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Inside: Mayor Sidran? • Walking the Blade • Litigating LIHL • Free Bus Fare for All

GRAPHICS BY SYLVIA RANOW.

A look at the
Apartment
Association of
Seattle-King
County
Part One of a
Two-Part Series

AASK and Ye Shall Receive:

The warped worldview of the landlord lobbyists

By Trevor Griffey

When the Seattle City Council asked its lobbyists in Olympia to put some effort into repealing or modifying the statewide ban on rent control this year, they asked for the impossible and they knew it.

"I don't think there's any chance in hell that we'll have it rescinded," says Seattle City Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck. Hans Dunshee, co-chair of the state's Housing and Local Government Committee, didn't think twice before confirming Steinbrueck's assessment: no Republican is going let that legislation even get introduced in committee. "The landlord lobby is as strong as ever," he explained.

Who is this lobby, virtually unknown to the public, that holds the reins on Olympia's rental housing policy?

It is essentially no more than two organizations: the Apartment Association of Seattle and King County (AASK) and its statewide parent, the Washington Apartment Association (WAA). And, when you take into account AASK's enormous influence on the WAA, one could say the statewide "landlord associations" Dunshee refers to are really no more than one organization: AASK.

AASK is the single largest and most powerful local landlord association in the state of Washington. It comprises half the membership and most of the force behind its parent organization. Together with the WAA, AASK has enjoyed, until lately, near monopoly status as the voice of landlord interests on rental housing issues. They have used that status to fight nearly every piece of legislation at the state and local level meant to give tenants more power in their relationships with their landlords.

"I would put AASK on the extreme right wing" of the political spectrum, says John Fox, of the Seattle Displacement Coalition. "They are the most volatile, most reactionary, most militant at the drop of a hat. They oppose anything that suggests government intervention into their industry."

Formed in 1987 by the merger of two well-established landlord organizations, the Apartment Owners Association (of King County) and the Rental Housing Owners of Seattle, AASK has played a prominent role in local politics since its inception.

The organizations that merged to form AASK led the successful fight against Seattle's rent control initiative 20 years ago; they were instrumental in

passing a statewide ban on rent control two months later; and they have fiercely guarded the law ever since.

AASK opposes City Council efforts to protect tenants who complain about their housing conditions from landlord retaliation. It opposes making it easier for tenants to have the ability to buy the property they rent when it goes to market. It opposes Seattle's current law requiring landlords to give 60-days notice to tenants who receive rent increases above 10 percent. It spent roughly \$20,000 in a failed campaign to defeat Judy Nicastro when she ran for Seattle City Council on a renters' rights platform. It almost succeeded in removing Tenants Union funding from the King County budget last year. And it opposes nearly every agenda item discussed at Judy Nicastro's Renters' Summit last year.

"They've been very effective lobbying on behalf of the interests of their membership," says Seattle City Councilmember Nick Licata's legislative aide, Lisa Herbold. "Everyone [on the City Council] gives them a fair shake. When they call to set up a meeting, everyone gives them the time of day. Whatever soundbite they work on will implant itself in people's brains."

Nonpartisan Republicans

AASK is an organization that claims to be nonpartisan. While technically true, that elicits skepticism from not only some affordable housing groups, but from landlords as well. AASK spokesman and former president Chris Benis tried to reach out for new membership in one newsletter by retelling the story of one landlord who didn't want to join because she "thought AASK was allied only with one side of the political spectrum." "The truth is," Benis explained somewhat legalistically, "AASK PAC [political action committee] contributes to candidates regardless of party affiliation."

Yet despite its nonprofit status and support for a few Democratic legislators, the personal politics of AASK's leadership aren't much of a secret. "I certainly welcomed the early Christmas present of electing George W. Bush our New President," crowed AASK president Alex Thole in AASK's January newsletter. "The last few weeks also restored some of my lost faith in the court system to do the right thing and follow laws, rather than liberal bias and feelings."

Continued On Page 10



Blue Cigarettes for Eddie

He asked, "Do you have a light, son?" as his hand fished in his breast pocket. He produced a tin of tobacco with a strong aroma of nicotine. From the same pocket, he retrieved a leaf of rolling papers, and opening them, revealed that they were spent. "No problem," he winked.

He gently plucked out one of the blue end papers. His practiced fingers began to roll a cigarette, and his eyes sparkled, betraying the frustration and pain that played on his mind.

"Got a light?" he asked. I fumbled in my shirt pocket, found a book of matches, and handed them to him. "Thanks," he replied and lit his cigarette.

Taking a long drag, he began to hack violently. "Damn things'll kill ya," he said, pain seeping from his throat and welling into his eyes. The smell of burning paper filled the air between us. I clumsily began to role a cigarette of my own when he started to speak.

His name was Eddie and he had lived a very long time — forever, it seemed to him. He told me of the boy off on the adventure to end fascism in Spain, and the young Marine liberating the Philippines; he told me the story of the veteran that was a kid coming home and finding the right girl.

He took my paper and tobacco from my hand and, continuing to speak, he rolled my cigarette and handed it to me. He told me of the great career at the steel mill and of the three good kids. He spoke of the long fight with cancer that took a life's savings, and of the woman he loved. He began to roll another cigarette and told me of the long nights at honkytonks and the bitter depression drowned in alcohol — of the man now old that sleeps on the streets, and the hard road to recovery.

Looking in my tin, I saw I was out tobacco but had papers to spare. We traded that day, Eddie and I, his wisdom for my rolling papers. I think I got the better end of the deal.

Sincerely,
Sean Smith

President Duh

If it weren't so pathetic for our country and the world, the "election" of George Dubya Bush could be considered a huge, cosmic joke. The only benefit I could see was that we got a gracious loser. Not much of a consolation prize considering what we have to live with.

Perhaps, though, a really stupid person in the White House could be a benefit to the voting public. Perhaps the whole corporate house of cards might get a shake up by having to worry about Mr. Duh opening his mouth about things he shouldn't. It will be an interesting time.

One benefit to having George Duh in the White House is that he will provide comics, pundits, and cartoonists with a never-ending supply of material. Dana Carvey, for one, will be back in demand again. The only problem is that every joke will always have that sad core that the man we really wanted was undone by a herd of lawyers.

The greatest lawyer joke of the ages has been done to us, but we aren't laughing.

Sincerely,
Reneene Robertson

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Puget Sound's Voice of the Poor and Homeless

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Mission Statement:

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

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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 MacWorkshop, 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.

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Uncivil Service

Mayor Mark Sidran? Just say no

By Adam Holdorf

City Attorney Mark Sidran is seriously considering a run for mayor. He's discussed it in intra-office memos. He's leaked it to the press. Sidran could win.

The anti-homeless city ordinances endorsed by Sidran's office are popular with a voting population that enjoys a "revitalized" downtown. Despite a handful of candidates — some who have won office — that have spoken out against legislation that he's endorsed, Civility laws reign over Seattle, and Sidran laid them down. He may well claim his crown. If he did, he'd bring his prosecutorial vision of helping the homeless to the mayor's office.

What could a man who relentlessly personalizes poverty and homelessness do in the executive suite? Let's take a comparative look at the career of Sidran's ideological doppelgänger, Rudolph Giuliani, mayor of New York City.

Giuliani's quality-of-life campaign banished homeless people from the streets and into city shelters. Homeless people have been arrested for impeding pedestrian traffic. Just before Thanksgiving 1999, Giuliani responded to an assault by a mentally ill man by announcing a street sweep: police would "offer" services to people on the street; if they don't want help, Police Chief Howard Safir said, they

would be arrested. Giuliani pronounced that, "Streets do not exist in civilized societies for the purpose of people sleeping there. Bedrooms are for sleeping."

The Thanksgiving sweep was the blunt edge of a coercive campaign to eliminate homeless peoples' right to shelter. Earlier that fall, Giuliani proposed a new policy in every New York City emergency shelter: in order to stay, you have to work. This despite statistics showing roughly half the city's homeless people have mental health obstacles preventing them from getting work.

Meanwhile, Giuliani's attention to housing has been minimal. From 1994 to 1998, the number of apartments for the homeless the city produced dropped 87 percent. In the past two years, the city Buildings Department has shut down more than a dozen of the city's last single-room occupancy hotels and boarding houses, in the Rockaway Beach neighborhood of Queens. Dozens of families have been evicted from housing that provided a last resort to people on the brink of homelessness. When faced with such dire straits in New York City, these families also come up against the Giuliani administration's blame-the-victim mentality.

To criminalize lying down on the sidewalk does little to make it stop happening. And until enough shelter and services are available, police officers and courts will continue to be dogged by petty concerns. It's an expensive and inhumane way to run a city government. Jailing one person costs 25 percent more per day than feeding, clothing, and providing counseling to get them on the right track.

But regardless of expense, jail will always be the answer to those who want homeless people to vanish. When you put the criminal justice system in charge of addressing homelessness, the results are quick. A police officer just becomes a social worker with the strong arm of the law up his sleeve. It's a tactic that satisfies the public's outcry to "do something."

The public sees results. Throughout the mid-'90s, people on the streets were moved about as part of New York City's vaunted urban recovery. Crime went down, tourism went up, and Giuliani's civility laws claimed partial credit. But there is little evidence that these laws have improved New Yorkers' lives. Other problems remain — in fact, those that aggravate poverty make civility laws all the more necessary. New York City has one of the highest urban unemployment rates in the nation.

"What we always do first is we offer people services," Police Chief Safir told the press during the Thanksgiving '99 sweeps. "We offer them shelter.... Many of these people refuse. If they refuse, we're going to make sure that they move along and that they don't violate the law."

It's part of a Giuliani administration tactic that *The Village Voice* called the political right's "sanctioned sadism." "First they create anxiety by stoking a sense of danger," the *Voice* wrote, "then they turn it into pleasure by inflicting punishment on those deemed dangerous, deviant, or merely unworthy."

Civility laws make the homeless into suspects. Suspects merit increased surveillance. And when caught, punishment means you've fixed the problem. In this light, considerations of the relative cost of jail time over housing are cast aside. For the sadist, this pound of flesh is worth its weight in gold. ■

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The End is near!
Ho-hum. Everyone knows we were all supposed to blow up on December 31, 1999. We already call our own time the Last Days. And not three weeks ago, we inaugurated a turtle as our new President.

Yes, rather than fear The End, humankind has instead begged it, invited it, seduced it.

Well, the honeymoon is over. The end of the world is no longer a romantic attraction, something coming down from the heavens like a love letter filled with lightning. It's been given over to the business pages of the newspaper, where you can read the simple headline "Can Earth support U.S. way of life?" (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Jan. 15).

In short, the answer is no. "In the next century," says World Bank vice-president Ismail Serageldin, "wars will be fought over water." Mark Sagoff, an economics professor at the University of Maryland, says simply, "Nature is something we're going to have to do without."

Now that the planet's survival is an item on a business plan, it seems clear that even death has forsaken us. It is indifferent, and will leave us to outlast ourselves with oxygen bars and smog-resistant retinal implants.

Quick, while the scent of roses is still in the air, write a Valentine. Write about a beautiful planet, with a volcano, a garden, and Baobab-eating sheep. Where there are 44 sunsets in one day, and the laughter shines like the stars. ■

—Bob Redmond

End of sanctuary

Parishioners of Sacred Heart Catholic Church have been known to tuck money under the sleeping bags of homeless people lying in their Lower Queen Anne churchyard. Pastors going in for the night withdraw with the words, "Sleep well, gentlemen." On Wednesday evening, January 31, homeless people camped outside the church got a different message: notice that the church would no longer permit them to stay.

About two dozen homeless people bed down outside on church property, according to Jason Yori, who has been sleeping there for about a month. Last week, Yori found the church's notice folded under his bedroll.

The letter cites increasing conflicts between parishioners and people who don't move out of the doorways or driveways. Besides blocked church entrances, it mentions drug paraphernalia, food, blankets, and human excrement; people stashing their possessions in nearby bushes; drunken fights; and people climbing over fences to sleep in "restricted areas."

"It's not that we mind people sleeping there; the problems have just been escalating. The paper carrier won't drop the paper in the mailbox because there's people [blocking his path]; our mail carrier won't drop off the mail on Saturday," says Schmitt, who signed the letters. "The elderly parishioners have been staying away from the church."

Yori says the new policy goes against the Vatican's official sanction for the poor's use of church facilities. "What they've been doing is in standing with what the Church has done for thousands of years. The police have no authority on church grounds," he says. Absent the church's protection, "we have no other safe place to go."

Schmitt says the church had no official policy on providing a harbor for the campers, who have been seen on the grounds for the past two and a half years. The city installed a sani-can about a year ago.

Yori says that most of the people bedding down outside with him have been well-behaved.

"The majority are calm, cool, and collected," he says. "They are not drinking or doing drugs. It's just been a couple of people" who've spoiled the spot by reacting angrily to parishioners and Church staff who need to walk past.

Sacred Heart is working with the homeless group SHARE and local design firm Environmental Works to design an emergency shelter for the building's basement. The church currently hosts an emergency shelter operated by SHARE, and (for one dollar a year) rents out the property's former convent to Archdiocesan Housing Authority, which provides 90-day temporary housing for about six families and single women.

Joan Clough, the shelter's director, says negative experiences with people camping out are rare, "but I'll be honest, I was wondering when there might be some change. When I leave at night, every nook and cranny [outside the building] is filled with people."

Yori, who became homeless six years ago after his wife's death, hopes Sacred Heart continues to expand. He'd like to persuade the church to turn 7,000 square feet of now-vacant classrooms into a shelter, counseling, and referral center for homeless veterans. ■

—Adam Holdorf

Downtown: hazards ahead

About 200 people packed the back hall of St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral on Tuesday evening, January 29, to talk about the nexus between jobs, housing, and open space. The meeting, called by a coalition of environmentalists, housing activists, and living-wage supporters, brought four city councilmembers to the podium. Councilmembers Judy Nicastro, Richard Conlin, Peter Steinbrueck, and Nick Licata all supported, in principle, the coalition's call for changes to the city's TDR/Bonus zoning incentive system that would build more housing and encourage livable-wage jobs.

Steinbrueck, however, added a sober note to the whole debate: even if the TDR/Bonus system is amended, there's no way it will meet low-wage workers' housing needs.

Over the next 15 years, it will take about \$522 million — in city, state, federal, and private loans and grants — to build low-income housing solely in the downtown area. The TDR/Bonus system is expected to generate about \$22 million over that time period. That money must be used to buy and build on some of the highest-priced land in the region. It will inevitably produce less bang for the public buck, notes Steinbrueck: "Why build one unit [of housing] in the central downtown section, when you could two units just outside that area?"

More troubling are economic predictions that demand for new office and hotel complexes will slacken in the next five years. The construction boom



will level off, and the flow of money to the system will slow to a trickle.

"I don't think there are any positives in the future for housing out of this program," Steinbrueck told *Real Change*. At Steinbrueck's bidding, City Council staff are working on a proposal to tweak the committee's recommendations further. Among other things, he wants to give the council more authority to prioritize funds for housing. It comes at crosscurrents with what Mayor Paul Schell's staff had hoped was a final proposal, to be released February 21. ■

—Adam Holdorf

No haven in Pontiac

What happens to shelter officials seeking to provide more than just a roof over their clients' beds? In Pontiac, Michigan, their shelters get shut down.

At 5 a.m. on January 23, two dozen Pontiac police officers raided the Grace Centers of Hope, rousing 150 shelter residents.

The shelter had provided police with a list of names and social security numbers earlier that week, and police used the list to match 50 residents to 57 outstanding warrants. Earlier that week, undercover officers had bought drugs inside the shelter.

Grace Centers of Hope was seeking a permit to start a women's drug rehabilitation center on the premises. The city had denied their permit, and shelter officials had pursued the issue. Now, under pressure from Pontiac city officials, staff say they'll shut down their emergency shelter operation on March 1.

In the *Detroit Free Press*, Grace Centers director Kent Clark called the police raid a "political" tactic. Of the 32 people arrested in the pre-dawn raid, only a handful were prosecuted. ■

—Adam Holdorf

Mail for all

A class-action lawsuit filed last week in federal court against the United States Postal Service could give homeless people the right to a basic service other people take for granted: free and easily accessible mail.

The suit, filed on behalf of three homeless plaintiffs and SHARE, charges that the post office's current practice of only offering mail to the homeless during limited hours at its branch on Third Avenue and Union Street is unconstitutional and a violation of the post office's own policy to offer equal mail service to everyone. In addition, the post office refuses to give free mail boxes to homeless individuals, even though those boxes are already offered for free for those with homes that cannot be reached on a normal delivery route.

"Anybody who is homeless and lives more than a certain distance [from the post office at Third and Union] is required to spend time and money getting mail that others receive for free," says the plaintiff's lawyer, Casey Trupin, of Columbia Legal Services. "Having to travel by bus to get mail at restricted hours is very cumbersome, and could mean choosing between two necessary tasks, like getting mail or taking care of benefits."

The suit also charges that the post office is continuing to violate two other policies it conceded to in an administrative ruling at the end of last year. The post office persists in denying post office boxes to people who don't have proof of a physical address, even if they meet alternative requirements, such as being known to the postmaster or providing a point of contact such as the address of a shelter or day center, the suit says.

In addition, Trupin says the post office continues to deny postal box services to homeless individuals after they have used the service for 30 days, even though their own policy says they have to offer this service for as long as it is needed.

No date has been set for a potential trial by judge or a summary judgment, says Trupin. If any ruling comes in favor of the plaintiffs, the decision would guarantee all homeless people the right to equal access to mail services for which they are currently having to pay and travel out of their way, he added.

"The post office has said everyone has the right to a free form of mail service," says Trupin, adding that, for individuals without constant access to a phone or email, mail is often a valued form of communication. "The homeless are the only ones being denied this service." ■

—Molly Rhodes

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

Hopping Mad

Tenant files suit, saying low-income housing provider scrapped self-management

By Aubrey Hiers

On December 18, 2000, Kenneth Jennings filed a King County District Court case against the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) for breach of contract and violation of the state Landlord/Tenant Act.

Jennings has been a resident at Arion Court since September 1999. LIHI, a nonprofit organization that provides 1,015 housing units for homeless and low-income individuals, has rented the 36-unit building to formerly homeless people since 1992.

Jennings is representing himself in what he describes as "a shoestring operation." His case is based on LIHI's adherence to its building management plan, designed to offer tenants more power in return for greater responsibility. Dubbed the self-management plan, it set up a tenant-led governing structure and required residents to devote 10 hours a month to meetings, chores, or other work overseeing the building's operation.

"The issue at stake is the meaning of resident self-management," says Jennings. "The way I look at it, it is the most important tool in the toolshed for rebuilding the lives of people coming out of the homeless situation."

Jennings says LIHI has intentionally overridden the management plan, part of the Arion's lease agreement, in hiring staff and pursuing evictions. "They have

systematically not enforced the contract, and actively sabotaged and undermined resident self-management," he says, "to the point where it isn't in existence anywhere else but on paper."

LIHI may contest Jennings' assertion that it has violated the lease agreement. It has made the case that since the plan is not signed by residents and building management, it is not part of the Arion's contractual lease agreement. LIHI's lawyer has filed a motion for summary judgment, which will be heard on February 12 in King County District Court.

LIHI management staff have acknowledged that the Arion's tenant self-management plan is in need of repair; staffer Ginger Segel says tenants have held meetings with staff to draft amendments. LIHI has declined to comment further, citing the legal proceedings.

According to Jennings, the Arion's advisory committee, formed so other local agencies could counsel tenants on self-management, was disbanded. And Jennings says LIHI has informed him that the residents tweaked their own management plan, trashing the "minimum participation requirement," a 10-hour-a-month work expectation. Jennings says LIHI should be holding residents accountable: "It's primarily LIHI's responsibility to make sure [ten-

ant participation] happens," asserts Jennings. "They allowed it to literally cease to exist."

Jennings' case follows hard on another court victory for an Arion tenant. Robert Jackson, a resident since July 1997, recently fought off eviction proceedings in King County Circuit Court. Last November, the Arion's three-member tenant executive committee served Jackson an eviction notice without seeking approval from the rest of the residents, as the management plan requires. The Circuit Court found LIHI to be in violation of the building's lease agreement and self-management plan, and stopped the eviction.

"That sent up some flares for certain members who believe in self-management," says Scott Strombaugh, an Arion resident and one of the original drafters of the self-management plan.

LIHI is not the sole source of resident-managed low-income housing in Seattle. Other non-profits, including the Capitol Hill Housing Improvement Program (CHHIP), Archdiocesan Housing Authority (AHA), and Lutheran Alliance To Create Housing (LATCH), provide co-operative housing programs with varying degrees of resident responsibilities.

LIHI, which began self-managed housing in 1989 at the Aloha Inn, offers housing for homeless and low-income individuals with rents beginning at 30 percent of a tenant's monthly income.



ARION COURT RESIDENT KENNETH JENNINGS WANTS HIS LANDLORD, THE LOW INCOME HOUSING INSTITUTE, TO RESTORE TENANT SELF-MANAGEMENT. PHOTO BY CASEY KELBAUGH.

Residents in all buildings are required to attend an orientation, monthly resident council meetings, and reside on one resident committee. These standard requirements are overseen by a fulltime staff member, called the program coordinator, for each building.

Jennings praises the principle of self-management, despite his difficulties with the practice. In a building like the Arion, "You don't simply take [formerly homeless] people and house them in a little cubicle and say that's it," he says. "That fulfills the first part of the problem, which is housing. But the second part is about rebuilding, retraining — all those things that it takes to equip yourself for life again. That's what self-management is all about." ■

Policy Watch

By Nancy Amidei

There's an elephant in the living room, and hardly anybody wants to talk about it.

As a couple different legislative staff people have said, in more or less the same words: "The voters have given away too much money in recent years. It's a problem."

Here's the bottom line: the state doesn't have the revenue sources needed to do what voters are telling legislators they want done. We could even make the Initiative 601 spending limit more responsive to real conditions and real needs, but that still wouldn't generate the necessary funds.

So the mood in Olympia is somber. Normally at this point the legislative policy committees would be looking ahead to all the bills they might pass. But not this year. No sense approving ideas we can't afford.



Energy Assistance: Proving that California does not exist in a vacuum, a bill providing energy assistance that had not even been on the agenda printed the previous week leap-frogged a new report on criminal justice in the Senate Ways & Means Committee. With eastern Washington caught in the grip of the coldest winter in decades, and energy costs rising, the committee leapt into action. Energy assistance appears likely to be funded out of the Supplemental Budget for fiscal year 1999-2001... and fast.



Long-term Care: Two bills to improve the quality of long-term care provided by the state — HB 1637, to raise caregiver wages, and HB 1576 — will have a public hearing in front of the House Health Care Committee on

Thursday, Feb. 8. The committee will also hear a bill to ensure the availability of affordable prescription drugs this Friday. Another prescription drug bill, SB 5026, would use the state's power as a major drug buyer to reduce drug costs as part of a discount prescription program.



Civil Rights: While SB 5232 would rescind an earlier decision to grant health insurance benefits to same-sex partners of state employees, HB 1524/SB 5771 would expand the jurisdiction of the human rights commission to include sexual orientation. A pair of bills, HB 1647 and HB 1648, would create a task force to study the death penalty, though only the first bill would impose a moratorium on the use of the death penalty until the study is complete.



Juveniles/Youth: SB 5500, a bill to revise procedures under the BECCA and HOPE Acts, has some youth advocates concerned, as it would allow judges to "stack" time for youth who run away. Youth advocates are also working on renewing \$220,000 in funds for five state-licensed youth shelters.



Mental Health: A bill to create a mental health ombudsman's office, SB 5522, will have a public hearing in front of the Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee on Friday at 8 a.m.



Welfare: After a hearing before the Senate Higher Education Committee, a house version of the bill (HB 1372/SB 5201) designed to provide access to post-secondary education for TANF recipients gets a public hearing in front of the House Committee on Children & Family Services on Thursday, Feb. 8. Another house bill, HB 1507, threatens to deny assistance to TANF applicants if they don't have a high school diploma or GED.

Information on these and other matters can be tracked on various state web sites, such as the state legislature's web site: <http://www.leg.wa.gov>. ■

Nancy Amidei is on the faculty of the University of Washington School of Social Work. Olympia Watch is adapted from Policy Watch, Amidei's weekly bulletin about legislative issues and events available at the School of Social Work web site (<http://weber.u.washington.edu/~sswweb/>).

One-Eye

Getting away with murder on the Blade

By Pati Wilson

Anyone who has been in town for any length of time has taken a stroll down the locally infamous strip of downtown Seattle known as The Blade, that poor little area of Pike Street that tries so hard to rise up (case in point: the ground-floor retailers in the Newmark Tower) but seems only able to support its own kind (The Turf Restaurant and Smoke Shop). Even if you're an "outsider," trying to get from point A to point B, it is impossible not to notice the flourishing drug trade.

Most of these small-time dope dealers are just trying to support their own habits, heroin or cocaine, and there are a few who ply their trade as a means of day-to-day financial existence, meager as this may be. As in any other arena of business or commerce, there are salesmen who will give you a fair deal, and those who will rip you off at every chance. Even in illegal markets there are good guys and bad guys.

It's not difficult to spot when a favored dope connection makes his appearance on the street, the way the little knots of junkies suddenly come alive, and they all follow close behind him as he sprints ahead, Pied-Piper-style, handing out packages and taking in money. When a dope fiend is sick, he's not very subtle, and as long as he gets what he needs, he doesn't care who sees what he's doing.

One-Eye was one of those who had powder cocaine for sale, and you never knew from one day to the next if it was real or if it was some kind of household cleanser or a bag of dandruff. One-Eye was an evil man. Although I didn't know him well — no one did that I'm aware of, he was always alone — he seemed to enjoy being a creep, the way he slunk around on the streets with a leering half-grin on his face, greasy black hair hanging in his eyes, walking hunched over like he was on the lookout for his next victim. I don't think he had a conscience, and he wasn't afraid of anyone.

One summer night about five years ago I was downtown, hanging out, and I recall it was warm and humid. When the

weather is like this the streets are alive, and the motel-dwellers choose to stay out and carouse rather than sit in a hot, stuffy room. Some folks who have no home sleep outside, of course, usually setting up a "camp" where they go to every night. Others, usually small-time dope pushers and hustlers, make enough money every day to stay in a cheap motel room. It's a very expensive way to go, but it follows the mindset of living for the moment. Having a motel room can make one quite popular with the homeless crowd — it practically guarantees female companionship.

On nights like this, there is usually some excitement generated by these rootless, aimless people. There's always somebody looking for trouble, and if there isn't any trouble, they'll create it, just for something to do.

On this particular evening One-Eye was there with his cocaine. This name he himself adopted, his seeing eye a dark brown and his blind eye a starkly contrasting pale, ice-blue. He was strolling around the street by himself, his rotting-teeth grin in place, when I saw a tall, sweaty, blond boy come bouncing up to him. He seemed very serious and desperate, and he asked One-Eye if he had any white, street jargon for powdered cocaine. One-Eye nodded thoughtfully and without a word, began walking slowly across First Avenue with the blond boy hopping alongside him. Momentarily they disappeared around the far corner of the Pike Place Market, and I didn't think anymore about them and went about my own business.

The doorman/bouncer/barker of the topless joint on the corner of First and Pike was at his post in the doorway, curly red hair glistening unnaturally with too much mousse, and a big belly that pulled apart the buttons of his tuxedo shirt and slumped over his cummerbund. He looked too young to have such cold eyes, like hard little stones. He gave me a once-over, then turned his head with practiced disinterest, but I went over to him anyway to see if he

wanted to buy a ring. I handed him my ring to look at, the only thing I had left to sell, and he looked at it like it was some kind of nasty, dead bug. He grunted something, then stepped inside through dirty red-tassled curtains, I assume to see if the exotic dancers inside wished to buy it. He was gone about a minute, then he came back shaking his head, and gave me back my ring. No takers. That was okay. I felt lucky to have gotten it back.

It was then that I heard some shouted obscenities and looked in their direction to see the blond boy running across First Avenue in pursuit of One-Eye, who was striding slowly and deliberately in front of him, hands in pockets, the same grim ugly look on his face he always had. It was obvious he had taken the kid's money and given him sugar, an all-too-common occurrence on these streets, especially late at night. The rip-offs figure (correctly) that most dope fiends out here at this hour are so desperate they will buy from anyone, even people they don't know, which is what the kid had done, and it was a mistake.

I heard the young man demand his \$15 back. One-Eye told him to go to hell. The blond boy caught up with One-Eye, and reached out to grab him by the arm. One-Eye spun around, his face dark and full of hate, and he pulled his free arm out of his jacket pocket and produced a knife. With one quick swipe he caught the boy's neck, and the blow caused him to stagger backward. His back hit the light pole, his knees buckled, and he slid down, his arms flung out at his sides, gazing in horror at the profusion of bright red blood that suddenly covered his shirt and jeans.

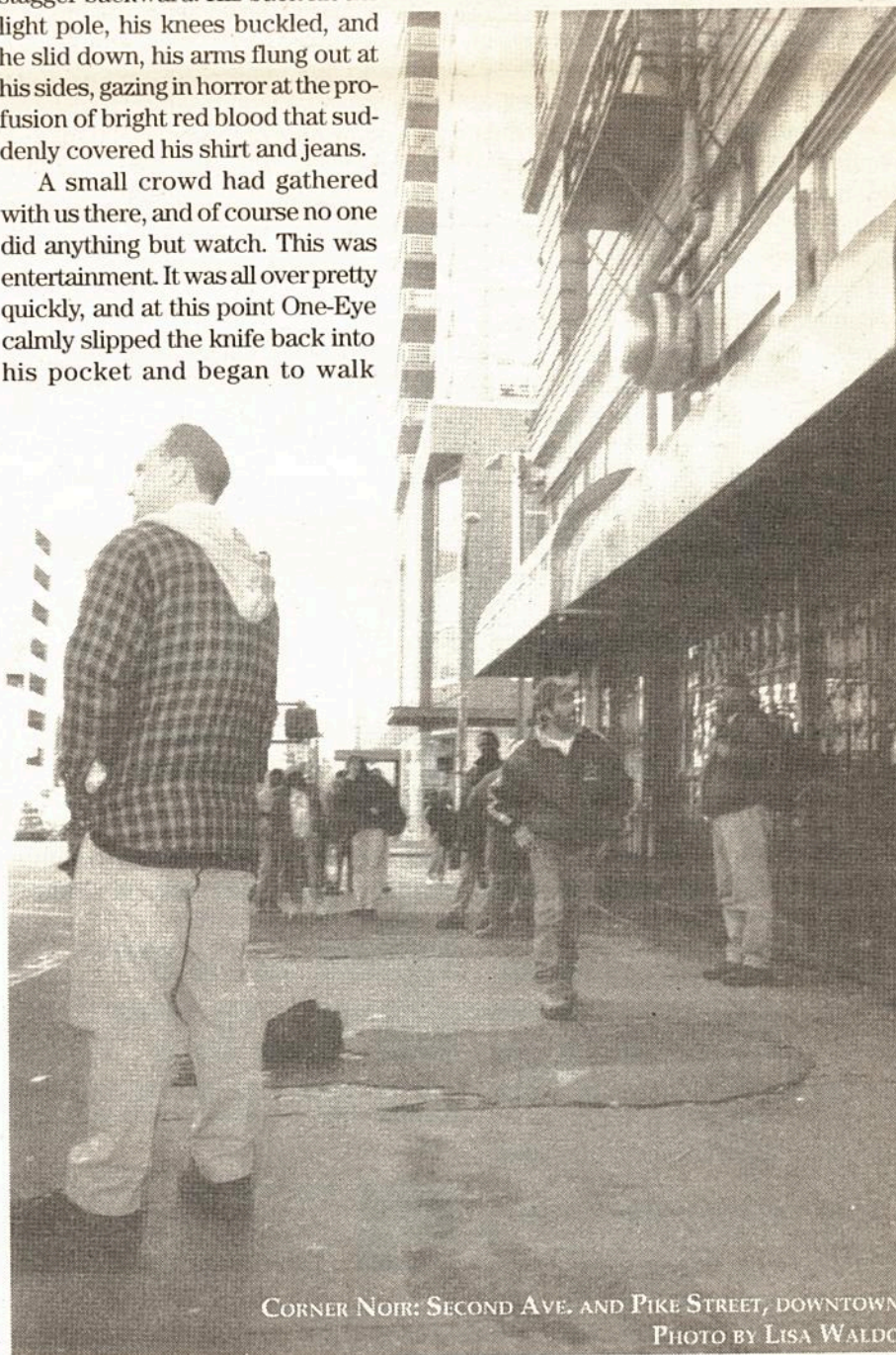
A small crowd had gathered with us there, and of course no one did anything but watch. This was entertainment. It was all over pretty quickly, and at this point One-Eye calmly slipped the knife back into his pocket and began to walk

slowly up the street in the same direction he had been going before. I glanced at the blond boy and saw him still sitting there, and he was moving his hands around the sides of his neck, trying to stop the bleeding. One-Eye had sliced the young man's jugular vein and the blood was pouring out of his body onto the sidewalk.

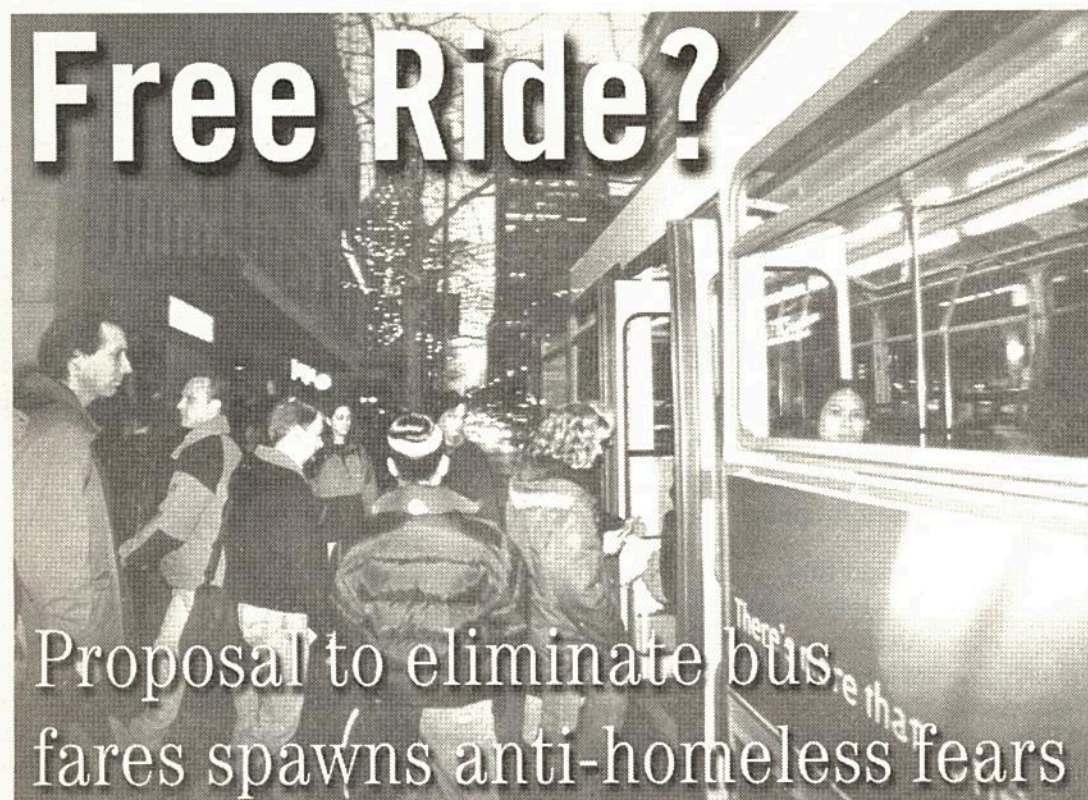
About a minute later a white car pulled up and four plain-clothes narcotics officers got out all at the same time like a choreographed routine, and stood around him, each one being careful to keep their distance so as not to get any blood on themselves. They stood there impassively, hands in pockets, staring silently down at the dying junkie as he jabbered nervously, non-stop. He seemed to know he was in trouble and he was scared.

He moved his right hand around his neck, pressing his fingers first at one spot, then another, asking no one in particular, "Is this the place? How about here?" But the blood kept flowing and no one said a word. The doorman of the topless dancing joint came to the door with a hose and began rinsing the blood off the sidewalk. The four officers got back in their car, all at the same time, and left, and I don't know who called the ambulance, but after a few minutes an aid car came and took him away to Harborview Hospital.

Continued on Next Page



CORNER NOIR: SECOND AVE. AND PIKE STREET, DOWNTOWN.
PHOTO BY LISA WALDO



Free Ride?

Proposal to eliminate bus fares spawns anti-homeless fears

OFFICIALS HOPE TO GET PEOPLE OUT OF CARS AND ON TO LOCAL BUSES. PHOTO BY CASEY KELBAUGH.

By Adam Holdorf

Chuck Collins wants to extend the downtown Free Ride Zone all over the county. Within two years, says the former director of King County's Metro, we should all be getting free rides — for less than what it will cost to build the SeaTac-to-U-District light rail line.

It's trying times for Sound Transit's light rail project: \$1 billion over budget, three years behind schedule, and on the lookout for a new head after executive director Bob White's resignation. So modest proposals like Collins' are getting some attention. The former director of Metro's bus service from 1976 to 1980, Collins also has some high-class allies, including former governors Booth Gardner and John Spellman, and real estate developers Matt Griffin (whose company developed downtown's Pacific Place mall) and John Runstad (of nearly every other office complex in the region). They point out that a single north-south light rail line won't reduce traffic congestion — if anything, it will make driving downtown worse.

"Light rail is not going to get people out of their cars," says Griffin. "It's going to get people out of the buses and onto the train."

Their scheme, which they call Ride Free Express, boosts the number of buses downtown during peak hours

and adds 4,000 new vans to Metro's home-to-job vanpool program. But at the bedrock of the whole idea is some no-nonsense market pricing.

"Price motivates use, and free pricing motivates more use," Collins says. "If I eliminated the water meter on your house, you'd use more water. If I eliminated the electric meter, you'd use more electricity. Unlike those things, we want you to use public transportation. The way to do that is to make it free."

So what's stopping us? Metro planners, the bus drivers' union, Mayor Paul Schell, and King County Executive Ron Sims believe that when the rides are free, eventually only those who can't pay will ride. Here's their fearful scenario: Eliminating the fares would make the buses as open as any other public venue. Some will ride all day, from one end of the line and back, just to kill time or get some rest. Passengers would start complaining about homeless people sharing the ride.

There's a euphemistic term in this sort of dialogue: free buses don't work "for security reasons," as Sims says.

Austin

Sims, Metro staff, and other opponents of free fares point to Austin, Texas, where a small number of riders "were, you know, just hanging out

on the bus all the time," says Jim Jacobson, a King County Metro transit planner. He says other riders who could have paid went back to driving.

Austin city transit planner Rob Smith says ridership nearly doubled immediately after fares were eliminated, in 1989. The transit board reinstated fares 15 months later.

"A lot of that growth in ridership was accompanied by problems," he says. Was it homeless peoples' fault? "They were definitely the ones riding around."

People for Modern Transit, a light-rail boosters' group, calls Collins' numbers inaccurate, and says that in Austin, "intoxicated passengers and rambunctious youth" turned regular passengers away.

Collins contests those assertions, saying that part of Austin's problem was that it eliminated fares throughout the city all at once, prompting an immediate ridership increase which packed the buses and frustrated drivers. Overcrowding, not just misbehavior, eventually dissuaded people from riding.

Collins would phase in a universally free system over two years. He also proposes to double Metro's security budget, to "discourage objectionable activities" on the bus.

At a mid-December public hearing, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 587 member Linda Anderson told the Sound Transit board that Collins' proposal would "attract vagrants and drive away middle-class riders, raising safety concerns," according to a December 15 *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* story.

Anderson told *Real Change* she didn't mean to characterize homeless riders negatively. "A lot of drivers, at night and early in the morning, welcome homeless people getting on the bus. They know they will stick up for them if something happens," she says. "Whether or not they have a home, if passengers are friendly and cooperative, they're an asset."

The numbers

Collins' proposal gets a thumbs-down from the ATU, which represents Metro's drivers. Collins' 4,000 new vans — a five-fold increase over the number of vans in Metro's current fleet — would mean fewer jobs for their members. And they wonder how, if you take away 25 percent of Metro's operating revenue, you can even maintain bus service at its current levels.

"Our biggest concern is that the plan will move the transit system into privatization, with the loss of our wages and our security," says ATU Vice President Glen Travis. "Transit is dependent on available money, and you need a transit-specific funding base." While King County's sales-tax increase took the hurt out of I-695, commuter fares are the one sure source of cash.

Dick Burkhart, a member of People for Modern Transit, says eliminating that funding source leaves transit "a sitting duck for Tim Eyman."

"Invest in the ride"

Despite the free-fare element, parts of Ride Free Express appeal to Seattle Mayor Paul Schell. Last week he and King County Executive Ron Sims called a press conference to announce a city "Transportation Blueprint" — the basics of which have been underway for several years, as part of the Seattle Transportation Initiative.

Schell's blueprint looks like an in-city version of Collins' proposal: express buses connecting mini-transit centers in different neighborhoods with special bus-only street lanes from outlying neighborhoods to downtown. The mayor called Collins' employer-based vanpool proposal "a good idea." Sims also touts the Metro vanpool system. Neither support the core of Collins' idea: eliminate the fares.

"When people pay the fare, they invest in the ride," Sims told *Real Change*.

Collins, who headed Metro from 1976 to 1980, says that assumption is poppycock: "I find it very patronizing." Pacific Place developer Matt Griffin agrees, calling it "a stupid comment."

"I don't pay to drive my car down the street," he says. "That doesn't stop me from complaining about the potholes. I don't pay to walk down the sidewalk; that doesn't keep me from [re-marking on] the litter. The buses are clean, they're timely. I ride the Number 43 downtown; there are lots of vacant seats. Those are wasted assets." ■

ONE-EYE Cont. from Previous Page

As I looked after the aid car, I noticed One-Eye off in the distance, still walking slowly up Pike Street, unconcerned with what he had just done and what had just occurred. No one stopped him. The police, the aid car drivers, and the people watching were not concerned with catching up to him; it didn't seem to occur to anyone. And somehow he knew it. In fact the police didn't even inquire as to who had done this. No police car accompanied the aid car, and no police came by to ask us any questions. They didn't care. One-

Eye disappeared into the night, and he didn't even have to run away.

I don't know why no one called the police (maybe they did); I can only speak for myself. At the time of the incident, if the police had come to the scene and asked questions, I was upset enough that I would have told them everything I had seen. But at the same time, I was a street person and going to a pay phone and actually calling the police was something that hadn't even occurred to me.

About an hour later one of the taxi drivers who routinely sat here on Pike street waiting for fares stopped by the

little grocery store where we hung out and told us the little blond boy had died in surgery from loss of blood. We didn't know his name.

I saw One-Eye again about six months later, down on those same streets, looking much the same as he had that night. He was not afraid of being apprehended. The boy he killed was one of those disposable persons, one whom the police considered to be just one less piece of trash for them to contend with, as evidenced by the way there was nothing on the news about the killing, no article in the paper, nothing. He didn't matter enough.

But what about his family? He probably had one, and I have wondered many times about them. Did they behave like those grieving parents in the movies who angrily pursue various agencies until finally the *deus ex machina*, that one hard-working genius cop, comes to their aid and solves the murder? That is doubtful; who knows what they were told, or even if they know at all.

I'm not homeless anymore. And I'm no longer afraid to call the police. If ever I am in the vicinity of One-Eye, you can bet I will drop a dime on him this time. Otherwise I won't be any better than the people I complain about. ■



Sometimes I wonder what the world would be like if everybody were treated the same way homeless people are. When I first heard about faith-based initiatives that's what it sounded like to me: we were going to arrange to do all government business through churches, the way the missions do the soup kitchens.

That could be pretty enlightening for the general public. There's something I could support.

For example, suppose whenever anybody wanted a fishing license, they had to go to a local church and sit through a half-hour sermon to the effect that if they weren't such sinners they would be the CEOs of corporations — and have figured out how to have fish flown in to them. That might be enlightening.

What if they ran Medicare like they run the mission down the street?

Say you're on Social Security, you're old, you have cancer, and you need a painkiller. The government sends you to a mission, you have to show up at the door no later than 4:30, the sermon starts at 4:35, NO LATECOMERS, we don't care how much pain you're in, this is Christ's time, you'll get your painkiller when your turn comes, and while you're waiting you'll find a hymnal at your seat. You don't have to sing to the Lord, but if you had let Jesus into your heart years ago you never would have landed here. Look at the pain you're in, it's proof you hate God in your heart. Oh, yes, and if you expect to come back for more FREE pain-killer you'd better spend an hour sweeping the vestibule, whether it needs it or not.

What if everybody's grandparents got treated that way when they needed help? That might be enlightening.

Why stop at spreading the soup kitchen experience around? Let's think of some more ways that everybody else can share in the homeless experience!

Here in Seattle, homeless people who have tents aren't allowed to set them up anywhere, because such living arrangements are unsafe, according to the government. They aren't even

allowed to sleep in tents on private land with the owner's permission. Can we think of a way to share that experience with everyone?

Well, I couldn't think of anything, but Fairfax County, Virginia, found a way.

People in the government of Fairfax County, Virginia, near Washington, D.C., have apparently decided that they don't have enough homeless people. Too many people are living in the houses of Fairfax County. They have decided its time to put a stop to all that.

They are trying to get a law passed to prohibit anyone from sleeping anywhere except in a bedroom. As of this writing, it appears that the Virginia Legislature would allow such an ordinance to be put into effect, according to an article in *The Washington Post*.

You see, poor people have been driving down property values (gee, what a shame, that housing should cost less) in Fairfax by letting too many people live with them in their apartments and houses. When your neighbors put enough friends and relatives in every living room and every kitchen and hallway and they all have Hondas and Sonys, you know, pretty soon you're having to park all the way out in New Jersey and listening to 16 kinds of salsa, at once, all hours of the day and night, if you know what I mean.

That's right, someone just might think that the purpose of the law might have something to do with ethnic interests involving immigrant populations. But its sponsors deny that they are targeting minorities. They say they are preserving parking spaces and peace and quiet.

Why can't we do something like that here in Seattle? Let's have a law that prohibits people from sleeping on their own living room couches. Well tell them it's for their own good. That might be enlightening. ■

**When your neighbors
put enough friends and
relatives in every
living room, pretty
soon you're listening
to 16 kinds of salsa, at
once, all hours of the
day and night, if you
know what I mean.**

Holy Sand

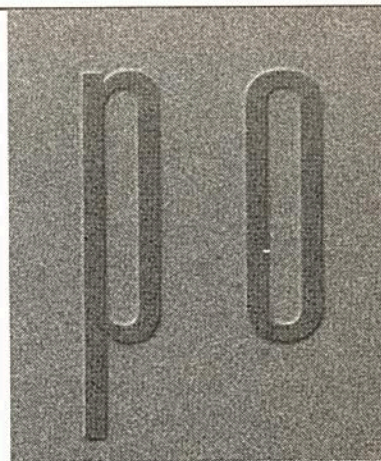
May all of the poor
And lonely people
Forever dwell
Upon fertile land.

She bore the weight
Of his broken body;
He is the fruit
Of Holy Sand.

Desert fire
Has left me scarred —
Alone in a dance —
Where others are paired.

Truth is written
On the smallest stone:
Eternal life
Is born
In a tomb.

— LISA R. GRISWOLD



Lessons

She walks through yellow fields, a
bronze goddess, reaper of corn, n
of our scorn, as we mourn her cal
and turn away, afraid it might be

She weaves a web protecting her
from memory loss, preserving the
of their demise in rich red cloth,
woven by hand, washed with tear
in blood, then sold to western tou
can't understand how a son or da

She works at a factory sweating
for fifty cents an hour, pressing th
rich women will buy to hang in th
and not on their slim well fed tan
as they stroll on easy street never

She buys cafe mochas for \$2.50
from the man in the stand
on the corner before driving
through rush hour to work down
not savoring the aroma of brown
burning in the sun bending to pic
beans one-by-one selecting only
the choicest ones to sell on the
American slave market.

Crack

Whether glass pipe, straight shooter, or can... can't you see my brother, th

Aimed at your soul, your heart and your mind, crack is going to win, it's ju

Babies being born, already half-dead... give me another rock, is all the mo
their bodies for a hit... kids twelve years old can't get enough of it...

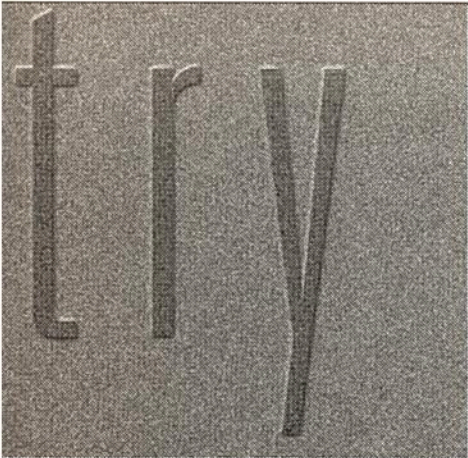
When the money's gone... you swear you'll never do it... the first sign of n

Begging everybody on your hands and knees... Peeping around corners, t
You steal from your mother, your sister, your son... and what you can't s

Politicians spending money with a grin... crying that crime is nothing but

The mayor of D.C. smoking dope on tape... no wonder this country is in s

Teenage pushers hooked on selling... rock-fed junkies, hooked on telling.
pushers get caught... the judges get paid when the kingpins walk... The
pockets, then stomp old junkies until their eyes are out of sockets... It's
strife... Get out now while you still have your life...



ker,
n
When you meet a man about town
A man of the world, with bedroll and worn out shoes
There are some things you must not say.
Don't speak about warm satin floors
Obedient hot and cold faucets
Double-glazed triple lock windows.
He longs for your privacy
Dreams of nothing on his back but
the effortless air.
—LIZ SMITH

pears.
ail.
—MICHAEL MAGEE

Here

Your life was nobody's news,
here people pressed their noses into books
not other people's business, this city
wouldn't look at you — silence separates —
connecting words...and...but...so...then.

Spiky firs, pines dropped as many needles
as heroin addicts and people rolled themselves
into doorways like cigarettes, kept
their mouths closed, wear black in mourning
for some recent past no one can remember.

What were you to make of yourself?
Why did you come home anyway, what
were you looking for, a floating bridge
between “us” and “them,” here we are learning
to live on bottled water.

Give up the sky, you surrendered,
there are other places to live than here
where people do talk to each other,
don't put up spread sheets, you'll find
even these white pages won't hold
it together much longer, all loose leaf.

You wished this city liked you more,
but feeling time is wasting, you gave
up your ghosts for other people's bylines.
Settle in, keep your books feather close,
find friends to store up for the winter.
—MICHAEL MAGEE

The Fall

we are the ocean
and the ocean us
we ebb and palpitate
we have silt at our feet
we have life pausing in our corners
we have life pulsating in our depths
we breathe against the moon
we exhale amongst the stars
we find our sanctuary in men who chose to cross our path
we find them, their stories, their loves and passions
we drift into their dreams
we saturate their blood with the salt from our winds
we find them and retreat, we find them and advance
we find them and reciprocate, we find them, find them
find them
we lose them, and search for gates
we lose them, and challenge their weight
we send them packing, thrust their candles in our break
our swells are sores that rise to intimidate
our swells are fellows who've lost to Satan's Gate
our swells are mates that have brought themselves to this
sorry state
our drunkenness a folly
and after all the Seasons all ours to the calling
each one of us
each and every one of us
Falling,
Falling,
Falling.
—EARNIE CHURCHILL

—PATRICK BISSELL

Holy Sand

May all of the poor
And lonely people
Forever dwell
Upon fertile land.

She bore the weight
Of his broken body;
He is the fruit
Of Holy Sand.

Desert fire
Has left me scarred —
Alone in a dance —
Where others are paired.

Truth is written
On the smallest stone:
Eternal life
Is born
In a tomb.

— LISA R. GRISWOLD

Lessons

She walks through yellow fields, migrant worker,
bronze goddess, reaper of corn, not worthy
of our scorn, as we mourn her callused hands
and turn away, afraid it might be catching.

She weaves a web protecting her dead children
from memory loss, preserving the story
of their demise in rich red cloth,
woven by hand, washed with tears, soaked
in blood, then sold to western tourists who
can't understand how a son or daughter disappears.

She works at a factory sweating
for fifty cents an hour, pressing the clothes
rich women will buy to hang in their closets
and not on their slim well fed tan bodies
as they stroll on easy street never breaking a nail.

She buys cafe mochas for \$2.50
from the man in the stand
on the corner before driving
through rush hour to work downtown
not savoring the aroma of brown backs
burning in the sun bending to pick
beans one-by-one selecting only
the choicest ones to sell on the
American slave market.

—ANGELA C. VASQUEZ

Crack

Whether glass pipe, straight shooter, or can... can't you see my brother, that's a weapon in your hand...

Aimed at your soul, your heart and your mind, crack is going to win, it's just a matter of time...

Babies being born, already half-dead... give me another rock, is all the mother said... Beautiful women selling
their bodies for a hit... kids twelve years old can't get enough of it...

When the money's gone... you swear you'll never do it... the first sign of money you're right back to it...

Begging everybody on your hands and knees... Peeping around corners, thinking everybody's the police...
You steal from your mother, your sister, your son... and what you can't steal, you take with a gun...

Politicians spending money with a grin... crying that crime is nothing but a sin...

The mayor of D.C. smoking dope on tape... no wonder this country is in such sad-sad shape...

Teenage pushers hooked on selling... rock-fed junkies, hooked on telling... The lawyers get paid when the
pushers get caught... the judges get paid when the kingpins walk... The police put the pusher's money in his
pockets, then stomp old junkies until their eyes are out of sockets... It's a vicious circle, full of nothing but
strife... Get out now while you still have your life...

—EARNIE CHURCHILL



When you meet a man about town
A man of the world, with bedroll and worn out shoe
There are some things you must not say.
Don't speak about warm satin floors
Obedient hot and cold faucets
Double-glazed triple lock windows.
He longs for your privacy
Dreams of nothing on his back but
the effortless air.

—LIZ SMIT

The Fall

we are the ocean
and the ocean us
we ebb and palpitate
we have silt at our feet
we have life pausing in
we have life pulsating i
we breathe against the
we exhale amongst the
we find our sanctuary i
we find them, their sto
we drift into their drea
we saturate their blood
we find them and retre
we find them and recip
find them
we lose them, and sear
we lose them, and chall
we send them packing,
our swells are sores tha
our swells are fellows v
our swells are mates th
sorry state
our drunkenness a folly
and after all the Season
each one of us
each and every one of t
Falling,
Falling,
Falling.

AASK Continued from Page 1

AASK's official philosophy is similarly partisan and can be summed up in just three words: supply-side economics. The phrase, popularized during the 1980s as Reaganomics, is used to justify any and all attacks on government aid to those in need. It is the faith that the failures of the market to provide for the public are made worse, never better, through government intervention. Supply-side economics is, essentially, the belief that an unregulated market is not only the most efficient way of distributing wealth, it is the most fair of all the alternatives. It's an economic view that few Democrats wholeheartedly support.

AASK doesn't make much of political party differences in its public statements — given the nonpartisan status of Seattle's elected officials, it doesn't have to. But AASK knows which side its bread is buttered on. "With the renewed prominence of Democrats in the Legislature," AASK spokesman and former president Chris Benis warned members two years ago, many pieces of legislation AASK opposed "will receive serious consideration."

"There is a flurry of activity as politicians have become concerned about the costs of houses and rentals," the previous AASK president, former Seattle Mayor Wes Uhlman, warned two months earlier. "Political leaders [should] look at the *supply* side. We should focus on repealing the locally mandated ordinances that have made it more difficult and costly to develop affordable housing and apartments."

"Our Renters and we"

Believing that tenants as well as landlords benefit from supply-side policies, and trying to fight the belief that landlords may not always have the interests of their tenants at heart, AASK offers some surprising arguments to support its positions. Though AASK's mission is to "promote the interests of rental housing owners and operators to state and local legislative bodies," much of AASK's rhetoric claims to represent not just landlords, but also low-income tenants and even sometimes the homeless. One might think, by reading their newsletter and listening to them testify at public hearings, that they are the sole protectors of affordable housing in the city against meddlesome legislators who will only make things harder on the little guy.

"STOP RAISING ALL THE COSTS OF SERVICES," Alex Thole recently urged the city in capital letters. Why? Not because it cuts into landlord profits, but because "it is destroying affordable housing in this city."

On November 12, 1997, a fire tore through the Kona Village Apartments in Bremerton, killing four and injuring 12, with firefighters rescuing 20 people just in time from collapsing fire escapes. One hundred and fifty people were put out of their homes. Uhlman immediately responded, warning that "panic-driven requirements" to have landlords install sprinkler systems in old apart-

ment buildings "could imperil [the] affordability of rental rates" and "drive our residents out of their homes."

How? Because installing sprinklers is expensive, and landlords would increase rents city-wide in response. All regulation, the argument goes, costs money, and those costs are always translated into higher rents. If rents are higher, it's not because of greedy landlords, but increasing taxes, regulatory burdens imposed by government, and increasing demand. The only way to keep rents low is to build more units and end costly regulations.

"What did more damage to Hanoi than all the bombs dropped during the Vietnam War? Rent control."

— Chris Benis, writing in the AASK newsletter

Taking this reasoning one step further, AASK went so far as to attempt to organize tenants against Seattle's Parks initiative last year, by encouraging landlords to put up placards about how the initiatives' property taxes would force them to raise rents sky-high.

AASK also started a Tenant-Landlord Coalition, supposedly to help resolve landlord-tenant disputes. So far, the group has largely been a vehicle through which AASK mobilizes landlords to sue city governments who tax landlords to pay for preemptive city inspections of rental properties.

Yet regardless of whether AASK's defense of its own positions through the guise of protecting low-income tenants is accurate, it is certainly a shrewd way to protect landlords at a time when rents, and public pressure on city government to preserve affordable housing, are increasing. "[We are] enter[ing] a period of increased tension between renters and owners," Uhlman warned three years ago, in the newsletter. "[H]ard-pressed local governments are looking to any and all sources of potential revenue. Our renters and we continue to be potential targets."

Extreme rhetoric

By pushing supply-side economics to the extreme, AASK paints a picture of Seattle housing regulations which is both apocalyptic and, despite the Cold War's end a decade ago, red-baiting.

AASK's lobbying arguments utilize "very extreme rhetoric," says Lisa Herbold. Rent control means abandoned vacant buildings. Just Cause Eviction, the city ordinance requiring landlords to give a legally justifiable reason for evicting a tenant, "means being forced to rent to drug dealers."

In addition to opposing just cause eviction ordinances on the grounds that they would have no choice but rent to drug dealers, AASK has also implied in the past that JCE would force landlords

to retain "child molesters and [people who perform] animal sacrifices."

When testifying against legislation that would ease the burden of proof against landlords accused of unfairly retaliating against tenants, frequent AASK spokesperson Paul Birkeland offered an analogy that struck many observers as extreme. He warned, along with another speaker, that the law would result in landlords being arrested as they walk off a plane from vacation — sent straight to jail for something their representative had done while they were away.

AASK saves the most fire and brimstone for its descriptions of rent control. This rhetoric has, at times, veered into criticizing not just specific legislation, but positing a communist leaning to the idea's supporters.

"What did more damage to Hanoi than all the bombs dropped during the Vietnam War?" asked Chris Benis last year in the AASK newsletter. "According to Vietnam's Nguyen Co Thach, it was rent control."

Benis got this astounding opinion from *Forbes* magazine, but not without fudging a few crucial details. What Thach is reported to have actually said is that rent control did "more damage than American bombers to housing in Hanoi." Obviously, the human and political cost of bombing Hanoi is something hard to compare with the effects of a policy like rent control. Regardless, Benis' use of the quote allows him to later claim: "If we are going to keep Seattle from suffering the same fate as Hanoi, Vietnam, [the board members and activists of AASK and WAA] are the people who are going to do it for us."

The perceived threat that an American city could go the way of a North Vietnamese city with an utterly different history and culture does have precedence in recent American history: it rings of anti-Communist red-baiting.

Who really believes that without proper vigilance against certain foes, Seattle could ever become like Hanoi? Well, AASK seems to. Its language dumps tenant-friendly public officials and advocates for renters' rights into the dustbin of far-left, and perhaps dangerous, political irrelevance.

One year before writing about Seattle going the way of Hanoi, Benis wrote in AASK's newsletter that "I do not believe that the majority of tenants favor the abolishment [sic] of private property. We must always remember, however, that the vocal minority that is the Tenants Union favors these sorts of policies."

After meeting with Seattle City Councilmember Judy Nicastro last June, AASK president Alex Thole reported, with all bolds, caps, and italics included, that "she supports rent control and wants to see it happen in Seattle. Her philosophy is that Landlords have a *social obligation to provide affordable housing* based on the tenant's ability to pay rent. (*This seems like socialism or worse to me*)."

Leaving the reader to wonder: what's worse than socialism? Is Judy Nicastro a Communist? ■

Inside Talk

Bits and pieces from AASK's newsletter



AASK MEMBER RANDY BANNECKER SPEAKS BEFORE CITY COUNCIL. PHOTO BY MIKE HAMRICK.

Let them eat cake: "I always advise my tenants to purchase something — renting year in year out produces no wealth for the tenant. The only way to keep up with inflation is to purchase assets which themselves appreciate." —Paul Birkeland, AASK vice-president, offers an unsympathetic explanation of how tenants should respond to Seattle's rising rents.

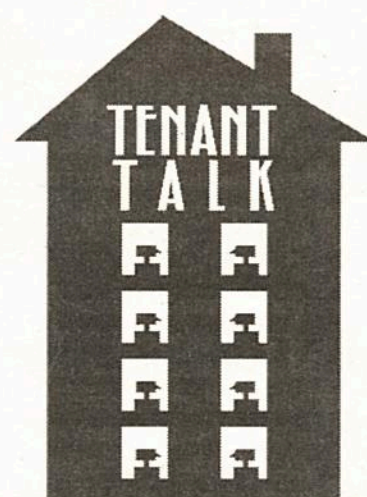
Obsessed with Judy Nicastro: "The tenants were nestled all snug in their beds While visions of Judy Nicastro danced in their heads." —from Tamara Simon's rendition of *The Night Before Christmas*, presented at AASK's holiday party and reprinted in its January 2001 newsletter. Simon's version is about the trials and tribulations of a landlord and his rental house.

Went too far: AASK threatened to sue the City of Seattle when it passed a law requiring 60 days notice for rent increases over 10 percent. It never followed through on the threat. According to Chris Benis, an informal poll done by the organization revealed that even "AASK's membership did not consider the proposed law terribly burdensome."

Capital "S": "[The rent control] issue was dead last year but our City Council and Judy Nicastro want to throw us into Socialism." —Alex Thole, AASK president, Jan. 2001.

Landlords wanted — inquire within: "Although we currently have 2,500 members, I am forced to admit, sadly, that this is a relatively small percentage of rental property owners [in King County]. This hurts our credibility with elected officials." —Chris Benis, AASK president in early 1999, calling for new members [two years later, they still haven't broken 2,500]. ■

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.



Tenant Talk Educate Agitate Organize

Rent on the Rise

Dear Tenant Talk:

On December 8, the landlord of my Seattle apartment building gave me notice that my rent would increase by more than 10 percent on February 8th, 2001. He's doing this in compliance with the city's notice law (SMC 7.24), which requires landlords to give tenants 60 days warning before raising the rent more than 10 percent. But he's added a twist: he's changing the day rent is due from the 1st to the 8th day of the month.

In February, my rent will be prorated at the old level (\$750) for the first seven days of the month, and then go up (to \$950) for the rest. On March 1st, I pay the new rent: \$950. Can he do this?

Dear Tenant:

It looks like your landlord is trying to speed up the rent increase before its time is due. A landlord may make changes in the rules and regulations of a month-to-month tenancy by giving 30 days notice which becomes effective at the end of the rental term. He could change the date that rent is due by giving 30 days written notice; therefore, his December 8 notice changes the due date for rent to February 8. There is an argument that the rent increase, however, cannot go into effect until March 8. The 60-days notice must end at the close of a rental period, and the rental period at the time of the rent increase notice is still the end of the month.

The fact is that this is all semantics, and it may not be worth fighting over. Since you are a resident of Seattle, you

should contact the Department of Construction and Land Use (DCLU) and ask for their interpretation of the statute and the notices provided by your landlord. If DCLU finds the notices defective, they will issue a notice to the landlord. If they think the landlord has complied with the ordinance, then you probably should accept the rent increase right away.

Rights for Immigrants

Dear Tenant Talk:

I'm a Latino immigrant from Mexico, living here without papers, with a limited command of English. I live in an apartment building in Tukwila. I've made two complaints to the manager about a leaky shower head; the first time, he ignored me. The second time, he simply said, "People like you should worry about the INS, not about your faucet." My spouse thinks he probably won't call Immigration. But still, he won't fix the shower either. What rights do I have as an illegal alien? If he calls Immigration, do I have to let them in?

Dear Tenant:

A tenant is entitled to the rights under the Residential Landlord Tenant

Act regardless of whether he is a legally documented immigrant, citizen, or someone "without papers." Unfortunately, our office has heard of several incidents where landlords have made threats to call the Immigration and Naturalization Service when a resident is undocumented, or Child Protective Services when it is a single parent household that is asserting their rights.

Whenever your apartment needs repairs, you need to put the request in writing. You can obtain assistance from a variety of programs if you do not feel that you have the language skills to write the letter. The landlord should

then initiate repairs within 10 days. Obviously, your landlord has little intention of respecting your rights. You can exercise some remedies under the Act when he fails to do so, including making repairs to the shower head and then deducting the costs of the repairs from the next month's rent.

If INS should show up, you are under no obligation to allow them into your apartment unless they have a court order. Do not

invite them in unless they show you a court order. Unfortunately, the fact that

You must weigh the value of exercising your rights against the potential of being deported. Perhaps a leaky shower head is not the fight you want to pick at this time.

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 Second Ave., Seattle, WA 98121 or email rchange@speakeasy.org

your language skills may be limited could make it easier for them to take advantage of the situation.

The Tenants Union has had experiences with landlords making threats about contacting INS. Their perspective is that, for the most part, the INS is not going to respond to some landlord's allegations about the immigration status of one of his tenants. There is obviously a risk by drawing the ire of your landlord, but you must weigh the value of exercising your rights against the potential of being deported. Perhaps a leaky shower head is not the fight you want to pick at this time — but you do have the right to do so. ■

Attorney Mark Chatten works for the Legal Action Center

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NOTES FROM THE KITCHEN

Paris... Dakar... dinner

By Liz Smith

The world's toughest off-road rally begins every year in the last week of December and runs for about three weeks and 8,000 miles. Mention the phrase "Paris-Dakar Rally" to a European or Japanese person and their face lights up. It's a big deal: 600 million people follow it on TV every night. There is a fine book about this race, written by Ed McCabe, called *Against Gravity*. He and his navigator, Carolyn Jones, stayed the course and survived. This rally is so arduous, competitors must have their name and blood type painted on the sides of the cars.

It also requires courage, stamina, and big stacks of money. Entrants spend from \$100,000 for an SUV, up to \$400,000 for a specially designed Porsche. Before they start, they also make sure to have enough francs, durhams, and ouguiyas to pay for gasoline and bribes. The maps, which are given out two weeks before the race starts, are in French only, though the drivers are from more than thirty countries. The maps are often inaccurate. GPS systems are allowed, but it is essential to have a precise compass and a spare.

Time trials are run to establish starting positions, and the cars and motorcycles go through liaisons and specials. During the time spent in France and Spain, the contestants are surrounded by thousands of enthusiastic fans who scream, ask for autographs, and deprive them of their sleep. At the end of each day, the exhausted drivers stay up to work on their machines and guard against thieves. They start tired and stay tired.

Drivers endure freezing cold by night and burning sun by day. The windows are never rolled down because of choking clouds of dust and 80-mph-force sandstorms. They must dodge or navigate around axle-busting rocks, 30-foot-deep ravines, and barn-sized sand dunes — all while driving 100 mph.

In the isolated villages, the restless worn-out heroes line up at the town's single gas pump. In 1985 — this is so sad — 73-year-old Marcel Huguely took his place behind 200 luckier racers. A veteran of six Paris-Dakar rallies, he had gotten lost in Mauritania and finally made it to the outskirts of Tichit. After 7,300 miles of hell, he turned on the gas pump to fuel his gasping car. Nothing. Nothing but the whoosh of air. End of race. End of hope.

All kinds of things can go wrong. One poor guy — Ari Vatanen — had his car stolen and held for ransom. The car was recovered and Vatanen made it to the starting line, 20 minutes late. He went from first place to out — disqualified. In 1999, desert marauders with big guns ambushed the race and stole cars, cash, and trucks. Mauritanian troops gave chase, but the robbers escaped. There are land mines, interrogations by soldiers, sniper attacks on rogue goats, and hostile border guards carrying AK-47s.

If a driver gets lost — easy enough to do — he can go one of two ways. Activating the emergency beacon will bring rescuers, but gets him put out of the race. Alternately, he can search for someone helpful, like a camel caravan from the salt mines at Taoudenni. "Tuaregs," he thinks, joyously. He roars up to them, he yells, "Kiffa? Kiffa?" His reply — thirty men, all pointing in different directions. By the end of the race, three out of four entrants have dropped out.

The following recipe is typical of meals eaten in North Africa. Tea, the usual drink, is prepared by the man of the family. It's made with green tea and fresh sprigs of mint. It is also customary, before eating, to dip one's hands in a bowl of water scented with a little orange flower water. It has a wonderful fragrance. You can find it at Ballard Market, DeLaurenti's, Whole Foods, or Larry's Market.

The recipes call for many ingredients, but are simple to prepare. Enjoy your meal.

Tagine of Pork, Vegetables, and Exotic Spices (Serves Four)

2 TB butter or oil	1 bunch flat leaf Italian parsley
2 medium onions	5 tsp turmeric
2 pounds boneless pork loin roast or top sirloin	1 to 1 1/2 tsp cayenne
1 tsp salt	3 tsp cumin
2 tsp pepper	3 tsp ginger
fresh cold water	2 tsp paprika
2 carrots	6 oz. prunes
3 cloves of garlic	4 tsp cinnamon

1. Chop onions and sauté in butter on medium heat.
2. Cut pork into one-inch cubes and sauté with onions until browned. Add salt and pepper.
3. Grate carrots, mince garlic, stem parsley, and mince leaves. Add to onions and meat and add water to cover, along with spices.
4. Bring to a gentle simmer and cover. If heat is too high, meat will be tough.
5. Simmer until meat is tender, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. Slice prunes into long slivers. Add prunes and cinnamon to stewpot and simmer 10-15 more minutes. Stir a few times.
6. Serve on top of couscous.

Couscous (Serves Four)

2 cups fresh cold water	1/2 cup golden raisins
1 TB butter	10 oz. couscous
1/2 tsp salt	1/2 cup shelled pistachios

1. Bring water to a boil. add butter, salt, and raisins.
2. Stir in couscous. Cover and remove from heat. Let sit 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork.
3. Garnish with pistachios and serve. ■

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**Streetwatch "Greatest Hits" September-December 2000**

Sept. 23, 1800 Block Broadway, Capitol Hill.
At approximately 10 p.m., a police officer approached a black male in his 30s who was sleeping on the sidewalk and attempted to move him along. The officer informed the man he couldn't sleep there, and asked him to stand up. The man appeared disoriented. The officer asked him if he was under mental health treatment, to which the suspect answered 'yes.' The officer then asked the man to pick up his sleeping bag and belongings and move. The man seemed very confused by this, and began to throw his belongings about. He threw a plastic bag containing his papers at the officer, narrowly missing his head. He was placed in restraints and transferred to Harborview.

Sept. 23, First Avenue Metro Bus Station, Downtown. A homeless white female in her early 20s was punched in the face, tackled to the ground, and sprayed in the eyes with an unknown substance at around 11 p.m. The suspect, a man approximately 30 years of age, took \$20 that the victim had dropped to the ground during the attack and fled the scene. He is still at large.

Friday Nov. 3, Prefontaine Park, 5:07 a.m.
An officer observed a 46-year-old female standing in the south end of Prefontaine Park. His partner informed him that the woman had been "trespassed" from the park on two separate dates. Both listed trespasses were for a period of one year. The officer contacted the woman for being in the park after closing time; she was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Friday Dec. 8, 4:20 p.m., East Madison Starbucks. A white homeless male, 55 years old, a "chronic trespasser" in the 4000 block of Madison, was verbally warned by officers for criminal trespass in this area Thursday, December 7. A Starbucks employee called the police to report that the suspect was once again asked to leave, and would not comply. An officer recognized the man from the previous day, and it was verified that he had also been verbally warned earlier that day. Suspect has mental problems, and his being a nuisance has not involved violent behavior. He was taken into custody, interrogated, and released. He was cooperative, and when warned not to return to Starbucks, he agreed he would not return.

Monday December 11, 11 p.m., QFC on Broadway. An off-duty officer working at QFC was approached by an employee, stating he had seen a 17-year-old homeless male select a deli sandwich from the display and put it in his pocket. The suspect was contacted outside the store, and when asked if he had the sandwich in his pocket, replied "yes," and stated that he was hungry. The young man was admonished and "trespassed" from the store. The sandwich — corned beef, \$3.99 — was recovered and returned to the store.

Compiled by Emma Quinn.

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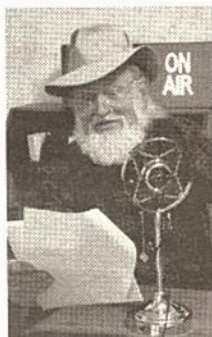
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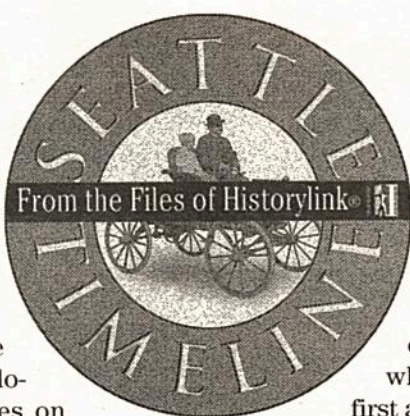
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Loafer's Glory:

Hobo Jungle of the Mind

Sundays, Midnight

A patchwork of tall tales, labor songs and stories, tramping and railroad lore, and a general and often comic assessment of the passing parade.



From the Files of Historylink

Nisqually Chief Leschi was hanged on a gallows at Fort Steilacoom for the "murder" of the American soldier Colonel A. Benton Moses on February 19, 1858. Chief Leschi's attorneys argued firstly that Leschi had not actually been the one to kill Colonel Moses, and secondly that Colonel Moses was killed during warfare (in which there were casualties on both sides), requiring that his accused killer should not be tried in a civilian court.

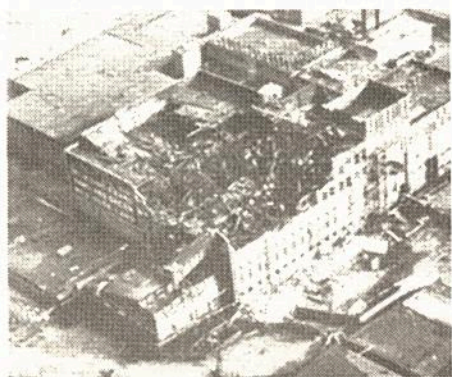
On February 8, 1887, the Indian Allotment Act divided Indian reservations among individual tribal members in an effort to assimilate Native Americans into the U.S. population as "responsible farmers." Reservations were divided into 160-acre allotments and assigned to individual members. Unassigned lands were made available to white homesteaders.



FORT LAWTON IN ITS HEYDAY ON MAGNOLIA BLUFF.

The U.S. Army designated the military installation on Magnolia Bluff, on the present-day site of Seattle's Discovery Park, as Fort Lawton on February 9, 1900. It became part of the system of defenses protecting Puget Sound from naval attack. The fort was named after Major General Henry Ware Lawton, a veteran of the Civil War and of the Indian Wars. The site of Fort Lawton remained in military hands until 1970, when it was turned over to the City of Seattle.

On February 18, 1943, the second of Boeing's top-secret XB-29 prototype "Stratofortress" bombers caught fire 20 minutes after takeoff from Boeing Field and crashed into the Frye Packing Plant. Lead Boeing test pilot Eddie Allen and 10 crewmen perished, along



THIRTY PEOPLE DIED WHEN A BOEING BOMBER CRASHED INTO THIS MEAT PLANT.

with 19 workers in the meat-processing factory. While the event could not be concealed, the identity of the aircraft type — which later dropped the first atomic bombs on Japan — remained classified until the end of World War II.

Jimi Hendrix made his hometown superstar debut in a concert in the Seattle Arena on February 12, 1968. The performance was almost a sellout, even though the concert was announced only seven days before. Garfield High School intended to award him an honorary high school diploma. He arrived for the ceremony and in the assembly, a student asked him how long he had been gone. He replied, "About five thousand years" and walked off the stage. He never received the diploma.

Approximately 2,000 protesters, led by the new Seattle Liberation Front (SLF), clashed with Seattle Police during "The Day After" demonstration at the federal courthouse at Fourth Avenue and Madison Street on February 17, 1970. Demonstrators pelted the courthouse and police with paint bombs and rocks, which led to 76 arrests and 20 injuries. The demonstration protested contempt citations issued against the "Chicago Seven." Federal prosecutors later filed conspiracy charges against SLF leaders, which led to the trial of the "Seattle Seven."

On February 12, 1974, federal Judge George Boldt issued an historic ruling reaffirming the rights of Washington's Indian tribes to fish in accustomed places. The Boldt Decision allocated 50 percent of the annual catch to treaty tribes, which enraged other fishermen. At the same time Judge Boldt denied landless tribes — among them the Samish, Snoqualmie, Steilacoom, and Duwamish — federal recognition and treaty rights. ■

To learn more about these and other events and benchmarks in Seattle and King County history, visit www.historylink.org. All photos are courtesy of historylink. Copyright ©2000 History Ink. HistoryLink is a registered trademark of History Ink.

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CLASSICS CORNER



by Perfess'r Harris

Every so often, we'll be trundling down the street, whistling a happy tune, and someone will stop us to ask, "Perfess'r Harris — you know so damn much — why is it that poor people are so screwed?" And we'll stop, scratch our rapidly balding head, and reply, "Well, to answer that we'll have to go all the way back to Homer."

America's dirty little secret is that most poor people, including those who don't have a place to live, work for a living. They just don't make enough money to stop being poor. Full-time work at the federal minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour simply does not go very far. Here in the Great State of Washington, a worker's paradise if ever there was, the minimum wage is set at a whopping \$6.72. At that rate, the lucky worker takes home just over a thousand bucks a month to wisely invest in whatever manner he or she likes.

Should a full-time worker need food stamps, a public subsidy, to feed their family? Our Congress, which voted down the last minimum wage increase proposal, would evidently reply, "Yes."

In Homer's time, poor people were just as screwed. The Greek word was *thete*, which meant to be a serf or a menial or to work for hire. In ancient Greece, to be a lowly wage earner was in some cases worse than being a slave. At least a slave belonged to a community and could not be killed outright. The wage earner had no such protection. There was no Department of Labor and Industries.

The word "thete" occurs just three times in all of Homer. Let's review, shall we?

In the *Iliad*, Apollo and Poseidon reminisce over the days of their youth, when they were exiled from Olympus by Zeus to go work for King Laomedon. Poseidon built the walls of Troy and Apollo herded his cattle. At the end of the year, when it came time to be paid, the King refused and threatened to cut off their ears or sell them into slavery if they pressed the issue. Years later, they remained bitter. Were Laomedon now living in Wyoming, where the state minimum wage for agricultural workers is just \$1.60 an hour, he could easily afford to pay them both and avoid any lingering grudges. But he probably wouldn't. Kings are like that.

The promise of low-wage work is used in the *Odyssey* by Eurymachos, one of the ill-mannered suitors who plague poor Penelope, to taunt a jobless beggar. When a disguised Odysseus replies by challenging Eurymachos to an old-fashioned grain-reaping contest, the suitor hurls a stool at his head. Later, during the climactic killing spree of Book 22, we are thrilled when Eurymachos is one of the first to die.

Our own favorite occurrence of the word is when Odysseus meets Achilles in the underworld. Our wily hero remarks that Achilles, being the above-average sort that he is, must be running the place by now. "Don't get me started," Achilles more or less replies.

Then, by the Robert Fagles translation, poor Achilles says "By God, I'd rather slave on earth for another man, some dirt-poor tenant farmer who scrapes to keep alive, than rule down here over all the breathless dead." The absolute worst fate Achilles can think of, outside of being dead, is to be a wage slave in somewhere like Wyoming.

So there we have it. Poor people are screwed because they don't make the rules by which they are forced to live. This is why so many of us, like Achilles, would do almost anything to avoid this fate. Unfortunately, not all of us have the option. ■



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February

Notables

Monday, 2/12

Co-Housing Salon sponsored by Northwest Co-Housing, no reservations needed, this and subsequent 2nd Mondays, 6-8 p.m., at Delfino's in University Village, info <http://www.thefoundry.org/cohousing/> or 206-763-2623.

Tuesday, 2/13

The Eastside Diversity Forum will present a Dramatic Presentation in Honor of Black History Month, Living Voices presentation featuring actor Kevin Warren, "The Right to Dream: Share the Struggle," about Raymond Hollis, the Mississippi son of an African American veteran of World War II who befriends a white boy and then is no longer allowed to see his friend. RSVP 425-452-2835 or khenry@ci.bellevue.wa.us; 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m., at the Crossroads Community Center, 16000 10th NE, Bellevue, info 425-452-6881.

Monday, 2/19

Human Services Day, all day, in Olympia. Ask the Legislature to "Step Up For Human Services." Over 150 sponsoring organizations include Nat'l Assoc. of

Social Workers, Northwest Aids Foundation, NAMI with multiple events all morning at various sites, info 206-242-1698 ext. 144, hsday@rdcc.org, or Aiko Schaefer, Director, Statewide Poverty Action Network, 206-694-6794 or <http://www.geocities.com/hsday2001>.

Have a Heart for Kids Day, the Children's Alliance's annual advocacy day; activities for both adults and youth (ages 12-15) in the morning, the "Step Up for Human Services" rally on the capitol steps at noon, and lobbying legislators in the afternoon; transportation will be available from the Seattle area. Childcare will be provided; info and registration forms Jon Gould 206-324-0340 ext.19 or jon@childrensalliance.org.

Wednesday, 2/21

Washington Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty presents death row survivor and wrongly convicted former prisoner Sunny Jacobs, who spent five years on death row in Florida followed by 11 years in prison, while her husband, Jesse Tafero, was executed in 1990 despite his innocence, 7 p.m. at General Administrative Auditorium, 11th Ave & Columbia, in Olympia, info Emily Shier 206-622-8952 or wcadp@scn.org

Ongoing Mondays

Books to Prisoners, ongoing volunteer project could use your help answering letters and sending books to incarcerated individuals, we are a 100% not-for-profit, 100% volunteer collective that has sent tens of thousands of books to people in prison since 1979, help wrap packages or choose the books that a prisoner will receive, books are also needed, especially need dictionaries, thesauruses, Black/Chicano/Native American books, and radical politrix books, 6 - 10 p.m., at 1004 Turner Way E on 23rd Ave, 2 blocks north of Aloha, Bus lines 43 & 48, info 206-322-2868 or <http://btp.tao.ca/>

A Freedom Socialist Party public discussion group on *Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B. DuBois, free, everyone welcome, 7 to 9 p.m., at Seattle Central Community College, Broadway & Pine, Room 2115, info Doreen McGrath 206-725-5434.

A Freedom Socialist Party public study group on *Democracy and Revolution* by George Novak, free, everyone welcome, 7 to 9 p.m., 6727 Seward Park Ave. S., info Chris Smith 206-723-2549.

Ongoing Wednesdays

Briefing on Disability Issues, weekly citizen advocacy days sponsored by the ARC of Washington, through Legislative session, 10:00 a.m., in House Hearing Room E, Olympia, info bean@arcwa.org or toll free 1-888-754-8798.

Meetings of Resist the List, working to prevent mandatory reporting of HIV positive people, 7:30 p.m. at the Community Room, Cal Anderson House, 400 Broadway, 2 blocks south of Swedish Hospital, info 206-517-2617 or jackman@drizzle.com or <http://www.speakeasy.org/~rtl>

Books to Prisoners, ongoing volunteer project could use your help answering letters and sending books to incarcerated individuals, see info under "Ongoing Mondays," 8 a.m. to 12 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://btp.tao.ca/>

Ongoing Saturdays

Seattle Food Not Bombs re-distributes free produce to the members of the Yesler Terrace Community Center, Produce to the People, Right On! 10:45 a.m., sort vegetables, noon-1 p.m., Free Market, at the Yesler Terrace Community Center, 835 E Yesler Way, info 206-985-2247 or fnb@scn.org or <http://www.scn.org/activism/foodnotbombs>

Ongoing Sundays

Seattle Food Not Bombs collects food and serves free vegetarian meals to the homeless each and every Sunday, 12-4 p.m., cook, call for location, 5:30 p.m. share dinner at Occidental Park, info 206-985-2247 or fnb@scn.org or <http://www.scn.org/activism/foodnotbombs>

Ongoing Daily

Fly To Freedom: The Art of the Golden Venture Refugees, pieces done by Chinese refugees from a ship called the Golden Venture which ran aground off the coast of New York City, 52 of those refugees were sent to York County Prison, Pennsylvania and were held there for nearly four years where they made over 10,000 paper sculptures while awaiting asylum hearings to proceed, this is the initial stop on the first national tour for this spectacular exhibit of 25 selected works from the collection of The Museum of Chinese in the Americas, through February 13th at Seattle Central Community College Art Gallery, Broadway just north of Pine, info 206-344-4379.

Call state legislators toll-free through the legislative session at 1-800-562-6000, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., the operator on this hotline can tell you who represents you.

FareStart assists people who are homeless through training in life skills, food service, and the culinary arts, and job placement, and runs their own restaurant, lunch daily and dinner on Thursdays only, with guest chefs from area restaurants. A 3- or 4-course dinner is only \$14.50 plus tax and tip, with all of the proceeds going to FareStart, 1902-2nd Ave. between Stewart and Virginia, please consider logging on to <http://www.farestart.org> and making a donation. ■

A Roof Over Every Bed Getting from Here to There

Join First things First for a panel discussion with Seattle Housing Advocates
City Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck
Tent City Residents
Rev. Peter Strimer
Nancy Amidei
John Shaw

February 13

7 to 8 p.m.

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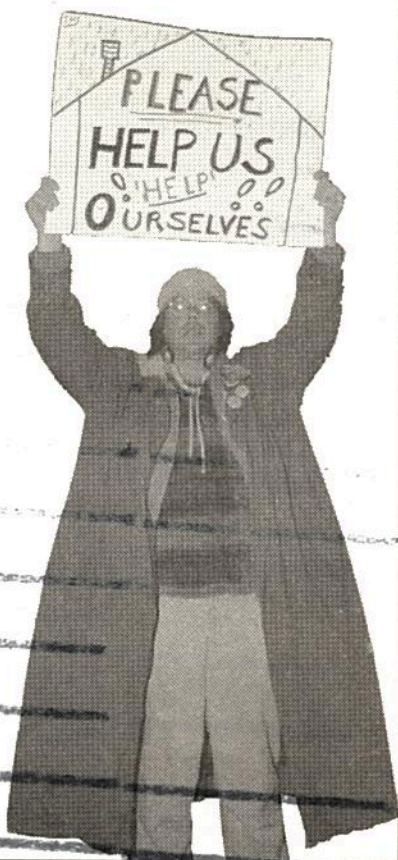
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The StreetLife Gallery is a self-managed working gallery for low-income and homeless artists, sponsored by the Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project.

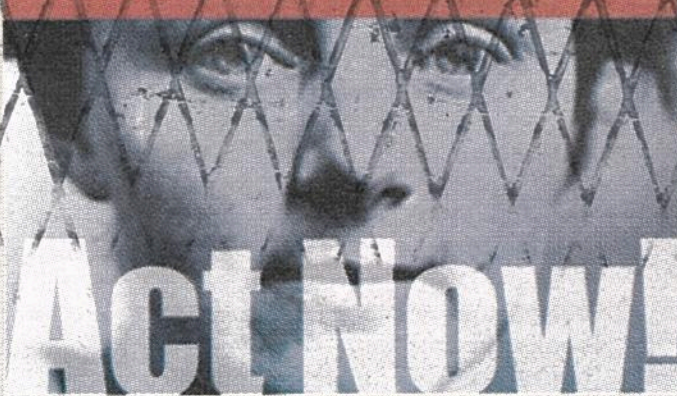
You can also visit us on the web at: <http://www.realchangenews.org/StreetLife>

We're looking for the following: Thread Pens/Markers
Watercolors Brushes Paper Masking Tape
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citizens participation project



Give homeless youth a place to sleep

Issue: An additional \$4.3 million is still needed in the proposed state budget to complete the vision of the HOPE ACT and fund an additional 75 shelter beds.

Background: When state legislators enacted the HOPE ACT in 1999, they recognized the needs of homeless youth and provided funding for 75 new shelter beds designed to help youth get off the streets. This year, legislators are being asked to continue implementation of the HOPE ACT and provide funding for an additional 75 beds for homeless youth. Given the scope of homelessness (estimates find that there are up to 5,000 homeless youth in Washington), increasing shelter options for homeless youth is an urgent need.

Governor Gary Locke's budget proposal for the next two years failed to include a request for the increased funding needed to complete the vision of the HOPE ACT and fund the additional 75 shelter beds. Without this critical funding, youth will not have access to shelter, which is often a first step to reuniting them with family or accessing services.

Action: Send your three legislators (two Representatives and one Senator) the following message:

"Please include \$4.3 million for the HOPE ACT in the state budget. These resources are necessary to continue to implement the homeless youth legislation passed by the Legislature in 1999."

43rd District: U-District, Capitol Hill, Madison Park, Downtown
Rep. Frank Chopp
chopp_fr@leg.wa.gov
(206) 389-2410

Rep. Ed Murray
murray_ed@leg.wa.gov
(360) 786-7826

Senator Pat Thibaudeau
thibaude_pa@leg.wa.gov
(206) 389-2555

36th District: Magnolia, Queen Anne, Fremont
Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles
kohl_je@leg.wa.gov
(206) 281-5493

Rep. Helen Sommers
sommers_he@leg.wa.gov
(360) 786-7814

Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson
dickerso_ma@leg.wa.gov
(360) 786-7860

11th District: West Seattle, International District, Beacon Hill
Senator Margarita Prentice
prentice_ma@leg.wa.gov
(360) 786-7616

Rep. Eileen Cody
cody_ei@leg.wa.gov
(360) 786-7978

Rep. Velma Rosete Veloria
veloria_ve@leg.wa.gov
(360) 786-7862

37th District: Rainier Valley, Madrona South Capitol Hill
Senator Adam Kline
kline_ad@leg.wa.gov
(360) 786-7688

Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos
santos_sh@leg.wa.gov
(360) 786-7944

Rep. Kip Tokuda
(360) 786-7838

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