN AUTHORIZED AREA FOR STORAGE OR SHELTER. THIS MATERIAL WILL BE REMOVED IN 24 HOURS.

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE IN RELOCATION, CALL THE COMMUNITY SERVICES OFFICERS FOR ASSISTANCE: 684-4790.

### Creative Landscaping

And then nothing happened for two months. The notice-posting scare tactic drove many of the homeless people away—some to a camp inside a parking garage two blocks south on 4th Avenue, others to go it alone in alleys, doorways, on hillsides.

But more than a dozen stalwart homeless folks and a couple of organizers continued to sleep out at "Camp Muni." The police started occasionally appearing at 4 AM and threatening to arrest people, causing a few to move onto the sidewalk. But no arrests were made until after the City engaged in a clever "landscaping" effort to move people.

"We don't want to arrest you guys," Hammond said at a public meeting. "So we're going to environmentally modify the place so that you can't sleep there." Shortly thereafter, several dozen

small, spiky bushes were planted in the strip of earth in front of Muni. The next night (March 14th) Muni campers, equipped with shovels and planters, potted and replanted some of the bushes to clear the sleeping area. Police arrived in short order, and eleven people were arrested.

John Hoffman, a local activist, was arrested that night while simply crossing the street to make a pay phone call to the press. An intoxicated man, too drunk to understand, was arrested anyway. He was in survival mode; just wanted to sleep. Police threatened to impound bystander's car because it was alleged to contain a shovel.

### Charges Dismissed

As is typical, the people who had addresses were released on personal recognizance after 12 hours in jail. The people without addresses, however, were held until they pled guilty, or would've stayed in jail until some indefinite time. The trial didn't begin until months later, as it turned out.

By the time the case got to court, in late September, only five people were still charged—with criminal

trespass and/or property destruction. During the trial Jackie Campbell, Manager of the Municipal Building, testified under oath that there was no damage to the spiny shrubs transplanted back in March. Charges were then dropped against all but one person.

Charges against that person—organizer Scott Morrow—were dropped on December 10th. The City gave no reason for dropping charges; Morrow believes "it was becoming apparent to the public at large that it was absurd to continue, and that the trial was politically motivated."

### Homeless People Buried

We have come full circle this year: in a tragic bookend to the Muni sweeps story, on December 6th a mudslide on lower Queen Anne hill resulted in the death of at least one homeless man, who had burrowed into the loamy hillside for safe sleeping.

"I never thought I'd be fighting for the right to sleep outside."

Scott Morrow, SHARE

What is the alternative to continued efforts to sweep campsites and create ordinances to move homeless people out of downtown? Diverting attention by pointing to all the good (but inadequate) things being done or planned for folks on the street does nothing. Diverting attention from the pain and suffering the destruction of Camp Muni caused by pointing to the (solvable) health and safety problems at encampments does not solve the problem. Neither, clearly, does criminalizing and politicizing efforts to keep encampments going until there is a more humane alternative.

Even the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* gave credence to the discussion of a sanctioned encampment; in a February 21st editorial entitled "City Hall's Homeless" the paper stated "...the City should explore in-depth the possibility of creating outdoor camping areas on public lands with attendant cleanup facilities." In February, *Seattle Weekly* writer Eric Scigliano published a page-long listing of other cities that do provide tools and sanction encampments. This list includes Phoenix, Arizona, and Orlando, Ft. Lauderdale and Jacksonville, Florida.

Morrow says, "I never thought I'd be fighting for the right to sleep outside." The cry for a Hooverville in Seattle seems strange, seems like giving up. But things aren't going to get better anytime soon, and the Muni sweeps resulted in unnecessary pain and suffering.

Another effect of the sweeps and the nearly year-long prosecution was that it took street organizers and homeless people away from what they do best: coming up with creative community solutions to ending homelessness. Until enough housing and shelter exists for everyone, what is Seattle waiting for?

## Social Security

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# Landlords, the Law, and You

LAC is a small legal services office providing legal assistance to tenants who are faced with the threat of eviction or are having other difficulties in their tenancies. In the past year, we have seen a dramatic rise in the number of requests for assistance.

The federal government's reduction of funding for Evergreen Legal Services severely reduced the number of attorneys available to low-income clients. The impending changes in the welfare system and disability benefits loom ominously before us and ensure that even more people living in poverty will miss the shrinking safety net.

The Residential Landlord Tenant Act provides some protections to tenants, but getting those protections enforced is another matter altogether. Enforcing a tenant's rights requires a complete understanding of the law and the tenant's responsibilities under those laws.

Tenants who are forced to represent themselves in court may have an understanding that they have been mistreated by their landlord, but they are unable to present their case in a way that the courts will recognize as a defense to the eviction.

Many times tenants have the misconception that they can simply withhold their rent if the landlord has not made repairs or provided all the services promised. Those tenants often end up being evicted even though their landlords were not in compliance with the law. LAC's first rule for tenants is "You gotta pay if you want to stay."

The Residential Landlord Tenant Act also allows tenants to bring a lawsuit against their landlords. In most cases, however, the realities of the situation make it extremely difficult to do so.

Most legal services offices do not have the staff to file lawsuits because all their resources are tied up in defending tenants who are being evicted. Most private attorneys will not take such cases because they are not profitable and can be time consuming.

Tenants who try to file suit on their own will most likely face a skilled defense attorney who will be able to raise defenses, such as the tenant

abandoned the property. Furthermore, in order to be restored to the property, a tenant must bring a motion for injunctive relief immediately, a motion which most tenants (and many attorneys) have little knowledge of.

The law also has wrinkles in it that leave some tenants totally defenseless. This past week a single mother with five children came to our office. She had moved out of a shelter into a duplex and paid the landlord \$900 for rent and a deposit. As she was moving in, the landlord told her that the property was being sold but that the new owner would let her stay. What he didn't tell her was that the property was actually being foreclosed upon in 7 days and that he had no idea who the new owner would be. A mortgage company received the deed and after 20 days served the tenant with an eviction lawsuit.

Since the house was transferred by a special foreclosure proceeding, the tenant was not entitled to any written notice from the new owner before the eviction proceedings were started. On December 20, 1996, an eviction order was entered by the court, and the tenant now faces the real prospect of having to move back into a shelter with her five children during the holiday season.

To complicate matters further, she now has an eviction on the public records and a judgment for court costs and attorney fees through no fault of her own. She may have a claim against the former owner of the property, if she can find him, but she had no defense against the eviction.

In the coming months in this column, LAC staff will try and provide information that will help keep people in their housing. If you are faced with a situation that could threaten your housing, be sure to try and get the advice of an attorney. Despite a shortage of attorneys in legal services offices, there are ways to get the information and advice necessary to keep a roof over your head.

—Mark Chattin is Director of Legal Action Center, a program of Catholic Community Services. This is the first in a series of regular columns

# A Holiday Gift to Remember

## Local Homeless Woman Invited to the Presidential Inaugural Ball

Local homeless woman and advocate Catherine Hunt has had the pleasure of her company requested at the Presidential Inaugural Ball, January 20th. Hunt, 34, who volunteered with the '96 Clinton/Gore campaign since August said, "I'm honored. I wasn't expecting this at all. And the exciting thing is I can dance!"

Hunt believes the invitation is a grand opportunity to raise consciousness about homelessness and people in transition. Not able to stay with family, Hunt has been staying in a self-managed shelter as she makes a move from living and working in Hawaii to living in Seattle. "I'm looking forward to the trip and the Inaugural Event. It's a special time for the country and a chance to show national support for a leader I've worked with and admire," Hunt said.

Washington state, she feels, is out front in this country with smart, influential political and business leaders but we must be responsive to challenges. "We must provide models which raise the level of dialogue, commitment, activity, and rebuild trust," she said. "Homeless people have talents and skills as diverse and unique as each individual and his/her circumstances."

"We must ask tough questions: How will we shelter people who can't or won't shelter themselves? or feed people? or provide health care? or encourage economic opportunities for people who can't or won't seek these opportunities? How do we provide

nurturance to children and families and people who can't or won't feel and share it themselves? How will we empower women to feel safe with fuller economic recognition within their families, communities, the nation? How can we prevent homelessness? The answers will come from us, all of us."

In this new year the Clinton administration will be enacting plans that reform Welfare—part of a tired, but historic American safety net. The reassurance from Health and Human Services Department is that the changes



CATHERINE HUNT EMBRACES REAL CHANGE MASCOT AND FASHION MODEL ZELDA DE MILO

are in the Welfare offices and service delivery systems. This perspective takes the blame off victims and empowers beneficiaries to help solve problems. Solutions from the heart work best.

Hunt has a Bachelor's degree in Education

and English from Southwest Missouri State University. She grew-up in St. Louis and has worked in Milwaukee and Honolulu. She has traveled around the world and been politically active for over a decade.

Asked what she plans to accomplish in D.C., she said, "I hope to have a good time. I understand the events have an academic and policy focus this year. I hope we aren't working construction on a 'Bridge'," she laughed.

Hunt is encouraging the community to share articles, ideas, poems, or newspapers related to homelessness and transitional living that she will bring to

D.C. She is welcoming financial contributions, as well, to help defray the expenses of the trip. She can be reached in care of W.H.E.E.L. (Women's Housing Equality and Enhancement League) #206-448-7889 or fax #206-448-2389, or PO Box 2548 Seattle, WA 98111-2548.

"With all the excitement," said Hunt, "it's a comfort to know that when I turn back into a pumpkin after midnight, I'll have a place in the Belltown P-Patch."

## Belltown Barber

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## PAPERS, CONT. FROM PAGE 5

## The INSP 1997 Program

The INSP, which represents 16 of the 60 papers in Europe, Australia, and South Africa, was founded in July of 1994 and regards itself as the "voice of the European street paper movement." INSP member publications have a combined circulation of over one million copies per month.

While the European network has until recently been funded by the

European Community, an initiative by the governments of the United Kingdom and Germany to eliminate EC funding for anti-poverty work has frozen the relevant line item in the EC budget until the matter is resolved. INSP staff are optimistic that other means of funding for the network will be found.

The network of papers provides support for its members, assists in new start-ups, promotes the exchange of information, and provides an agreed upon ethical framework for the operation of street newspapers. Member publications must commit to "financial transparency," and to spend any post-investment profits on social support for the vendors. The INSP committed to continuing a social audit process initiated last year.

The INSP hopes to continue expansion throughout Europe and to other continents, and committed to establishing a "concrete working relationship with NASNA, through information and article exchange, linking up through the internet, and attending conferences."

Timothy Harris, Director of Seattle's *Real Change*, reported that a Steering Committee has been formed to organize a second North American conference of street papers, at which it is hoped a



NASNA Charter will be adopted.

One concrete way the INSP has strengthened the European street paper movement is through staff exchanges. INSP Coordinator Tessa Swithenbank reported that twenty-one exchanges have taken place within the network since last May, allowing for the exchange of ideas and skills between papers.

The INSP also committed to continue representing street papers at conferences and in international organizations. Last year the INSP attended the Madrid Homeless Confer-

ence and the Habitat II conference in Istanbul. The INSP is also a member of the European Anti-poverty Network. A third INSP General Assembly is planned for late 1997.

INSP General Assembly delegates were *Das Megaphone*, Graz, Australia; *La Rue*, France; *BISS*, Munich; *TagesSatz*, Kassel, Germany; *Terre di Mezzo*, Milan; *Straatnieuws*, Utrecht, Netherlands; *De Rotterdamse Straatkrant*, Rotterdam; *CAIS*, Portugal; *The Depths*, St. Petersburg; *Situation Sthlm*, Stockholm; *The Big Issue*, UK; *Big Issue Cymru*, Wales; *Big Issue Scotland*; and *Big Issue*,



# Storm

## Gallery Provides Calm Space for Local Poet

**B**elinda Springer, better known to her friends as "Storm," has been a regular at Belltown's Street Life Gallery for more than two years now, writing poetry at the gallery's mac, sketching naturalist scenes, and making abstract drip paintings, all of which helps Storm cope with the

turbulent emotions she feels every day.

The 31-year-old artist was born in Seattle and has always lived in Washington State. The Street Life Gallery has been a place of friendship and stability during tough times. "If I didn't have the Gallery," confided Storm, "I'd probably be walking around a lot looking for a place to be."

away all at the same time," she explained. "I wound up on the streets."

"The gallery gives me a way to reach out and be in touch with people," she said. "It beats my four lonely walls."

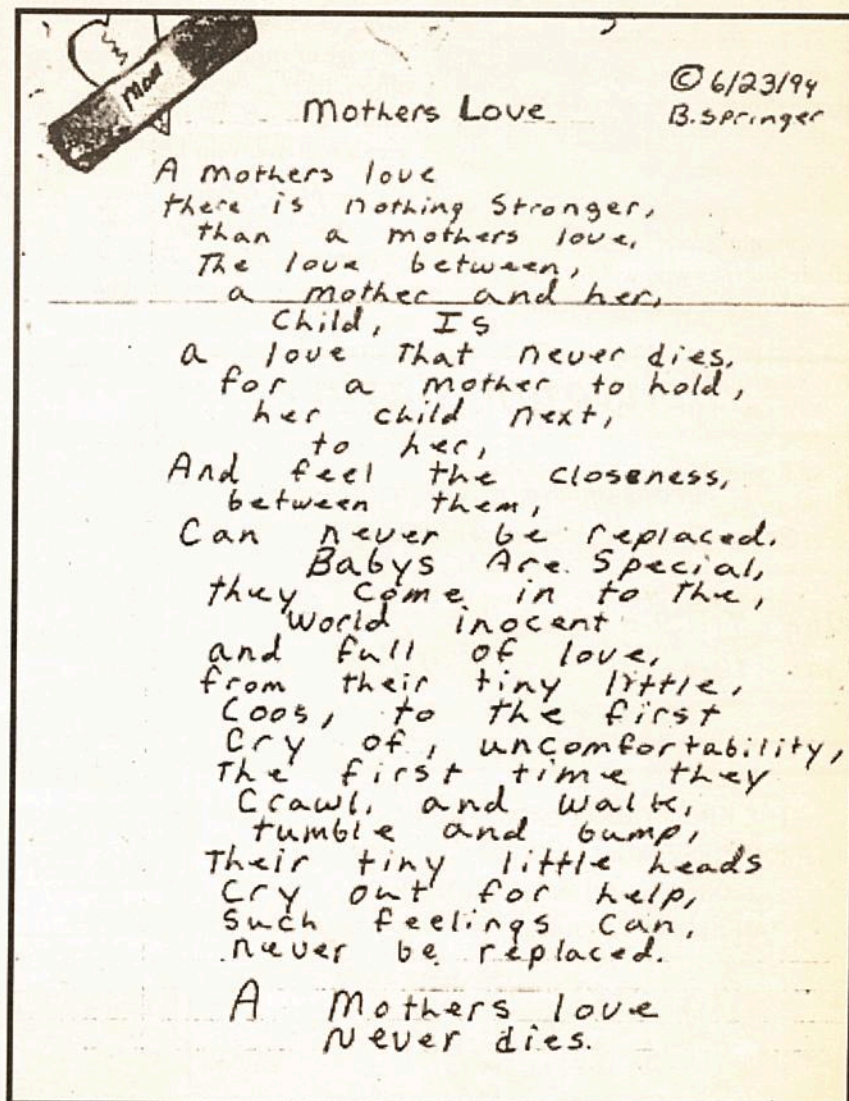
"My story isn't that great, but it's getting better."



STORM'S GALLERY WORK SPACE. PHOTO BY JOHN MOSTROM

"My art's just a way to release my pain. My real thing is my writing. Lately I've been getting in touch with my poetry a lot," said Storm. "It's great to have a computer to work with, because it helps with my spelling. I never had a chance to go to school. When I was a kid I was always running from Child Protective Services, and never had a chance to settle down."

While Storm has been off the streets for about a year, she had been homeless on and off for four years. "I lost my unemployment, was evicted, and had my kids taken



Mothers Love  
© 6/23/94  
B. Springer

A mothers love  
there is nothing stronger,  
than a mothers love,  
The love between,  
a mother and her  
child, is  
a love that never dies,  
for a mother to hold,  
her child next,  
to her,  
And feel the closeness,  
between them,  
Can never be replaced.  
Babys Are Special,  
they come in to the,  
world innocent  
and full of love,  
from their tiny little,  
coos, to the first  
cry of, uncomfortability,  
The first time they  
crawl, and walk,  
tumble and bump,  
their tiny little heads  
cry out for help,  
such feelings can,  
never be replaced.

A Mothers love  
Never dies.



## Speaking to Stones and Other Serious Acts of Faith

Last Thanksgiving Day, as Strand Helpers fed two hundred homeless men and women at Occidental Park, five people stood in the rain and shouted at the cobblestones. I am sure that sounds familiar. We've all seen the mentally ill standing on corners and in parks, shouting epithets and haranguing whoever passes.

### Wes Browning

How was this different? These people were acting together. The event they were gathered for had been planned as a rally, a demonstration that "bread is not enough", that free Thanksgiving dinners aren't enough, that what the homeless need more than meals and shelter is eradication of the causes of homelessness.

The rally was conceived by artist Rahn Porter, who arrived in Seattle only weeks earlier. He approached local homeless activists with the idea of creating a rally around the unveiling, at a city park, of giant loaves of bread which he would fashion. The local media would be notified, flyers would be circulated, and the giant loaves of bread would attract a crowd of interested NON-homeless to hear the homeless activists speak.

Occidental Park was selected for its nearness to downtown and to homeless shelters, and because no permits would be needed as long as only a bullhorn was used.

Now let us examine how sane this "rally" idea was in the first place. Who, besides the speakers themselves, and the homeless who have little choice, would be out in Occidental Park at noon on Thanksgiving Day, with or without giant loaves of bread?

How were these giant loaves of bread going to be created and transported to Occidental Park in two weeks by an artist who had only just moved to Seattle?

How sensible and sane could these homeless activists have been to believe that these giant loaves of bread would be in place, the TV cameras would be rolling, and throngs would gather on a warm, sunny (huh?) Thanksgiving

Day in SEATTLE, listening to speeches they would really rather not hear because they would rather be enjoying Thanksgiving at home, basking in the glow of their own charity, having contributed to the holiday foodbanks?

Rahn Porter himself couldn't actually make it, so not only was the art not present, there was no bullhorn. No one at all showed up for the rally except the speakers and one of their friends. Speaking were Anitra Freeman, Madeline Lewis, and Norma Rennison, representing the Homeless Women's Network and WHEEL; Steve Martinez, a Real Change vendor representative; and myself.

Yes. Me.

We discussed among ourselves the ludicrousness of presenting our arguments about the long-range needs of the homeless to the people in the soup line, who live it and don't need to hear it. We agreed unanimously to go ahead with the rally, although no one was actually there to be rallied.

Perhaps the only concrete beneficial outcome of the "rally" came about incidentally. One of the homeless men in the soup line was a young man who came

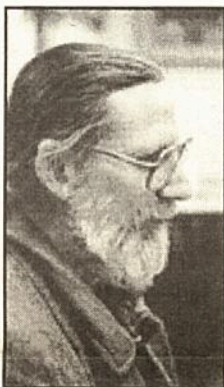
over and asked us to pray for him. He had come from Hawaii to find work. Instead he was robbed and wound up on the streets. We formed a circle and prayed that he would find shelter and peace, and a way to return to his family in Hawaii. Then we found a guide to show him where Lutheran Compass Center is, and pressed him to apply there the next morning.

We didn't need the rally to help that man. The five of us do this sort of thing on a daily basis. If we hadn't met him there we might have met him somewhere else in our work.

So, was the rally crazy?

Absolutely not. No political movement is possible without the intangible will to make it happen. The rally served to strengthen our will, and gave us renewed hope and confidence. Nobody gave up and walked away.

As long as there are people willing to try to move cobblestones, there is hope that others will be moved.



**"As long as there are people willing to try to move cobblestones, there is hope that others will be moved."**

## Our Seattle Heritage

### Christianizing Seattle

#### Early Missionary Comes to do Good and Does Well Indeed

In the early years of the 19th century, the East Coast witnessed the Second Great Awakening - a religious movement inspiring a crusade of clergyman to migrate to the Northwest. Inspired by the journals of Lewis and Clark, as well as religious doctrines, they sought to promote humanitarian reform through conversions of the native inhabitants to Christianity and hoped to create a Protestant republic.

Initial efforts begin with Reverend Dr. John Richmond, a Methodist Episcopal missionary, who, with his wife and four children, were the first full-blooded whites to settle the Puget Sound area. Richmond initiated the Nisqually mission near the fort of the Hudson Bay Trading Company in 1839. His attempts to Christianize the natives, however, proved futile.

Yet others soon followed. Along with converting the natives, they serviced settlements interspersed throughout the Puget Sound wilderness: performing marriages, burials, and occasionally Sabbath day services. Essentially, however, they sought to instill old, familiar notions of order in these new, rugged communities.

Town founders recruited ministers - sometimes aggressively. A town minister was a sign of prosperity and attracted more settlers. When Reverend John DeVore, for example, sailed to the Northwest in 1853, destined for Olympia, he was intercepted at Alki by Lafayette Balch, founder of neighboring Steilacoom, who persuaded DeVore to come to Steilacoom, offering a new church and sole jurisdiction of the town. DeVore accepted.

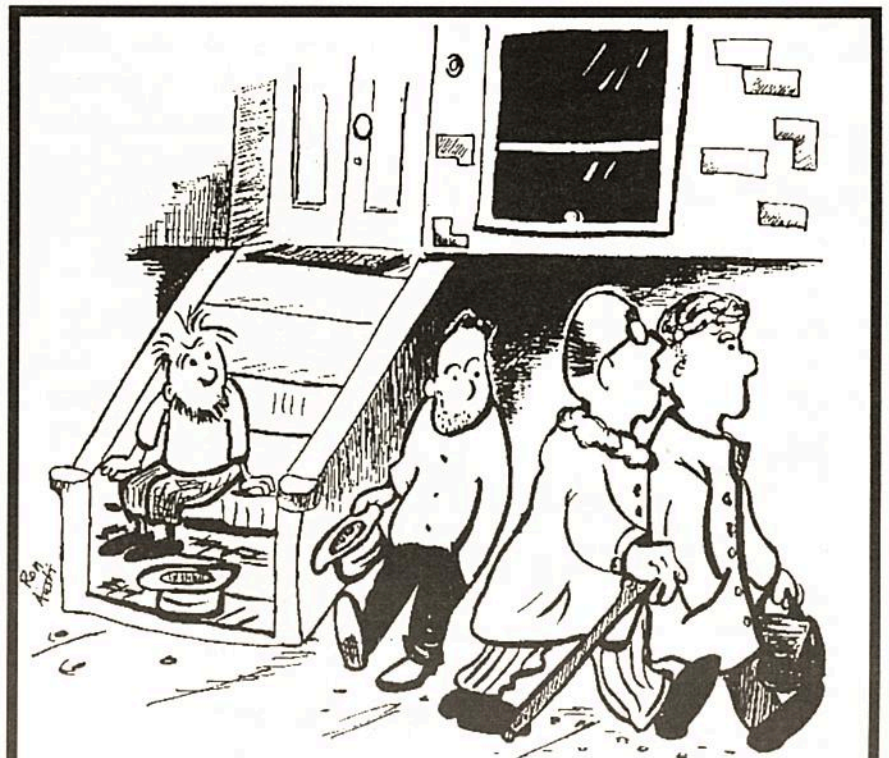
Meanwhile, that same year, Reverend David Blaine, also a Methodist Episcopal minister, with his wife, Catherine, sailed from New York for Steilacoom. Learning of DeVore's recent settlement there, they were encouraged to move

north to a small village known as Seattle where its 50 inhabitants were eager to get a minister. In fact, Seattle landlords, such as the Borens and Dennys, fought over whose claim he would construct his church. Catherine wrote to a friend, "Each is afraid that the other will have some preference shown him or will derive more than his share of the benefits from the locality of the church." Denny's claim was chosen for the site.

Receiving support from his mission office, as well as pay for his services as county auditor, Blaine became one of the wealthiest men in town. The Blaines soon adopted an attitude of the survival of the fittest and deterministic destiny; preaching progress and cheerfully observing the falling of trees and the yielding of the *debased Indians* surrendering their lands. They preached against inter-racial relationships. Catherine wrote, "You have no idea of the degradation men bring on themselves with the squaws. These squaws are lower and more degraded than you can imagine, but little better than hogs in human shape."

Ironically, they maintained the belief that they were accomplishing a great deal in civilizing the natives and preserving them from rapid deterioration. What they failed to observe, however, was that the natives were dying due to foreign diseases introduced by the white settlers; native adolescents were succumbing to alcohol abuse - a substance non-existent until the arrival of the settlers (in fact, 75% of native American boys in grades 10 to 12 suffer from alcohol abuse, today); and initiating the displacement of the native inhabitants.

—by Chris French



"Another good year to invest in hats."



## January

5

**Sunday, 7 p.m., Torture and Assassination in Guatemala of over 200,000 Guatemalans and more than 20 U.S. citizens since 1954.** Jennifer Harbury support group meeting, working to declassify all U.S. files pertaining to this topic. University Friends Center, Library, 4001 9th Ave. NE. Info, Raki 783-8481.

12

**Sunday, through Saturday, January 25, Free Burma Fortnight** presented by Seattle's Burma Roundtable. Events every day and evening, for detailed information please call Larry Dohrs at 784-6873.

13

**Monday, 7:30 p.m., World Religions as seen through National Cultures Lecture Series,** presentation by Roy Wilson on Native American Spirituality. University Unitarian Church, 6556 35th Ave. NE. Info, 525-8400.

16

**Thursday, 4 - 6 p.m., Citizens Concerned for the People of Iraq** sponsors a Vigil to Commemorate the 6th anniversary of the onset of "Desert Storm" and the U.S. Destruction of Iraq, protest the economic sanctions against Iraq, Jackson Federal Building, 2nd near Marion downtown, info Fellowship of Reconciliation 789-5565

19

**Sunday, 5 p.m. potluck, 6 p.m. short business meeting and announcements, 6:30 program,** Seattle Chapter Fellowship of

Reconciliation monthly meeting, featuring the Rev. Anne Hall with a report on her recent trip to Haiti, 225 North 70th near Greenwood, info 789-5565

20

**Monday, 9:30 a.m. Workshops and Job Fair, 11 a.m. Rally in Gymnasium, noon March, Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration,** Seattle has one of the largest observances in the country, This Year's Theme: "Welfare Reform Means More for the Greedy and Less for the Needy", Workshop Topics will include Public Housing; Welfare, Rights and Reform; Economic Empowerment; Crack, Cocaine, and the CIA; Education; Community Mobilization; Legal Issues; How to Be an Activist; Health Issues; Immigrant Rights. Each workshop will have at least one youth leader. There will also be a Job Fair, and a variety of community organizations will have information about their activities; Sponsored by the MLK Jr. Celebration Committee, which says "We can only achieve real welfare reform through economic empowerment.", Garfield High School, 400 23rd Ave at Jefferson, info 329-4111 x300

21

**Tuesday, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., CISPES general meeting,** Update on El Salvador, planning events and evaluating strategies, 2212 Jackson in WROC Building, info 325-5494

23

**Thursday, 7 p.m., Global Economy series "Global Inequalities, Local Solutions",** information on the inhumane policies of International Monetary Fund and World Bank, featuring Don Shakow on "Bringing It All Back Home", radical political economist and Director, Institute for Washington's Future, sharing thoughts and ideas for the new year based on his local and global work with environment, labor and churches, free, collection taken, St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, 1245 10th Ave E, info Angela Ford 525-1213

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25

**Saturday, 10 a.m. - noon, Tenant's Union Annual Membership Meeting,** organization that provides info about evictions, deposits, repairs, harassment, discrimination, lockouts, utility shut offs, and privacy, among other things! Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 911 Stewart St, info Sara 722-6848

**2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Legislative Issues Forum hosted by Cong. Jim McDermott.** As the 105th Congress convenes, reductions of federal expenditures continue to have serious implications for Washington State low-income workers, seniors, women, children, and students. Programs that monitor air and water quality are also experiencing cutbacks. These and other issues will be discussed at this forum open to the general public. More info: Jane Saunders, 553-7170

26

**Sunday, 2 p.m., Seattle Women Act for Peace** invite you to A Gala Event Celebrating Our Coalition Partners, Fun and Fundraising Gala Dinner, Sing-Along, and Party, Delicious Spaghetti Dinner with Vegetar-

ian or Non Options, Sliding-scale Donation \$15 \$25 \$35, Entertainment by singer Rosy Betz-Zall with pianist Claire Shallit, political satirists The Raging Grannies, Northwest poet Pat Pedersen, RSVP by January 18, Central Area Senior Center, 500 30th South, info 329-3666

## February

1-7

**Annual Black Dollar Days,** a time for all residents of King County to patronize African American businesses: stores, restaurants, services; a time to reflect on keeping community money in the communities; info 323-0534

## Ongoing

**Call the Mayor, 684-4000,** urge him to support LIHI's compromise plan, toilets and sinks for homeless people and all members of the public at the Glen Hotel, & a complete hygiene center at 9th & Lenora! If that costs too much, go back to the original plan, full services at the Glen!

**20 years' funding** by Department of Housing and Human Services for Tenants Union's tenants' rights hotline may be eliminated, providing info about evictions, deposits, repairs, harassment, discrimination, lockouts, utility shut offs, and privacy, call Mayor Rice at 684-4000 and tell him to support funding for the Tenant's Rights Hotline, info Lisa Herbold, Tenants Union, 722-6848 x103

**2nd & 4th Thursdays, 7 p.m., Central Lutheran Church, Parish House, 1710 11th, Seattle-Cuba Friendship-ment Committee meetings,** work to end the U.S. embargo, a project of the Latin American Task Force, info 725-5434 or 932-1152 or 527-7055

**Domestic Violence Drop-in and Support Group,** Every Monday and Wednesday, 12:30-2:30, bag lunch provided. In a safe and confidential environment, women will explore the dynamics of abusive relationships. Millionair Club Women & Family Center, 113 First Ave N. Call Deborah at 301-0833.

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