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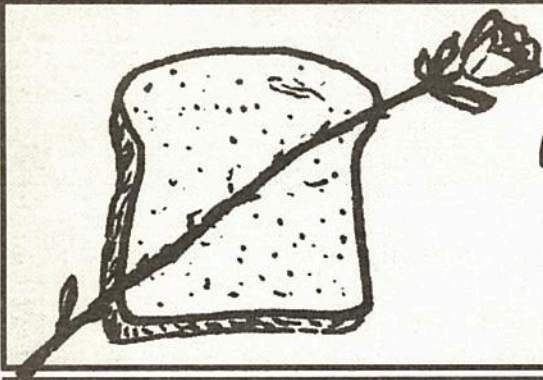
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Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless

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Jan. 15, 2000



Real CHANGE

Puget Sound's
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We Shall Not Be Moved

Tenants Union lobbies for just eviction bill

BY DELILAH JEAN WILLIAMS

Envelopes arrive in our mailboxes every day. Letters, bills, advertisements and Catalogs. However, few have the power to traumatize us and turn our lives upside down like an unexpected eviction notice. Under current law, a property owner has the right to terminate occupancy, without explanation or just cause, with just 20 days notice.

The Tenants Union in Seattle hopes to change that law.

"It's a matter of fairness," says Aline Carton, a Tenants Union representative in charge of promoting a new piece of legislation — the Just Cause Eviction Bill. "This legislation would require landlords to have reasonable cause in forcing a vacancy and close the loopholes that allow discrimination against renters." Carton and the Tenants Union believe that landlords should not be able to force a tenant from his or her home without good reason. Discrimination and retaliation are often at the root of an eviction, says Carton, and the tenant has little legal recourse.

Delaine McGuire, resident in good standing at Garden Park II apartments in Federal Way for nearly a decade, will be writing to her congressman to support the bill.

McGuire and seven of her neighbors formed a group to protest lack of repairs and maintenance in their apartments. Two days later, the group received eviction notices. Three families have already moved out and the remaining four families have few options. According to McGuire, the evictions were a form of retaliation.

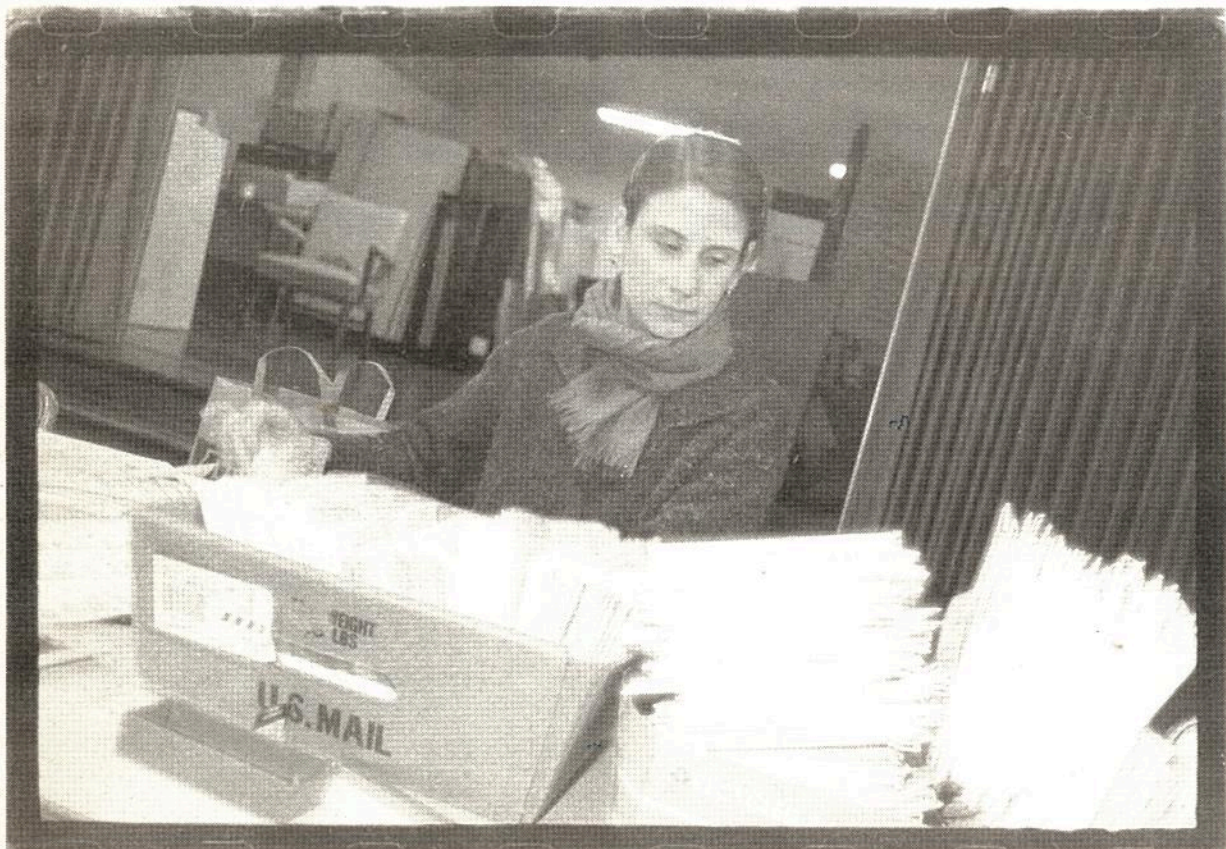
"McGuire and seven of her neighbors formed a group to protest lack of repairs and maintenance in their apartments. Two days later, the group received eviction notices."

Tenants say the landlords have made themselves unavailable. According to McGuire, their unlisted phone number is unknown to tenants. She also says that certified mail to the landlords has been returned.

A similar situation happened to Cassandra Lee of Seattle. While living at Park Hill Estate apartments in Skyway, Lee received an eviction notice on her door after a confrontation with the manager. According to Lee, the manager was upset because Lee's daughter was bouncing a ball in the apartment parking lot. The suit was settled when Lee agreed to vacate, providing the apartment owner pay all moving costs.

Both critics and supporters of the Just Cause Eviction bill recognize that not all property managers are insensitive to their residents. Many landlords are simply trying to do their job: enforce rules established by the landlord or owner.

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TU STAFFER ALINE CARTON HAS A FIGHT ON HER HANDS. PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

Close to Home

An Interview with Mindy Cameron

BY TODD MATTHEWS

As the editorial page editor at *The Seattle Times* for nearly a decade, Mindy Cameron is final arbiter of the material that appears on the Opinion, Editorial and Op-ed pages of Seattle's largest daily newspaper. She also has much interest in the newspaper's readers, and considers herself "proud and privileged" to be overseeing the editorial page of the *Times* — something she refers to as "a community asset."

An experienced Pacific Northwest journalist for two decades, Cameron began her career at the *Lewiston Tribune* in Idaho, then moved to the *Idaho Statesman*. Public television later led her to Rochester, New York, where she produced an alternative evening newscast and supervised a small staff. In the late 1970s she returned to Idaho — and the *Lewiston Tribune* — where she worked as the managing editor. She was later recruited to *The Seattle Times*, where she started as the city editor.

Real Change recently met with Cameron to discuss civility laws in Seattle, the *Times*'s looming shift to a morning newspaper, Seattle's identity crisis as a so-called world-class city, and why the Op-ed page of a daily newspaper is such an important venue.

REAL CHANGE: We've seen the term "world-class city" thrown around quite a bit, especially after WTO. Do you think Seattle is a world-class city?

MINDY CAMERON: (laughing) Well, not in the ways maybe that we thought we were or aspired to be. Maybe we are still kind of in our adolescence — or early years — as trying to mature into a world-class city. I think we have really confronted the reality that we are a mid-sized city, and we don't have the public safety resources to do some of the events we might want to do, whether it's the Olympics or WTO. I think that's a lesson well-learned. In many respects we are a world-class city, but not in the same way that New York or Los Angeles is, whatever it means for a city of our size — a mid-size city. I think that through Boeing and Microsoft and our position on the Pacific Rim, we have aspirations to be a world-class city. But we have to match those aspirations to the reality of our resources.

RC: What are your thoughts about the civility laws in Seattle?

CAMERON: Well, it kind of depends on what you include in the whole basket of civility laws. I don't support the anti-postering ordinance. I think cities are lively, vibrant places. Being able to post an announcement on telephone poles is fine. However, I have supported the emphasis on anti-loitering and no-sitting on sidewalks. There is no fundamental, basic constitutional right to sprawl across the sidewalk and interfere with street traffic. I think that's a good ethic to apply in a city where you are trying

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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
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Email rchange@speakeasy.org
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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.

MAILBAG

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What's it all worth?

Dear *Real Change*,

Shortly before Christmas I was at the coop, and there was the *Real Change* vendor. I hadn't gotten my second-half-of-the-month issue yet, and while I was rummaging around in my wallet for a dollar I thought to myself, "How much is a single dollar worth to me?" and I had to answer, "All by itself, not much." But how much, I wondered, is a dollar worth to the *Real Change* vendor? Probably quite a lot. So I gave him two.

And here is my New Year's challenge to all us prosperous folks out there (and we're all prosperous): Give the vendor an extra dollar—you're worth it, the vendor's worth it, and the rag is worth it!

Catherine Kettrick
Seattle

Kudos to the Perfess'r

Dear *Real Change*,

This donation is to help underwrite the Perfess'r's Classics Corner, which is *the best*, richest, and probably most accurate representation of classical literature in the local press. Ever.

Thank you so very much for taking the *very* long view and still keeping your edge.

Kathy Roseth

(A one time student
of classical literature)

The Perfess'r replies: I swear upon the River Styx that I did not put anyone up to this. This is an honest to god letter, accompanied by a check that successfully cleared the bank. Classics fans take note: The production of Classics Corner does not come cheaply. Lengthy sabbaticals, extensive world travel, and huge amounts of expensive higher education are all critical to this unassuming little column. Keep the classics alive in Seattle. Write a check to Real Change today.

Still waiting

Dear *Real Change*,

There are still 2500 homeless men and women out every night, even after every Seattle shelter bed is full. Mayor Schell hasn't even managed to get all the homeless women and children off the street—more than a year after he promised to do so. Tent cities are needed tonight to make us safe. Isn't it especially reasonable to at least let us recuperate in a tent while sick—instead of making us get even sicker sleeping outside? Then we end up in Harborview's Emergency Room, or so depressed it's hard to get on with life. It also doesn't help us get motivated with the sanitary standard is doing all of one's business in an alley, with few options for showers or washing clothes. You can't work unless you're clean, and dirty people get sick more often. It is also pretty depressing to try to hide all your stuff so it's not stolen, and then to come back and find nothing. But

no one wants to see us hauling our stuff all over town on our backs or in grocery carts. Catch-22 situations like these are depressing. We understand how it can drive some people nuts. We don't want to wait until after we're dead for low-cost housing to be ready for us. SHARE/WHEEL is hoping that once Seattle has realized city hall can be wrong about a lot of other things like the WTO, it might just be wrong about refusing to allow Tent Cities. We are asking anyone with an idea of where we can pitch our tents to call us today!

SHARE/WHEEL

Praise from down under

Dear *Real Change*,

My husband and I have been concerned with the welfare of homeless people in Seattle for a long time. We read your newspaper whenever we are in the area and have even subscribed when possible. I can see the very real and positive effect the paper has on people who sell it, but am also impressed by the paper's clear and focused reporting on issues close to people who have been locked out of the consumer culture in America. We see your project as helping people on both levels. Keep up the good work.

Frances Carpenter,
Australia

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Make it Real

Put a King to admire into King County

No leader in 20th Century America did more to dramatize the plight of the homeless and the poor than did the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. When he was brutally assassinated on April 4, 1968, he was in the middle of building the most powerful "Poor Peoples Campaign" this country had ever witnessed. He was going out onto the streets of American cities and organizing Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, unemployed, homeless and other disadvantaged people to join the "Poor Peoples Campaign." He would tell them, "Come with me to Washington, D.C., and join together with other poor folks to pressure the Congress and President to pass legislation to end poverty, illiteracy, homelessness and other problems faced by minorities and the poor in the United States."

Larry Gossett

Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his life to build a movement whose aim it was to eliminate poverty, racism, and economic exploitation in the United States. He fought to expand the concept of democracy, justice and equality in this country. His life and legacy is a powerful and inspirational example for all Americans.

As the 21st century begins I cannot think of anything more appropriate than to have Washington State's largest county change its logo and symbol to a likeness of its namesake, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

To honor the tremendous success of the civil and human rights movement, lead by Martin Luther King, Jr., the King County Council renamed King County in his honor on February 24, 1986, on a motion sponsored by former Councilmembers Ron Sims and Bruce Laing.

But no one in King County knows that our county's namesake is Martin Luther King, Jr.

The only public display recognizing this ceremonial name-redesignation is a plaque located above

the elevator lobby on the first floor of the King County Courthouse. To increase the awareness of Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy and the county being renamed in his honor, I have proposed that we change the King County logo from an "Imperial Crown" to a "likeness of Dr. King."

King County was originally named after William Rufus De Vane King, an Alabama Senator, who was selected by Franklin Pierce as his Vice-President in the 1852 U.S. Presidential election campaign, on a pro-slavery ticket. At a time when slavery was abhorrent to millions of Americans, William Rufus De Vane King was a slaveholder until his death, six weeks after he was sworn in as Vice-President. Consequently, history books and other documents continue to portray William Rufus De Vane King as the namesake of King County.

If Dr. Martin Luther King's image was placed on county business cards, buildings, cars, park signs, and letterhead, citizens would be reminded of the values he stood for — racial tolerance, social justice, inter-group understanding, peace, and equality for all. This would remind citizens to reflect upon their own daily existence and what they can do to help others. No better image exists which symbolizes people accepting growing diversity within their community than the image of Dr. King.

"No one in King County knows that our county's namesake is Martin Luther King, Jr."

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is a national hero, honored by the federal government and the governments of all fifty states with a holiday in his honor. He is a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, and an aspiring force in the struggle for human rights, civil liberties and economic democracy.


The State of Washington honors its namesake, President George Washington, with his likeness on the state seal, logo and flag. The

City of Seattle has done the same thing for its namesake, Chief Sealth (Seattle); he is pictured on the City seal, logo and flag.

If you think that my Ordinance 99-0472, calling for the replacement of the County "crown" with an "image of Dr. King" is the right thing to do, please help me in one or more of the following ways:


1. Attend the Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Rally and March, held at Garfield High School (23rd and East Jefferson Street), beginning at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, January 17, 2000.
2. Write a letter to the Metropolitan King County Council, King County Courthouse, Seattle, WA 98104, expressing your support of my Ordinance (99-0472).
3. E-mail a message of your support to all 13 Councilmembers.
4. Call the City Council at (206) 296-1000 and tell the receptionist to let all Councilmembers know you support Councilmembers Gossett's Ordinance 99-0472, changing the County logo from an "imperial crown" to an "image of Dr. King."
5. Call my office at (206) 296-1010 and find out how else you might be of support. ☐

Larry Gossett is a King County Councilmember representing District 10.



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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 readers to do a 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. Donations to the Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project (RCHEP) are tax deductible and support our work with StreetWrites, StreetLife Gallery, the Macworkshop computer lab, and the Homeless Speakers Bureau. Checks written to *Real Change* are not tax deductible, and support the newspaper itself.

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Clueless in Seattle

POLICE DETECTIVES ARE CONTINUING TO INVESTIGATE the death of a transient man found bludgeoned to death on Capitol Hill last month. According to Jerry Webster, Chief Medical Investigator at the King County Medical Examiner's Office, the victim was identified as Jose Chavez, though he also had several aliases, including "Timothy Ree," "Timothy Chavez," and "Timothy Jenesse." Medical investigators have also been unable to locate any relatives or next of kin. Chavez's body was found near a parking structure in the 1200 block of Pine Street on December 15, 1999.

"Detectives are still investigating the case," said Pam McCammon, spokeswoman at the Seattle Police Department. If you have any information about this case, please contact the Seattle Police Department at (206) 684-5550.

—Todd Matthews

Crocodile Tears

WHILE WE GENERALLY IGNORE the overpackaged gimmicky corporate press releases that come wandering through our door, sometimes, when a suitable gift is included, we just can't help ourselves. Furniture.com, for example, caught our attention with a small package of cat pasta.

A survey by Socratic Technologies found that, tragically, 67% of Americans are unhappy with their home decor. Surprisingly, the problem is not that most people are too poor to keep up with current standards of over-consumption. "Furniture shopping is just too hard," they found. This is why most Americans only redecorate every 4 1/2 years. If only shopping were more convenient, say the people at furniture.com, we'd all redo our livingrooms every three years instead.

We apparently live in a culture of shame. Just less than half of Americans "feel good" about taking someone on a tour of their home. But the saddest news comes for the middle-aged. "Consumers in their 40s feel the greatest home decorating deficit," says furniture.com marketing genius Kirsten von Hassel. "Twenty-one percent of those surveyed say they are so embarrassed that they won't invite guests over or show them around their homes."

The sad truth is that most of us just can't afford the upper-middle-class standard, whether we can buy it on the net or not.

In a country where one in ten have experienced homelessness, the heart-break of home decorating is more than we can bear. We suggest a tour of the campsites beneath I-5 to gain some valuable perspective.

—Timothy Harris

So sue me, city says

REAL CHANGE PHOTOGRAPHERS GEORGE HICKEY AND DANA SCHUERHOLZ have hired an attorney and filed damage claims against the City of Seattle, stemming from incidents involving the Seattle Police Department during the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial.

According to the separate claims, Hickey identified himself as a working press photographer and displayed his press pass to a police officer at the intersection of Sixth and Union — the site of a large, non-violent protest. Shortly thereafter, the police sprayed the seated protesters with chemical spray. Despite the press credentials, Hickey was singled out by one officer and repeatedly blasted. Photographs taken by the Independent Media Center corroborate his story.

Schuerholz's claim states that she was arrested by a police officer while she photographed a protest at Westlake Center. She displayed her official WTO press credentials to the officer, but was arrested nonetheless. She was transported to Sand Point and then booked into the King County jail. She was later released, and appeared in Seattle Municipal Court. Her charges were later dropped, and her case was dismissed.

"The media has a constitutional right to cover events such as WTO," says John Muenster, the attorney representing Hickey and Schuerholz. "Both Dana and George had media credentials, which they were wearing, but they were still arrested and assaulted."



PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY

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CLOSE TO HOME

Under state law, the city has 60 days to respond to the claim. If the city fails to respond, Muenster will file lawsuits for his clients. "We're in a waiting period," says Muenster. "If the matter isn't resolved, we will move forward with a lawsuit."

—Todd Matthews

Reading is Fundamental

AS SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY (SPL) implements its "Building Libraries for All" program, it has already presented two public forums on early design plans for the new Central Library. The old downtown library will be demolished, and the new library will replace it on the same site, with plans to open in 2003.

Following the early design presentations in December, SPL City Librarian Deborah Jacobs invited library users to join work groups to address homeless needs related to the new library. A group of public citizens met this month to discuss these needs. Key concepts identified by the work group for providing services and facilities for homeless library users included privacy issues, accessibility, safety, and comfort. Key building design elements, identified by the work group included multiple meeting rooms of different sizes, sufficient restroom facilities, covered entry, and ample information kiosks.

One issue, a hygiene center, was actively discussed. Patrick Grace, Magazine, Newspapers and Government Publications Coordinator at SPL, said he did not believe the library would include a hygiene center because such a function is not part of the Library's mission, and to do so would reduce funds and space for actual library collections and services needed and used by all library users, including people who are homeless. He said, however, that this issue would be included on the full list from the work group, and could help the City Librarian and Library Board as they forward non-library needs on to Seattle city government.

More information and regular updates are available at the SPL web site, www.spl.lib.wa.us then go to the Home Page and click on the "Libraries for All" topic. Or ask for printed information at the Central Library.

—Betty Richardson

Real Change call for recipes

BRING A NAPKIN FOR THE FEBRUARY 1, 2000, ISSUE OF REAL CHANGE, as it will be crowned our "Food Issue." As part of this special edition of Real Change, we are asking for readers to submit their recipes for publishing consideration. The rules are short and sweet: recipes must be easy to prepare, budget-friendly, and easy on the taste buds. Send your recipes to Recipe Contest c/o Real Change, 2129 Second Avenue, Seattle, WA 98121 or via email at rchange@speakeasy.org by January 24, 2000.

—Todd Matthews

Churches remind legislators of judgement day

HUNDREDS OF MEMBERS OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY will be a voice for social justice later this month when they come together at the 2000 Church Advocacy Day in Olympia, Washington. The event will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 27, 2000, at the United Churches of Olympia, and will offer advocacy training, a briefing of important issues, and workshops. Reverend John Boonstra, Executive Minister of the Washington Association of Churches (WAC), will conduct the opening prayer, and guest speakers will include Sara Fleming Merten of WAC, Danielle Welliever of the Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington, and Sister Sharon Park of the Washington State Catholic Conference.

The event, which is sponsored by WAC and created by a coalition of churches, will present to legislators many items important to the faith community, including a moratorium on executions in Washington state, fair and flexible welfare reform, and economic justice. If you would like more information about the event, please contact Shelby Mooney, Intern Program Assistant at WAC, at (206) 625-9790.

—Todd Matthews

Do you have a story we should look into? Call Todd Matthews at 441-8143, and just maybe we will.



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REAL CHANGE

Good Friday

U-District "feast" may lose space

BY TODD MATTHEWS

"This is probably the most eclectic homeless feed in the city," says Sinan Demirel, spokesman for the weekly Friday Feast at the University Baptist church in Seattle. "We get a real mix of people from all over the city. Many take buses from far away to reach us." For nearly four years, Demirel and a group of volunteers have hosted upwards of 100 homeless men and women by collecting food, cooking meals, and providing a healthy reprieve from the streets.

Demirel's weekly feast, however, may find itself homeless by the end of the month. University Baptist church has formed a committee to decide which programs it hosts to continue. The committee, composed of members of the church, plans to decide on the future of Demirel's feast by the end of the month. The news does not look good.

"The church is not the ogre in this situation," says Demirel. "When we started the program, churches all over Seattle told us, 'no.'" Anne Hall, pastor at the church, was the only person who opened her doors to the homeless. Yet, after four years, according to Demirel, the church would like to free up space for other charitable events. "The church is at the point where they don't have access to their facility," says Demirel. "They host another feed Saturday mornings, a teen shelter Saturday night, and church services on Sunday."

"Part of the problem is that we are stretched too far," says Pastor Hall. "The church has a small staff and a small budget. Whenever we support a program at the church, there is a certain amount of staff time involved."

Demirel, a student at the University of Washington, began the program shortly after his mother died; he wanted to do something to honor her memory. At the time, he was a Sociology graduate student, and felt that he and his peers weren't doing enough "hands-on" work with the community.

"We were doing a lot of computer work," says Demirel, "but nothing that really engaged the community." In an email to his peers, Demirel proposed a weekly feast for the homeless, and

the idea was a roaring success in the Sociology Department. The students initially queried area businesses for donated food. Two years later, the group acquired non-profit status and began receiving food from Northwest Harvest.

Since that time, Demirel has seen the volunteer pool vary. Sometimes there are upwards of twenty people who collect food, cook meals, and serve the homeless each Friday. Other times, when the volunteer level drops, Demirel has handled the tasks on his

own. It's a demanding job, but one in which Demirel finds satisfaction.

While Demirel has carried much of the program over the years, he recently finished his Ph.D., and is seeking employment. He is hoping that others will help him network area churches, should they lose their space at University Baptist Church. "I have held back from taking that initiative," says Demirel, "in hopes that others would take the lead. I am hoping to see others step up and help out." Finding another church may prove to be a formidable task. According to Demirel, lots of churches are already involved in charitable community outreach, and feel they are spread too thin.

Many have come to depend on the meals and friendship the Friday Feast offers. "If it was not for this place, I

would have starved many nights," says Ed, a homeless man who both eats at the feast and volunteers his services.

Matthew Perrin echoes these remarks. Perrin began eating at the feast three years ago, and is presently a volunteer. "There is no other Friday night feed in the University District," says Perrin.

Pastor Hall has nothing but praise for the program. If the church decides to discontinue the program, she says, it will be made strictly because the church is overextended. Should another church express interest in hosting the Friday Feast, Pastor Hall would highly endorse the program. "Sinan is probably one of the saints of the world," she adds, "and Friday Feast is a wonderful program and a delightful atmosphere." □

Daniel Caplan contributed to this report. If you would like to help the Friday Feast, please contact Sinan Demirel at (206) 726-4289.

"When we started the program, churches all over Seattle told us, 'no.'" Sinan Demirel, Friday Feast



DR. JEFF HARWOOD, SINAN DEMIREL, AND ANNE YORKE PREP TO FEED THE HUNGRY. PHOTO BY DANIEL CAPLAN.

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The Optimist

You win some, you lose some. Sometimes you lose big.

BY GEORGE WYNN

The putrid humid odor of Rollie's dank enclosure brought saliva to his lips. He lay on the soiled cot and said a silent prayer. His mind drifted, replaying the events as they had happened.

"Jolly Rollie" was his moniker in tramp circles. The paunchy, 60-year-old, bespectacled redhead had spent decades thumbing through the West and Midwest. He rarely ventured east of the Mississippi. But he'd been bitten by the fresh experience bug and found himself a passenger in the jalopy of an old black man along the Mason-Dixon line. The jalopy came to a halt by a white wooden church. "Not much of a town. Stoneville," said the black man, "or the friendliest."

"Much obliged for the lift," said Rollie. "I'll be fine."

The driver nodded. "Good luck," he said, and sped off.

Rollie eyed the chapel; seeing the door shut, he removed his sweaty cap from his bald head and crossed himself. He went over to the police station and made his way down the main drag.

Today, Saturday, a week before Labor Day, the weather was hot. Along the sidewalks the smell of coffee, tobacco and perfume invaded his nostrils. He smiled at everyone and said howdy to young and old, male and female. Not a single person acknowledged his smile or greeting. The closest thing to a response was when Rollie studied the various brands of beer in a variety store and a teenager remarked to his sweetheart, "Old alkie hobo, if he'd just put his back into it, he'd stay settled." She nodded firmly. "Sure would."

In front of a flag-draped barbershop he slouched in a folding chair and recollected the old days. Yes, sir, he'd shaken MacArthur's hand and was proud

of it. He was an American through and through. In his late teens he enlisted for the Korean War and was discharged a combat-decorated vet. After the heaviest shelling, he'd caress his rosary and console himself by repeating: "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away."

After a couple of years home from overseas, Rollie grew restless. On the road he enjoyed a sort of upbeat bum's freedom he'd never known before. He made friends with everyone he came in contact with. Folks would offer him such basic necessities as a toothbrush, deodorant, shirt, jacket and lodging. And he'd never had any real problem with the police other than a good night's sleep in jail for vagrancy. He became unaccustomed to having a roof over his head. He had often spent the night on a park bench.

Seemingly always broke, he lived by his wits and his smile. Now and then he took a menial job — but not for long. Peddling encyclopedias, vacuum cleaners or washing dishes bored him fast. Anyway, wherever he wandered people helped him out. Suddenly, a jerking on his shoulder shook him out of his reverie. "Why don't you be on your way, old feller," snarled a 40-ish man, comb and scissors in hand. It seemed he was as welcome as the plague in Stoneville. But then he reminded himself that strangers in small towns usually fall under the scrutiny of suspicion.

Rollie was getting hungry. He only had six dollars. He'd had bacon and eggs in the morning. That's it. He stared at the town clock in the Square: 4:30. He

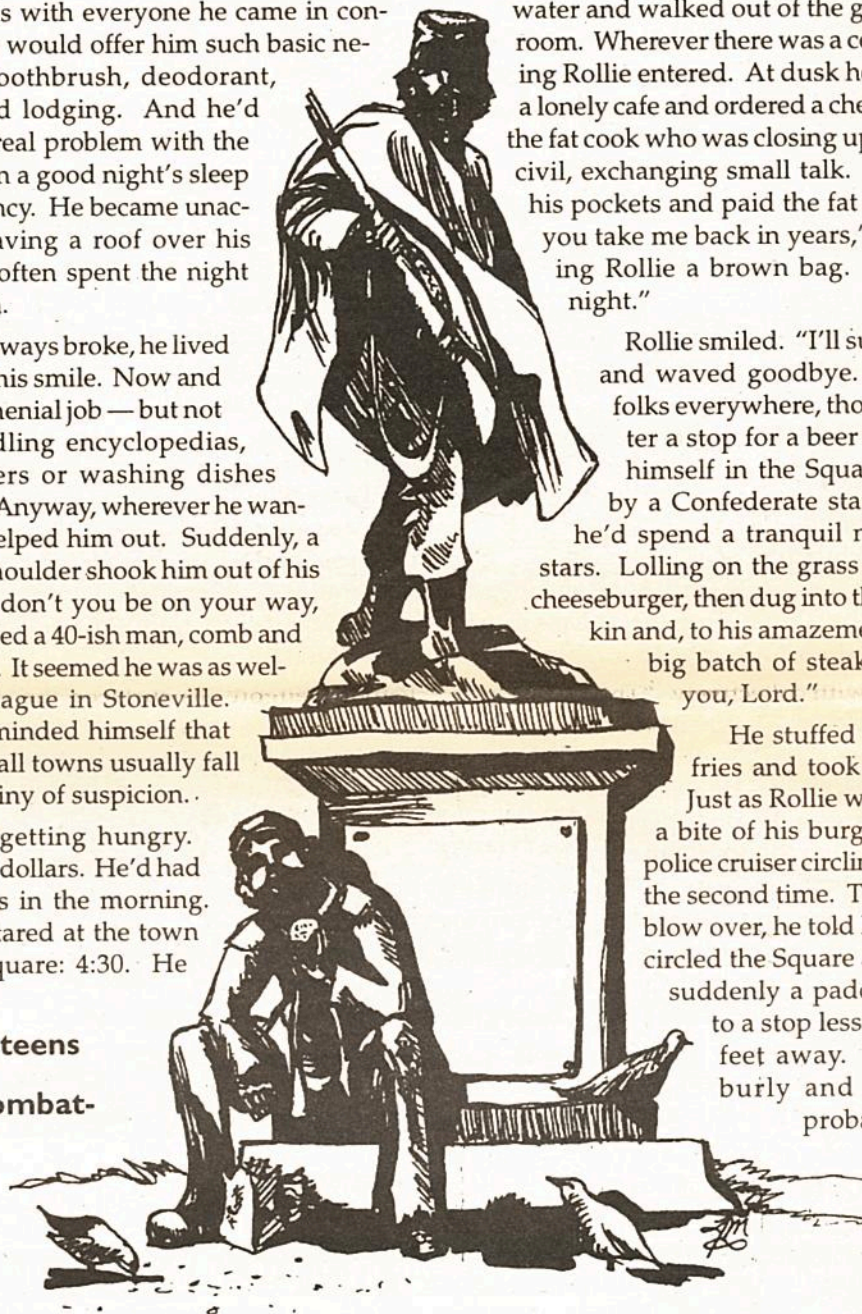
bought an orange, apple and a peach at a market from an old woman who sized him up as if he were from another planet. Never mind the hostile faces. The Lord will provide, he assured himself. He always had.

Rollie walked slow. The sun was shining on his forehead as if it had a personal vendetta. The heat was getting more intense. Hot, real hot. No cooling down tonight. He rinsed his face with cold water and walked out of the gas station bathroom. Wherever there was a ceiling fan whirling Rollie entered. At dusk he straggled into a lonely cafe and ordered a cheeseburger from the fat cook who was closing up. The man was civil, exchanging small talk. Rollie emptied his pockets and paid the fat man. "Partner, you take me back in years," he said, handing Rollie a brown bag. "Have a good night."

Rollie smiled. "I'll sure try," he said, and waved goodbye. There's polite folks everywhere, thought Rollie. After a stop for a beer Rollie gathered himself in the Square under a tree by a Confederate statue. Hopefully he'd spend a tranquil night under the stars. Lolling on the grass he grabbed the cheeseburger, then dug into the bag for a napkin and, to his amazement, pulled out a big batch of steak fries. "Thank you, Lord."

He stuffed his mouth with fries and took a swig of beer. Just as Rollie was about to take a bite of his burger, he noticed a police cruiser circling the Square for the second time. The threat would blow over, he told himself. Then it circled the Square a third time and suddenly a paddy wagon came to a stop less than a hundred feet away. Two cops, one burly and sunburned — probably about fifty — and his backup, young and skinny, approached Rollie.

"He was an American through and through. In his late teens he enlisted for the Korean War and was discharged a combat-decorated vet. After the heaviest shelling, he'd caress his rosary and console himself by repeating: 'The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.'"



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A flush crept up across Rollie's neck and throat like a sudden fever. The older cop in stride kicked the beer can Rollie had placed at his feet, soaking Rollie's field shoes. Then he sniffed under Rollie's chin. "Jesus, do you smell!" he exclaimed. Taking off his black hat and wiping away a few beads of sweat he smirked, "I'll eat my hat if you've had a bath in a week." He sighed. "On top of that, drinking in public and loitering."

"Sorry, officer."

"Sorry ain't good enough," said the cop, slapping the burger to the grass with the back of his paw — knuckles denting the nasal cartilage. Rollie felt his stomach tense and cobwebs before his eyes, but he maintained a soldier's composure.

"Handcuff him, rookie," growled the old cop to the slightly reluctant young cop who marched Rollie to the paddy wagon door. Then the burly cop shoved him face-first, splattering his glasses. As the paddy wagon drove off, Rollie, with blood-stained hands, groped for his rosary — finding it. He'd seen plenty of good,

fresh blood before. They locked him up in the town jail.

Now everything was dark as Rollie thought about when he was going to get out of this town. Tomorrow's another day, he consoled his weary mind. Drifting in and out of sleep he pictured himself driving away with the black man in the jalopy, striding loosely down a back road, the cool breeze fanning him. He sure was hungry and very thirsty. He was remembering how lucky he'd been in the war. He'd always been so lucky.

In the morning the two cops opened the cell door and found Rollie on the ground curled in the corner clutching his rosary — dead. "Ah shit," grumbled the older cop. "Now we got paperwork." The young cop just gaped in naive surprise. He stepped into the bathroom and was stunned by the sight of his pale face. Across the street the parishioners sang to the tune of "The Lord is my Shepherd." ☞

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Book Review

The Homeless One

A poem of voices unheard

BY ESTHER ALTSHUL HELFGOTT

REVIEWED BY RUTH FOX

The needs of mentally ill homeless are important, though widely overlooked. They are needs that will persist until the cause of mental illness is faced and dealt with collectively. "The Homeless One," by Seattle writer Esther Altshul Helfgott, is a book-length poem for voices that portrays how these issues affect us all.

The strength of Helfgott's work is rests upon the truths of those she knows and with whom she interacts. The use of the direct voice personalizes the issues, allowing us to hear the thoughts and feelings of some very real people.

Crysta (a formerly homeless schizophrenic) and Genevieve (an elderly woman besieged for handouts by Ellen — "the homeless one") struggle to cope with the deep emotions that are evoked when trying to really confront the homeless one's situation. *The Homeless One* tackles complex issues — most notably the lack of effective long-term solutions to truly rebuild the losses that have created what Ms. Helfgott aptly terms "society's disease"—the forgotten and ignored mentally ill and homeless people that we try to shut out of our communities.

Genevieve and Ellen are represent the heart of the dilemma. Genevieve reflects the housed who feel frightened and helpless, and would rather not look at "society's disease." Yet as a show of compassion, she gives small handouts to ease its symptoms. Ellen represents the nagging symptoms that just won't

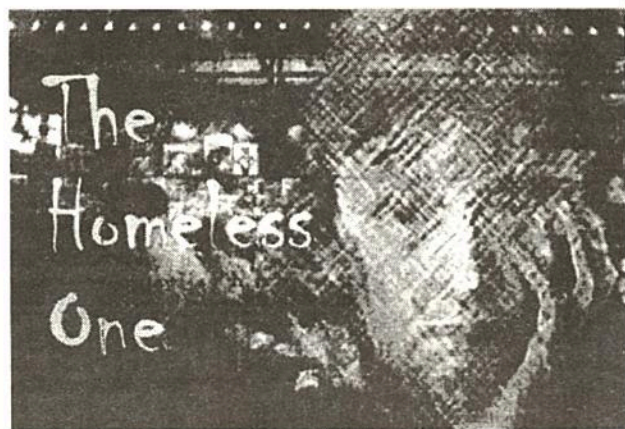
"Esther Helfgott has surfaced the unheard voices in our society, going beyond sentiment to human emotions that require response."

let up, no matter how many handouts are given.

There is no way you could read this work and not identify and respond to what the characters are feeling, given the range of viewpoints and emotional expression that have been woven together.

Esther Helfgott has surfaced the unheard voices in our society, going beyond sentiment to human emotions that require response. This book is not only written words: it is a living action, asking for action in return.

The homeless one's needs will persist until the cause of mental illness is faced. Only then will there be a lasting change in our society. Helfgott's poem is a most welcome step in this process. ☞



By
Esther
Altshul
Helfgott



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Beyond Shame

The names don't matter, but the people do.

I once knew a woman so tender-hearted
Whenever she heard a siren she'd say, wrinkling her brow,
"One of my people is in trouble."

—Marion Sue Fischer

At this year's annual Compass Center Memorial Service, January 7th, we were told that the names of homeless and formerly homeless people who died in 1999 should not be published; that "some families are out of the closet, but for others it causes more pain." The family pain was attributed to the shame society has given to homelessness, a shame that carries over to homeless people themselves.

Five years ago the *Real Change* editorial committee made a different decision. That year we struggled hard and long and decided that it was right to publish the names of every homeless and formerly homeless person who died in 1994. The editorial debate, and it was a raucous one, centered around personal choice versus the rightful attribution of shame. In a way, we "outed" homeless people that year to de-shame them.

Not much has changed or gotten better in these five years. More than one hundred homeless people died in 1999. At the memorial service, more than one hundred candles were lit during the litany. Meanwhile, most of us are still inured to the reality of homeless people's pain and struggles, even though more and more people are becoming homeless every day. Since the problem has gotten a lot bigger, it's gotten a lot harder to know and remember people by name.

In 1998 several homeless women were targeted and murdered by a serial killer. In 1999 several homeless men were stabbed to death under bridges. Most of their stories were relegated to tiny boxes about anonymous "transient" victims on page B2

of the local sections.

Two recent stories illustrate the continuing paradox of shame and naming: In our community's most publicized murder of 1999, the newspapers *did* name a homeless person—David Ballenger—a 46-year-old man who was stabbed and beaten to death on a teenager's lark in Ravenna. During his confession one of the teenagers said this was just "one less bum on the face of the earth." To those kids Mr. Ballenger did not have a name, a story, or a value. His worth—or lack of worth—was contained solely in his circumstance, his homelessness, a shameful thing. The sensationalism of this naked hatred caused the story to be heavily covered

by the daily papers.

"In 1999 several homeless men were stabbed to death under bridges. Most of their stories were relegated to tiny boxes about anonymous "transient" victims on page B2 of the local sections."

Months later, a homeless man known only as "The Professor" died. No one knew his name, but he had made a mark on his community for his pride, intelligence, and persistent cleanup around the Seattle's Best Coffee outlet on 4th Avenue....so much so that SBC employees sponsored a memorial service in that coffeeshop, and raised enough money to bury him. God love those

SBC employees for their efforts. Their efforts were made on behalf of a man whose name they didn't even know.

Five years ago when we named names we talked about homeless people's fierceness of pride, a pride with no labels. That pride remains, but so does our confusion about shame. The risk of not naming is the same: accepting shame—for individuals—where there should be no shame.



THE ANNUAL COMPASS CENTER MEMORIAL SERVICE REMEMBERED MORE THAN 100 HOMELESS PEOPLE WHO DIED LAST YEAR. PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

During the "Time of Sharing" at the Compass Center Memorial this year, Stan Burriss stood and shed light on this paradox: "I've always been sort of a loner," he said. "I don't have a lot of friends, so I don't remember a lot of names. Maybe that's why it's always seemed close to me to be homeless. Any of us could be." For Stan, not knowing specific names doesn't dilute his empathy or love of others.

It's a lot more difficult to be indifferent to someone else's pain when you know their name. But what if, even without knowing names, we truly honor people who live and die homeless? Perhaps that just leaves us with naming indifference and hatred as the rightful source of our shame. ☐

—Michele Marchand, Real Change Obituary Editor

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The Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association (DNDA), a non-profit community development corporation, has an immediate opening for an experienced Project Manager working on community, economic and property development projects in the Delridge District of West Seattle. Call 932-3328 today for a copy of the job announcement.

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CAMERON, CONT. FROM P. 1

to develop a vibrant residential core. That's important to me, as somebody living downtown.

I think you have to be careful how you enforce it, though. I don't want to see any sort of 'zero tolerance,' that we need to sweep homeless people off the streets. I don't think that creates a vibrant city life. The important thing for a city, particularly related to homeless sleeping on the streets, is to determine the range of problems — why are they there? — and find ways to provide the shelters, services, and treatments to really address those problems. I don't think the city is doing enough in that regard.

RC: In one of your columns last year, you wrote that you were in favor of public toilets, but not in favor of tent cities. Can you explain your feelings about those two items?

CAMERON: Well, the whole issue of public facilities — whether it be for tourists, people downtown for a day of shopping, or the homeless — the idea that this city with so many resources, that has so much going for it, the best we can do in public facilities is to put up these ugly "port-a-potties." It just astounds me!

I think the city council is stymied over how it can go forward to get the attractive sort of 'street furniture' public toilets that San Francisco has. That has been something that has amazed me: that this city is in such a stalemate over the ability to get attractive public facilities that are available to all kinds of people using the streets.

As far as tent city, I just think that's a solution that is short-sighted. It is temporary. I don't think it's a real long-term solution to the homeless problem. I know there are lots of advocates who say it is better than nothing, and I understand that. But I think if you allow yourself to go down that road it means you don't really have the time and energy to focus on the more meaningful solutions over time.

RC: Do you think that Mayor Paul Schell will ever recover from the WTO and New Year's debacles?

CAMERON: (laughing) The question of the day. I think the mayor is probably in some ways permanently damaged. I'm not an overall critic of the mayor — I happen to like him personally, there are lots of things about him I admire — but he's not fundamentally a politician in the real sense of the word. He hasn't figured out how to communicate effectively, and I think he continues to stumble over his own habit of rambling on without the ability to figure out what is the important message, focus on that message, and communicate it in such a way that builds confidence in his leadership capacity. I think he's failed at that too many times, and I don't think he'll ever fully recover from that. I think his

own personal flaws continue to work against his ability to grab hold and present himself as a leader that a lot of people in the community can feel good about.

RC: What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of *The Seattle Times* moving from an afternoon newspaper to a morning newspaper in March 2000?

CAMERON: The main disadvantage is that we have been an afternoon paper for all these years in Seattle, and we have a loyal core of readers who love getting their newspaper in the afternoon — it's part of their daily life. By switching to mornings, we are making many people unhappy with us.

sation with our readers is the advantage looking into the future for us.

RC: There is an argument that the P-I will fold when the Times moves to a morning paper. Do you think that's going to happen?

CAMERON: Who knows? I don't predict the future. I think that would be very far down the road if anything like that were to happen. There is every indication that the Hearst company — the group that owns the P-I — is committed to getting some additional profits over this renegotiated arrangement. So far it looks like they are putting it into the newspaper. They are hiring staff and doing things that demonstrate that they are going to be serious about this competition. I think readers are well-served by that kind of competition.

RC: I've seen you change your stance a few times, based on reader input. Do you run into that a lot?

CAMERON: I guess that's why I love this job. It's a job where, if you do it right, you are constantly listening and the better you listen the more you learn. It's all about learning. I don't presume to have any found or discovered wisdom about things.

I have lots of views and opinions, but I'm open to having those opinions changed by listening to people I haven't heard before. I think that's what this job is all about. I deliberately try and do that — present myself as a normal human being in my column from time to time by saying we have to be open to changing our mind, to hearing things that we didn't hear before, and figuring out what that means.

I think there really is something out there about this disconnect between institutions. There are a lot of people out there who feel very disconnected because they feel people like me, and what I represent, haven't been paying attention to them. I think that's an important message, and we need to pay more attention to that message.



MINDY CAMERON, LOOKING VERY NORTHWEST IN HER OFFICIAL TIMES PHOTO.

The advantage, however, is that it is clear across the country — and increasingly clear in the Seattle region — that the market trends are going towards the morning. We have fought off that market trend for a very long time. The advantage for us is to be in the morning position, and to be a part of people's daily conversation — "What's the morning headline? What's the news? What happened overnight?" To be a part of that daily morning conver-

RC: What are the greatest challenges you face as the editorial page editor of a major daily newspaper?

CAMERON: I think there are just so many targets of opportunity out there. An editorial page of a metropolitan newspaper has to be smart about where its readers live and what's going on in the communities of which they are a part. And that's what I think a good editorial page has to be first and foremost — to write about that, to be smart about that, to have intelligent commentary about stuff that's close to home.

In a sophisticated city like Seattle, people have a very wide interest in things regional, national, and international — we have to be smart about those things. So picking and choosing every day: "What are we going to write about?" And once we pick the topic: "What are we going to say about it?" That's the biggest ongoing challenge: to serve a very diverse readership in as intelligent a way as we can. And not just through our own voice, but also by providing access on our pages to the letter writers, guest editorials, syndicated columnists — picking and choosing and providing a rich mix of ideas and opinions that serve a pretty diverse batch of readers. □

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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,

I am seeking advice concerning our situation as renters. We are living directly above a woman who smokes constantly, and the smoke has permeated our air, furniture, carpet, and presumably our lungs. She has lived in the complex longer than us. We love the location, view, etc., but are almost ready to move because of the constant contamination of our living space! I have even received comments from people at work who think that I smoke (which I do not), because my clothes smell like it. Help! Do we have any type of recourse against this problem, short of moving? Thank you in advance for your response.

—Smoked Out!

Dear Smoked Out!

Your landlord is not going to be able to regulate legal behavior that occurs in another tenant's apartment. At this time, I am not aware of any ordinances that would restrict a tenant from smoking in their own private residence. The best solution you may have is to ask the landlord if there are any measures you can take to seal your apartment from the offending smoke.

I have heard of companies that will come in and seal electrical outlets, windows and doors to reduce smoke from entering another apartment. You would have to get the permission of the landlord to make any alterations and then you would be responsible for the costs of the alterations.

Dear Tenant Talk,

My landlord is always harassing me. What can I do? I pay my rent on time, ask for only the basic repairs to be done, and mind my business. He also talks about me to other tenants, telling them things which are not true. He shows up at my door all the time, asks questions about my guests and calls me all the time. Do I have to talk to him? Do I have the right to tell to not call me anymore?

—Harassed

Dear Harassed,

A landlord has certain rights to come to your apartment but those rights are strictly limited. The Residential Landlord Tenant Act does not create any limits on a landlord's right to contact a tenant but if the contact is harassment then a tenant should be able to ask the landlord to stop.

It would be best to make this request in writing. If the landlord then persists, the tenant may need to seek an anti-harassment order. If an order is issued by the court, it will set out the limits to which a landlord can contact you. Courts are reluctant to issue an anti-harassment order in a

landlord-tenant relationship unless there is concrete evidence of harassment. You should be prepared to bring witnesses that can testify to actual events of harassment.

If the order is issued and the landlord violates the order, the landlord could be arrested. The arrest may not occur even if the landlord violates the order unless the arresting officer actually witnesses the offending behavior or there are independent witnesses to verify the violation. This is an extreme step to take and if the court does find that there are grounds to issue the order you probably can expect to receive an eviction notice shortly thereafter.

You may need to communicate with your landlord when you have legitimate requests or the landlord has legitimate questions. You are under no obligation to respond every time the landlord contacts you especially if it is clear that the contact is not for a legitimate business purpose. I suggest that you take cautious steps to see if you can resolve this situation before you seek an anti-harassment order.

"I have thought about calling for a housing code inspector but am afraid that the house will be condemned. What would happen to me if my place were condemned? I cannot afford to move right now and am scared."

Dear Tenant Talk,

I live in a real dilapidated house in Seattle, but it is all I can afford. There are so many repairs that need to get done and the landlord refuses to do them when I call or write letters. I have thought about calling for a housing code inspector but am afraid that the house will be condemned. What would happen to me if my place were condemned? I cannot afford to move right now and am scared.

—Shanty Kate

Dear Shanty,


If you live in Seattle you may be eligible for some protection even if the building is condemned. If you are low income, the Seattle Relocation Ordinance should entitle you to relocation assistance. You would be notified that the building was being condemned and the Department of Construction and Land Use would provide you with forms to apply for the assistance. The amount of assistance varies but may be as much as \$2,000. If you live outside the city limits you could be out of luck and potentially find yourself homeless, although, you still would have a lawsuit against your landlord for the breach of warranty of habitability. Basically, the law recognizes that the renting of a dwelling to a tenant creates a promise that the dwelling rented is fit for human habitation. If the building is not then that promise has been broken and is the grounds for suing a landlord.

If the building was officially condemned before you moved in and the landlord simply went ahead and rented the premises after removing the condemnation notice, you could have a claim against the landlord for 3 times your monthly rent and any damages.

Got a Tenant Problem? Get Help	
Seattle CSOs (police matters only)	684-4790
Legal Action Center (low income only)	324-6890
Tenants' Union	723-0500

Service Carpet & Upholstery Cleaners
(206) 841-9021

- Carpets dry in 60 minutes
- Virtually residue free
- Non-toxic
- Deodorizing
- Stain protection
- Prevacuuming and pretreatment included
- Pet stain removal
- Furniture is carefully moved
- No hidden costs
- Satisfaction guaranteed





A funny thing happens in *The Odyssey*. Actually, lots of funny things happen in *The Odyssey*. Compared to the austere *Iliad*, it's a regular laugh riot. Probably the single most hilarious event in *The Iliad* is when straightman Ajax trips in a foot race and gets shit in his mouth and up his nose. It's the original pie to the face joke.

The truth is, Homer has set the mold for just about everything. For example, look at *Smoke Signals*, Sherman Alexie's cutting edge father-son reconciliation road-trip movie. Sherman stole the idea from Homer. How many improbable adventure movies have one or two heros massacre scores of bad guys? Homer again. How about Luke Skywalker? Yoda? Gilligan's Island? Homer, Homer, and Homer.

Homer is also the Emily Post of antiquity. *The Odyssey* is nothing if not a book about manners. In a world without law or government, the guest relationship is all-important. There were certain rules to be followed among the nobility, and the moral person was above all a good host. Martha Stewart has nothing over King Nestor, except possibly her strawberry tortes.

It's a damn good story. Wandering Odysseus goes out one day to get a quart of milk, takes a detour to help sack Troy, and is now about twenty years late getting home. After getting his entire crew killed, he is further "detained" for seven years as Calypso's sex slave.

He has a lot of explaining to do. This will be easy, since people in 1,000 BC will believe just about anything and there are no witnesses. Odysseus has spent years working up an alibi.

Excuses include but are not limited to voracious giants, churlish one-eyed shepherders, multi-headed monsters, a trip to hell and back, a barbeque gone bad, and several magical seductresses. Oh, and then there's the oldest excuse of all: "God hates me."

Meanwhile, Penelope, his faithful shroud-weaving wife, is beset by bad houseguests who refuse to take a hint. This is just about the rudest thing one could do in the ancient world, and Telemachus, Odysseus' son, aches to kick some ass. With the help of Athena, he and dad unite to do just that.

After a suitable build-up, 108 suitors and a few errant servant girls are hacked to bits for their appalling lack of manners. *Hasta la vista, baby!*

Cool as all of that is, my favorite part of *The Odyssey* is a scene many of us will recognize for its utter timelessness. Alcinous, King of the Phaeacians, is holding a State dinner in Odysseus' honor. The King is so overcome by our hero's scintillating cocktail party conversation he orders the assembled nobility to gather yet a third round of send-off gifts for his welcome guest.

"Come," he says, "Each of us add a sumptuous tripod, add a cauldron. Then recover our costs with levies on the people: it's hard to afford such bounty man by man."

Some things never change. [E]

Be an armchair classicist. The Northwest Society for Classical Studies seeks fellow freaks. Call 325-1787 or email nscs@home.com for information. Or visit members.home.com/nscs

Surviving with Dignity

Evergreen student does something useful

BY BRIAN GOEDDE

Some people argue that the activity of academia is inherently impractical. But for Mike Leavitt, a junior at the Evergreen State College, schoolwork and life's necessities beautifully collided during WTO week. Leavitt built two self-contained, mobile shelters — sort of "log cabins" — for academic credit. As the homeless faced the threat of street sweeps during WTO, Leavitt's creations were used as a "honeymoon suite" for one couple, and as headquarters for the Seattle Housing and Resource Effort (SHARE).

Log cabins for the homeless? It is an odd invention, indeed. But it may also be a solution of sorts for homelessness in Seattle.

Leavitt says his respect for the homeless comes in part from knowing his own life has been relatively easy. He rejects the idea that the homeless people are unable to be productive, and admires their ability to survive. "Many homeless people have learned to survive under incredibly challenging circumstances," comments Leavitt.

Not surprisingly, the idea of log cabins for the homeless emerged from Evergreen State College. Leavitt was enrolled there in a course called "Shelter Design," and took advantage of the opportunity to contract a project in lieu of a formal classroom course. Leavitt scrambled to get the required sponsorship from a professor to build his own shelter — one that would be useful to those without money or property.

Leavitt's goal was to build shelter that was extremely cheap and mobile. As the project progressed, Leavitt's activism on the side for SHARE's tent city campaign came into focus as the WTO approached, and suddenly the shelters found real-world use. The cabins are made of recycled materials, and are large enough to house two people. They feature carpeting and are positioned on wheels for easy mobility.

Through the project, Leavitt has developed his own philosophy of shelter and dehumanization. "The homeless are viewed externally as objects, things to be avoided on the street when panhandling or sleeping in a doorway. This supports the idea that these people on the streets are unlike us, and need to be rehabilitated so they can find their way into a normal lifestyle." Leavitt argues that the homeless are a part of the community, and our objective ought to be to develop a comfort with all of the community's elements.

Leavitt hasn't always worked to solve social problems, though his artwork has always had a social angle. His interest in the individual's relationship with his or her environmental space, and in turn the individual's relationship with other people with whom he or she shares that space, has long been the basis for his art.

Leavitt is most proud of the two interactive performance art pieces he formulated for the University of Washington last year. One piece involved a team of volunteers, suited in Velcro, who affixed themselves to those who would make eye contact with them at the school's cafeteria. The other project was to create a box which was pitch black and filled with various materials. Volunteers would climb in the box and not have an objective to escape. Rather, the individual would have to feel acquainted with the space he or she occupied.

The themes of these art projects evolved into his shelter project for the homeless. Though the projects were abstract, they were social in nature, and led to his interest in a project that would have a direct action on those less fortunate. Namely, designing small, mobile shelters that could be used by the homeless during the WTO chaos.

Leavitt continues in SHARE's fight to develop a tent city, and hopes to see more mobile shelters built upon this foundation: Those without property are not without dignity. And those with the will to survive deserve shelter. [E]

For a User's Guide and Builder's Guide to these shelters, call Mike Leavitt at (206) 329-2266, or write 1132 34th Ave, Seattle, WA, 98122.

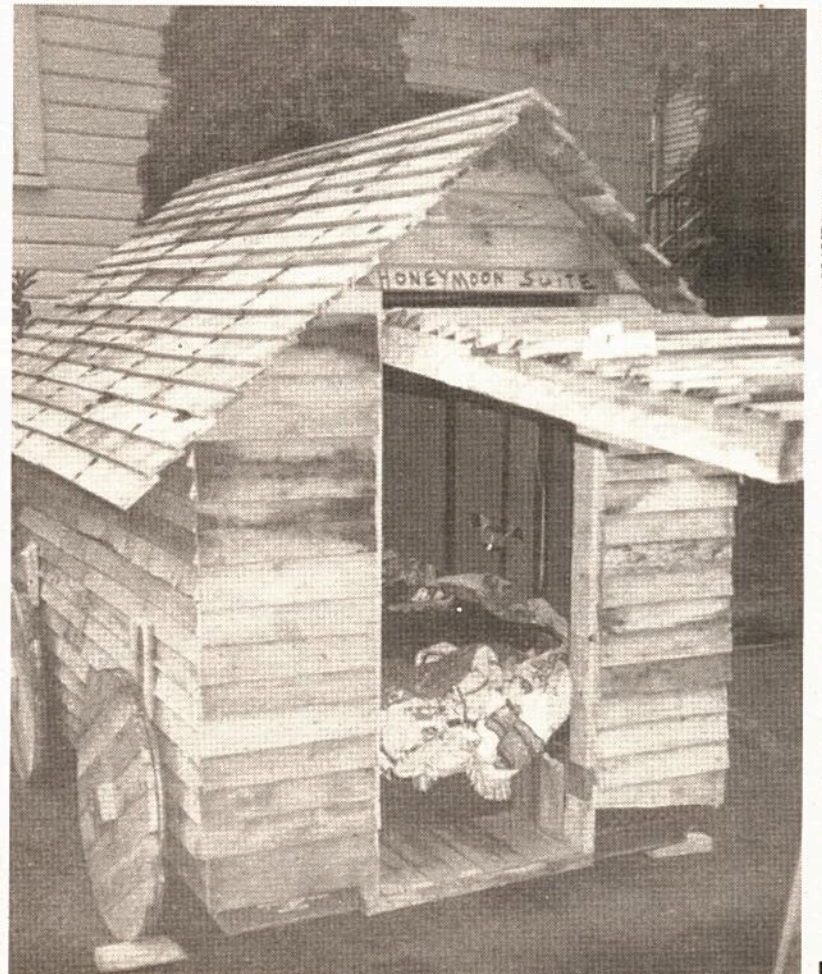


PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEAVITT

Street Memo

I don't know how much time I have.
 This will be short.
 Don't bother the mayor; he's busy I'm
 sure. The cement is not dry.
 I know I don't have much time.
 Cut chunks of fruit and throw
 it into the sidewalk.
 Call it feeding the city.
 Tell him that's not urine,
 the cement is not dry.
 How much time I know I
 have is shorting out like cables
 in a puddle. If he gives a damn
 you let me know.

—Anonymous

Untitled

Lemons are yellow
 Bananas are too
 Roses are red
 Violets are blue

But not everything is as it seems
 Remember that and hold onto your dreams

—*Ryana Williams*

Waiting

Had breakfast at Detox,
 it was instant noodles
 and watery juice.
 They discharged me
 or kicked me out
 at four-thirty
 seven. At five in the morning
 the world begins
 yawning; people commute,
 leave to their
 destination. Others
 have coffee,
 beer or ride the bus.
 However, I sit
 and raise with Promethean grace
 beer glass rings form
 on my used books
 and papers.

—*Earle Thompson*

As I watch it all...

Evolution not revolution,
 Try to find the solution...
 Falls upon the constitution.

Revolutions spreading around.
 Trying to break some ground.
 Turning it around and back again...
 Amendments are falling fast...
 All they need is a brain.
 They're driving us all insane...
 Edit this untangle that
 Get it right...

Massive hysteria's coming down
 falling, on the constitution...
 Untangle this, veto that
 Edit this, forget about that

GET IT RIGHT
 WE'RE ALL AT RISK...

—*Storm*

The Box Under the House

Jo Anne said she'd found a secret place to
 hide in, hide from everyone, a place where
 all you did was sleep and dream of flying

and then she said
 she was running away, to hide from all of
 the things that were following her, shadows

of babies and children and hospital carnage
 calling her "Mother" in dreams. said she'd
 found a secret place to hide in, a place

where love and sex aren't necessarily
 connected, synonymous, a place where
 no one will ever find her. and then she

made me help her pick out a box and then
 she made me put the nails in and then she
 made me nail the lid shut. I made sure

no one will ever find her.

—*Holly Day*

Dreamland

You know where you lay your head, when
 you do lay

back, and
 you fall. Even you, do
 fall—

too quickly! You
 remember.

Words are the same when they hammer at
 your

window ... lost
 while these cracks between you and the
 outside,

rise
 with nothing but sound.

—*Stan Burriss*

Delusions of Adequacy

My poems are scattered all over the floor
I should care for them
type them
put them on hangers
remove the stains
iron them
dry clean the very sensitive ones
not loan them out
or give them away
cuz I do not like it when they return
tonight you must understand
little poems
you're staying home
you're going to read
and not write
cuz if you little poems don't shape up
you're going to be donated
to a poemless shelter
and here I write
nothing changes
they sit waiting to be collected
and now so soon
15 minutes later
in desperation
I wonder...
will you
little poems
ever have the maturity to become
poetry?
We — you and I — little poems
have so much in common
cuz if you don't know where you're going
they you're never
lost.

—Jimmy Henry

Sociology of Society. Second time around.

Sociology of society to study the reasons why we're poor.
Instead, break through the walls of stereotype.
Please don't just re-categorize!
Listen to our voices that stand loud.
Common sense states that we need the cash, not just research.
We need open eyes to what's right in front of your doorways.

Humanity. How do we pass the whistle on for, the better of us all
Our lives, our children's? How do we join together instead -
of holding our neighbors down.
Please get us out of this hell hole!
(Please give a damn, not just a number)
Don't leave us on a ship of fools.
Searching for equal ground, equal rights, civility amongst all people.

—Storm

When I Was Ten Years Old

When I was ten years old, my mother and father got divorced. I remember my father crying as he hugged us all goodbye. Then he left, got in his car, and tore off across the front lawn. He was drunk. You could smell it on him. I grew up with that smell. It was in our house. I remember being up late after bedtime one evening and there were some glasses which contained the remains of some earlier drinking, but I can't remember anything else, just the smell of the stuff that was in those glasses. It was dark in the living room and it was spooky, and it was not the first time that I had found myself up, wandering around in the dark, or on somebody's couch, in somebody else's house, staring at the wall, at other people's art work, in the dark.

—Jerry Dwayne Wylie, Jr.

Sticky Situations

woodland park, wallingford

The sunny spring afternoon
swells, filled with pretty,
well-dressed people and
their children playing in the park.

My small dog and I walk
uphill along wooded paths
to escape the constant
swooshing of car wheels.
I slip off her leash and release
frolicking canine abandon.

Down on the road, I spot
a shiny blue car
with lights and siren on it
sliding silent through the trees.
So I slip her leash back on,
tell her she can't have fun today,
this Chihuahua mix who turns
prey to larger dogs
in designated offleash areas,
untrained by owners who pay
money to reclaim wildness.

And I wonder why that car
is here today, shiny, blue,
with lights and siren on it,
simply to scout out unleashed
dogs for city revenue,
or for some heavier purpose.

You see, I know that there are
camps of homeless folks
within these woods,
renegades from shelters
and downtown's wasteland,
where a plethora of cops
patrol, skulking on bikes
through the always wild alleys.

I remember some weeks ago
when two homeless men
gave up drinking water
so I could wash my hands
when I'd slipped on this same hill,
still slick from winter's rains.

Our dogs played, happy to be
stopped when too rambunctious.
They offered food and
pressed on me a bag of what
they couldn't cook with pans,
so I would leave full-handed.

Today, walking back down
the wooded slope and through
the pretty, well-dressed people
and their children playing
in the park, I feel suspect
in my own neighborhood,
wearing black and workboots,
my legs unshaven. And I wonder
whether I am sweating from
the humid weather or my fear.

For in the downtown darkness
after the pretty, well-dressed people
have driven home to safety,
the shiny blue cars
with lights and sirens flashing
roll onto the sidewalks and park paths,
chasing off the unprotected.
I know because I have seen this,
and yes, my friends, I'm frightened.

—Ruth Fox

JUST CAUSE, CONT FROM PAGE 1

Often a complex is owned by an out-of-state corporation that has no direct contact with the people living in the properties. It is not uncommon for corporations to make sweeping changes when an apartment building is purchased and put under new management.

Such is the case with Cynthia and Adrian Mealioa. Brenda Jacobs, manager of Lake Place apartments in Sea-Tac, recently gave the Mealioas a 20-day eviction notice. "I feel bad for Cynthia and Adrian," says Jacobs, "but the new management has strict occupancy standards that must be met and I am just doing my job."

However, the Mealioas, who are Latino, think their eviction was the result of discrimination. The family has lived in the complex for one year, has paid their rent on time, and has met all requirements of their contract. Simply put, the Mealioas are model tenants. But a California corporation bought the Lake Place apartments last September, and ordered the eviction.

Initially, no reason was given for the Mealioas to vacate. After Adrian threatened to file a complaint, he was told that only four people were allowed in a two-bedroom apartment (there are five members in the Mealioa family). Furthermore, the family was told that it wouldn't be able to afford living at the complex anyway once a planned price increase was implemented (rent would be raised from \$685.00 per month to \$810.00). "We have already paid over \$100 in fees trying to find another apartment," says Adrian Mealioa, "and most places require first-month, last-month, and a deposit on the rent."

The Tenants Union says stories like the Mealioa family's are not uncommon. "Fami-

lies are being displaced and are forced with the hardship of having to find affordable housing, due to a no-cause notice," says Carton.

Chris Benis, former president of the Apartment Owner's Association, says Just Cause is just a headache. Benis says the bill would keep prospective tenants without perfect credit records from getting housing, and would interfere with a landlord's ability to manage property and enforce rules.

According to Benis, the Just Cause Bill in Seattle has made it so difficult for owners and landlords to properly manage their buildings, many refuse to own rental properties in the city limits.

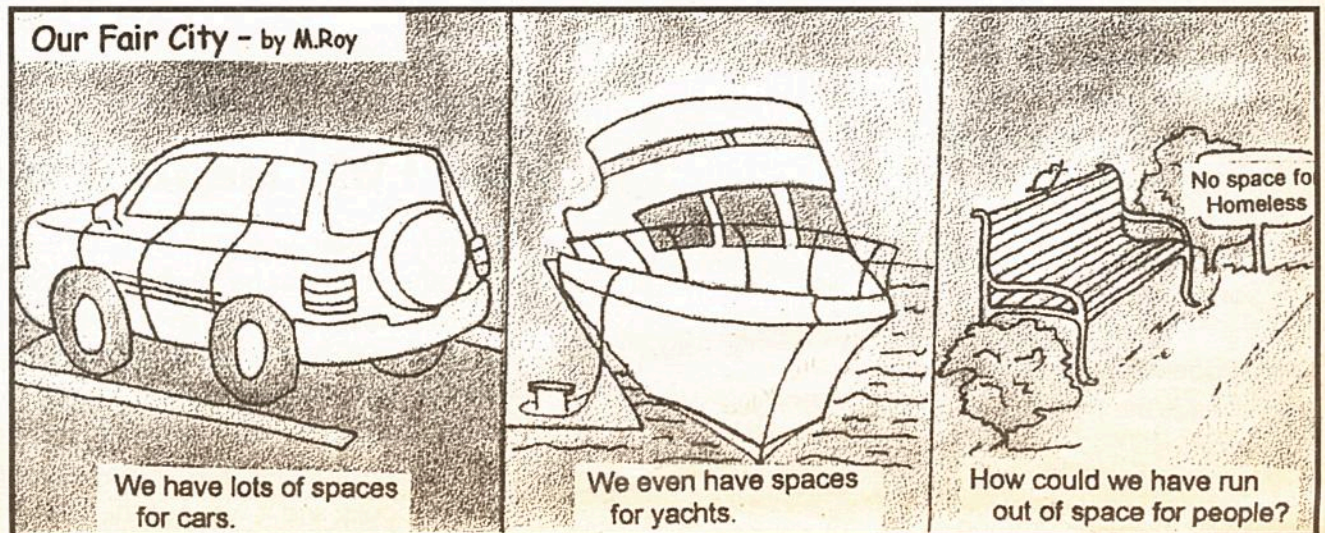
But Benis isn't reaching for his aspirin just yet. Passing a Just Cause Bill will not be easy. Presently, the 'Just Cause for Eviction' Bill is receiving legislative support from Senator Margarita Prentice, 11th district. It also has received endorsements from the Washington Low Income Housing Congress, Casa Latina of Seattle, and Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition. According to the Tenants Union, much

work needs to be done in order to see this bill to fruition.

The Tenants Union is urging supporters to contact state legislators and testify at legislative meetings about experiences involving an eviction without just cause. Moreover, supporters plan to stress the importance of the bill at the February 17th Housing Advocacy Day in Olympia.

"A 'Just Cause' law in this state is important," says Carton. "Such a law will make it harder for landlords and new management to legally force vacancies as a way of getting around the current fair housing laws, implementing exorbitant rent increases, and discriminating against renters who have met their part of the rental agreement." □

If you would like further information about the Just Cause Bill, please contact the Tenants Union, at (206) 722-6848.



A paid advertisement by the Seattle Housing Authority

A View of Our Mission from a Church Van

One of the most important services that SHA offers is extending the vision and horizon for Seattle's homeless and marginalized poor.

For the past few months, I have been driving up to 10 homeless women from a shelter in the Maple Leaf area to downtown Seattle on my way to work. These morning rides have been a major opportunity to get to know some of our future clients and their stories. While daily stories about struggles for custody, with the criminal justice system, and of street life are eye-opening, I have been particularly struck by the prayers of the women.

When I started driving in early fall, they wanted me to pray before we depart Maple Leaf. However, in the last few weeks, I have asked them to volunteer to pray. All those who have volunteered usually pray for the same things, and not a single one of them has prayed for permanent housing, which was very curious.

What they usually include in their prayers are:

- Thanks for a warm bed.
- Thanks for the food they had the night before, if any.
- Thanks for a safe night's sleep.
- Prayer for safety during the day.
- Prayer for a friendly smile on the streets.
- Prayer for people they encounter during the day to be open-minded.

What I have realized from their prayers is that more than any other people I know, they are concerned mainly about the day ahead of them. All they want for the day that lies ahead is safety, a smile, and not to be judged based on their homeless status.

Another lesson that I learned by volunteering at the shelter is their perception that they are invisible on the streets because they carry their bags with them. Those who view them as opportunities for crime notice them. However, many of the rest judge them by the bag they carry, don't acknowledge that they exist, and don't offer the smile they seek. In other words, their homeless status militates against the very things they hope for.

One of the things I offer to them on a regular basis is an application for SHA housing. For brief moments in our morning rides, the application form offers a sense of hope and opportunity to look beyond today. It allows them to lift their heads from their feet to look ahead. However, their overwhelming concern is for their spirits to be lifted by a smile, for their safety, and for a lack of prejudice.

What SHA offers for many of the folks that we see on the streets and in our admissions office, therefore, is an extension of their vision beyond today. Our long waiting list is an almost insurmountable barrier. However, some of them do make it in, about 250 homeless households in 1999. We have extended their horizons and provided them with an opportunity to look toward the next week, some the next month or year, some to get their children back, some to get a job and provide for themselves, and others the opportunity to grow old with dignity.

Sojourner Truth Unity Fellowship Church presents a **Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Breakfast** with entertainment, featuring guest speaker Larry Gossett, benefits AMEN, AIDS Ministry Ecumenical Network, \$5, 9 a.m. - noon, at First Christian Church, 1632 Broadway across from SCCC

1/15

Work party for Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, January 17 events commemorating Dr. King and furthering civil rights, put together signs for march or other work, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. or when finished, at CAMP, 18th Ave at Columbia; Info K.L. 206-461-3865 or pager 206-645-7224

Tinto Por La Paz (a cup of coffee for peace), hear members of Seattle's Colombian community talk about the war that is ravaging their country and the peace they are struggling to create, includes a video about Colombia; 2:30 - 5 p.m., at Southwest Community Center, 2801 SW Thistle St; Info Justin Delacour, Seattle Colombia Committee, oakleyruth@igc.org

Celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day And Black History Month 1/17-2/26

with works of photographer Dan Budnick, Weekdays 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Sundays noon - 5 p.m., artist's reception Feb 3, 6 - 8 p.m., at Benham Gallery, 1216 First Ave; Info Marita Holdaway or Erin Spencer 206-622-2480

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration with Workshops, Rally and March 1/17

theme changing the County Logo from an Imperial Crown to the likeness of Rev. King, march to the King County Administration Building downtown, 9:30 a.m. workshops, 11 a.m. rally, noon march, Garfield High School, 23rd Avenue at E Jefferson, Info K.L. 206-461-3865 or pager 206-645-7224

Section 8 Briefing for State Legislators, an important part of maintaining low income housing 1/18

Noon - 1:15 p.m., in House Rules Committee Room, Legislative Building, Olympia; Info Tenants Union 206-722-6848 ext. 102

Seattle Displacement Coalition Meeting 1/19

with discussion of combating gentrification and displacement; protecting tenants rights on Capital Hill and city wide; Keeping Seattle Housing Authority from destroying low income housing; developing strategies to save low income housing and prevent escalating rents, 7 - 8:30 p.m., at Pilgrim Congregational Church, E. Republican and Broadway Ave E., use entrance at 509 10th Ave E one block east of Broadway; Info 206-632-0668 or jvf4119@zipcon.net

Forum "What's Next and How Do We Get There?" Labor's program 1/21-22

after the WTO, offering a range of positions and challenges for labor's program from within the AFL-CIO and by allies in the coalition that created the historic march on November 30; speakers will include Ron Judd, King County Labor Council; Tyree Scott, Labor & Employment Law Office; David Solnit, Direct Action Network; Plus others from the AFL-CIO; Challengers will include Faculty, Students, and Coalition Partners; also Saturday events, Sponsored by the University of Washington Center for Labor Studies, 7 - 9:30 p.m., at Kane Hall, University of Washington; Info 206-543-7946 or <http://depts.washington.edu/pcls/wft/afl-cio>

Studio X, a new broadcasting studio for the community, will hold an orientation/demonstration. 1/23

Come and be part of a new movement to put the community back into the airwaves. Share your news, information, spoken word,

and other creative material not found on corporate radio. Sign-up yourself or your community organization for air time and learn how to use the studio for educating and inspiring you local community. 1:00pm at Studio X, 2222 - 2nd Ave. Info 729-2437.

Alternative Healthcare Access Campaign (AHAC), general meeting. 1/26

If you believe healthcare is a right, not a privilege, help us obtain alternative options for low-income people and the homeless. 7:30 - 9:00pm at Real Change, 2129 2nd Ave (b/t Lenora and Blanchard). Info Kris Weber at 322-9254

Creating Mutual Respect and Peace between Law Enforcement and Community, 1/28

Program by the Abe Keller Peace Education Fund, featuring a dialogue between Chief Norman Stamper of the Seattle Police Department, and the Rev. Harriett Walden, founder of Mothers for Police Accountability 7:30 p.m., at University Unitarian Church, 6556 35th Ave NE; Info Rosemary Brodie 206-523-1127

Music and Poetry benefit for the people of Guatemala and East Timor, featuring students from Nova High School with a wide variety of talented student performances including African drumming, Afro-Brazilian dance and social protest poetry, donation requested but not required. Proceeds will help provide desks for the children of impoverished Guatemalan coffee farmers visited by Nova's Spanish students last year, as well as East Timorese people displaced by the recent Indonesian violence in their country. Information about the struggles of the people in both countries and what people can do to help will be provided, 7:30 p.m., at the Zoka Cafe, 2200 N 56th across from the Honey Bear; Info Joe Szwaja 206-633-2836 or 206-726-6730(w) or morrisondeb@earthlink.net

Mothers Against Violence in America annual conference and "Public Official-Student Forum," 1/29

in Everett; Info 206-323-2303

Demonstration and leafleting calling for Statehood for the District of Columbia 2/1

so the citizens of Washington, D.C. will have equal rights with other US citizens; this event commemorates the 40th anniversary of the Southern Student Sit-in movement which started with the sit-in at the Woolworths lunch counter in Greensboro, NC in 1960, noon - 1 p.m., at the Federal Building, 2nd and Marion, downtown; Info 206-323-2187

Washington NARAL celebrates the 27th Anniversary of Roe V. Wade with its annual Chocolate for Choice event 2/3

at the Dome Room in the Arctic Building in Seattle. Celebrity judges include Tracy Conway of Almost Live, actress Cynthia Geary, Seattle City Councilmember Judy Nicastro, Dr. Michael Greer, Physician and CEO of Use Your Brains/Black Brains, and many more will choose the best chocolate in Seattle. Tickets are \$25, \$60 and \$100, ind include chocolate information.

Mondays: Books to Prisoners - Ongoing

Visit our new space. Ongoing volunteer project could use your help answering letters & sending books to incarcerated individuals; 6 - 10 p.m., at 1004 Turner Way East on 23rd Ave, 2 blocks north of Aloha, Bus lines 43 & 48; Info. 206-322-2868 or <http://weber.u.washington.edu/~jargon>

Sundays: Seattle Food Not Bombs collects food and serves free vegetarian meals to the homeless each & every Sunday, 2 p.m., cook, Green Tortoise Hostel, 1525 2nd Ave; 5 p.m.

JANUARY

NOTABLES

share dinner at Occidental Park, Info. 206-346-0335 or <http://www.scn.org/activism/foodnotbombs>

Continue to call the City Council 206-684-8888 and tell them to fund Services for Homeless People, not studies, and tracking systems; when shelters don't turn people away they will know they have enough of them!

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, healthcare, call 202-783-3566 for an information packet, Info. Ann McLaughlin 360-779-4774

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

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Inquiries to Tim Harris, 441-3247.

WANTED:

writers
photographers
illustrators

Join up with the Real Change Gang. Fame. Glory. Purpose. Call Todd at 441-8143.

ACT NOW!

Sign Me Up

Children's Alliance needs you to act for kids

ISSUE: Support for three legislative initiatives being presented by the Children's Alliance.

BACKGROUND: The 2000 state legislative session began on Monday, January 10th, and will continue through mid-March. What happens this session will affect the future for children in Washington. Every year the Children's Alliance promotes several important legislative initiatives that are good for children. This year, the top priorities for the Children's Alliance include the following:

Support for the Working Poor

"New Performance Measures" is a bill to ensure that families coming off the welfare rolls as a result of WorkFirst will have the support they need to be successful.

Implementation of WorkFirst has resulted in a substantial reduction in the single-parent and two-parent family caseloads. However, many of the WorkFirst participants who have found paid employment are working in jobs that result in family incomes that are close to or below the federal poverty line. Families that should be getting supportive benefits such as Medicaid, child care, and food stamps are not; DSHS recently acknowledged illegally terminating as many as 100,000 people from Medicaid as a result of WorkFirst.

Families that are living at or close to the federal poverty line have a higher risk of returning to public assistance and face many challenges in helping their children succeed in school and prepare for the jobs of the future. The "New Performance Measures" act sets measurable goals in three areas: (a.) Increases in hourly wages and quarterly earnings; (b.) Levels of employment stability and job retention; (c.) Access to benefits that support work (food stamps, Medicaid, and child care).

The act would require that WorkFirst's performance

in achieving these goals be published and made available to the Legislature and the general public on a quarterly basis. The act also directs the Department of Social and Health Services to establish and meet customer service standards in the WorkFirst program, to be reported to the Legislature in January 2001.

A Future for Kids

"Opportunities for Middle School Youth" is a proposal to create and expand after school programs for middle school students.

Judicial Fairness for Youth

"Justice For Youth" is a bill to make sure that youth in contempt of court for non-criminal behavior receive sanctions that are consistent regardless of where the youth lives in Washington.

ACTION NEEDED: The Children's Alliance is inviting Washington state citizens to speak up for children through the Children's Action Network — the action arm of the Children's Alliance. During the state legislative session, you may sign up for a free weekly email bulletin about children and family issues.

The action alerts provide background information about an issue, an action, and a pre-written message. During the present legislative session, the Children's Action Alert will cover a wide range of children and family issues, including welfare reform, child care, youth activities, juvenile justice, anti-hunger initiatives, low-cost housing, and the state budget.

If you would like to receive the free weekly email alert, please send a message to gabriela@child-rensalliance.org. Please include the following information: name; mailing address; telephone number; state legislative district (if you know it; if not, Children's Alliance will provide you with that information). For further information, feel free to contact the Children's Alliance at (206) 324-0340.

Real Change/RCHEP
2129 2nd Avenue
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