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VOL. 6, NO. 12, JUNE 1999

# Real CHANGE

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*The Liberal  
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**Karen Dawson Speaks**

**Dead Horses Walking**

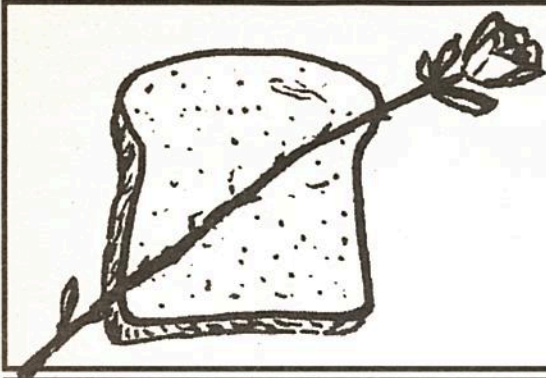
**Uppity Workers**

**Big Brother Lives!**

ALL THE MONEY  
I GET GOES TO THE  
HOMELESS

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless

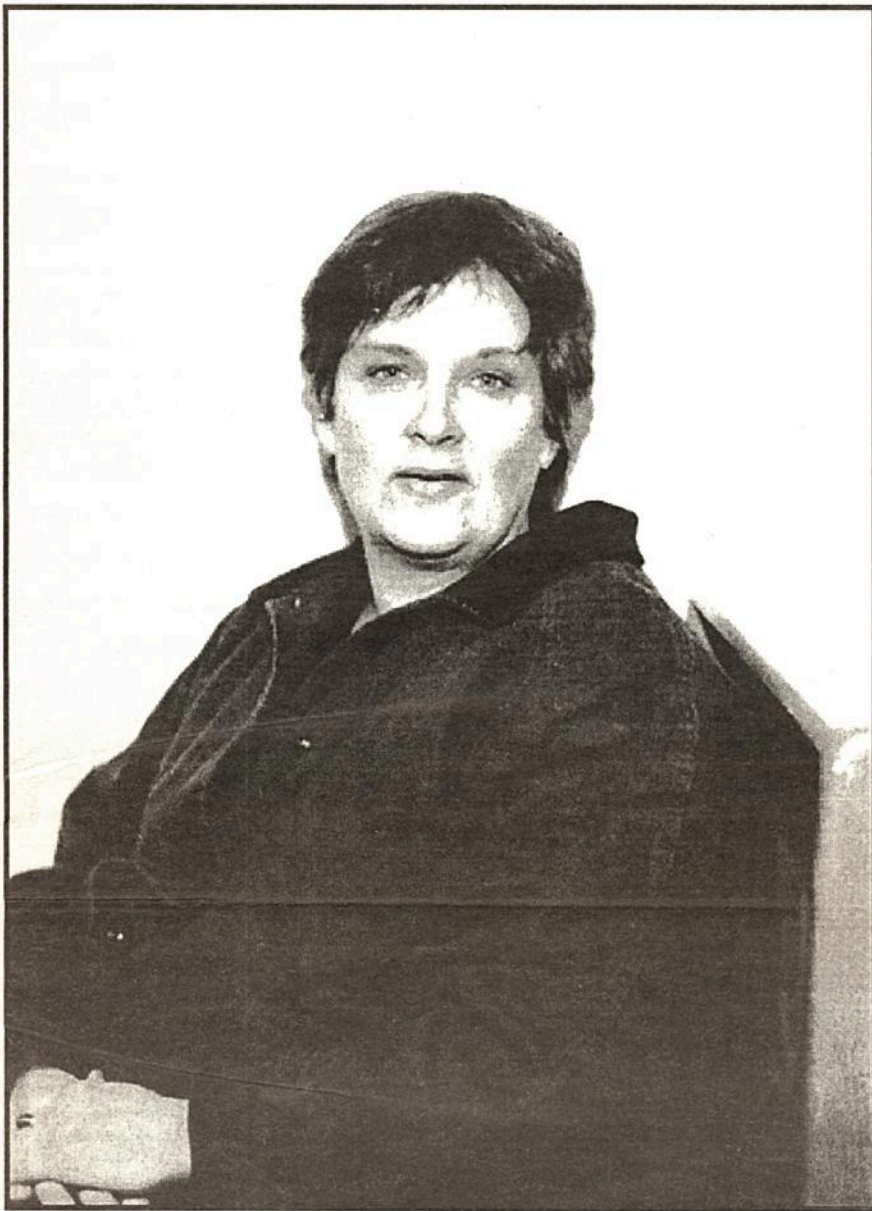
JUNE 1999



# Real CHANGE

*Puget Sound's  
Newspaper of the Poor  
and Homeless*

2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121 (206) 441-3247 www.realchangenews.org rchange@speakeasy.org



KAREN DAWSON CALLS IT LIKE SHE SEES IT. PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

## Winning Hand

Karen Dawson puts her cards on the table

INTERVIEW BY ADAM HOLDORF

**K**AREN DAWSON HAS NEVER BEEN A TYPICAL CITY BUREAUCRAT. She has worked for the City of Seattle since 1979, almost since the inception of the Department of Housing and Human Services. During the 20 years Karen worked for the city, she distinguished herself as a committed advocate who never lost sight of why she was there. Last month, Karen began a well-deserved one-year sabbatical.

Upon leaving city government, Karen was the manager of the Survival Services Unit at the Department of Human Services, which coordinates 95 programs with a total budget of \$8.3 million.

Last fall, when Mayor Schell announced his commitment to end homelessness in Seattle for women and children, it was Karen who ensured that homeless people were involved in the planning process.

Karen's inimitable style has been characterized by disarming honesty, visionary advocacy, and a natural ability to move mountains, even within the bureaucratic environment. Karen still believes that homelessness is a problem that can be solved.

**RC:** Is Mayor Schell on the right track to ending homelessness?

**DAWSON:** Well, yeah. He didn't commit to ending homelessness. He committed to trying to make sure there was no woman or child on the streets by Christmas. We've created this institution called "homelessness," which is the worst thing we could have ever done. What we're dealing with is really people's lack of housing and other supports. We call it homelessness. We call it homeless programs, homeless this and homeless that, and we really

shouldn't call it that. It is a lack of housing. If we called it that we'd probably be in better shape. We've created this institution around the problem, and it is unfortunate. A lot of our energy goes into responding to the institution and not into responding to the issues.

**RC:** What are the institutions we have created around homelessness that are most open to criticism?

**DAWSON:** With any social service system, any institution, you have to ask your-  
*Continued to page 8*

## Big Brother, MSW

Where does coordination end and surveillance begin?

BY MELISSA WALL

In Boston, they call it ANCHoR.

In California's Santa Clara County, they call it HUG'em.

But what some critics want to know about these computerized software packages being used to manage information about the homeless is: Should they simply be called Big Brother?

Certainly not, say some local participants in an on-going discussion about establishing a computerized tracking system here in Seattle. They argue that such systems are about improving responses to the homeless. Such databases allow non-profit and state service providers to share a common set of information about the homeless, cutting down on paperwork and avoiding duplicating counts of people. Right now no one knows how many homeless people exactly are being served in Seattle-King County and what happens to them afterward.

"We need an accessible system, rather than shuffling people around," says Georgia Conti, homeless planner for Seattle's Human Services Department who has studied the homeless management systems in 20 different U.S. cities, in anticipation of Seattle's jump into the field. Joe Easterday, program manager for transitional housing at Seattle Emergency Housing Services, concurs. The more coordinated the homeless system is, the easier it is on the homeless, he says. Yet Seattle's homeless network is complicated, consisting of many different service providers with

**"Is it worth giving up your privacy to cut back on paperwork?"**

**Joe Martin,  
Social Worker**

many different ways of collecting and recording information from their clients.

"Folks are frustrated," says Greg Wong, a hous-

ing specialist with the Seattle Crisis Clinic.

The effort to create a database of homeless began with the city's organization of the Homelessness Advisory Group (H.A.G.) a year ago. The group was charged with identifying effective ways to address the problem, which included defining it in manageable terms.

While the H.A.G. helped name homeless women and children, for instance, as first priority for the city to help (resulting in the Mayor's notable Christmas Promise), they also considered better ways of following up with all homeless persons and making it easier for them to access services.

While some city workers would prefer to move slowly on the establishment of a database, others are more eager. "Some providers don't even have email yet," says Conti. She doesn't project a date for the installation of a system-wide database, saying rather that the first step to streamline services

*Continued to page 13*

www.realchangenews.org June 15, 1999 Real Change

# Real CHANGE

Puget Sound's Voice of the Poor and Homeless

*Real Change* is published the first and fifteenth of each month and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Annual subscriptions are available for \$35. All material is copyrighted to the authors.

Submissions are encouraged and should be mailed to "Real Change," 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 441-3247.

On the Web at  
http://www.realchangenews.org  
Email rchange@speakeasy.org  
ISSN 1085-729X

*Real Change* vendors receive 70¢ of the \$1.00 paid for this paper.

## Mission Statements:

*Real Change* organizes, educates, and builds alliances to find community-based solutions to homelessness and poverty.

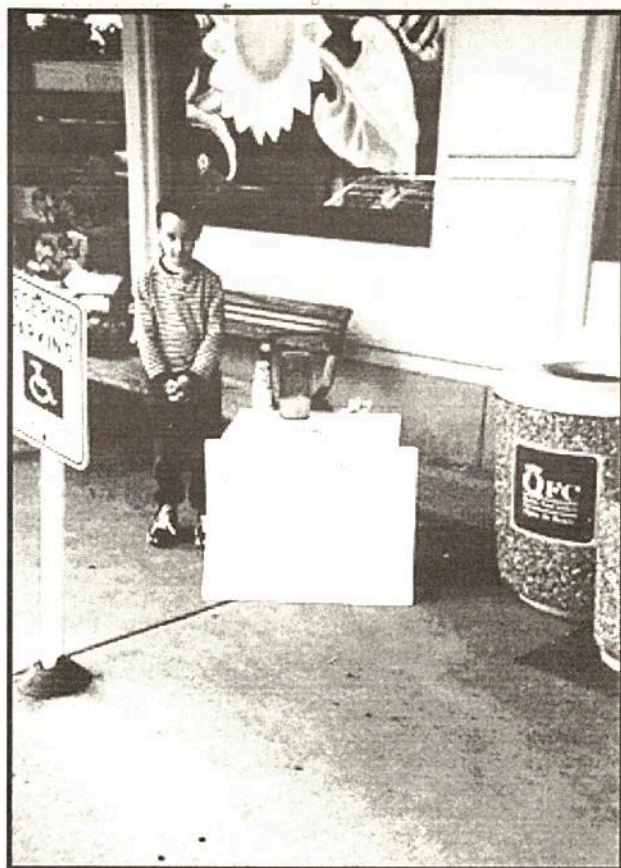
## Goals

- Provide a foundation for grassroots organizing.
- Publish the views of marginalized communities.
- Create direct economic opportunity.
- Build bridges with a broad range of allies in the struggle against poverty.

The Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that sponsors the StreetLife Gallery, StreetWrites, and the Homeless Speakers Bureau. The RCHEP raises the voices of the poor by supporting cultural, artistic, and literary expression to place a human face on homelessness and poverty. All donations to the RCHEP support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

## Editorial Policy

Articles appearing in *Real Change* reflect the opinions and perspectives of the authors. We encourage the submission of journalism, opinion, fiction, poetry, and artwork, and hope to create a forum where the many perspectives on 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.



## Piggybank Fundraising

We would like to extend a very big "thank you" to the youngest fundraiser *Real Change* has ever had. Second grader Iain Frankel and his mother recently visited *Real Change* to learn about poverty and homelessness. After talking to vendor and speakers bureau member Teri Kabb, Iain decided to set up an information table/lemonade stand at this local grocery store. He then donated all of his hard-earned money to *Real Change*. Thank you Iain! ☺

## MAILBAG

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

Dear *Real Change*,

I regularly pass by a *Real Change* vendor on my way in and out of Larry's Market on Queen Anne. Today, however, I actually stopped to chat with a vendor who'd caught my eye, or should I say, my ear, on numerous occasions. I believe his name is Davio and he is never without a smile and a song. He cheers me up whenever I walk by.

I must say that before today I'd never purchased a paper or even

knew what exactly *Real Change* was. I'd seen the vendors, but wasn't sure where any money that I gave them would go.

After talking with Davio for a while, however, things became clear to me. He explained how *Real Change* worked, and programs that were offered. He even suggested that I stop by and offer computer help. Here was a guy who'd gone through tragedy after tragedy, and came out of it with a positive outlook and hope for the future. And it looks to me like *Real Change* is giving him significant help in keeping that hope.

Thanks for doing good work.

(name withheld by request)

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## Thank You From REAL CHANGE

We would like to say thank you to everyone who participated in our raffle this year and our **Winners** are:  
**Mark Greaves, Gelb, Matthew Doherty, Peggy Shull, Sheryl Schwartz, Tia Lessin, Chashel Toner, Christa Pierson, Bill Broderick, Richard & Mary Thompson, Denise Pollock, Niell Murch, Watt Taylor, Scott Granland, Steve Mellandez**

## Thank You All

And we would like to offer a **Special Thank You** to our **Volunteers** with out which this fundraiser would not be possible, your time, energy, and sense of humor are greatly appreciated.

**Carole Frisell, Annie Chadd, Maryanne Atkinson, Terrie Yaffe, Carla Bueno, Toni Ameslave, Shihomi Ara, Kathleen Ruth, Tamara Dyer, Janelle Hartman, Sonja Richter-Kaufman, Jane Thuerk, Matt Lynch, Patricia Palagi, Eric Rose, Pauline Cooper, Michele Thomas, Madeline Lewis, Megan Farley, and an extra special thank you to Brianna Morgan.**

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State Representative, 11th District

Harriet Walden  
Mothers for Police Accountability

# Dead Horse

## Parks Exclusion Ordinance still a bad idea

I would really rather not be writing this editorial. I'd rather be watching the Knicks win game 5 of the NBA semifinals, or finish that Russian novel, or heck, take a walk in the park. I don't want to be sitting here in front of Mr. Mac and a blank sheet of Microsoft Word, much less talking about the particular issue at hand—again.

### Bob Redmond

The fact is, a lot of people are sick and tired of the Parks Exclusion debate. This is probably the 10th article in this paper about it. There have been discussions and letters and initiatives and hearings ad infinitum on the issue. But all the talk has gotten us nowhere.

An estimated 5000 people are homeless in the city, and approximately 2500 of them have nowhere to sleep at night, not even in a chair in the waiting room of the First Avenue Service Center. Oh, wait, the city ended funding for that "shelter" on May 1st. OK, no shelter, then, even in a dugout next to a half-billion dollar ballfield.

The fact that neighborhood residents, like me, would like to take a walk in a park without having to deal with homelessness caused the city to pass the Parks Exclusion Ordinance in June of 1997. It has been enforced for a year and a half, to the fervent hurrahs of some, over the passionate objection of others.

It makes our parks livable, safer, say supporters. But at the expense of civil rights of poor, homeless, and minorities, say critics. Those issues are unrelated! insist the supporters.

Let's not kid ourselves. The issues are related. Everyone knows what this debate is about. At every public hearing, the topic at hand is "Where can the homeless go?" No one, not a soul, argues for letting assaultive people, drug dealers and rapists loose in the parks. As activist Matthew Fox pointed out at a recent hearing, when the police show up, the dealers clear out right away. They're not going to stick around to get a citation. The people who do are more likely the victims of these felons, and stay in the parks because there's nowhere else for them to go. So who gets cited?

The ACLU, which performed a ticket-by-ticket analysis of citations given out during the first year, estimate that 42-48% of the people cited have no home. From a racial breakdown, says the ACLU, 45% are people of color.

Their behavior? Police reports show that 24% of people get cited for camping or trespassing—simply people in the wrong place at the wrong time. An additional 47% of the exclusions are issued for drinking. Drinking in public is already illegal, and if anything, the problem needs treatment solutions rather than more stigmatization.

Somehow the city and county argue that the recently-opened Shisler Center, which can let up to 60 alcoholics sleep on the floor for a few hours, is the best treatment option for those with this crippling disease.

The ordinance works, say police, parks officials, and some neighborhood groups. Neighbors (that anonymous and therefore specious majority) say they feel "safer." Complaints are down. Unfortunately, their argument is logical: (middle-class white) people feel safer if you remove the homeless, Blacks, Indians, Hispanics, and the diseased.

"The ordinance disproportionately affects poor and people of color and the homeless," said Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck at a council committee meeting last week. "I vehemently oppose it in its entirety... we don't have places for people to go; we don't have enough shelters."

**"The ordinance disproportionately affects poor and people of color and the homeless. I vehemently oppose it in its entirety."**

**Councilmember  
Peter Steinbrueck**

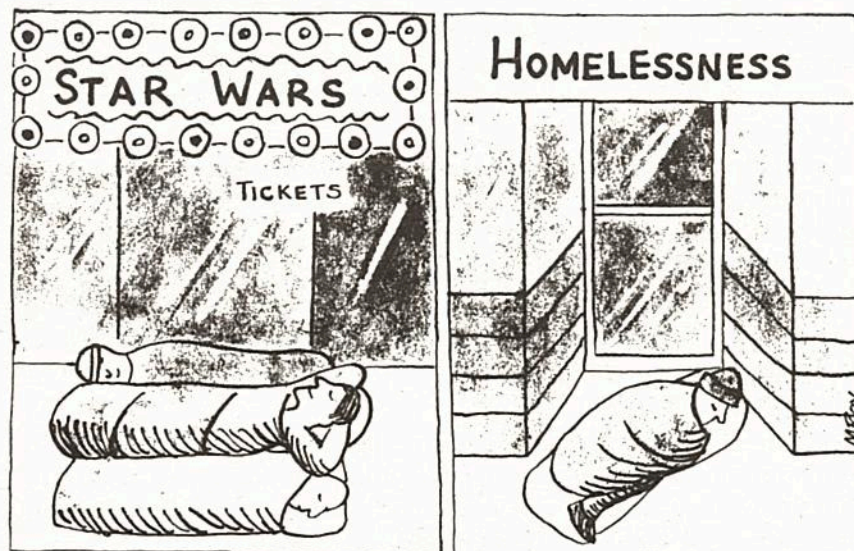
Steinbrueck joined councilmembers Richard McIver and Nick Licata in proposing significant amendments to the law. He also proposed a task force to find a way to create Safe Harbors: "places where people can go where they are free from any harassment or being asked to move along."

Call me a communist, but I thought that was the idea of a public park in the

first place. Rhetoric aside, Steinbrueck actually hopes to generate a fresh discussion about positive responses to homelessness, keeping in mind issues of public safety.

Why not sanction a temporary tent city to deal with the emergency? Architects have studied the feasibility and delivered options to the city, which has been reluctant to respond. The *Seattle Times*, which also has not supported a local encampment, editorialized on June 8th that "Tents Beat Alternative" for 1600 homeless migrant workers east of the mountains.

Last week, City Councilmember Nick Licata's Culture, Arts, and Parks Committee passed amendments to the Parks Exclusion ordinance. While the amendments, which would limit exclusions to felony behavior and institute due process requirements, won't solve homelessness, at least they'll cre-



Is SLEEPING A CRIME?

ate an attitude of tolerance.

Steinbrueck, even though he co-sponsored the original amendments and voted for them, says that he is still "not satisfied" and will be going door-to-door to other councilmembers to enlist their support for revised amendments. No matter what the final amendments look like, the council, which votes on June 21st, is expected to vote against the most substantial revisions.

No matter how hard we deny it, however, our local problem of homelessness is not going to go away until we acknowledge it, take responsibility for it, and do something to end it.

Don't stop me if I've said this already. ☐

### Be a Part of the Solution!

This little paper, which now publishes twice a month, receives no foundation or government support, 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. Your contribution goes beyond simple charity. *Real Change* helps people help themselves while they work for a more just world for everyone. Please give to *Real Change*.

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

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## Code Enforcement: A Radical New Idea

THE CITY COUNCIL IS SET TO PASS NEW LEGISLATION that will strengthen their hand in dealing with negligent landlords. The proposed ordinance includes amendments that will address more effectively the needs of renters — who make up 52% of the city's population.

Scheduled for a vote on June 21st, the ordinance proposes a ticket-based system of citations and puts more responsibility on landlords to respond. The expanded scope of the ordinance isn't as strong as some advocates had hoped, but it does open the door to better enforcement of the Housing and Building Maintenance Code.

Initially a response to complaints about bad neighbors, the proposal had only targeted five different violations of the Land Use Code, including keeping junked vehicles or garbage in the yard, too many pets, and other primarily cosmetic offenses.

The Housing Code, on the other hand, covers vital structural and safety issues, but enforcement has always been difficult because the people who would complain, particularly low-income people, are also subject to retaliation by their landlords (see next item below).

On these grounds, councilmembers Nick Licata, Peter Steinbrueck, and Tina Podlodowski lobbied for an expanded ordinance, and won some amendments that the whole council seems to support: ticket-based enforcement of minimum fire safety and security standards.

This leaves out plumbing, electrical, and structural problems, illegal lock-outs or utility shut-offs, and more, but the new ordinance gives a new tool to inspectors and literally opens the door for them to get inside a building. It also sets a precedent so that expansion of the new system to other parts of the housing code is more likely.

Pending passage, implementation should begin in July, with a review coming by the end of the year.

## Transportation Initiative Threatens Neighborhoods

SHOULD ALL OF PUGET SOUND'S LIGHT RAIL TRACKS RUN UNDERGROUND, except for existing tracks, the monorail, or new tracks on highways or industrial thoroughfares?

Voters might have a chance to decide, if Initiative 47, the "Neighborhoods First" initiative, gathers 18,830 signatures by July 15th. The effort arises primarily from the "Save Our Valley" campaign that pushed unsuccessfully for a subway under Martin Luther King Way earlier this year.

Organizer George Curtis says the group is not limited to the South End, however, and pledges support from a variety of neighborhoods. They're going to need all the help they can get, to raise the necessary signatures in a month. Curtis remains as hopeful about the cause as he is emphatic about it.

First, he says, more surface level transit will only add congestion. It's also dangerous to other traffic and pedestrians. Most of all, "it's going to demolish the community."

Train tracks down the middle of MLK Way, for instance, will literally divide the communities that have grown up around both sides of the street. Even if businesses survive the construction phase, says Curtis, they'll be inaccessible to half the traffic because of the tracks.

Furthermore, it's been small businesses that formed the social and economic backbone of the minority and low-income communities, says Curtis. Without them and the rents they re-invest in the area, the whole neighborhood will suffer. "We're trying to get the trains to conform to the community, not the community to the train," he says.

It's the same sentiment being voiced on Capitol Hill, and, says Curtis, could be valid in Fremont, Ballard, or anywhere else Sound Transit designates for the light rail route. "It's not a trolley car... it's a train 360 feet long, bigger than a football field, right down the middle of anybody's community."

Sound Transit, which is already \$200 million over their \$1.74 billion budget, says that the proposed initiative will cost an additional \$400 million and could jeopardize their plans. The initiative would cause 5.5 miles of track to be placed underground. They have to decide on a route by the end of the year.

For more information on the Neighborhoods First! initiative, contact (206) 721-1799.

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CLOSE TO HOME

## TU Strikes Out Landlord

FIRST, THE LANDLORD TOLD HIS TENANTS THEY HAD 20 DAYS TO MOVE OUT BECAUSE HE WAS PLANNING RENOVATIONS.

When they called the Tenants Union and complained to DCLU, he jacked up their rents 200 and 300%. Strike two.

Strike three: Those rent increases came with only 30 days notice, not the required 60 days for increases of more than 10%.

You're out, said the city, as last month they formally charged Reyn Yates, part owner of the 24-unit Eileen Court Apartments on Capitol Hill, with criminal harassment for retaliating against four tenants.

The charges actually pertain to the extreme rent increases, which came three days after DCLU told the landlord to rescind his original notice to tenants. If convicted Yates could pay \$5000 and serve a year in jail.

The rent increase was "blatantly illegal," said Lee Lumsden, a Section 8 tenant whose rent was raised by \$470. The extreme experience of Lumsden and the other three tenants may have helped the city make the rare decision to prosecute.

"The last time we know of the city prosecuting a landlord was one and a half years ago," said Scott Winn of the Tenants Union. Does that mean landlords don't break the law? No way, said Winn. "Retaliation happens all the time, but like discrimination it's hard to prove. In this case, though, it's obvious."

Yates and his ownership group, called No Boundaries, plan to contest the suit and have said that they had permission from DCLU to renovate and remove the tenants.

The pre-trial hearing is scheduled for June 21st.

## Women's Housing Program Gets Bigger and Better

THE LUTHERAN COMPASS CENTER IS MOVING its transitional housing program for homeless women from the Pioneer Square to larger digs in the Cascade Neighborhood.

The center's 32 residents will be able to stay for up to six months instead of the current two in the new Compass Cascade Women's Center. A new supportive services program will help women leave the program armed with the support of friends from church and neighborhood groups.

The "community integration" program, funded by a federal HUD grant, gets residents involved in a social network outside of the shelter and away from their case manager. Friends like these will stick around, said resident manager M.J. Kaiser. "We've noticed women who have a support system outside of the shelter tend to be more successful after moving out."

Kaiser sees the program as a chance for people who help the homeless in traditional ways — by volunteering occasionally at a soup kitchen or a shelter, for instance — to donate their time on a more satisfying level. Residents are interested in joining Immanuel Lutheran Church's quilting group that donates homemade blankets to the center's beds.

The new building doubles the number of people currently served in the Pioneer Square building. Residents will share bathrooms, a kitchen, dining room and living space. Building architect Lavay Aldrich met with current and former residents and took notes on the good design features of other local transitional housing. She incorporated the residents' opinions into her design plans. The building is funded by city, state and Federal Home Loan Bank grants and low income housing tax credits.

Residents begin moving in June 23.

—Adam Holdorf



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## More Housing News

**L**AST MONTH, HUD ANNOUNCED AN INITIATIVE TO PRESERVE SUBSIDIZED UNITS whose contracts are expiring before the end of September. It is a stop-gap measure designed to forestall the loss of Section 8 housing until more long-term solutions can be enacted.

It may mean the preservation of hundreds of units of affordable housing in King County—if HUD's local office decides to use it.

Through the plan, HUD will pay owners more rent for each unit if they re-up their Section 8 contracts for 5 years. HUD is under considerable pressure to address these contracts, since the bubble of Section 8 agreements that were initiated 20 years ago is coming due in the next few years.

In King County, contracts on over 2000 units are at risk of expiring in that period, with 750 of those slated in the next four months. Not all the owners will require the incentive of the new program to re-up, but it could provide a safeguard. "This program gives us a tool to save some of the buildings," says Siobhan Ring, coordinator of the Tenants Union's Section 8 Organizing Project.

Ring is frustrated by the local HUD's inaction on the new program. Although they are aware of it, they have not gotten an official "directive" from the national office, explains Ring, and therefore haven't done anything. "You can raise hell about owners opting out, but it's hard to do anything about it unless you have something else to offer them," she says.

While Ring and Section 8 tenants are encouraging the local HUD to take action, they are also rallying support for HR 425, currently being debated in the US House of Representatives. HR 425 would raise subsidies for rents on 1,000,000 units of housing nationwide, offering incentive for owners to stay in the program.

### CPP, CONT. FROM BACK PAGE

**4/1/99 (State):** Prioritize social services in the State budget: Homeless Children's Lawsuit, welfare for families and disabled, Mental Health, Housing. *Split: the budget prioritized Housing and Homeless Youth; the other issues, especially Mental Health, were not as successful*

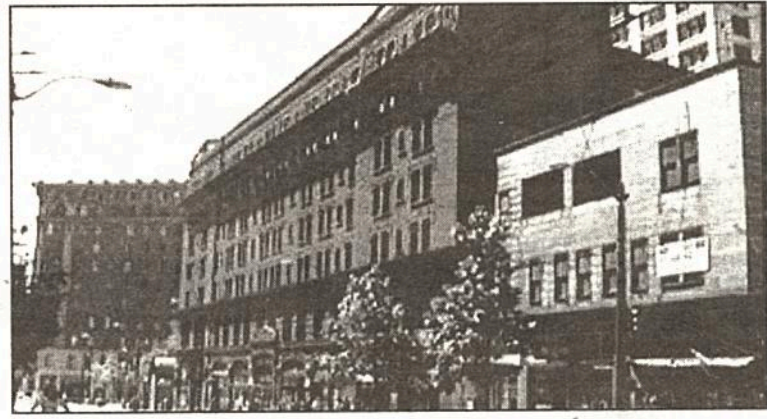
**4/15/99 (State):** Pass the HOPE Act legislation to help homeless youths. *Won: At the eleventh hour, the HOPE Act overcame one Senator's roadblock and became law—not at full funding, but enough to get the ball rolling on this urgent need.*

**5/1/99 (Federal):** Increase federal subsidy of Section 8 housing, thereby helping preserve 1,000,000 units of subsidized housing whose contracts are at risk of expiring. *Pending (see News You Can Use, p. 5)*

**5/15/99 (Federal):** Community Reinvestment Act Take 2: Maintain this valuable community development tool; defeat bills in the House. *Pending*

**6/1/99 (Federal):** Replace funding for Food Stamps and Housing that was diverted in the Kosovo War spending bill. *Pending*

**6/15/99 (Local):** Respond to Real Change! Your turn to shape the column. *Pending*



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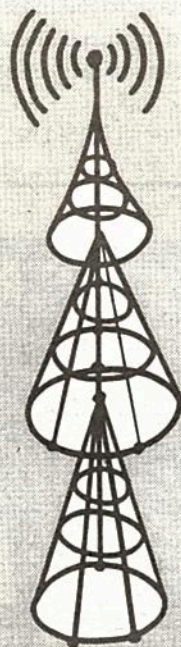
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## Unemployment Law Project evens the scales

By JIM PENNINGTON

On a cold day in January 1996, Richard Johnson's (not his real name) life changed forever. On that day, Richard, an accomplished industrial electrician, was working a trade show at the Seattle Center when a heavy metal ramp slammed down on his foot, crushing it and causing severe neck and back injuries.

For the next two years, Richard received worker's compensation for his injuries. In the spring of 1998, Labor and Industries terminated his benefits, and Richard applied for unemployment to cover his expenses until he could find work.

Although state law mandates that workers coming off L & I are automatically entitled to unemployment benefits, Richard's claim was denied. According to the Employment Security Department, Richard needed to earn six times his weekly benefit amount before he would be eligible to receive a check.

Richard filed an appeal, represented himself at the hearing, and won a favorable judgment. Still, the Department refused to pay him. "I won the appeal," said Richard. "I was totally broke. After a week, I went to see the judge, who called the unemployment people in Olympia. They said, 'We don't have to pay.' Even the judge didn't understand it."

After two more months, Richard was able to return to work. He discovered, however, that his injuries made it difficult for him to work continuously. "I found that when I got back to work, I was way out of shape, in a lot of pain. It was really difficult. My foot was aching. I was literally stumbling home." Because of his pain, Richard found that he was able to work only short calls (jobs lasting less than two weeks), and had to take a week or two off between jobs in order to recuperate.

In September 1998 Richard again tried to file for Unemployment, but the Department refused to accept his claim. This time, he decided to seek the help of the Unemployment Law Project, (ULP) a Belltown agency that provides free representation to

workers who have been denied unemployment benefits.

When people such as Richard are denied benefits, they are entitled to request a hearing, said Pam Crone, ULP's attorney/director. At the hearing, both the employer and employee give testimony, and may present witnesses; an Administrative Law judge then decides whether to uphold the denial. The problem for claimants, according to Crone, is that "employers hold all the cards," because they have more experience, access to witnesses, and legal representation.

ULP tries to balance the scales by giving employees legal advice, representation at the hearings, and in some cases issuing subpoenas to witnesses. The agency represents about 500 people a year; of that number, 72% win their appeals.

"We take cases that fall into a gray zone," said Crone. "These are employees who have quit their jobs because something bad happens, that was not present when they started," such as sexual harassment, or a reduction in pay or hours. Or they quit because of personal problems such as illness, childcare issues, or domestic violence. ULP also represents people who have been wrongfully discharged, and people like Richard, whose claims have been erroneously denied.

Many times, these people do not realize that they may be entitled to benefits. "We would like to encourage people in that gray zone to apply," said Crone. "We can be their advocate."

Crone also knows that claimants who try to represent themselves at hearings are more likely to lose because they lack legal expertise. "The primary reasons that people lose are that they don't present enough evidence, they assume that the judge knows things he doesn't know, or they don't know what's relevant," said Crone. "For example, we get cases where people didn't get breaks and lunches for years, and then one day the boss screamed at them and they walked. They don't mention the breaks and lunches — they don't understand the relevance of not getting breaks, that that is more important than the screaming."

People can get very emotional at these hearings, Crone said. "We're talking about who we all are; we identify ourselves through our work. This may be the first chance the employees have had to tell their story. They cry. They're angry. They yell." That is not what the judge wants to see, or what will persuade him, according to Crone. In order

to win, claimants have to tell their stories in a calm and rational manner, and the ULP representative helps them do that.

**"We're talking about who we all are; we identify ourselves through our work. This may be the first chance the employees have had to tell their story. They cry. They're angry. They yell."**

People should call ULP right after they have been denied, in order to give the staff enough time to evaluate the facts, and if warranted, prepare to represent them. If the agency decides that legal representation will not make a difference, the employee may receive tips on self-representation. "I encourage everyone to go to the hearing, even if we don't go with them," said Crone.

Crone is a former public school teacher who joined ULP because she wanted to make a difference in the lives of everyday people. She believes that one of her most important contributions is simply to listen. "People who come to us are in crisis," said Crone. "This may be the first place that somebody has listened to them. No one has sat down, looked at them eyeball to eyeball, and listened to their story. I want people to feel good about coming here. We treat people with respect."

Richard Johnson wholeheartedly agrees with that statement. "Pam is very compassionate," he said. "Everyone at ULP is 'caring, smiling, happy to do business with you.'" After hearing Richard's story, Crone decided to represent him; at the hearing, she convinced the judge that Richard's claim had wrongfully been denied. "I was awestruck," said Richard. "Pam is one of the best lawyers in Seattle. I have a lot of respect for her."

Richard recently received a sizable check, and he is using the money to get back on his feet. "When I got the check, my account was overdrawn; I still owe my landlord a few months' back rent," Richard said. To show his gratitude for their help, he donated 20% of the check to ULP. "It is so important that they are there," he said. "They are central to where I am today."

*Epilogue: The Employment Security Department has appealed the judge's decision to award Richard benefits. If they win, he will have to return the funds and be assessed an overpayment charge. The Unemployment Law Project has filed a response to the appeal.* □

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# Kids of the Korn

## Squatters look for community and safety

BY CAT

We drove in silence down a street to a place we must forget. One of the homeless people (we'll just call him Bob) that I, for one, care about had been injured and my foster mother, a friend of hers and I were being taken to his squat to give him the help and attention he needed. Driving down a dead end, we parked the car and walked up a steep, rocky embankment underneath a bridge. To the far left, when we reached the top of the embankment, there was an adorable little yellow house. We walked around the porch and without hesitation were invited inside.

The sliding door closed behind us and the dogs inside the house barked with excitement. A heavy metal band, Korn, was playing in the background of everyone's laughing and conversation. A sheet was pulled back to reveal a vigorous and smoky room filled with many people, including "Bob," who had been stabbed. They offered us seats on stools, torn out car seats and the floor.

Looking around the room I was in, I realized that the squat I was sitting in the midst of was more pulled together than your average house. Everyone sitting in this abandoned home had something in common and were just as close as any other family. Because there was no electricity, the candlelight flickered beautifully on the graffiti of past inhabitants. All the walls were covered in tags (signatures made with spray paint or bold markers) of earlier squatters, left just as a memory.

It really made me feel grateful that my homeless friends trusted me enough to let me come see their home. It's difficult to gain that kind of trust for anyone when you live on illegal property.

With much disappointment, about a week after I visited their squat, I found out that the police had invaded it and everyone staying at the abandoned house are now living on the cruel streets of Seattle with nowhere stable to sleep at night. This disturbed me very much

**"Everyone sitting in this abandoned home had something in common and were just as close as any other family. Because there was no electricity, the candlelight flickered beautifully on the graffiti of past inhabitants."**

because they tried so hard to make it their home and fix it up.

One of my acquaintances talked with the police about the legal issues of invading someone's property. The policeman told her that the police must give at least twenty-four hours' notice before they just barge in. They never gave the homeless any kind of notice or indication before inviting themselves inside.

I really don't understand why it's such a huge deal that the police need to raid the safe places that homeless kids have to stay. How is it that some people don't show the vaguest bit of concern? If society is worried about the homeless people causing problems and all the other misinterpretations that they have, wouldn't they rather have a homeless person stay in a building than in an alleyway, the side of the street, or a dumpster?

It's really strange how America accepts things. Most countries, England in particular, embrace squatters and other people without homes very well. Some squatters in other countries can actually have electricity and water without any problems. For some reason America has trouble accepting the less fortunate. Why is it that America

chooses to ignore the homeless population? They try and ignore them and hope they'll disappear.

Although many, many people help the homeless in a variety of ways, most people have the perception that all homeless are drunks, drug addicts, etc. and if the homeless people don't choose to get jobs then they're not really trying to do anything with their lives. This is totally not true, people. The homeless people need our help to get off the streets, get off drugs, get a place to stay and get a job. Until then we should let them keep their squats while they struggle to get their lives in order.

There are squatters all over the world for multiple reasons and I like the way a young man from London put it when asked, "Do you have any visions of what the next generation of squatters will be like?" He responded, "No idea at all. I'm one of those people who sees the younger generation as un-political; though, at the same time, I know that they have their needs and those needs are completely in contradiction to the way the world's going" (from *Not For Rent, Conversations with Creative Activists in the UK*, Evil Twin Publications).

Squatters should be treated with care and humanity and be at least able to stay in their abandoned homes if they're not doing anything wrong.

*Cat is a fifteen-year old homeless youth advocate.*

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**DAWSON, CONT. FROM PAGE 1** self, "Are you part of the problem or are you part of the solution?" And that goes for a SHARE, a LIHI, a city government. It goes for anybody who is part of the system.

There is a lot of institutional racism in the system. There are a lot of things that we think are right and fair because we are a city that thinks we are right and fair, but it's not. It's not a fair system. It's not a kind system. But, I think it is more kind than most.

I don't want to criticize programs. We are—all of us—a part of the problem. That is hard to admit.

**RC:** How well is the system serving people?

**DAWSON:** Well once any person, no matter who they are, goes into a system where they are coming in with nothing, the fight to get something is extremely difficult. When you are dealing with the issues that people are dealing with, like drug addiction, children, battery, or even just poverty alone, you are coming in with everything against you. Poor credit histories, discrimination, all kinds of things.

Many times I think what the system expects is that if we give you good information and referral, you will be able to put it all together. It's a fairly unrealistic idea. We act like if you have the motivation, then you can figure this out. With people in crisis, that's not necessarily how it works. The system is there to move people along; it's not there to provide the interventions that people really need.

There are exceptions, but by and large I think we're really just pushing people through. And that is why people keep coming back, because they are not stabilizing. They are not getting the recovery. Why would they?

We have programs that are there to help people, to save people, to make sure they don't die on the streets, but we have to ask what changes are we really effecting? When people need services, there's always that struggle that we have to deal with. Is it worth it? Am I making a difference? Did I really do the right thing?

**RC:** You've been here 20 years now. Do you have any regrets?

**DAWSON:** I surely don't regret being here this long, not that I haven't asked myself that many times and wondered why. Although, again, coming from where I came from and how I

started out, I've done a lot during those twenty years of working that I'm proud of, including raising my children.

I took on tremendous challenges over the years. I always have. That's what kept me going. I think at our last homeless women's forum we started to debrief what we had accomplished in the past six months, and that was really incredible. It was really a SHARE/WHEEL initiative. We put together a planning process. We spent about \$1.8 million in service money, got programs on-line, and did this all really as a group. This was in six months, which is really record time.

like I'm part of the problem. So I know I need to take a break here.

**RC:** When did you begin to feel that way?

**KD:** Well I started to feel it about five years ago. I started to really question. Our department has really gone through a lot of changes. We keep expanding programs but the problems keep getting worse, and it's not a wonder. The housing market personally benefits many people, and anyone who owns a home, like myself, knows it. That's great. But it really tipped it for me, because you just know that once the affordable hous-

to change the issues that we're dealing with...drug addiction, racism, poverty, issues of wealth. In this community, we have tremendous wealth.

If you feel like you can make a difference, you can keep doing anything. For me, I don't see that there's much left that I can do to make a difference except for being there. Maybe I'll feel different when I come back, but you have to feel like what you're doing is important to stay and do it.

**RC:** So this isn't a permanent leave?

**DAWSON:** A sabbatical.

**RC:** For a year?

**DAWSON:** Yes, for a year.

**RC:** What do you plan to do with your time?

**DAWSON:** Well, hopefully as little as possible. I'm going to move to Santa Cruz. I'm from the Bay area. I spent the sixties in Berkeley so my parents are still there and my son is there with his three children. I have a lot of friends and in-laws there. My daughter was born in Santa Cruz, so it's just a real special place for me.

They don't have many of the same poverty issues. At least it's not on the same scale. I'm not going to work in government. I'm not going to work, hopefully, in poverty programs.

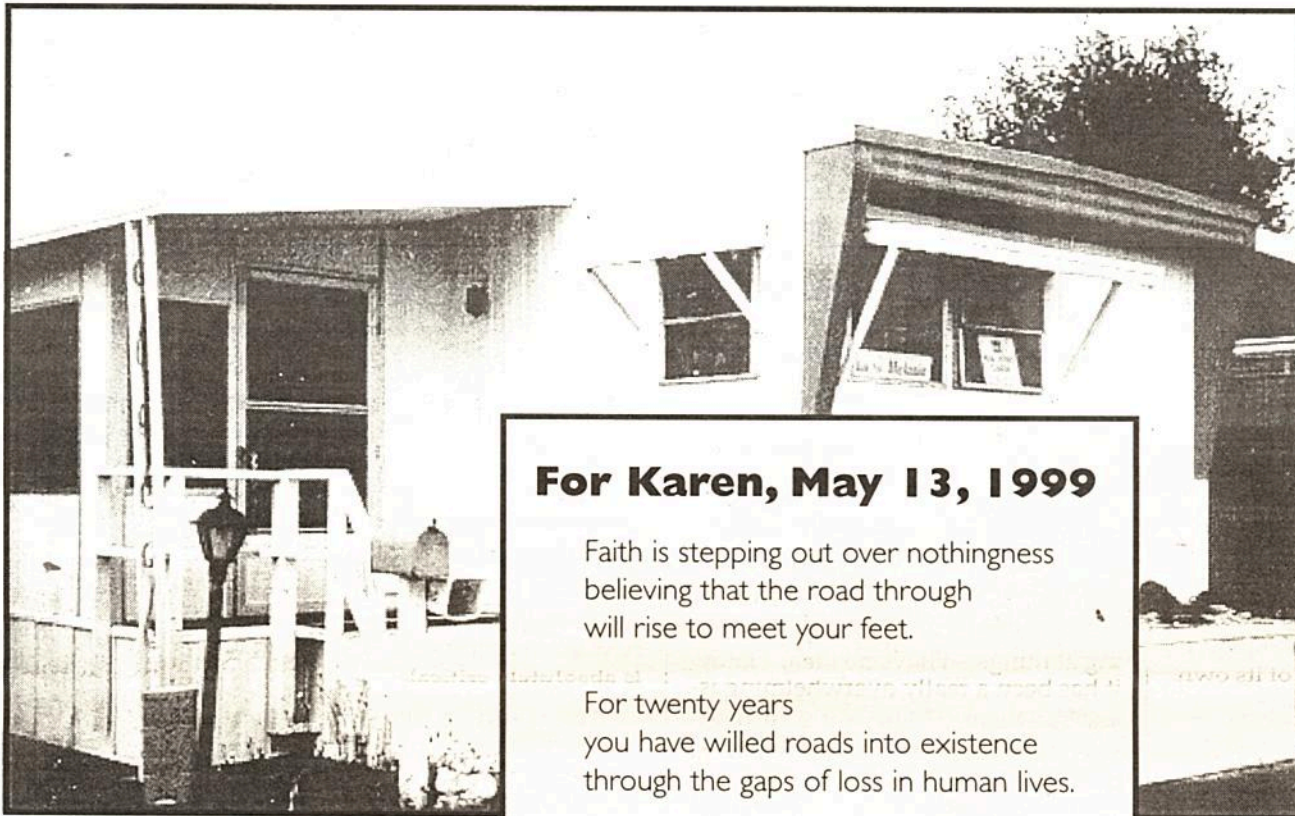
**RC:** You're not going to work in poverty programs?

**DAWSON:** No. Actually, I need to not work at all right now. I need to take a real break. I really don't know. But I do know that I don't want to work in a bureaucracy right now because that's where I'm really tapped.

**RC:** Six months from now, what work in Seattle do think you'll be most proud of? Any specific programs, or your role in getting things done?

**DAWSON:** It's actually funny, because this month, I'm beginning to feel like it's the wind down time. Actually, I'm feeling more support and more care from people than I have in a few years. People are genuinely telling me how much they are going to miss me.

It just makes me reaffirm the fact that most of the decisions that I made were right, even though my style is not always pleasant. People have said to me, "You've fought the good fight." I think it's not a bad way to be remembered. It's true. There's been a lot of times that people would not have done it the same way. I probably could have made it a lot easier sometimes on other people and myself, but that's not what I did. You don't take these issues lying down. They are rough, hard issues.



**KAREN'S HOME-TO-BE IN SCENIC SANTA CRUZ.**

### For Karen, May 13, 1999

Faith is stepping out over nothingness believing that the road through will rise to meet your feet.

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I still hear your feet upon these roads. I see your hands in these walls. I feel your heart beat with us as ours will shine for you in the warm sun.

Faith builds all our roads and builds our dreams. Faith can even make a place to rest.

—Anitra L. Freeman

So we were all really proud of that, but at the point when it was over, and after I kind of digested all of it, I realized that I couldn't do that again. I have done a number of those projects over the years, where a whirlwind of groups of people get things together and then the agencies do the hard work to keep things going. I just realized that I don't have another one of those in me.

When you know you don't have the energy to move mountains, which is what you have to do in systems because they don't work with you, they work usually against you, and you can't take pride in being part of a system and making it move with you, then you have to think about something else.

I am really proud of the work that we did with the women's group. I'm really proud of how all of us pulled that off, but I wouldn't be able to do it now. I just don't have the patience and don't have the energy and I feel

ing is gone, you really can't get it back. No amount of subsidies, no amount of programs.

**RC:** Is it that you can't bring people from even moderate income renting into home ownership?

**DAWSON:** Right, and if you can't help them, you know that no one else will get helped. Not if you have thousands of LIHIs. The market's too competitive. I've known and accepted for years that we can double, triple, quadruple programs but that's not going

RC: I think that in any work dealing with administering a crisis you get the impression over time that you are refereeing a catastrophe. That and bureaucracy don't really mesh.

So you've worked with WHEEL in the past and the homeless women's forum. How did you get involved in that?

DAWSON: In 1993 I went back and got my Masters in health administration. What I ended up writing was basically a thesis with two other women on barriers for homeless women. At that time, the Noel House women's shelter was new. So part of the thesis was what was done and what needed to be done. I read it the other night. It was really funny.

Most recently, the planning process got moving when WHEEL came to me and said, "OK, the Mayor put all this new money out for these services, what are you going to do?" I was fairly resistant, like "I'm not sure," and they said, "We really think we should have a process." So I said OK, and we started.

RC: This was the Mayor's Christmas...

DAWSON: Yeah, basically the \$1.8 million that was for families and women. That was last year. So they were really being the initiators in saying OK we want to steer and guide and have something to say about how this happens. So we started this planning process, and it sort of got a life of its own.

RC: How do homeless women's issues connect with the other issues

women face?

DAWSON: It's all a circle. Women's stuff is all so complex and it's all so connected. The reality is that homeless women just represent all the issues that women have to face and more. They have nothing and they have to deal with all of the institutional issues like racism, violence, and sexual assault. They've got it all and more. It's so severe, so critical, so overwhelming that it's not hard to find women who are interested in the issue; it's just hard to find women to sustain the issue because it's so overwhelming. And there's not the financial support from those people who should be supporting. And not all people think that all women's issues should be dealt with.

RC: Next Christmas, is Paul Schell going to have any new allocations for getting homeless women off of the streets by Christmas time? What should be happening there?

DAWSON: Hopefully, my division is going to keep looking at numbers and looking at need and looking at the programs that we have funded. What that gets translated into—whether new programs or new ways of looking at things—I have no idea. I know it has been a really overwhelming issue for them. I know it's an overwhelming issue for us, and we're in it

The women's stuff, and some of the stuff for single men too, wouldn't have happened if the Mayor hadn't brought the energy and the funds. They go together. So his vision and his energy to deal with

the issue is really important. The problem is over the long haul. Again, these things are not cheap. They are not simple. You have to keep in there and keep working with things.

RC: So it was a premature pledge if

in government administration like yourself?

DAWSON: It's all of the above. I wish we had more. The people who should really be in the driver's seat are the clients who are most impacted.

WHEEL and SHARE have done a lot

to change things, but there needs to be more advocacy.

I don't think there will be. Most people, they're surviving.

But I think there could be easier and more creative ways for people to be heard

including a suggestion box at every program, the post-card technique where you

pay people five bucks to tell you right there what they think.

It's just something that in our institutions that

we don't do much of. There are a lot of us making assumptions,

and they are just assumptions. We think we

know it all.

RC: Looking at Real Change over the years, do you have anything you'd like to say to speak to our readership or to people who pick up the paper? What are your thoughts on the paper?

DAWSON: I love *Real Change*. Sometimes I feel like there is more that can be written. It's not like there aren't people out there who will talk. My favorite article is when you did the rating of the meal programs.

RC: It was called "Choosy Beggars Review."

DAWSON: I think that should be done regularly because one of the things that we have actually been working

on really hard is this whole issue of kind of upping the bar on the whole

meal program thing downtown. The city has put more money into it; we've

put more focus on it. Things to make the system better is kind of the name

of the game for me. And the same for the women's stuff...one area gets better

and then you notice how something's not so great. So I wish

things like "Choosy Beggars" would be done more regularly. I think *Real*

*Change* is great for the programs downtown and the people that are

writing for it. I just wish we could shake it up a little bit.

**"There's been a lot of times that people would not have done it the same way. I probably could have made it a lot easier sometimes on other people and myself, but that's not what I did. You don't take these issues lying down. They are rough, hard issues."**

Karen Dawson

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## Not a Morning Person

bare feet on bricks  
 she carries her shoes cradled  
 yawns  
 waves away eye contact  
 from driver stopped at light  
 self salutes a lock of hair  
 steps into morning glare  
 toward dog shit  
 glass  
 and broken tongues clucking

—David Thornbrugh

## Genesis

February sun bleeds orange  
 staining mountains  
 purple.

Coyote interprets, musing,  
 and transcribes telephone lines  
 that grow cold with chattering  
 of the night.

Under the filigreed awning  
 of a tamarack, Coyote regally poses  
 his most prominent  
 and interesting feature  
 is his long, proud  
 nose.

Coyote grins, beginning  
 his soliloquy:

"Some label or call me  
 a cultural anomaly,"  
 he laughingly barks.  
 The outer rim of his face  
 and an eye were visible;  
 the other half was obscured  
 by a bough, then he continues  
 his spiel.

"We create our own  
 mythologies. I  
 may be non-linear.  
 Well, pard! Better circle  
 the wagons..."

Telephone poles extend into the-sky  
 reaching for the moon.  
 They pierce the dark  
 creating a fine web of stars  
 on his fur and Coyote  
 begins again:

"Being the people's poet,  
 I count the syllables  
 and breaths—the rise and fall  
 of one's voice—trying to understand  
 and examine the rhythm  
 of the world..."

—Earle Thompson

## Going Without

Going hungry  
 Although the free hand-outs were  
 greatly appreciated  
 There was nothing there my body  
 could consume  
 Unless a visit to the hospital  
 was added to my agenda  
 No, not tonight.

Nothing to wear  
 Unless I felt like putting on the  
 dirty clothes I took  
 off yesterday.  
 "It's not your turn to do laundry."  
 I would have signed up earlier  
 But I was so tired.

Getting no sleep  
 I could have slept despite the  
 hunger pangs  
 Except for my fear of spiders,  
 roaches, and rats  
 Which I happened to glance  
 just as I was about to doze off.  
 So it was up to me to keep vigil  
 Because everyone else was asleep  
 And didn't seem to mind.

Aching from the cold  
 No coat for me to wear.  
 Teeth chattering  
 Shaking all over in my wet clothes.  
 I wondered if hope for tomorrow  
 was worth the effort.

—DeAnn Ferguson

## Soliloquy

The bright light shines  
 Down on me  
 The heat of the light  
 Dries my tears I cry.

I tell all who are watching me  
 The hell and heaven in between

But the end is near for the  
 Light is on me  
 For the world to see.

It is my turn to speak.

To tell all who believe in me  
 That the end is near  
 No more tears.

—Alicia

## Mist

Raindrops on a soiled  
 window pane. Murky images  
 passing, as though visions,  
 through tears.

Grayness covers the point  
 of view; where Heaven and Earth  
 mingle into a fragile,  
 indefinable horizon.

Mist rises and dances across  
 the present, past and future  
 as if knowing, and well rehearsed, Ghosts.

Emptiness attends, taunting  
 and comforting, like an old uninvited Foe.  
 Whispering, ironically—  
 "Seize the Day."

—D.S. Kent

## Climate

### [at Pioneer Square]

You can see them behind the trees, if  
 you stand there—  
 finding, in your own  
 hands, reasons to  
 deny

everything.  
 We raise eyes while we,  
 ourselves fall  
 from the same trees through  
 time—or,  
 creation

one of voting, first. Done, by  
 standing with friends in the circle!  
 Inside...

outside...  
 with friends, around trees in the circle.

—Stan Burriss

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as if to say: leave living to the ground,  
upstairs to bread, death, and pigeons  
who come & go, homing where they will  
(like us), their spread wings harboring ghosts,  
their detritus, fallen below, transforming  
seeds to petals & perfume, filling  
beds & tables, burdening the air.

—Marion Kimes

## Everyday Chaos

A police siren echoes in the cries of waking babies  
More or less randomly distributed along its trajectory  
in a doughnut shaped perimeter moving at approximately  
fifty miles an hour  
And crystallizes in the bloodshot eyes of mommy  
and/or daddy  
The act of picking up  
a penny  
removes its reflection from the nearby shop window  
And breaks a link of collective pedestrian thought:  
"It's not worth my time to pick up that penny,  
I have to go somewhere."  
The act of hugging a lover upon a crowded street  
sets off small, hidden explosions of emotion  
in the blood of bystanders  
They step more quickly toward where they expect somebody  
to be waiting for them  
Gunshots ... grow in volume forever if they take root  
and set off the sirens of police

—John Hoffman

## ADVENTURES IN POETRY

with © Dr. Wes Browning

# Flawed Brilliance

President Clinton says we did all right  
To bomb Serbs eighty days and some  
nights

"We did it the right way," he says gleefully  
"We'll finish the job! Take it from me!"  
And you know there could be somethin' to that  
We might have done right for an actual fact  
I heard we bombed Serbians only with bombs  
We didn't drop anything else on their lawns.

Sorry about that last rhyme. I meant it to be better but I came to a "bump in the road", such as the ones that slowed the Kosovo peace settlement and the end to our bombing. In my case the bump in the road was the English Language. In America's case it was real bumps in the road from the Macedonian coast to Belgrade.

Those damn bumps! Isn't that always the way it is when you're trying to bomb the bejeesus out of some people and forcing them to submit to your will? I know it is for me. People are always resisting. You're just trying to have a perfect little war with perfect airplanes where no one, absolutely no one, who was **anyone important** dies, is that asking too much?

But nooooo. There's got to be bumps in the road. I even heard some of the road was blown up! And even where it wasn't, there were actual enemy soldiers who didn't want us to march to Belgrade, and homes full of people lining the roads, that didn't want us to march to Belgrade.

And homes empty of people lining the roads, people who have already expressed their opinion about us marching to Belgrade in the most emphatic

way imaginable, by laying their bodies down and dying, to be bumps in the road. It's just so very frustrating.

Speaking of frustrating bumps in the road, and aren't we always, you will find in this issue a story about how our city officials are looking into ways to improve services for the homeless, and incidentally cut costs for those services, by tracking the homeless better.

The trouble with the way it is now, every time you turn a homeless person away from a shelter because there's no space left on the floor, you lose that person in the dark of the night, and wouldn't recognize her/him if you saw him again.

Why wouldn't you recognize her/him? Because there are thousands of her/him that's why, if there were only twenty or thirty, everybody could just remember what they looked like.

But I digress. The point is there are thousands of homeless not getting into shelters, and we all know that, but the funds needed to build more shelters are constantly being denied on the basis of the fact that **no one knows who those people are**.

I know who those people are, they are bumps in the road.

We will have shelters enough for everybody, trust us America, down the road, we are doing the right thing, we are doing it the right way, it'll be a little slower than expected, **there are bumps in the road**.

Well I got off on a tangent again. I meant to deliver a powerful polemic on the subject of software solutions to hardware problems and vice versa, but I got carried away by this whole road thing.

But what I really regret is that I have failed to make room for the deep sociological analysis that I was going to provide that was going to explain what

the War in Kosovo and tagging homeless people in Seattle have each to do with what we all are really most interested in these days, the revelations in the press regarding Charles Kuralt's mistress.

Oh well. Meanwhile here's a poem I wrote in honor of dear Charles, may he rest in peace and good cheer, and may there be no more bumps in his road.

### Late to the Wake

We've come too late t' the wake, I see,  
The man's been dead two years or three!

His last word said upon his bed,  
Was "Pat"! not "Rose Bud"! nor even "Dead"!

Who's Pat? all asked, around the room.  
A long lost friend, they'd all assume.

But not so long lost as all that,  
A fishing partner was fair Pat!

To be precise, Charles made the fish,  
for Pat to catch and make a wish,

then put him back in his fish den  
the Magic Fish to leap again

& again & again, for near thirty years,  
for Fishing always gave Charles cheer.



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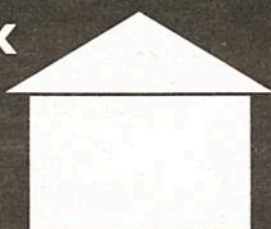
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**Tenant Talk**

Legal Action Center

By Mark Chattin



*Buyer Beware: Each individual tenant situation involves factors that cannot be addressed and people who may react differently. My responses are based on a general application of the law to the questions raised, and it cannot be assumed that following these responses will resolve the issues in the way that the law would seem to indicate. I have gone to court on many occasions feeling that I had a sure thing and come out a loser, and I have even gone to court with a case that I thought was a dead loser and ended up winning. Hopefully the responses will give you an idea of how to proceed to protect your rights.*

Dear Tenant Talk,

A new owner just bought the building I live in and I got a rule that says no pets without the permission of the manager. I have an aquarium with a fish. The manager said I could keep the fish but had to pay a \$100 pet deposit, on each fish! Fish aren't pets. Now the manager says they will evict me because I didn't pay \$1000 for my ten fish. The reason I got the fish in the first place is because after my son got in a bad accident, the doctor said animals in the house would help him recover faster since he stays home a lot. The fish have become his hobby. Can they evict me if I don't pay?

Something's Fishy

Dear Something's Fishy

The first question is whether you are still under a valid lease. If you are still under a lease, the new owner cannot change the rules of the tenancy until the completion of the term of the rental agreement and only after thirty days written notice. Secondly, the law requires that the tenant conform to all reasonable obligations. It is highly questionable whether a \$100 deposit for each fish in an aquarium is a reasonable requirement. The purpose of the deposit is to protect the landlord from property damage which could be caused by your fish. It is hard to envision the potential for increased property damages simply be-

cause you own more than one fish. The Residential Landlord Tenant Act also imposes a duty of good faith on both the landlord and tenant. I think the landlord would be hard pressed to convince a court that he is acting in good faith while demanding that you pay a \$100 deposit per fish.

You also raise another possible defense in that the fish provide some comfort for your son who was home recuperating from an injury. Landlords cannot discriminate against tenants who have service animals; however, I don't believe your fish would be extended the same protections. Even though they wouldn't qualify as service animals, I think you would have an excellent argument that the deposit demands made by your new landlord are unreasonable and his demand is not in good faith.

Dear Tenant Talk,

I live in an apartment in Magnolia and the owner has been putting off repairs for years. The landlord says he's getting ready to sell the building. Tenants have received a letter from the landlord telling us that he plans on beginning major renovations this summer. He also says that he will raise the rent in the next few months to pay for the improvements. The landlord is offering to move tenants temporarily around the building to vacant apartments while he does renovation to our apartments. I don't want to have to move twice, and I'm not sure I even want to stay in the building since rents are going up and this major renovation project will begin soon. Do I have to move? What can I do?

Major Renovation

Dear Major Renovation,

When a landlord starts a substantial rehabilitation project in Seattle, which requires a building, electrical, plumbing or mechanical permit and which cannot be done with the tenant in occupancy, the landlord is subject to the requirements of the Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance. The landlord must obtain a tenant relocation license and provide the tenant with a tenant relocation information packet. A low-income tenant may be eligible for relocation assistance payments from the city and the landlord. If your landlord has not fulfilled his obligations then you should contact the Department of Construction and Land Use.

If you are not eligible for relocation assistance and you are not on a lease, there may not be much you can do. A landlord has a right to renovate their property so long as they comply with the permit process. A landlord may also issue a rent increase so long as it is not issued in retaliation for a tenant asserting their legal rights or based upon discrimination. There is no rent control in Seattle and the only limitations on rent increases is that a landlord must give 30 days written notice of a rent increase unless the increase exceeds 10% of the current rent. In cases where the rent increase exceeds 10% the landlord must give 60 days written notice.

**Write to Tenant Talk!**

Have you now, or have you ever been screwed by your landlord? Got a tenant issue you'd like to raise? Have anecdotes from another country or city? We want to hear about it! Send all gripes, anecdotes, or questions to "Tenant Talk," c/o Real Change, 2129 -2nd Ave., Seattle, WA, or email [rchange@speakeasy.org](mailto:rchange@speakeasy.org)

**Got a Tenant Problem? Get Help**

Seattle CSOs (police matters only)	684-4790
Legal Action Center (low income only)	324-6890
Lawyer Referral Service	623-2551
Northwest Justice Project	
(Section 8 or HUD housing only)	464-1519
Tenants' Union	723-0500
or TTY (hearing impaired)	723-0523

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## BIG BRO, CONT. FROM PAGE 1

is to create a common intake form. Joel Estey, Director of the VA, on the other hand, has already budgeted \$25,000 (in the current King County budget) for the establishment of a tracking system. Estey thinks that a database will allow providers to catch scam artists, and, in the best scenario, provide more resources for everyone.

Add to this variety of objectives and constituencies a healthy dose of concern for privacy and you get a daunting issue of its own. Social worker Joe Martin puts it this way: "Is it worth giving up your privacy to cut back on paperwork?"

### Crunching numbers

Under the current system, the homeless are forced to repeat the same stories and supply details over and over again as they move from one shelter or clinic to the next. Service providers must spend hours generating paperwork to constantly document their work. Funders demand solid statistics on the city's homeless population before they're willing to provide money.

And while many service providers say their first concern is having a system that best serves the homeless, it is also the demands of the funders that loom large in this push to better keep track of the homeless. Funders want indisputable statistics documented over time. That's partly why more than 25 cities have started using the ANCHoR system.

"Politicians want to see numbers," says Wong.

Without such numbers "it's hard to make a case" to funders, says Tom Richards, housing lead at the Fremont Family Shelter and Bethlehem House. These demands for statistics are frustrating when the homeless are so underserved, he adds.

Martin issues a warning: "Efficiency sometimes collides with something called democracy, and a certain level of freedom of privacy," he says. "This isn't going to be some kind of foolproof way to tabulate the numbers of homeless people," he adds. "There are people who never get onto anybody's database."

For the homeless who do end up in a database, privacy can certainly be a concern. Consider the "HUG'em" system, produced by EPIC Solutions and used at a California children's shelter.

HUG'em links photos and video of homeless children with information about family histories, medical or emotional concerns, school status, other names used, visitation rights, court appearances, room assignments, daily location and languages spoken, according to an EPIC press release. EPIC has also created similar systems for human services, criminal justice, and public safety agencies including "BOOK'em" for persons arrested and "HOLD'em" for jail management. "As we move into the realm

of neo-fascism," says Martin with a straight face, "they'll probably have a new program called 'KILL'em.'"

### Concern for privacy

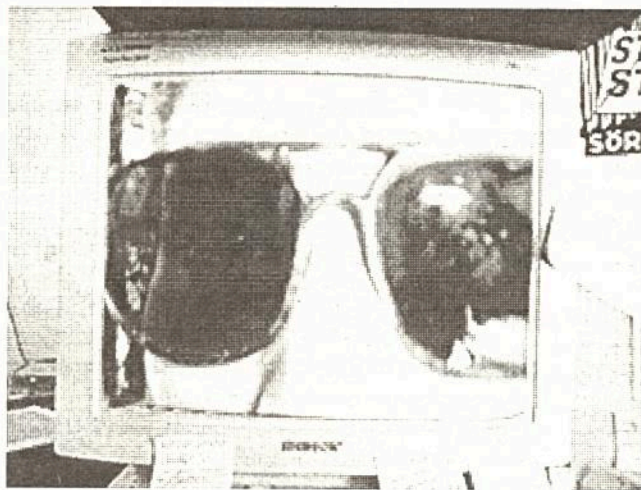
Whatever system is eventually used here in Seattle would put a premium on privacy and security, according to Conti. It would be designed so that future employers, landlords and even other governmental authorities would not be able to tap into a person's personal information. It would avoid the use of social security numbers and could include release of information stipulations that the client could control.

Conti's concern for privacy has actually led her to favor a system that would be similar to a San Francisco computer package not even designed for the homeless. Called Reggie ([www.reggie.org](http://www.reggie.org)), the database serves another group with serious privacy considerations: that city's HIV and AIDS populations. Reggie does not identify people by name, instead using a personal identification number (PIN) with multiple tiers of confidentiality.

Seattle's system would have to be adapted to local circumstances, says Wong, who also notes that ethical questions have to be considered. "How to use technology to help without de-sensitizing the homeless population?" he asks. "How to make it work for everybody" without stepping on the "rights of the homeless and still keeping funders happy?"

If it makes things easier for the homeless, says Martin, "who can argue with that?" He continues, "But it has a big, big, big potential for abuse. The fundamental question is how easy should it be for you and me to find out if Johnny Brown's dad is in jail, or homeless?"

"There's good and bad" in the computerized systems, admits Easterday. "Efficiency of information is a good thing; inaccuracy of information is a problem." In any case, Seattle's homeless providers are unlikely to collect more than simple demographic information. Wong says it would not be a tracking system.



### More questions

Some ask whether sharing such information requires a computerized system at all. Fremont's Richards definitely supports a common intake form which he says could be easily started and shared via phone, fax or email at a small cost. "I'd like something low tech first," he says, where the bugs in the system could be worked out.

But he acknowledges that "there's a belief that it has to be complex."

When he worked in mental health care a switch to a computerized system "cost a fortune and was not well received." He supports a computerized system for the homeless if it is cost effective, doesn't harm confidentiality, is easy to access and is more efficient

than the current system — and doesn't take money from current services.

The questions around cost are unanswered. Conti says the city doesn't yet know the cost of setting up or operating such a system. They aren't even sure how much hardware and software various service providers now have. Some service providers are said to not have a single computer.

Conti and Wong both believe that assistance could come from high tech companies or social venture capitalists in town who often support projects using computer technology.

For that matter, Martin again counsels caution. "I would be very leery of giving any public imprimatur to any private interest in this realm," he says. "This thing is tailor-made for abuse — to be used

for purposes it is not ostensibly designed for."

Although establishing a computerized system is still officially just a discussion, Wong says it will likely happen at some point and service providers are better off participating in the discussions. If the concerns of Martin and others have any credence, then Wong's advice is wise: "I'd rather us take a pro-active approach," he says.

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**FIRST PLACE IS A MODEL SCHOOL** and Therapeutic Center for low-income and homeless children and their families that fosters hope, promotes stability, and provides resources for self-sufficiency. Volunteers support First Place in a plethora of ways. Contact Robin F. Counts for details 223-6715.

**THE COMMON CENTS CAMPAIGN** is a combination coin drive/educational campaign to benefit homeless children in Seattle. We need responsible people to help with material delivery and classroom workshops. There are many opportunities to volunteer from March through May. Call 461-3883.

**REAL CHANGE/RCHEP** needs volunteers for a wide variety of tasks. Front desk volunteers serve vendors 2 hrs a week. StreetWrites needs a driver to pick up food donations Sunday AM. We are also looking for Computer Center Interns for 10 hours per week. Minimum commitment of 3 months for all positions. Call Michele at 441-3247 for more info.

**THE SHAREHOUSE** collects quality furniture and household items to give to homeless families moving into permanent housing. The Sharehouse needs volunteers at its University District office to help with warehouse and donation pickup scheduling. Time commitment is 3 hrs/week. If interested, please call Young Kim at 527-5956 or 525-1213.

**VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA GREENWOOD FOOD BANK** needs volunteers to deliver groceries to home-bound clients and pick up food from grocery stores. Must be friendly, reliable, and have your own truck or van. Regular (once per week) and substitute drivers needed, Monday and Wednesday mornings. Call 782-6731.

**HELP "ADDRESS" THE HOUSING CRISIS.** Fun office needs help updating rolodexes, other small tasks. Seattle-King County Housing Development Consortium

(SHDC) is the association of non-profit housing developers working to increase the quality and supply of decent, safe, affordable housing in King County. Call 682-9541 to make a difference.

**HELP THE HOMELESS** by volunteering at Downtown Emergency Service Center, Seattle's largest multi-service center/shelter for homeless men and women. Community volunteer drivers are needed to pick up donations for our shelter, mental health and housing programs. Training provided. 6 month commitment. Call David Strong at 464-1570 x3003

**RELIABLE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** for Seattle Childrens Home's Street Links outreach program. Go out in our van between 8:00 pm to 2:00 am, assist driver and other professionals in providing basic needs (such as food, clothing, and hygiene supplies) for Seattle's homeless teens. Carol Fleagle, 206-298-9600, voice mail box 9838.

**FOOD NOT BOMBS** is a hunger relief collective that serves vegetarian meals to those in need every Sunday evening in downtown Seattle. Cooking begins at 1:30 on Sunday at the Green Tortoise Hostel. Meetings are held on the 2nd monday of each month at 7:30

pm. To join or donate food/cooking equipment, call (206) 985-2247.

**HELP THE HUNGRY** in Northeast Seattle by joining the Board of the University District Food Bank. 4-8 hours per month and a 2-year commitment starting 5/99. Please visit our website at www.scn.org/civic/udfb or call Lorrie Johnson at (206) 523-7060 for more information and an application.

**TEENHOPE** provides shelter to teens in Shoreline and has numerous volunteer opportunities to serve at-risk youth and their families. TeenHope seeks volunteers for house parenting, special events, fundraising, public speaking, committee development, and clerical work and errands. Please call Linda Roy at (206) 546-1010.

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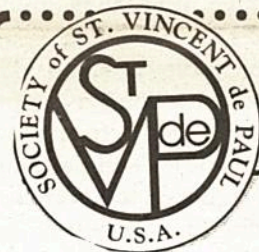
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**Meeting to plan local responses to the impending execution of African American activist** and journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose appeal was denied in Pennsylvania's Supreme Court. Tuesday June 15, and every other Tuesday thereafter, 7 p.m., at 2nd Ave. Pizza, back room, 2015 - 2nd Ave, near the Moore Theater; info on the case: <http://www.mumia.org>, local Seattle Mumia Defense Committee 206-376-5867, [smdc@speakeasy.org](mailto:smdc@speakeasy.org), or <http://www.speakeasy.org/~smdc> **6/15**

**Earth Day Puget Sound General Meeting** 4 - 6 p.m., at Downtown Seattle Public Library, 4th Ave near Madison downtown, info: 206-264-0114 or <http://www.earthday.net> **6/16**

**International Women's Day planning committee** is planning for an extraordinary celebration in March 2000 and activities leading up to this event. All concerned with women's issues either as individuals or representing organizations are welcome. June 17 and subsequent 3rd Thursdays, at NOW office, Good Shepherd Center, 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, room 222 at 6 p.m. Monthly meetings have been changed for convenience of those who could not attend the former morning meetings. info: Rosalinda, Jobs With Justice 206-441-4969, fax 206-441-5059, or Diane, Seattle NOW 206-632-8547 **6/17**

**"Six Months After I -200: Challenges and Opportunities;" a community forum on the effect Of I -200 on public sector employment, government contracts and higher education;** short presentations by representatives of City of Seattle, Port of Seattle and UW, followed by comments and questions from those present and call-in participants; 6 - 8 p.m., at Seattle City Council Chambers, 11th floor, Municipal Building, 600 4th Ave; sponsored by Seattle Office for Human Rights, info Paula Harris-White 206-334-4540, and Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck info Lisa Witter 206-684-5334

**Stern In Concert "Singing for Families/ Singing for Peace,"** two truly outstanding songwriters join creative forces for an evening of music about NON-VIOLENCE & JUSTICE both in the world & in our homes, suggested \$5 - \$15 donation, 7:30 p.m., at the Seattle Waldorf School, 2728 NE 100th St. off Lake City Way, Betsy Rose & Michael info 206-633-3647 **6/17**

**General meeting organizing protest of the WTO** meeting of various committees including Street Committee, Outreach, Education, Communications, Media, Logistics and Budget; Group name to be determined: No to WTO, or People for Fair Trade, or who knows?!, at the Labor Temple; info 206-632-1656 **6/19**

**Fremont Street Fair,** many non-profit booths, circulating petitions, etc., look for Fellowship Of Reconciliation's Plants for Peace booth with proceeds for scholarships to F.O.R.'s July 2 - 5 conference, info 206-789-5565 **6/19-20**

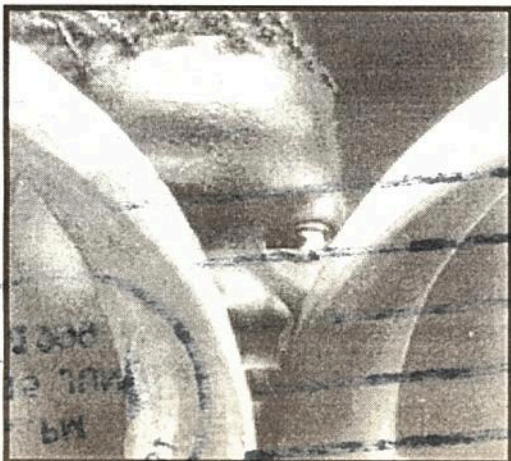
**Organizing School** taught by top labor organizers in King County 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., at IWW office, 5215 Ballard NW above the Tractor Tavern; UNION; info 206-706-6250 or 206-517-5166

**Critical Mass,** an organized coincidence of bicyclists who ride around the streets of Seattle en masse. It happens when a lot of cyclists happen to be in the same place at the same time and decide to cycle the same way together for a while. Come join the fun! 5:30 p.m. at Westlake Park, downtown, 4th & Pine (also subsequent last Fridays); info: <http://www.oz.net/~nic/cm.html> **6/25**

**Asian Counseling and Referral Services 9th Walk for Rice,** a fun and worthwhile event raising money for the ACRS Food Bank, the 2nd largest in King County, which provides over a 100,000 pounds of food per month to the community, the only FOOD BANK in King County that provides much needed staples of Asian diets such as rice, ramen, tofu, fish and fresh produce, at Alki Beach in West Seattle, details TBA, info: Elisa Del Rosario, ACRS Coordinator 206-695-7521 **6/26**

**Gay Pride Parade and Celebration:** Begins 11 am at Pike and Broadway and continues to Volunteer Park for Rally and Entertainment. Support equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people! Info: Freedom Day Committee 206-324-0405 or 206-324-2026 or [fdcseattle@aol.com](mailto:fdcseattle@aol.com) **6/27**

**Lectures on Domestic Violence in the African American Community:** Dr. Oliver Williams, Executive Director of the National Institute on Domestic Violence, visits Seattle to deliver this series of four lectures regarding unique issues that African American survivors and batterers face regarding domestic violence. Sponsored by the local African American Task Force Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the lectures are: **6/27:** "Confronting Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse in the African American Community" (3 - 6 p.m., New Hope Baptist Church, 124 - 21st Ave.); **6/28:** "Unique Struggles Facing the African American Survivor of Domestic Violence" (7 - 9 p.m., Salvation Army, 1101 Pike St.); **6/29:** "Black Men, Fatherhood, and Domestic Violence" (7 - 9 p.m., Randolph Carter Center, Catholic Community Services, 100 - 23rd Ave. S.); **6/30:** "Effective Community Responses to Domestic Violence in the African American Community" (12 - 2 p.m., Seattle City Council Chambers, 600 - 4th Ave., 11th Floor). For more info on any of these events contact Elle Kelsie, 206-324-4943. **6/27-30**



**Fotographia de la Esperanza, June 14-July 31, Benham Gallery, 1216 1st Ave.**

**Fellowship of Reconciliation annual regional conference,** theme "Inclusion: Creating a World for Everyone", keynote speakers John Dear, national director of F.O.R., and Rosalinda Aguirre, head of Washington State Jobs With Justice; at Seabeck, WA, on the Hood Canal; info: 206-789-5565 **7/2-5**

**Meeting of Latino workers** to discuss activism to achieve better wages, medical insurance, pensions; in Spanish with translation to English available. July 7 and subsequent first Wednesdays, 7 p.m., at Labor Temple, Hall 8, 2800 1st Ave; info Jose 800-202-1433 or Jimmy 800-202-9748 **7/7**

**Tenant Organizing Meeting** sponsored by the Tenants Union, come plan actions to further tenants rights and support the struggle of tenants to save their housing; snacks and socializing too, for special needs (interpretation, kids, etc.) July 12 and subsequent 2nd Mondays, 6 - 8 p.m., at the Pike Market Senior Center, 1931 - 1st Ave, enter on the side door on Virginia St.; please call ahead 206-722-6848 ext. 102 **7/12**

**Upward Bound "Job Shadow Day:"** Upward Bound, a program that encourages low-income high school students to go to college, is offering volunteers the chance to spend around 2 or 3 hours with very motivated and diverse students. The students have requested work in every field from the **7/21**

# JUNE

# NOTABLES

Arts to Zoology, including yours. To volunteer call Martin Friedman 206-386-1183 or email [Martin.Friedman@ci.seattle.wa.us](mailto:Martin.Friedman@ci.seattle.wa.us)

**Education ONGOING for Activists,** organizers, workers, and the community: series of Urban Action School courses offered frequently; sliding scale fees, space limited, early registration recommended, checks to Public Information Network, PO Box 95316, Seattle WA 98145-2316, info 206-464-9129

**Continue to phone President Clinton** 202-456-1111 to urge No Military Action against Iraq; End the economic sanctions killing thousands each month right now. The crisis is not over!

**Join in the efforts of Jubilee 2000,** press Congress to cancel the debts in the 41 most heavily indebted poor countries; Structural Adjustment Programs, conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund cause hardship and desperation all over the world; payments on international debts eat up half the national budget of these nations, with nothing left over for education or healthcare; call 202-783-3566 for an information packet, info Ann McLaughlin 360-779-4774

**Emergency response plan if U.S. bombs anywhere,** meet at Seattle Federal Building, 2nd between Madison and Marion, at 5 p.m. day after such action is announced (up to midnight Seattle time); info: Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia 206-547-0952

**Free Video Rentals** of Citizen Vagrom's micro-media offerings, a video magazine highlighting independent, micro-media from Seattle and beyond, (also on TV Channel 29 Sundays 8 p.m.), at Rain City Video, Fremont, Ballard, Sunset Hill; Video Vertigo, 913 East Pike; Broadway Video, Broadway Market; Scarecrow Video, 5030 Roosevelt Way; info 206-344-6434 or [citizen@speakeasy.org](mailto:citizen@speakeasy.org)

**Boycott Gallo of Sonoma Wines** to support the United Farm Workers union (Mondavi dispute is settled); local info: 206-443-7645

**WEEKDAYS: Pacifica News,** get another side of many stories, news from a more progressive viewpoint than NPR and the networks! 6:30 p.m., KBCS Radio 91.3 FM

**MONDAYS: Production work party for Eat the State!,** a free, independent print and electronic weekly, "a shamelessly biased political journal. We want an end to poverty, exploitation, imperialism, militarism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, environmental destruction, television, and large ugly buildings, and we want it f---g now." [censored by calendar compiler], 7 p.m., 3rd floor Univ. Baptist Church (4554 12th Ave. NE in Seattle), info: [ets@scn.org](mailto:ets@scn.org)

**Special Thanks to Jean Buskin at [bb369@scn.org](mailto:bb369@scn.org)**  
For complete listings with meeting times for local advocacy & peace groups, see her fine calendar at <http://www.scn.org/activism/PJ-cal.txt>



# CPP Scorecard

## Tell us how we can keep winning

The CPP seeks to provide you with the views and concerns that homeless, poor, and working people's organizations have about pending legislation, both local and national, in a clear, concise, and meaningful way.

Our hope is that the information provided here will help make your participation in the legislative process a good experience. Indeed, something that you want to do.

**ISSUE:** In every edition of *Real Change*, the Community Participation project focuses on a different legislative circumstance. From the Tenants' Right of First Refusal (City); to the HOPE Act for Homeless Youth and the Housing Trust Fund (State); to funding for HUD and support for the Community Reinvestment Act (Federal), *Real Change* has covered the gamut of issues and decision-makers. Now we'd like to hear from you ourselves. Do you find the CPP informative and useful? Most of all, do you take the time to contact legislators and if so, how have you found the experience?

**ACTION NEEDED/ RECOMMENDED**

**MESSAGE:** Read the summary below to jog your memory, and call us at *Real Change* with feedback on the CPP and your participation (or not). Our number is (206) 441-8143; ask for Tim or Bob.

**BACKGROUND:** In the past year there have been 18 total CPP's: 8 directed towards State government; 6 City or County, and 4 Federal. "Winning" issues numbered 7; split or pending 8, and losers only 2 (some issues took two tries). Here are the specifics (by date, target municipality, action recommended, and disposition,

- 8/98 (State): Reinstate outreach program to sign up people for Medicaid. *Won*
- 9/98 (City): Amend the Parks exclusion law. *Pending*
- 10/98 (County/City): Keep downtown dental clinic open. *Won*
- 11/98 (County): Ask the Council to fund social services cut from the Executive's budget; fund the Housing Trust Fund. *Won*
- 12/98 (State): Fund Homeless Children's plan at or near recommended \$31.1 million; protect state's mandate to serve homeless children and families. *Won*
- 1/1/99 (City): Support tenants right of first refusal. *Pending*
- 1/15/99 (City): Enact HOPE Act legislation to help homeless youths. *Legislation written, to pass later (see 4/15; below)*
- 2/1/99 (local): Support musicians striking for the right to negotiate a contract with the Civic Light Opera. *Pending*
- 2/15/99 (State): "Stop the Clock" Support fair and flexible time limits to meet the needs of welfare recipients. *Lost*
- 3/1/99 (State): Fund the Housing Trust fund at \$100 million for the biennium, and add \$22 million for the supplemental budget. *Won an increase to \$60 million.*
- 3/15/99 (Federal): Support the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977; defeat Senate Bill 900. *Lost (the bill passed—see 5/15; below)*

Continued to page 5

- 6/98 (State): Fund the Child Care Food program with state funds, replacing Federal cuts. *Won*
- 7/98 (City): Ask the City Council to add \$300,000 to the Mayor's \$500,000 in funding towards homeless women and children. *Won*

**Real Change/RCHEP**  
**2129 2nd Avenue**  
**Seattle, WA 98121**

Seattle Public Library, Serials Unit  
 1000 Fourth Ave.  
 Seattle WA 98104

