

VOL. 4, NO. 14, SEPT. 1-30

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## The SSSSSSSSSSmokin' Issue

- Solutions from Nick Licata
- Apple Pickers Kickin' Butt
- Wes Browning Licks Ducks & Dies

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# Real CHANGE

is a Washington State  
non-profit organization

*Real Change* is published the first and fifteenth 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: 1417 S. G St., Tacoma, WA 98405,  
(253) 572-4247 or 572-6582

On the Web at <http://www.speakeasy.org/realchange>  
Email [rchange@speakeasy.org](mailto:rchange@speakeasy.org)  
ISSN 1085-729X

Annual subscriptions (24 issues) are available for  
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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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Dear Real Change,

Thank you for Ruth Fox's wonderful interview with Pete Seeger and Tao Rodriguez, and her article outlining the history of the "Links On The Chain" presentation at Folklife. As Producer of KUOW's radio broadcasts from Folklife (for 13 years), I have to confess that I was very nervous about how that evening's presentation would work on the air. I learned from both Folklife and Rise Up! that the plan for the evening was evolving right up to the last minute. I am grateful to Scott Reed and Bob Barnes for bringing me into the process

shortly before the festival weekend, and allowing me to make suggestions and changes with them, which we all felt made for a smooth show. Credit must also go to Folklife and the wonderful stage crew, for their willingness to trust us in our adaptations, and going with the flow the whole evening. Anyone who was there (or listened on the air or over the internet) knows what a powerful evening it turned out to be.

I first met Pete Seeger at the Iowa Peace Chautauqua in Des Moines in 1984, at which I was producing tapes for another public radio station. It was a muddled, disorganized weekend of great fun, music and information, featuring Pete along with Sweet Honey In The Rock, Holly Near, Inti-Illimani, and dozens of others. When Pete and I talked about the radio taping, and it came time for him to sign a release

form, allowing taping and broadcast, he looked it over intently, stated that it all looked "pretty legal," and proceeded to turn the form upside-down to sign it! He handed it back to me with a mischievous grin and said, "There you go! You got my signature on it, which should give you what you need, but if there's ever any problems with all this, I can say that it isn't really legal, since I signed it that way!"

I've never forgotten his charm and humor, as well as his willingness to talk at length with anyone who wanted to bend his ear for a few minutes. I was tickled to see how much he and Tao enjoyed their Folklife experience, and I hope it won't be long before we see them here again.

Gregg Porter,  
Seattle WA

*Continued page 25*

## Vendor of the Month

### Eric Jarvis

Thirty year old Eric Jarvis recently made his way back to the Seattle area after almost a year of living in Southern California.

Of his time there, says Eric, "There are not very many good-paying jobs for the poor. It's very polarized out there between the rich and the poor. I came back because my family is out here, and because my life was miserable out there."

Other than helping him to get from one day to the next out on the streets, says Eric about his experience with the paper, "Selling *Real Change* has helped me define part of the reason why I think I am homeless right now, which I believe is to plant a seed in people's thoughts. If I can get people to look at me when I am selling the paper, then even if they say no, I've planted a seed in their mind—a seed which brings about awareness."

"There are a lot more caring and generous people in this world than I thought, especially in Pioneer Square. The people I've met out there are very cool and very supportive. I'd like to thank all of them."

As our August vendor of the month, Eric receives a \$25 prize and a gourmet dinner for two at Common Meals. Our heartfelt congratulations to Eric Jarvis!



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Cover: "Mikey, A Class Act," by Wes Browning.



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- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Parent involvement welcome

## We're Not Proud! Donations Cheerfully Accepted

Don't let our beautiful new format fool you into thinking we're too fat and happy to still need your help! This little paper, with its two and a half paid staff, is a low-budget affair, and your donations matter a lot.

*Real 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.

*Real Change* has recently launched the *Real Change* Homeless Empowerment Project to support self-expression by the poor and homeless, sponsoring such projects as the Street Life Art Gallery, the StreetWrites homeless writers group, and our Homeless Speakers Bureau. In September, we will host the founding conference of the North American Street Newspaper Association. *We're doing our share. Please help us out by doing yours. Support Real Change in any way you can.*

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# Seeking Solutions

## City Council Candidate Says More Can Be Done

EDITORIAL

Facts about the need for helping homeless people are readily available; it's a commitment to finding the solutions that has become so elusive. The Executive Summary of Seattle's Community Development program, as submitted to HUD in 1995, reports that there are between 3,900 and 4,300 homeless people on any given night in Seattle. About half of them are probably in the downtown area. And it's not that Seattle isn't trying to do something. The City spends about \$17 million a year to support more than 43 shelter providers.

### Nick Licata

In 1980, there were few homeless people on Seattle's downtown streets or for that matter on the streets of most other cities. The rise in the number of homeless people started occurring from 1980 to 1988, during the two terms of President Ronald Reagan. Under the Reagan administration federal subsidies for low-income housing was reduced 60 percent and virtually no new housing was built or restored.

Even though this was a period of extended economic growth, by the mid-80's the number of homeless people sleeping in urban centers became a major national phenomenon. The large number of people seeking shelter under cardboard boxes, in vacated stairwells and waiting in lines for emergency shelter is a living legacy to Reagan's public policy of privatizing public services and channeling Federal dollars down to the states.

The question now is, how can Seattle handle this problem, both on its own and working in conjunction with other government jurisdictions? Starting on the broadest level, there is a need for the city to work with our Congressional delegation for a federal jobs program to help employ recipients who will not be absorbed in the private economy; i.e. those who are in danger of becoming homeless or who are currently and need employment.

Last April, Mayor Norman Rice argued that projected job growth in Seattle over the

next few years could handle the problem of absorbing these potential workers. While it is true that Seattle alone is expected to employ an additional 70,000 workers by the year 2000, many of those jobs will go to professionals and skilled workers moving into the city. Few if any will be filled by those who are now lining up outside the Millionair Club.

Locally the city should be working with King County to set up its own work skills training program to employ homeless residents and those at risk of losing their homes. Fifteen years ago, the City of Seattle did work with a neighborhood based organization in south Seattle to provide a two year training program for youth-at-risk. It's still operating and providing youth a chance to make a go of it. But no other community based program has been started since then to accomplish the same task. It's time to start again. The City and the County must start tying this region's growth directly to job training programs that can employ those who are homeless.

Obtaining employment is only half of the equation. The other half is finding housing for those in need of it or who are in jeopardy of losing it. Currently thousands of low-income renters are struggling either to find or remain in their housing. According to Federal statistics, an AFDC recipient in this region has to spend 100% of her income on housing. Obviously, that's impossible.

Some supply-sider enthusiasts argue that just by increasing the density of housing in Seattle more affordable housing will result. However, while the construction of new multi-family rental units has been at an all-time high, low-income renter households still do not have greater housing choices because they cannot afford these new units without subsidies. This is because most the new housing units coming on line are being purchased by either new workers to this area or already employed workers who have a secure job and can afford the

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**"The City can save our low-income housing and provide shelter for those that are homeless. But first there must be a commitment to deal directly with the problem."**

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higher rents

Outside of obtaining more funds from either the State, Federal government or additional bond and levies, the other source of providing housing for the homeless would be in preserving the housing that already serves the low income. When that housing stock is eliminated, the low income become homeless. The city can preserve low-income units by passing a "right of first refusal" law. This would give low income tenants an opportunity to secure public funds to buy their apartments before a developer could purchase and demolish that housing.

The City could also adopt an Abandonment Ordinance similar to one enforced in Portland, Oregon that allows the City to file a lawsuit seeking appointment of a receiver for any housing which is in violation of local codes. The receivership program allows the city to either require the repair of derelict buildings or hands it over to a receiver to fix it up and rent it out. This strategy also benefits neighborhood revitalization efforts by removing long time derelict buildings which often become havens for criminal activity.

The City can save our low-income housing and provide shelter for those that are homeless. But first there must be a commitment to deal directly with the problem. With three new members joining the Seattle City Council, hopefully there will now be that commitment.

*Nick Licata is a candidate for Seattle City Council, Position # 6*

# Changes in the Field

## Teamsters and Farmworkers Need Public Support

By JUSTIN OAKLEY

**T**he labor movement is witnessing a historic alliance of the United Farm Workers Union (UFW) and the Teamsters Union, which have recently launched joint campaigns to organize the apple industry of eastern Washington and the strawberry industry of central California. In Washington the Teamsters are demanding union recognition from the two largest apple-packing companies, while the UFW is building community support for farm workers' rights and assisting orchard workers in their disputes with growers.

Given the history of conflict between the Teamsters and the UFW, the decision to launch joint campaigns was groundbreaking. In the early 1970's the two unions fought bloody battles over the right to represent workers in California's rich agriculture industry. Although the violence eventually ended, bitter feelings between the unions remained for years.

One important factor that has led to the UFW/Teamster alliance involves the changes that have occurred within the two unions over the past 20 years. Today the Teamsters are no longer characterized by burly thugs and well-dressed mobsters. After corruption within the union nearly led to a government takeover of the Teamsters in the late 1980's, the union's membership was given the right to directly elect its leadership for the first time in history.

Teamster President Ron Carey, who was first elected in 1991, has purged the union of mob influence, fought employer take-aways, and put a new emphasis on organizing. In 1996 Carey was reelected as the union's president, narrowly defeating James Hoffa Jr., who was backed by the Teamster's old guard. The Teamsters are considered to be one of the most democratic and progressive unions within the labor movement today.

The UFW, with only 25,000 members, certainly could benefit from a partnership with a powerful union like the Teamsters,

who number 1.5 million across North America and 52,000 in Washington State alone. After UFW membership peaked at around 100,000 in the 1970's, membership began to dwindle.

In the 1980's California's Republican governors George Deukmejian and Pete Wilson repaid their big agricultural donors by putting growers in charge of the state's Agricultural Labor Relations Board. Growers began refusing to renegotiate union contracts and wages began to go down, in some cases even below the minimum. By 1993, the year UFW co-founder Cesar Chavez died, union membership had shrunk to roughly 15,000.

### Boycotts Work

One factor that makes it difficult for farm workers to organize is that the National Labor Relations Act, which guarantees most employees the right to unionize and collectively bargain with employers, does not cover farm workers. Most states, including Washington, do not require growers to allow their employees to vote on union representation. Given the lack of legal protection for farm workers, consumer boycotts have been one of the only ways for agricultural unions to apply pressure on employers.

When in 1987 the Chateau Ste. Michelle winery refused to allow its employees to vote on union representation on the grounds that there was no agricultural labor legislation in Washington that established guidelines to which the employer, union and worker would be responsible, the United Farm Workers of Washington State (UFWWS) launched a boycott against the winery and its parent company, U.S. Tobacco. The union garnered support for the boycott from other unions, the Washington Association of Churches, and the national Farm Worker Justice Coalition. UFWWS activists picketed restaurants and stores that sold Ste. Michelle wines and held protests against the winery and its parent company. In 1992 the union also won a discrimination lawsuit

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against the winery on behalf of employees who had been harassed — and, in some cases, fired — for supporting the union.

In 1995, by which time the UFWWS had affiliated with the UFW, Chateau Ste. Michelle finally agreed to allow its workers to vote on union representation. In a secret ballot election in Kennewick on June 2nd, 1995, winery field hands voted 53 to 33 in favor of the UFW, representing the first time farm workers had successfully organized in Washington. Later that same year the union negotiated a contract with the winery, granting the workers a 5.5% wage increase, dental coverage and a pension plan for full-time employees, in addition to the company medical plan already provided. Temporary employees who had worked over 800 hours qualified for benefits.

The victory at Chateau Ste. Michelle is only one of several cases in which farm

workers have organized in recent years. Rose workers in California and Oregon have voted for UFW representation, unionizing at the largest rose growers of both states. The union also claims to now represent two-thirds of mushroom workers along California's central coast. In its campaign to organize strawberry workers in California, the UFW has convinced the owners of approximately 3,000 grocery stores across the country to sign a pledge of support for farm worker rights to clean drinking water and bathrooms in the fields, decent wages, improved housing conditions and freedom from abuses like sexual harassment.

## Low Wages, Hard Work

In eastern Washington, where poverty-level wages prevail among the 40,000 apple orchard workers and 15,000 packing-shed employees, life is hard for apple industry workers. In a letter to the Seattle Times in 1993, Jackie Branz, who was a UFWWS boycott organizer for the Chateau Ste. Michelle campaign, wrote that the life expectancy for a farm worker in Washington was 49 years. Workers at the packing warehouses of Stemilt and Washington Fruit have complained about employer indifference to work-related injuries, excessively hot work areas, and exposure of employees to poisonous carbon monoxide gases from indoor usage of propane forklifts.

Amidst record profits, the average yearly wages of farm workers (\$9,000) and packing-shed employees (\$11,000) have declined in real terms. Teamster

researchers recently put out a graph showing that while production value per worker in the apple industry increased about 90% between 1989 and 1995, warehouse wages and field wages, when adjusted to inflation, had decreased considerably—about 20% for warehouse workers and 25% for field

workers.

So far the UFW and Teamsters have worked together to educate the public about conditions in the apple industry. They have organized support committees in

*Continued to page 14*

# Si Se Puede!

## Anitra Talks the Talk & Walks the Walk

**S**ee say PWAY-day. "Yes we can!" in Spanish. Let me tell you what else it means...

Early in August, a man name Fred Hight, whom I had met at the Labor Teach-In over Memorial Day weekend, called to ask me if I wanted to go along with a delegation from the local Labor Council that was going to Eastern Washington to support an apple workers rally. I said "Sure!"

He picked me up Sunday, August 10, at 6:30 am. When I am in the car, he says, "... and the five-mile march starts at 11 am...." I say, "Cute. Fred. Real smooth."

These labor organizers were real organizers. 35 people took off in a caravan of seven cars. I'd forgotten to bring sunscreen, but I was okay because they had sunscreen (I think it was SPF 1000 — I spent four hours in direct sun and didn't even color.) I couldn't find a hat — but they had extra big floppy sunhats. I'd forgotten water, but they had lots of water. I'd brought food but I left it in the car, and by the end of the march I couldn't walk back to the car. That was okay — they brought food.

We looked like a diverse batch starting out — men, women, European-Americans and Native Americans and Jews, gays and straights, metro bus-drivers and other union workers and a formerly homeless writer on disability (although occasionally being a bit manic helps). In the middle of the march, we all looked like a bunch of white geeks, trying to keep up with farm work pace and Spanish chanting. But we mingled well — a lot of shared grins and gestures bridged the language gap. On the last hill, a big blond man in front of me took over pushing a baby's stroller to give her Hispanic mother a break.

Seattle also sent another delegation that I know of, a full van from El Centro del la Raza. People came from all over the state — Olympia, Everett, TriCities, etc.

A bit more diversity could have helped in one area. The rally was in Mattawa; we then drove to a

place called Desert Aire and hiked back to Mattawa. The Highway Patrol monitored the march to be sure we obeyed safety regulations (stayed on the shoulder of the highway), stayed orderly, and weren't harassed. But none of the patrolling officers knew Spanish. They got a bit nervous with signs being waved and slogans being shouted that they couldn't understand. With a growing percentage of Spanish-speaking population, I hope that the Highway Patrol does have bilingual officers, and will assign more of them to duties involving bilingual demonstrations in the future.

The day was also a vivid illustration of the need for labor justice for the farm workers. Mattawa has no sewage system. There were a thousand or more people in the march; during the post-march rally and celebration, the septic tank of the restroom at the local service station quickly became overloaded, and everyone had to use the portapotties, including the one permanently located behind the service station.

Portapotties are a regular sight in Mattawa. And this town is luxury living among the farm workers; many live in transient shacks down by the river, with even less sanitary facilities. The discrepancy in income between laborers and employers is too great to be accounted for by the difference between the risks of capital investment and the stresses of management, and the value of manual labor.

One of the high points of the day for me was in the pre-march rally, when we all linked hands and sang "De Colores", the theme song of the United Farm Workers. It had been moving when I sang "De Colores" in the Mercer auditorium at FolkLife, with Pete Seeger on stage and a packed auditorium standing and singing all around me. But when I linked hands with Hispanic farm workers and sang "De Colores" in the colored fields themselves, it meant even more to me.

—Anitra Freeman is a member of the Real Change Editorial Committee. ☐

# Beck's Town

## Teamster President Loved and Hated in Seattle

By CHRIS FRENCH

In the 1930's, Seattle learned the four letter word which often offended and scared the public ears. It brought dollars to newspapers who worked it into their margins as often as they could.

**Beck** David Beck. He moved to Seattle from California with his family when he was four. As a youth, he initiated himself on Seattle's street corners, hawking newspapers after school to help support his family. His junior year at Broadway High School, he dropped out to work as a truck driver for the laundry services. This lasted five years, during which time he partook in a three week strike. Here, he witnessed the futile results of the strikers efforts, noticing that they fought hard and gained absolutely nothing.

He later observed, "You loose more in pay than you get from the raise in years." The only thing they gained, he stated, was a worsened reputation. Stability, not strikes, he preached, was what the industry needed.

To afford him the opportunity to shape his policies, he sought a position of leadership within the truck driver's Teamster union. He campaigned feverishly, wherever he could, jumping on the ears of fellow drivers.

"Organize. Organize. Organize!" was his favorite saying. The organized, he believed, could win without striking. The key was to first organize the bosses and work with them, in a friendly manner, and not against them. Then, convince them that raises in wages will increase the loyalty of labor as well as increase the bosses profit.

### Roosevelt's Impetus

I am a firm believer that the administrations of a local union should be responsible to the members," Beck said, "but it should also have responsibility. That's what the officials are for, to sell what labor possesses, it's own labor. When we get the best conditions for the men, and they re-elect us, then we are accomplishing what

**The drive was on, nationally, to unionize, and locally, to secure Seattle's industries labor. Beck fought hard and won the Teamsters over; proudly claiming everything on wheels as his own. Though his methods have been described as brutish and offensive, they were tremendously effective.**

we are set up for."

In 1933, when Roosevelt signed the National Recovery Act, with section 7-a stating: "employees shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representation of their own choosing," Beck had his written impetus to carry his aspirations out to their fullest extent. The drive was on, nationally, to unionize, and locally, to secure Seattle industry's labor.

Beck fought hard and won the Teamsters over; proudly claiming everything on wheels as his own. Though his methods have been described as brutish and offensive, they were tremendously effective.

Anyone who refused Teamster unionization, who was discovered driving trucks without the Teamster button, was paid a visit by Leo Lomski (a world heavyweight contender) with a crew of disgruntled east-coast style thugs who relied heavily on the old-school rules of persuasion: drivers were often sideswiped and run off the road, factories were burned, and those who crossed over picket lines were beat up. "Vote no and go to the hospital," was the Teamster's motto.

### Hazing Hearst

Beck's administrative power soared to its height in 1936. At that time, Seattle had three newspapers: the Hearst owned *Times* and *Post-Intelligencer*, and the *Sun*. They all despised him and printed slanderous editorials slamming his

organizational efforts.

In May, the Newspaper Guild came in and organized the *P.I.* employees. When the *P.I.* chiefs learned of this, they fired two key players: drama editor Everhardt Armstrong and acclaimed photographer Frank Lynch, claiming grounds of "inefficiency" and "insubordination." The Guild appealed to Beck and his Central Labor Council for strike support.

The *P.I.* was immediately put on the Teamster's "unfair list" and Teamster bullies were sent down to the *P.I.* office and ordered to get on-line and join the strike. Many citizens against Hearst joined the strikers as well, jamming streets for blocks.

Hearst was furious. He went on air, broadcasting over the radio, calling out Beck as a "Red" and an endangerment to the freedom of press. Beck countered with a \$500,000 lawsuit, and settled out of court for \$15,000.

The Newspaper Guild organized a telephone brigade; every time a Hearst supporter went on the radio attacking Beck, station telephone lines were flooded by pro-Becker's calls demanding their side of the story be heard. Their nuisance worked, and they were granted free air time (they could not afford to pay for time) to formulate their own supportive arguments to earn a favorable public opinion of the strike.

Hearst, desperate, assembled the Law and Order League — his own version of a vigilante mob squad. He would arm them, send them to the strike line, and have them



break it. When Mayor Dore learned of this, he went to the 5000 strikers, himself, and told them not to fear: if those armed vigilantes come in waving their armory and attempt strike interference, he said, he would order the police to disarm them.

"I don't care if the *Post-Intelligencer* ever publishes, and I think it would be a good thing for the town if it didn't," he said.

They were at a standoff. The strike was maintaining itself. The verdict would be decided, ultimately, with the November elections, with Hearst depending heavily on republican wins. The outcome, however, was a democratic landslide, sweeping the republicans out of office and any of Hearst's hopes of victory with them. He had lost his battle to the radical liberals and the again-proven-effective Dave Beck system.

### Beck Crosses Bridges

Yet this was child's play compared to the rough-trade business of Beck's nemesis, Harry Bridges, president of the Pacific Coast Longshoremen's Union. Unlike Beck, a plump, conservatively dressed businessman, Bridges was rugged and rigid, less eloquent, and dressed like an ex-pimp.

Where Beck talked of organizing the bosses, and working with them, collectively, Bridges said, "Workers have nothing in common with the employers. We are in a class struggle." Bridges was also part of a new organization, assembled in 1935 from the remnants of the American Federation of Labor (Beck's affiliated group), known as the Committee for Industrial Organization.

Though both men were now working nationally, they collided, viciously, in Seattle. It was Beck's town, from the hills down to the piers. Yet his jurisdiction ended here, where Bridges controlled the longshoremen. In between their claims, was the wasteland of unclaimed warehouses, with the men in them wearing neither organization's button labels. Beck and Bridges vied for these new members.

Their negotiation tactics were simple. Like two warring generals, they sent in their ranks in full force, armed with sawed-off baseball bats, cargo hooks, and fists wrapped with metal tape, sraging violent confrontations.

Yet the barbaric and brutal tactics of this dirty labor war were beginning to cost Beck the public's support. Moreover, Beck

was also enduring accusations of being a price-fixing communist, who drove up the price of basic commodities such as bread and milk.

Fortunately, though, Beck had maintained his relations with the business men and reasserted his principle of keeping the bosses organized.

He held on to their support and assured them, "This town is going to be organized," while pointing to businesses profits of the past and the threats imposed by the likes of Bridges on industries stability. They supported the Teamsters, allowing them victory over Bridges. The town was still Beck's.

### Labor Legacy

By 1947, Beck's Teamsters had the largest union in the nation, with 1 million members and a \$20,000,000 bank statement. Now working more intently on a national level, Beck drove to organize more warehousemen and retail clerks — those who handled the products carried by the Teamsters.

*Continued on page 18*




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**"I want to let God be seen. I think that most people who see my work are drawn to it because of its beauty and its significance."**

**—Miguel Peña**

LEFT: MIGUEL PENA, STREET LIFE GALLERY ARTIST

## **Appearances**

### **Street Life Artists Desire Legitimacy**

BY LUIS GARCIA  
STREET LIFE GALLERY VICE-PRESIDENT  
PHOTOS BY RON CAMPBELL

**H**ow much is too little? What is value? It's simple to say. If you pay a thousand dollars for a cup of coffee, it's going to be a thousand dollar cup of coffee.

Since moving here from Phoenix, AZ I have been working and enjoying the company of some of the most unique artists I have ever come across. I was asked to write about three such artists.

The first is Miguel (Angel Pina), a twenty-eight year old war refugee from San Salvador. Miguel came to the United States to escape the violence and hatred that war brings. He now uses art as a form of release and to try and beautify the world he now lives in.

His art is painting religious scenes. When I asked him why he had chosen religion to focus on, his response was, "I want to let God be seen. I think that most people who see my work are drawn to it because of its beauty and its significance. But they don't want to pay what it's worth. They think that because this is a gallery for homeless artists, they don't have to pay as much. What they don't realize is that the

work is original—painstakingly created. I feel people should open up their hearts as well as their eyes."

I asked Miguel at what age he wanted to be a painter and he recalls being a small boy when he started to draw on anything he could find. "I've always liked to draw, but I wanted to be a musician first, to play an instrument and sing." A table located within the gallery displays Miguel's work: multi-paneled ceramic tiles, plates and framed canvases. I could feel his personality in them.

Next is a young man from the desert plains of Arizona named Martinez. He says his creativity derives from ideas he gets from every day life experiences. While I was talking to him, Martinez was busy with a unique sculpture: a figure of a woman. When I asked Martinez about the sculpture he said "I see something where there is nothing and create. I take things I find in the alley and on the streets."

He holds up a rusty old can and says, "You see this and you probably see just a rusty old can. Not me. I look at this and see whatever I want it to be. I'll work at it for a couple of hours and it no longer looks like a rusty old can any more." Martinez then picked up a long hand-carved piece of wood

and started to carve. "Is that a flute," I asked.

"Yeah. I never made one before but I think it will play pretty good when I'm

*Cont. to Page 25*



# A Very Big Band-Aid

## City Finds Funding to Keep Services Going For Now

By MELANIE HARRIMAN

The City of Seattle has doubled the emergency funding available to help resource-strapped service providers that serve the homeless keep their programs running until additional funding might be found. Cutbacks in services were originally scheduled to begin as early as this month if additional funds were not committed.

The Emergency Stabilization Fund, a \$200,000 allocation made available last month to help shelters with budget shortfalls and service cutbacks this year, has been increased to \$400,000 over a two year period.

According to Martha Dilts, Director of Housing and Community Services, the Supplemental Homeless Assistance Fund (SHAF), as its now being called, will provide funding primarily to help prevent the actual loss or reduction of emergency shelter bed spaces or day services. A secondary use for the funds will be to help restore or stabilize agency service capacity and infrastructure.

Many agencies were eligible to apply for the emergency funding, with a total of 51 various programs potentially seeking assistance. Only agencies with existing contracts with the city were eligible to apply for the funding, so some agencies programs will not be receiving any of the Supplemental Funds to be distributed through the

Department of Housing and Human Services in October.

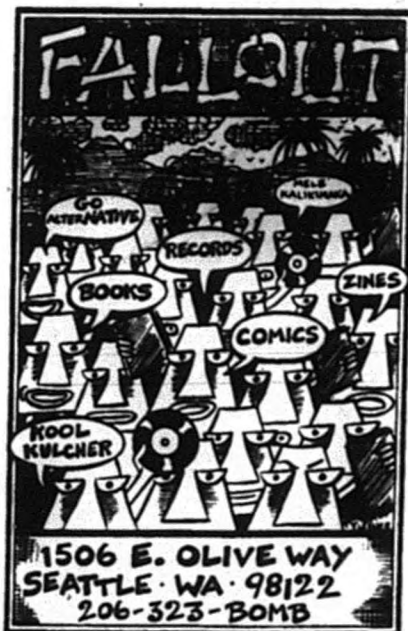
The applications for the SHAF are all in and are under review. Funding decisions are expected by mid September. According to Ken Cole, Special Ministries co-director for the Archdiocesan Housing Authority, the good news is that the department of the mayor's office did hear agency concerns and respond. "They've covered a period of 18 months instead of the usual 12 months, as well as increased the amount of the funds. Our programs see that as positive," he said.

"Year after year, we've seen two to three percent increases in the budget that don't meet unmet need or even begin to cover the cost of inflation," said Cole. He called the emergency funding just another band-aid. Cole expressed fear that in a political climate where "we have eight candidates for mayor talking about pot holes," the city may not prioritize funding for the homeless. "We're going to be prepared to make cuts if not adequately funded" he said, "though we're not going to do it quietly."

The SHAF is intended to cover expenses from July 1, 1997 through December 31, 1998, depending upon funds availability. While this funding will provide some agencies relief from service reduction or closure, it is one time emergency funding only. It is not an addition to the human service budget,

which expects to see only a 2% inflationary increase in 1998, according to Karen Dawson from the Department of Housing and Human Services.

Advocates for the homeless say the need for services continues to grow and additional sources of funding will need to be secured to prevent a repeat crisis later.



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# News from the Front

## Youth Fight a Quiet War for Survival

**W**hile the warm summer nights find thousands of children "sleeping outside" in the safety of their own fenced-in back yard fully equipped with flashlights, plenty of junk food and of course the back door unlocked, it's easy to forget that each night there are anywhere from 700 to 1,000 kids who consider the streets of Seattle their home.

### Jim Theofelis

To fully appreciate this reality imagine how many kids attend your local high school. Imagine a young person you know left to survive without the support of a caring adult, let alone "a whole village." Imagine your thirteen year old niece or your neighbor's fifteen year old son on the street.

Imagine them on the University Ave or downtown streets at 2:30 a.m. exhausted yet too afraid to sleep for fear of being assaulted, raped or killed. The kids who have spent anytime on the streets instinctively know about the research that states a young adolescent female has a 50% chance of being raped within the first ninety days of "hitting the streets".

Research has clearly demonstrated that over 60% of the young people who are surviving on Seattle's streets were physically and/or sexually abused *before* they left home. As one sixteen year old young woman in crisis told me "When I was ten years old people felt sorry for me and wanted to help me because I was being tucked by my step father. Now they call me a liar, talk about the colors of my hair and want to lock me up. I'm still the same kid, just not as small or cute."

### War is Hell

Although I have had the honor to work with young people for the past twenty years, this past three years that I have served as Clinical Director at YouthCare, a local social service for homeless youth, have taken

me to "the front lines" of the war to save kids.

While there are daily examples of young people rising above their circumstances in heroic style, there are even more examples of the physical, psychological and spiritual consequences to a young person left to

survive on their own. As a citizen of this community for the past thirty five years and a veteran of this domestic war for the past twenty years, I am here to report some "news from the front".

As I stated earlier, while some estimates range that as many as 2,000 kids are on Seattle's streets each night, a more conservative number is at least 500 to 700 kids. Match this against the fact that in all of King County there less than 70 licensed shelter beds for adolescents. In 1981 there were approximately 1800 long term group care beds in Washington state. Today there are said to be less than 200.

Mental health and chemical dependency services that are clinically relevant to the needs of homeless youth are rare to non-existent. While resources seem to be dwindling, more and younger kids stream toward the streets. Approximately 25% of the young people on the streets of Seattle come from outside of King County from all corners of the Evergreen State.

### Appropriate Services Needed

Not every youngster who is homeless has been abused. There is one sub-population of kids on the streets who exhibit clear symptomatology of mental illness and/or chemical addiction. These young people are largely left to navigate the streets and the system without easy access to services. They frequently have families who

**"When I was ten years old people felt sorry for me and wanted to help me ... Now they call me a liar, talk about the colors of my hair and want to lock me up. I'm still the same kid, just not as small or cute."**

Seattle 16-year-old

are loving, concerned and overwhelmed. The young people who have a mental illness and come from intact families are seriously ill-equipped for the cut-throat culture of street life and are easy prey for predators.

Unfortunately for this sub-population of youth, who are in need of intensive mental health services, Washington's mental health system has shifted to a Managed Care model which has proven to be a nightmare for young people who are homeless. Telling a fifteen year old female who is pregnant, HIV+, the survivor of untold sexual exploitation and has recently been "hearing voices" to show up at the mental health center next Wednesday at 3:00 pm is futile. She probably doesn't even know where she'll be tomorrow let alone next Wednesday.

Another sub-population of young people who are surviving on the streets of Seattle includes gay and lesbian youth. These youth often come from homes that seemed loving and stable. In fact research has shown that heterosexual youth enter street life at a much earlier age than their homosexual peers. Gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgendered youth typically gravitate toward the streets during middle to late adolescence as a result of the homophobic responses to their developing sexual identity.

Many of these young people talk about being banished from their homes due to

*Continued on page 14*



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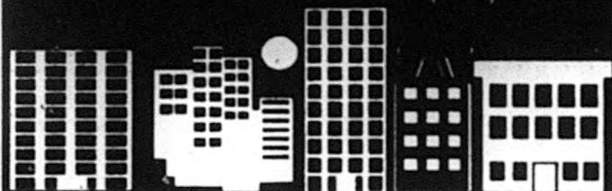
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## Zero Population Growth

## WAR, CONT. FROM PAGE 12

their families inability and unwillingness to accept the emerging sexuality of their child. Many of these kids talk about choosing to runaway and spare their families the "coming out" process. For some "queer youth" the streets are often the first place where they are able to be out front about who they are. However, they usually find out very quickly that the streets are full of sexual predators who are highly practiced at "helping and teaching" newcomers the ropes. Queer youth experience an extremely high incidence of sexual exploitation on the streets and are at a very high risk to contract HIV/AIDS.

Many of these young people are in fact the heroes as well as the victims of this war. Many have sacrificed their own childhood, putting themselves in the path of an abuser, in order to protect a younger sibling. Or running away to protect their families from having to directly face some "truth". They attend school, counseling sessions, court appointments by day and sleep in shelters, parks and all-night restaurants by night. They attend free meal programs during the day and feed the sexual appetites of upstanding citizens by night.

They feel the scorn of a community that seems all too eager to send more juveniles to adult courts and prisons, but still has weak and feeble consequences for adults who exploit children. And of course, they wallow in the hypocrisy of a community that hails the building of new homes for professional sports teams and yet protests over the construction of new housing for homeless kids. These kids know better than most of us that "war is hell".



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## UFW, CONT. FROM PAGE 7

Seattle and leafleted consumers throughout the area. They have also led marches in Yakima, Wenatchee and Mattawa, where they have developed community and church support for the campaign.

The Teamsters have won National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) decisions against Stemilt, which agreed in April to rehire and pay back-pay to 14 workers who had been fired or laid off for supporting the union. While Stemilt and Washington Fruit are calling for an NLRB secret ballot election, the Teamsters are demanding recognition of the union based upon the signatures of support that the union has gathered from the majority of employees. NLRB elections are easily manipulated by employers, who often draw out the election process and use various forms of distortion and intimidation to frighten employees.

The UFW would like to organize all orchard workers simultaneously, but activists do not feel they are ready for such a drive at the moment. Instead they are working on community and consumer support as well as assisting and educating farm workers. Due to the lack of NLRB protection for orchard workers, the UFW

will probably be more dependant on consumer support.

For further information, call the Seattle UFW headquarters at (206) 443-7645 or Teamsters United for Change in Wenatchee at (509) 664-8066.

## HOME ALIVE



Home Alive is a Seattle-based non-profit collective made up of musicians, artists, writers, performers and other freaks hell bent on fighting all forms of violence including rape, domestic abuse, gay, lesbian and queer bashing, racism and bigotry. We provide free and sliding scale self defense classes.

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# Reader Beware

## Surprises in Lease are Easier to Handle Before You Sign

By LESLIE ALLEN  
LEGAL ACTION CENTER

**Q: What is the difference between a lease and a rental agreement?**

A: A lease is signed for a concrete period of time (one year, six months). A rental agreement is renewed on a month-to-month basis. If possible, get a copy of the unsigned lease to look over before you are committing to renting a place.

**Q: Do I have a right to see the lease before I decide to take the place?**

A: Yes! You have the right to review the lease with the same scrutiny you give the physical condition of the rental. You might want to ask for a copy of the lease at the same time that you make an appointment to see the place. This way you can take it home and examine it. Be sure to check with tenant advocates or the Attorney General's office if there are provisions that do not seem right to you.

**Q: Is there such a thing as a "standard lease?"**

A: No! Leases vary a lot. It is very important to read each clause carefully to determine what the landlord's duties are and what the tenant's responsibilities are. Also, be sure to get a copy of your lease agreement from you landlord when you sign it. It is your right and responsibility as a tenant to keep a copy and abide by the rules and regulations stated in the agreement.

Too often, if the landlord-tenant relationship becomes difficult, the landlord will refuse to provide a copy of the lease to

the tenant. That is why we recommend getting a copy in the beginning of your tenancy.

**Q: As a tenant, are there certain things I should be particularly aware of when signing a contract?**

A: Tenants should be aware of clauses regarding late fees and utilities. Beware of clause that state that late fees accrue on a daily basis after a certain day of the month. For example, some leases may state that a tenant must pay \$10.00 per day after the fifth of the month until the rent is paid. This could become very costly for someone who is ever late with part of her rent.

Also, be cautious of whether the rent includes the electricity, water, trash, or whether the tenant has to pay for these separately. In some cases these bill almost double the cost of renting a place.

Beware of the landlord who tries to exempt himself from his legal obligations. Certain provisions in a residential lease are not legal and not enforceable. Examples include provisions requiring tenants to pay for all the damage in the unit, even if it is not caused by the tenants and their guests.

Other illegal provisions require tenants to give up their right to defend themselves in court, or require the tenants to pay the landlord's attorney's fees under any circumstance if a dispute goes to court.

Be sure to call tenant advocates or the Attorney General's office before you assume that a part of the lease is not legal. Although the landlord cannot enforce these illegal provisions, you are wise to be concerned about leasing from a landlord who clearly declares his intention to avoid his responsibilities.

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## Prison Population Tops 1 Million

Corrections officials built 213 state and federal prisons from 1990 to 1995 to cope with a quickly expanding inmate population now exceeding 1 million for the first time, the Justice Department reports.

The nation's 3,300 local jails and county or municipal detention centers were not covered by the census, which the bureau conducts every five years.

As of June 30, 1995, state or federal correctional facilities held 1.02 million people, up from 715,649 in 1990, the Bureau of Justice Statistics said in a statistical portrait of the prison system released Thursday.

To accommodate them, authorities built 168 state and 45 federal prisons to increase the number of such institutions to 1,500. The number of prison beds rose 41 percent to 976,000, the report said.

Despite the building boom, state prisons operated at an average 3 percent over capacity and federal prisons 24 percent.

"Approximately one in four state correctional facilities was under a court order or consent decree to limit population or address specific confinement conditions," the report said. "However, the number of facilities ordered by courts to limit their populations declined from 183 in 1990 to 174."

Separate Justice Department figures said the number of inmates as a percentage of the population also rose. In 1990, prisons held 293 per every 100,000 Americans. By 1995, the figure had risen to 409 inmates per 100,000, and figures already released this year put 1996's number at 427 per 100,000.

## Urban League Urges Black Economic Power

National Urban League President Hugh B. Price has called for better marketplace opportunities and better public education to promote black economic power, reports The Washington Post.

In his keynote address before about 3,000 people at the Washington Convention Center, Price sounded the 87th National Conference's theme of economic power as the next frontier of civil rights. Price said that for Americans to live in racial harmony, they must first learn to share "the

opportunities we call the American Dream."

"Opportunity is the pathway to power," Price said. "Any society that's truly 'of the people, for the people and by the people' must share its economic bounty with all the people."

Price laid out a three-part formula for black Americans to attain that power: quality, consistent public education; economic opportunity for anyone who plays by society's rules; and compassionate life supports for those who cannot play.

Price called for continued school integration where it is possible and better standards where it is not. Noting successes in the charter school movement, private-school vouchers and broad staff changes in some school districts, Price issued a warning to public school administrators that "the era of excuses and inertia is over."

Though Price promoted self-reliance, he also called for a humane welfare safety net for those who fall through society's cracks.

## Rich Get Richer: Tax Cuts to Widen Income Gap

An analysis of U.S. income patterns by the Washington, D.C.-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities found that in 1994, the combined after-tax income of the nation's richest 2.6 million Americans, the top 1 percent, was about equal to that of the 88 million people in the bottom 35 percent of income, reports The San Francisco Chronicle.

The analysis was based on data from the Congressional Budget Office, which began tracking after-tax income in 1977. Back then, the bottom 35 percent had twice the after-tax income of the richest 1 percent.

The study confirmed general patterns that also have been seen in U.S. Census Bureau reports.

"Wage trends have been very uneven in the last

few decades, declining at the bottom, stagnant in the middle and most of the improvements going to the top," said Isaac Shapiro, a senior analyst at the center.

"Income disparity is part and parcel of the free market. That's a given," he said. "Americans have a tolerance for income differences because there has always been hope that you could take the path of upward mobility. But if the only group that gains is the upper group, that perception will tear at the social fabric."

Changes in the distribution of income don't confine themselves to the top and bottom, the study found. Middle-income groups also have been affected.

For example, when all American families are divided equally into five groups or quintiles, the middle quintile in 1994 got 15.2 percent of all after-tax income. In 1977, the middle group got 16.3 percent of after-tax income. In other words, the after-tax income for the U.S. middle classes decreased during the past two decades.

At the very bottom, the poorest fifth of all U.S. families got 4.2 percent of after-tax income in 1994. In 1977, this group got more, roughly 5.7 percent of all after-tax income.

In 1994, the top 1 percent of families average after-tax income was \$374,131. This meant that those in this group got 11.4 percent of all the after-tax income in

*Continued next page*

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the nation. In 1977, this group only had 3 percent of all after-tax income.

"The tax cuts in the new budget agreement will not moderate the trend toward increasing income disparities," said report co-author Robert Greenstein.

"To the contrary, when fully in effect, the new tax cuts will exacerbate these trends and further intensify the concentration of after-tax income by providing the lion's share of their benefits to households at high income levels."

### 95,000 Kids Lose SSI

About 95,000 children have been removed from the disability rolls under the new welfare law, as most have mental impairments that are no longer considered severe enough to qualify for government support, reports Associated Press.

Advocates complain that children are being unfairly pushed out of the program. But officials say they are simply implementing the tough provisions Congress enacted.

"We've talked to families out there, and they're desperate," said Doug Forand, spokesman for the Arc of the United States, a national advocacy group for the disabled.

So far, 95,180 children - or 56 percent of cases reviewed - have been told they no longer qualify for Supplemental Security Income. The program offers about \$430 per month to help low-income parents who must stay home with children or buy expensive equipment to help them.

Officials project that about 135,000

children will lose benefits in the end.

Children have always qualified for SSI if they have a physical or mental condition included on a list of ailments. But since a 1990 Supreme Court decision, children have qualified if they have a combination of other problems that keep them from functioning normally.

In the face of a spiraling caseload in the early 1990s and stories about children taking problems to get on SSI, Congress used last year's welfare law to tighten the second qualification.

Children most likely to lose eligibility suffer from respiratory problems - just 15 percent of these children remain eligible. Officials surmise that's because milder asthma cases were allowed under the old standard but not under the new.

The termination rates vary across the country.

For instance, fewer than 35 percent of children under review are being dropped from the program in

Michigan, Minnesota, Hawaii and Nevada. But in Mississippi and Montana, about 80 percent of the children have been dropped.

Jonathan Stein, a Philadelphia attorney who won the Supreme Court case that expanded the definition of a disability - and the SSI rolls - accused those states Thursday of having "a culture of hostility to those children."

*All items from HandsNet, News & Blues*

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BECK, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Their membership meant tighter union security, as well as a bigger treasury. Beck used the same tactics he implemented locally a decade earlier: maximize Teamster control of supply to make unionized demands and continue to work with the bosses.

"The era of violence is over in Seattle," said Beck in 1951. "Sure there was violence here when it was necessary. Hell, that's part of the American tradition, the country was born of revolution... If violence is used against us, why, then there is violence on the labor scene. But that's history. It's always worked that way."

"Beckism," "Labor fascism," "Dave's NRA." The labels came and went, yet there was no question, Dave Beck owned this town during the 1930's. The man who could talk shop in the locker room with the boys, who could work the bosses in the office into labor supportive deals, himself, had become the great boss of the town.

The rapidly growing union with members whose solidarity and loyalty not only made Beck one of the most talked about people in the country, but also one of the most feared. ☐

## SEATTLE RAPE RELIEF

25th Anniversary

BENEFIT BREAKFAST

Wed. Sept. 10th 7:30-9am

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\$35 per person

Saturday

Sept. 27th 7pm

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THE NIGHT

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For more info, call 325-5531

Seattle Unity Church Presents

Siberian Shaman Journeywork & Training  
September 20-21 \$175

A weekend training in Siberian Shamanic Journeywork techniques, animal trance dancing and spirit work in nature presented by Nadyezhda Duvan, wisdom keeper and Bibe shaman of the Uchi People. These teachings come from a pure and unbroken line of ancient traditions of the people of the Amur River of lower Siberia.

Kamlania Siberian Soul Retrieval  
September 22nd 7:30 \$15.00

The Kamlania is a journey to the invisible worlds of the spirits where each person will experience a healing adventure into these unknown realms of the Siberian shaman. Each Kamlania is different depending upon the audience and what they bring with them collectively into the healing ceremony.

Seattle Unity Church 200 Eighth Ave. N. Seattle WA 98109  
For information & to register call (206) 622-8476 ext. 127

# Wes is Dead. Wes is a Duck. Long Live Wes (Duck)!

"In a world of Labrador Retrievers, I am a duck!!

(OH HH YES!! OH YESS!! A DUCK, I AM, a DUCK,  
ooooooooh yesss!)

When everyone else blows (be-lowws! YEAH! Ha -Ha -  
Ha!), I suck!

(Suckity - suckity - SUCKITY — SUCK! - YEAH)

A single ROTini in a plate of LINGuini —

Or a lonely LINGuini in a plate of ROTini —

(RotiNini, TahiniNini, RotininiNini — teehee - knee)

What the hell is I am is what I am?  
is what by any other name

is —

(! - extraneous bang!)

— is I couldn't ever — possibly —  
— or could I? — feel so lame.

Phththbbbt!!"

— that was just one of the several fragments of writing found  
among Dr. Wes Browning's personal effects yesterday, as police  
collected evidence in the hopes of clearing up the month's long  
mystery of the missing homeless satirist and would-be poet.

Dr. Browning was a frequent contributor to the *Real Change*  
Homeless Newspaper of Seattle, "making a difference in people's  
lives right now, please leave your message at the beep, and someone  
will answer your call as soon as possible...."

Dr. Wes Browning, AKA "Copyright Dr. Wes Browning", was  
best known for his monthly feature entitled "Adventures in Poetry",  
which pretended to amuse Seattle readers with its supposedly subtle  
blend of political and poetical humor. He received his doctorate

from, of all places, Cornell University, in 1979, for Mathematics.  
He received his "Copyright" from the StreetLife Gallery, 1994,  
where he had the audacious gall to make fun of another homeless  
artist, since deceased, for using the "copyright" symbol far too  
much

But Mr. Browning had always laughed out loud at that sort of  
death, that is to say, the usual sort, the sort that doesn't repeat on  
you, the sort that doesn't come back and race you around the ping-  
pong table all night long. In fact, Mr. Browning has laughed at just  
about everything and everybody. Maybe it's best that we're rid of  
him. Who needs people like that anyway, always making fun of  
everybody, never taking anyone seriously! What a creep! Thank  
God he's missing!

As Anitra Freeman, fellow editor, and oft-time benefactor of  
Mr. Browning puts it, "He did a wonderful lap-dance. He had a  
very talented nose. I am not going to tell you what all he could do  
with his nose. What a probiscus! I'm going to miss his nose.  
Maybe, just maybe, I'll miss the lap-dances. But definitely his  
nose."

Think about it. Guys who write poems. Guys who lap-dance  
Guys with prodigious noses. Do we need them? I say no. What do  
you the public say?

"What the hell is I am is what I am?  
is what by any other name

is —

(! - extraneous bang!)

— is I couldn't ever — possibly —  
— or could I? — feel so lame.

Phththbbbt!!"

Ahhh, ok, I am not in reality a duck. Sheesh.

Visit (c) Dr. Wes Browning at  
<http://www.speakeasy.org/wes>

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## Melvin "Mel" Pickett

**Aug. 1, 1934-June 19, 1997**

On June 19th we said goodbye to Melvin "Mel" Pickett, a longtime resident of St. Martin's on Westlake. Mel brought a special character to the community; he always had a smile on his face and usually a good word to say. Most of the time he was quiet and kept to himself, but over the past six months I had the honor of getting to know him a little bit better.

Mel was born in Freedom, Oklahoma, but was raised in Fall City and Preston, Washington. He was the youngest child in a large dairy farm family, and was proud to call the Snoqualmie Valley home. Mel spent many years living in Everett, working for the Mukilteo School District. In September, 1990 moved into the Westlake.

In February Mel was diagnosed with lung cancer. I spent a great deal of time with Mel after this diagnosis, and learned what a remarkable man he was. I am still amazed at Mel's constant congenial mood; he refused to let his illness get the best of him. He kept up the fight throughout his illness, overcoming many obstacles. He never complained of his own pain, and always took the extra time to enquire into the wellbeing of others.

Mel would spend hours in his room, listening to talk radio and country music while watching the happenings on the street below. He enjoyed debating the topics of his radio shows. When I visited, I was always greeted with a chuckle and a smile.

Two of Mel's children were very active in his life. His daughter Kathy was a regular visitor, and was active with his medical treatments. His son Marty stayed with Mel for quite some time, helping him with his daily needs. Marty's stay at the Westlake was really a blessing. One of Mel's greatest wishes was to be able to remain home, and with Marty's support he was able to do so.

Mel was someone whose gentle hello, ornery arguments, and fight to live will not be forgotten by many of us here at the Westlake. He will be missed, but will "sing on in the heart always."

—Bess Whitaker, Resource Coordinator for St. Martin's on Westlake





## POETRY

### Time of Need

December birds chirping, Sister Julie is in flight  
She gathers food, clothes, prayers for morning  
light.

She knows women and men who stay in the  
harsh weather  
There are natives who know the power of an  
eagle feather.

Sister Julie understands the circle, holds the good  
word  
so it will be heard. She stands vigil watching for  
fallen birds.

Sister Julie encircles them listening to their words  
and needs. She stands vigil watching for fallen  
birds.

Sunlight splinters, Sister Julie is the morning light.  
She holds the good word for them who stay the  
night.

Morning birds chirp, she like Mary knows flight  
She gathers sacred words, prays for morning light.

—Earle Thompson

### GOOD P: A Homeless Woman

STARVING and timid  
in the Land of Plenty  
in the Land of Freedom...

STARVING for Love  
STARVING for Respect  
STARVING for self-respect

TRYING/unable  
To make sense of  
What is happening to her

in this country that CLAIMS  
to worship the SAME GOD  
that she does...

the God of Love  
the God of Peace  
the God THAT TURNS THE  
OTHER CHEEK...

WHEN

What she SEES  
What she feels  
IS

CONFUSION  
DEGRADATION  
and DESPAIR

She speaks GRATITUDE  
for the CRUMBS  
for the KICKS

And

TRIES to smile  
Managing only  
A painful grimace

She

BREAKS DOWN  
and cries

BITTER TEARS

—Marion Sue Fischer

### Untitled

Here's to code six and Jimmy  
And the frolicking of whores  
Drinking hard forgetting  
The atrocities of war

The memories have vanished  
But the sidewalk's closing in  
Jimmy stares as code six falls  
And bounces on his chin

—Sally Johnson

# The Vet

(40% of the Seattle homeless community are veterans)

He was 18 then, and now he's 48 -  
30 years later, still a victim of fate.  
But the scene in his mind is so crisp and so clear,  
how he raised his gun at the smell of his fear,  
but too late to save the one by his side.  
He cradled his bloody friend in his arms as he died.  
That was just the first of many close scrapes.  
It was a hard 2 years before he escaped  
back to a country he no longer knew,  
that had no idea what it put him thru,  
and now has forgotten about him and the war  
that he still fights trying to settle a score  
in the jungle of his memory and the maze of his mind.  
He doesn't understand how we can be so blind,  
or forget so quickly what arrogance wrought:  
how it forced him to kill in the battles he fought,  
and then there's that little messy detail  
of how he sometimes shakes and wails,  
of how he sometimes loses his head  
and swings in violence to silence the dead,  
and reaches for the bottle in hopes to drown  
the demons that feast like fleas on a hound.  
So it was long ago that his family finally left.  
And though he understands why, still it was just another theft.  
Then the government shrinks tried to put him in a cage  
for daring to embarrass the army with his rage.  
They dressed his wounds with barbed wire and salt  
and urged self restraint and told him it was his fault.  
Now he lives in a box under the bridge by the bay,  
and he plays his mouth harp for spare change by day.  
He's ragged and rheumy and dirty and cold,  
seems lost and confused, ill-mannered and bold.  
He wears fatigues, but his medals are long gone -  
In '69 he threw them onto the White House lawn.  
But he's still a soldier, still fighting a war  
against what he calls "a government of whores".  
And yes, the politicians don't want to hear the name  
of that long lost war and the national shame.  
But more than this, they're afraid what he knows  
will infect young men who will refuse to go  
because they'll understand that war is slaughter -  
not glory, not video games, not adventure, not honor,  
but murder and rape and genocide and fear.  
These are the facts the old vet knows well  
as he burns on his corner like a prophet in hell.

like a crucified hero, a villain unmasked,  
like a broken winged angel, or a question unasked.  
He was 18 then, and now he's 48 -  
30 years later, is way too late  
to be all that you can be.

- Todd Steven Davis

# Being Poor

It can be a kid as white as you,  
a kid with an old face.  
And it is hope.  
hope that the sheriff doesn't come  
to serve the eviction papers  
when you happen to be home.  
Hope  
that you don't have to put anything back  
at the check-out counter.

Being poor is waiting,  
and telling your children to wait,  
wait their whole childhoods away.

It is knowing  
they blame you.

It is wondering  
if there isn't a better way.

Being poor is trying  
not to envy almost everyone you see.

It's not getting enough  
and getting mad.

Being poor is bones and hearts  
and marrows and gray street dirt.

If there is a God,  
and if there is a God anywhere,  
we haven't heard the half of it.

—Elizabeth Romero

## POETRY

### Untitled

It doesn't help knowing  
that others have had it worse  
right now. It increases the horror  
Hope is pretty handy, without it  
I'd go to a bar and hustle drinks  
until I was too drunk to think.  
And then I'd let some gun-collector  
take me home.

I'd prescribe for this  
resigned and local pain  
a temporary anesthetic,  
and learn one more thing  
I can't look back at  
without that one more step  
away from forever.

Strikes, layoffs, unemployment,  
welfare vouchers, loans.  
Crack the code for me.  
Give me a spell,  
Give me some money,  
I'll buy us some drinks  
and bring back all the change.

—Elizbeth Romero

### Comfortless

I know what it's like  
to sit on a curb  
in a strange town

(small) bag in front of you  
worn and dusty  
(as you are)

CONTAINING  
all your worldly possessions

To sit on a curb  
DIRECTIONLESS  
... waiting  
for  
What To Do Next

Broke, or nearly so  
Your options meager

Your spirit flagging  
perhaps a chill wind, as well

On a curb  
Waiting for a CLUE

Waiting for a friend  
Where you know no one

Waiting for a Guide  
to lead you  
to

WHERE YOU BE-LONG

IN  
from the cold and wet

IN  
from the WANT

INTO  
the comforting Presence  
of  
BE-LONGING

(PLEASE pray/for/our/Souls)

—Marion Sue Fischer

### I Give Up!

For THOSE of us

Who have OUTLIVED  
their Partners,

God opens up  
A rich world  
of Freedom  
and Solitude

...to please ourselves  
...and God

I pray for GRATITUDE

—Marion Sue Fischer

## The Woman Coming Toward You

The woman coming toward you  
is trying to hang on.  
You can see it in her eyes,  
her wary sidelong glance

The woman coming toward you  
is trying to hang on.  
Her clothes flap loosely in the wind.  
Her red shoes clash

The woman coming toward you  
carries the patient rage of her mother  
and her mother before that  
like that cracked plastic handbag

*Elizbeth Romero*

## Food Bank

The tell-tale brown paper bag,  
bottom damp from turkey juice,  
sits heavily in her arms.

Corn, carrots, cauliflower  
mixing and poking through  
leaving a trail of rice.

An older man kindly warned,  
"Next time, bring an extra plastic bag."

On the bus home  
some people move away.

They say, "It's the pits  
to stand in line for food  
the last act of desperation!"

She says, "We want to work again!"

How long, how soon,  
before you hold  
a damp, donated bag of pain?

*—Lonnie Nelson*

## The Last House I Will Ever Enter

There will be wine, food and Miller Beer in the  
Last House I will ever enter:

There will be a peppermint family giving candy,  
candy, candy in the Last House I will ever enter:

There will be axes with meat and blood in the  
Last House I will ever enter:

My scream will be heard for miles, miles and  
miles in the Last House I will ever enter:

I will see a light shine in my eyes and I will hear  
the police, they be running down the stairs but it  
will be too late because I will be found dead in  
the Last House I will ever enter:

*Daryl Ary*

## Under the Ballard Bridge

Maybe gone native brother made a bad mistake,  
saying he didn't like white people.

It was only five days away him thumping a friend's  
chest, getting him awake for enough time to say, "I'm  
okay" before an hour later breath was gone. Heroin.  
Anyway, a week ago I came into port, sailing my boat  
on down from Clayoquot Sound, west coast open  
waters...Tied up right by the bridge... And here it was  
I met my friend, asking me to dress his stab wound  
on account of Lakota getting hurt and angry over her  
friend who OD-ed and stabbing with knife in her  
pain... So... there were other folks under the bridge,  
right by the creosote timbers and the mix-blood  
mallard ducks and the Canadian geese that no longer  
follow the migration. And they must have taken way  
strong offense to my gone native brother's comment  
about white folk, 'cuz while he was sleeping under his  
borrowed blanket, two men in a black car came up  
and put a gun to his head...then made a big joke  
about it being unloaded...

*—Bobu of the Sea*



## GET INVOLVED, CONT. FROM P. 28

Supreme Court. Our American system of checks and balances has worked for 200 years. This extreme bill seeks to undo that!

There are also good bills that need your support. Recently, I sponsored a bill creating a task force to study alternative financing for low-income senior housing developments. In the 1960s, several federal programs were created for housing for seniors or those with disabilities. Many of these developments are now in need of renovation and repair. Reductions in federal funding have hampered efforts to fund improvement. HB 2189 creates the 11-member "Task Force on Financing Senior Housing."

Your involvement counts. So here's what you can do:

1. Write letters to the editor in daily and weekly newspapers.
2. Write or call us at the Legislature (hotline number is 1-800-562-6000).
3. Testify at public hearings in Olympia.
4. Visit your legislator.
5. Let your legislator know you are a part of an organized group. Then spread the word through your group.
6. The Washington Association of Churches has legislative sessions every Thursday to visit Olympia. Join them.

Remember, your voice is needed in Olympia. The special interests are already present, providing their own way into the legislative process. Stand up and be counted! My office door is always open. I would be happy to assist you to make your opinions known.

*Rep. Velma Veoria (D-Seattle) represents the 11th District. She welcomes calls from all at (360) 786-7862*

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## STREET LIFE, CONT. FROM PAGE 10

finished. I sometimes work on different things at the same time to break up the monotony. You should never limit your art. You have to be versatile."

When I asked Martinez how he felt about the public response to his art, he said, "I don't really care if I sell any of my work to anyone, but if... they're sincere I'll sell it to them. I am not out just to sell my work for money; my work is more valuable to me for its statement."

Jim Bentz struck me as a realist. He said he would rather write poetry which is his first love, but in the real world he knows writers... starve. Because of this he makes functional art: dragons with crazy faces, worms which sit on stools, and all kinds of creatures. "I like to make things people only dream about."

Out of curiosity, I contacted a well known gallery down on Pioneer Square and made an appointment to do a story on their gallery.

I showed up in a business suit and was received with a smile, a cup of cappuccino and almond cookies. I was ushered to a plush chair where I proceeded to tell them I was from Street Life gallery and I was doing



a comparison study. I was ushered out with a polite frown and asked not to mention the name of their gallery.

*The Street Life Gallery is located in Beltown at the corner of 2nd and Bell. The Gallery is a project of the Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project and the Archdiocesan Housing Authority.*

## MAILBAG, CONT. FROM PAGE 3

Dear Real Change,

Deeply appreciate your paper—building bridges of understanding. Of particular interest to me are "real-life stories" about experiences people have or what they are doing to help others. I loved the articles on street cuisine, boxcar riding, the one by the lady who had battled mental illness, the articles on SHARE housing. It helps make things real—and easier to relate to the people who live these experiences. They are no longer a faceless crowd, but are real live human beings. Thanks so much.

Maria Abidin,  
Seattle

Dear Real Change,

I just wanted to thank you for your publication of Real Change. Everyday as I step off the bus and head to work, it

puts a smile on my face thinking that someone does care about those less fortunate. I know that for many people we tend to forget that we all come from the same place and we should strive to help others achieve their hopes and dreams. I think that through the Real Change Publication you are helping those without homes the opportunity to make money and feel good about themselves. Once again, thank you!

Michael Connor,  
Seattle



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## SEPT 2

**Gabriela Network-NW, a US Solidarity Group with Gabriela, Philippines**, (Alliance of over 105 women's organizations in the Philippines), join in to get involved in solidarity work around Filipina and Asian Womens' issues globally and domestically. 6 p.m., locations vary. Seattle, info 206-824-8229

**Meeting of Citizens for Overt Action**, educating the public about the threat to democracy here and abroad by covert action, told us about the CIA- Crack connection a decade before the San Jose Mercury report came out, upstairs at 4759 15th Ave NE, info 547-7735

## SEPT 3

**Jobs With Justice Seattle Organizing Committee** meets the first Wednesday of every month, 5:30 p.m., Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave, info 206-325-3040

## SEPT 4

**Fire Your Boss workshop**, a hands-on Workshop For Uppity Workers, learn how to get a little more from your employer using ten easy direct action tactics with your co-workers, sponsored by the Puget Sound IWW, International Workers of the World, the "Wobblies" with a long history of Labor Activism in the Pacific Northwest, 7:30 p.m., Center For Urban Ecology, 5619 University Way, info 516-0483, PO Box 4814, Seattle WA 98104

## SEPT 5-6

**Womens' International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF)** fundraising garage sale, info 206-329-3666

## SEPT 10

**Seattle Rape Relief's 25th Anniversary Benefit Breakfast**, 7:30 a.m., Four Seasons Olympic Hotel, info 206-325-5531

**Boeing Retirees on the Line Seattle**, Boeing Hourly, General Office and Salaried Retirees: Protect what you worked for!, plan How Retirees Can Obtain Cola at Last, 10 a.m., IAM 751 District Headquarters, 9125 15th Pl S. (an interpreter for the hearing impaired will attend), info hnoable@eskimo.com or Jackie Terrell 206-722-0241

**Monthly meeting of the Labor Party**, info on Independent Progressive Politics Network which includes the Labor Party, 7 p.m., Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave, Curt 206-329-1048, info on Labor Party 206-382-5712

## SEPT 13

**The SHARE Foundation** present a day of information and activities about El Salvador "How is the Garden Growing?" with reports from delegations to El Salvador, updates on current projects, videos, discussion, networking and planning. 9 a.m.-3 p.m., St.

Patrick's Church, 2702 Broadway E. St. Patrick's Church and info Phelia Lorenzen 206-527-3209 or Kevin Wood 206-932-7859

## SEPT 14

**"Day of Remembrance for Victims of Gun Violence,"** noon to 6 p.m., Volunteer Park, busline 7 or 10, Seattle Peace Concert, hosted by Ceasefire Foundation of WA, featuring Rivertalk, Septimus, Kimberly Bass, Merkaba + special guests. Sound provided by American Music, free, please bring food bank donations for Northwest Harvest, info 206-789-5651 or <http://www.seapeace.org/>

## SEPT 15

**Group viewing of KCTS Channel 9 show "Affluenza,"** defined as "the bloated sluggish and unfulfilled feeling that results from efforts to keep up with the Joneses.. humorous and thought provoking look at Overconsumption, 9 - 10 p.m., Phinney Neighborhood Association, 6532 Phinney Ave N, Bldg A room 6. (see discussion Sept 24).. free, info 206-783-2244

## SEPT 16

**Primary Election**, Candidates for City Council, Mayor, etc. 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

## SEPT 17

**The Bad Jobs Reading**, including Pat Pederson [wonderful poet!], Donna Miscolta, Amy Condoitti, Red Reddick, 7:30 p.m., Red & Black Books, 432 15th E., donations benefit bookstore, info 206-322-7323

## SEPT 21

**Seattle Chapter Fellowship of Reconciliation** monthly meeting, featuring Don Whitmore speaking about nuclear disarmament, 5 p.m. potluck, 6 p.m. short business meeting and announcements, 6:30 program, 225 North 70th near Greenwood, info 206-789-5565

## SEPT 23

**Seattle Chapter of National Organization for Women** convenes a Roundtable Discussion for all Local Feminists and Womens' Organizations, to share

ideas and suggestions on how to work together more effectively. 7 - 9 p.m. Seattle Central Community College, room 106, portable on north end of campus on Broadway north of Pine, info 206-632-8547

### SEPT 26

**Come help promote non-motorized transportation at the monthly Critical Mass bike ride.** 5:30 p.m. Westlake Park, downtown, 4th & Pine, leave from Westlake at 5:45 and cruise the city streets; all bikes, trikes, blades, boards, and peds welcome, info: <http://www.oz.net/~nic/cm.html>

### SEPT 27

**Take Back The Night Rally,** 7 p.m.-Rally, 8 p.m.-March, Occidental Park in Pioneer Square, (everyone welcome) and March (women only), to protest Violence Against Women, info Seattle Rape Relief 206-325-5531

### SEPT 28

**Northwest AIDS Walk,** benefiting AIDS Care Service and Prevention Education throughout Washington. Wheelchairs available call by Sept 24, info 323-WALK, TDD 323-2685 or [www.nwaids.org](http://www.nwaids.org)

### SEPT 30

**Monthly meeting of the Green Party,** info on Independent Progressive Politics Network which includes the Greens, 7 p.m., University Heights Center, NE 50th & the Ave (Univ. Way NE) Curt 206-329-1048

### OCT 1

**Jobs With Justice Seattle Organizing Committee,** 5:30 p.m., Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave, meets the first Wednesday of every month, info 206-325-3040

### ONGOING

**Call Seattle City Council member,** Jan Drago 684-8801, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, tell her you Oppose privatization of our downtown park (Westlake Park, at 4th & Pine) and you want a public hearing; a private group, the Westlake Park Management Company formed by the Downtown Business association wants to take over, this could restrict public access for demonstrations, socializing, and just sitting on benches, they even want to take away the benches, info Diané 726-0864

**Boycott Gallo and Mondavi Wines** to support the United Farm Workers union, local info 443-7645

**Thursdays, informational picket on reparations for victims of CIA Drug Smuggling,** info CIA Crack Reparations, 4 - 6 p.m., Federal Building, 2nd and Madison, 325-6746 or 527-7055, or Citizens for Overt Action, 547-7735



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# Get Involved!

by Rep. Velma Veoria (D-Seattle, 11th District)

**A**s a legislator, I often have a difficult time convincing people that their opinion makes a difference. It does. Every letter, every call, every visit shapes opinion.

In fact, most of the bills I introduced started simply with a phone call or letter from a citizen who decided to get involved.

Stories from real people are needed in Olympia. Hundreds of lobbyists walk the halls—nearly all work for special interests, who pay to be represented well. Very few lobbyists advocate for the poor, for working families, for the average tax-paying citizen.

This session, legislation can be characterized as special interests vs. working families. Here's a sampling:

## 1. Minimum Wage

Washington now has the lowest minimum wage on the West Coast. Democrats proposed to raise the minimum wage from \$4.90 an hour to \$6.50 an hour. That would move annual income from below the poverty level to above for a family of three.

## 2. Tips Count as Wages

Under a Republican proposal, restaurant owners could pay below minimum wage, by counting tips received as part of wages.

## 3. Unemployment Benefits Reduced

Benefits for 85 percent of Washington workers would be cut. The average weekly unemployment check in Washington state would drop from \$222 to \$184. This legislation makes no sense at a time when Washington's unemployment fund is healthy, with large reserves.

## 4. Workplace Safety Reduced

A Republican provision would make it more difficult for injured workers to sue an employer for neglecting workplace safety regulations. Another measure would cut benefits to injured workers if employers missed paying workers' compensation. Workers would pay for employers' mistakes.

## 5. Making Healthcare Less Affordable

Republican legislation would make it harder and more expensive for sick people to buy insurance. Democrats have introduced three bills to protect consumers in managed health care plans. The Republicans are sponsoring a counter-measure supported by the insurance industry. The Republican majority has also passed "regulatory reforms" that cripple the Insurance Commissioner's efforts to protect us from deceptive and unfair insurance company practices.

## 6. Toxic Substances

A Republican bill mandates that no state, county or local government agency can recommend substituting a hazardous household waste or pesticide with a non-toxic alternative. For example, the City of Seattle's recycling program could not recommend that households use baking soda instead of chemical cleaner.

There are other extreme bills. It only took House committee a few minutes to railroad through a bill that destroyed years of compromise for the Growth Management Act. To protest, House Democrats walked out of committee right before the vote.

Another bill would allow the Legislature to over-rule the State

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**"Every letter, every call, every visit shapes opinion. In fact, most of the bills I introduced started simply with a phone call or letter from a citizen who decided to get involved."**

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