

# Real Change

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 8, No. 6

## Our Hero?

Sound Transit warrior Greg Nickels is pulling to be our next Mayor!

Inside: Going Postal on the Homeless • Homebuilders Say Less Red Tape, More Housing • Confessions of a Rent-a-Cop • Spineless Democrats

Interview by Peter Bloch Garcia

PHOTO BY RICK DAHMS.

**H**e's been running for mayor nearly 10 months already. He's amassed more than twice the war chest of incumbent Paul Schell. King County Councilmember Greg Nickels is the hardest-working candidate in the 2001 city elections. Nickels recently stuck up for Sound Transit, slammed Mayor Schell for deep-sixing the Monorail, and detailed his political vision in a conversation with *Real Change*.

**Real Change:** *If the mayoral primary becomes a race between you, incumbent Mayor Paul Schell, and City Attorney Mark Sidran, Sidran will position himself as the law-and-order man. How will you position your campaign?*

**Greg Nickels:** I certainly think public safety is an important issue. I chair the

Law, Justice, and Human Services Committee of the County Council. Public safety is the core mission of local government. I think he [Schell] will define it very differently. I don't think making homelessness a crime is the way to make communities safer. I think making sure that we have healthy families, we have people who are able to participate in our community and have shelter over their heads, I think that makes communities safer. That has been my record and that will be what I will be talking about as a candidate. I also think there are other issues besides public safety that are on voters' minds. Fixing traffic is probably the number-one thing people think about when they get up in the morning — they wonder how they're going to get where they need to get in a reasonable length of time.

**RC:** *As chair of the King County Council's Human Services Committee, what have you done to provide services for homeless and low-income people?*

**Nickels:** We've had a very vigorous political battle over the last several years. We've had Referendum 47, Initiative 695, and Initiative 722, which have continually attacked our revenue. We don't have a sales tax base like the city. All of the retail is basically in cities. Our most vigorous retail is probably 7-11 stores. And so we rely on property tax. Each of those initiatives cut the amount of money we had.

At the same time, we are facing huge increases in our criminal justice costs. We opened up a new jail in the mid-'90s — a jail I voted against building. We have \$25-\$30 million dollars or more in costs to operate it. We've got additional

costs of courtrooms, prosecutors, defenders, and sheriff's deputies, all combining to make it very difficult to fund public safety initiatives that aren't law enforcement. And to fund public health, which is a huge problem looming that we're going to pay a price for in the future.

As the lead Democrat on the budget, I lead the battle to restrict the growth — not stop, it has been like a tsunami — in our criminal justice costs, in order to fund some basic level of human services and survival services. We've been successful in that battle so far. But it has been a real struggle. One of my hopes is that we get a new majority on the Council that will continue that fight. We have to be willing to raise the revenue to meet those needs.

*Continued on Page 10*





## Sales Pitch

Greetings, fellow Lake City residents,  
My name is Brett Landgraf. I am a runaway slave. I seek asylum.

I am leaving Tent City for the Seattle Skydome. Living there for the last 10 weeks has been humbling, because I have met a lot of people who have suffered far more than me, far more gracefully, and, most admirably of all, with far greater forbearance towards you, their landed tormentors. Hopefully, this time on the streets, I'll be man enough to follow their example for as long as it takes to win my equal property rights — i.e., the right of the poor person to build and own a \$50 a month domicile for \$50 a month, not \$500 a month.

The object of my life is not to become a martyr, nor to prove how tough

I am, but to win the right to fair market shelter. That means finding a landowner who will grant me temporary asylum: the right to a 40-square-foot plot of land on which to cultivate my Oprah-esque dreams. (Please note that I am not looking for a burial plot, thank you very much. Which isn't to say that I haven't checked out cemetery real estate. If the city would only rezone grave lots for use by the above-ground quick as well as the below-ground dead, my housing fight would be over. Alas, the city believes that freedom should only be granted to the poor post-mortem.) Lake City is the neighborhood in which I seek to lay the Constitutional foundation for my future. Hopefully, one of you will find reason to grant me the property rights that the City of Seattle denies.

The asylum could take one of several forms. You can make me a .4 percent owner in your \$250,000 estate, at a fair price of \$1,000. You can rent me 40 square feet of undeveloped space, with residential rights, at a fair market value of \$15 per month. You might consider selling (at \$2,000) or renting (at \$30 a month) a 40-square-foot share of your house to me rather than your garden.

Now, for the risks involved: Fines may be a problem. In Seattle, it is OK for a homeowners to put a roof over their dogs, but let them grant the poor person the same right, and they'll get slapped with a \$75 per day fine. Prejudice may be a problem. I am a poor

man, and have come to integrate your neighborhood. Are you old enough to remember the huge battles that blacks fought in the '60s to strike racial prejudice from the nation's law books? You may discover economic prejudice to be as insidious an evil as racial prejudice. Never having been Black, I probably exaggerate.)

Knowing all this, why would you still bother to help me? Maybe you miss the '60s. Maybe you find Paul Schell and Mark Sidran as smarmy and smirky, respectively, as I do. Maybe your dog died and you don't know what to do with the doghouse.

If you have any questions, I would be happy to answer them. My phone number is (206)729-8716.

Sincerely,  
**Brett Landgraf**  
Seattle

[*excerpted from a letter dated February 24, cc'd to Mayor Paul Schell, City Attorney Mark Sidran, City Councilmember Judy Nicastro, Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske, and Real Change.*] ■

## Clarification

Last issue's guest editorial on the Morrison ("Future Looks Bright," Feb. 22) implied that SHA wanted to shut down Downtown Emergency Service Center, the building's homeless shelter, "with no plan to relocate, or fund the same level of beds and services somewhere else." As *Real Change* reported two months ago ("Present Tense," Dec. 15), SHA proposed to relocate the shelter to several other sites outside the Pioneer Square neighborhood.

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# Change

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.

### Goals

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

**The Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project** is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that sponsors the 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.

### Editorial Policy

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

# Beyond Charity

Support justice and dignity for all

You don't have to read very far into this newspaper to find some of the best poetry, photography, and journalism that you will find anywhere. All of this is brought to you by a host of volunteers and a small dedicated staff, without foundation or government grants. The StreetLife Gallery, StreetWrites, a bustling computer lab, and the Homeless Speakers Bureau, all projects of the Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project (RCHEP), are supported equally through contributions and grants. Make Sid the cat happy and help ensure our future by donating time or energy. The *Real Change* newspaper is now a project of the Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project, our 501(c)3 non-profit umbrella, so all donations are tax deductible.

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

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# For Equal Access

## Postal Service continues discrimination against homeless people

By Anitra Freeman

In 1998, United States Postmaster General Marvin Runyon declared that “all Americans are entitled to a free form of mail service.” It is one of the things we take for granted: check your mailbox once a day, throw away the junk, hide the bills, and read what’s left. But most homeless men and women in this state have an entirely different experience.

Imagine you’re staying at a shelter downtown. You get a general delivery mailbox at the downtown post office. It’s difficult to pick up your mail while working day labor. After three weeks of this you land a permanent job — now you can start saving for an apartment. But since your job is in the north end, you’re staying in a shelter close to there, and since there’s no way to get across town during the limited general delivery hours, you no longer have a reliable mailing address.

A recent lawsuit filed by SHARE and three homeless postal customers, *Currier v. Henderson*, seeks to right this wrong. The plaintiffs are merely asking for equal treatment: that they and other homeless customers save precious time

and money by receiving mail at their local post office.

If not for a bureaucratic oversight, the issues here would have been resolved years ago. In 1994, the United States Postal Service issued a bulletin stating that homeless people are eligible for a post office box if they can provide a piece of I.D., a way to be reached, or proof that the postmaster knows them. The bulletin also declared that homeless people are entitled to general delivery service indefinitely, not just for 30 days. But this bulletin was never incorporated into the Domestic Mail Manual, which clerks use to determine the rules. The Postal Service has still not updated the manual since this error was brought to its attention one year ago. And so — even when a homeless person is willing to pay — post offices in Washington continue to deny homeless customers post office boxes, and they continue to cut them off general delivery

The Postal Service is an important player in the daily lives of homeless people. Yet it denies them the free post office boxes which anyone else who can’t be reached by a carrier receives.

ery after 30 days. Even within those 30 days, there are added barriers to getting your mail. The Postal Service seems to believe that providing general delivery at one location in each city — in Seattle, at the Third and Union office downtown — is adequate. Having this simple service at neighborhood post offices would allow homeless people to stop having to choose between spending money on the bus or on services, or between picking up mail or going to work.

Finally, in what may be the most blatant discrimination against homeless people, the Postal Service refuses to provide them with the no-fee post office boxes which it grants to anyone who can’t be reached by a postal carrier. Can anyone seriously maintain that homeless people are eligible for carrier delivery? Do mail carriers bring letters to people sleeping under bridges, in parks, or in doorways? The Postal Service should not deny a service to homeless individuals for no other reason than that they don’t have a home. This type of discrimination is unconstitutional, and in violation of a federal law that prohibits the postal service from discriminating against its customers.

Since homeless people typically lack other means of communication, such as personal telephones or email, the Postal Service is an even bigger player in their daily lives. Mail service is essential for a homeless man struggling to keep in touch with a faraway caseworker in order to maintain his veteran’s benefits, disability benefits, or food stamps. Mail can make the difference between health and sickness for a homeless woman needing to communicate with a doctor. Mail can mean the difference between freedom or a return to prison for someone who needs to stay in contact with a lawyer or probation officer. Mail is an asset in the civic life of anyone wishing to receive publications or notices of public meetings. And as we should all realize in a state that’s becoming dependent on absentee balloting, access to postal services also affects a homeless person’s ability to exercise the fundamental right to vote.

For too long, the Postal Service has shifted its responsibility to shelters and drop-in centers, which sometimes receive mail on homeless people’s behalf. During time that they could serve food, do counseling and referrals, or wash blankets, staff and volunteers perform the mailman’s job.

This is about equal treatment in the eyes of a federal agency, folks. It’s time the Postal Service stopped ignoring its duty. ■

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You’ve got a lot riding on your family. You see your kids growing up. *Fields of flowers. Floppy-eared dog. Kids moving in slow-motion, laughter (have you talked to them about drugs?). Hair color so real, it looks natural.* Yes, you’re getting older.

Sure, you’ve thought about insurance plans, you’ve thought about Hawaii as your next vacation destination. *Seagulls’ caterwaul. Surf crashing.*

But if you haven’t considered it, perhaps the time has come for you to ensure your future and that of your family. Ask your doctor about cloning.

Cloning isn’t for everyone. But it may be for you. Clone yourself and grow up wiser the next time around. Why repeat the same mistakes? Why not give yourself the second chance? *Scenes from an empty living room. Leather furniture. Two-car garage.*

With cloning, you can download your memory to your new self after only six years. You can create a new, lasting you. A better you. Best of all, you choose the time to activate the process. Whatever your desire, your doctor can help plan what’s right. *Smiling mom, dad, and child page through a photo album.*

Stay young. Consider cloning today.  
(Some side effects may be extreme paranoia, repressed memory, genetic defects, impotence, viral epidemic, contaminated food supply, and spontaneous flesh degeneration.) ■

—Bob Redmond



## Shaken, then shut

Several Pioneer Square homeless shelters closed down or cordoned off parts of their buildings after the February 28 quake hit the Puget Sound area. Most found substitute beds for their clients.

Hardest hit was the Lutheran Compass Center, a men's shelter, hygiene center, and bank for homeless people. The multi-service center will be shut down indefinitely, says city Human Services Department head Alan Painter; it may re-open its men's facilities shortly, in donated space. Compass Center staff couldn't be reached for more information.

The St. Martin de Porres Shelter, on Alaskan Way South, moved its 212 men to the Lazarus Day Center Wednesday night. Director Bob Goetschius says the U.S. Coast Guard, the shelter's landlord, shut it down Wednesday evening before engineers inspected the building. Damages to the building were cosmetic, Goetschius says.

The SHARE-operated shelter in the basement of the old federal building at 909 First Avenue was closed for the night, pending an inspector's O.K.

The façade of the Union Gospel Mission (UGM), a 200-bed men's shelter, rained bricks down on the sidewalk. As the brick front continues to lean into the street, two lanes along the Second Avenue Extension are closed. Inside, a fifth-floor day room used for severe-weather shelter will be closed until repairs are finished. Spokesman James Jones says the mission sustained about \$500,000 in damage. Most of UGM's services were back up and running that evening.

*Real Change* vendor Robert Demalvilain was standing outside the Lazarus Center across the street from UGM and saw the bricks come raining down. Pioneer Square's historical quirks lent a little absurdity to his ordeal. "We ran out into the street," he says. "Someone was yelling, 'It's hollow under the sidewalks.'" ■

—Adam Holdorf

## Morrison pencils out

The earthquake interrupted the City Council Human Services Committee meeting just before a briefing on the Morrison Task Force's recommendations for the Pioneer Square hotel and shelter. But in spite of the tremors, some parts of the task force's plans were pretty groundbreaking. Among the suggestions:

- **Beef up the staffing.** SHA added front desk workers last year; the task force wants to see more case managers and counselors on hand as well.
- **Sell the building to the Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC).** Citing its experience providing residential treatment for mentally ill or drug-addicted people, the task force called DESC "uniquely well suited" to own and manage the building.
- **Rehab the place within five years.** Financial projections anticipate a major overhaul in 2005, requiring \$11 million; there's no way that the low-income rents can pay for all the needed work. Analyst Mike Scott wrote that all cash flow should go directly into a reserve account.
- **Find a grant to pay for the rehab.** Even if the Morrison's owners save their pennies, they would need an \$8 million grant to accomplish the renovations and then be financially solvent for the next round of improvements.

The City Council heard the task force's recommendations on Thursday, March 8. ■

—Adam Holdorf

## Tent Village drops out

After leaving Capitol Hill's St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral on February 17, Tent Village found a new home, outside city limits for the first time in its 11-month history. It's down in Tukwila, at the Riverton Park United Methodist Church, 3118 S. 140th St.

Kevin Terry, a six-month resident, says the south-of-Seattle town has been a gracious host. One SHARE/WHEEL member says officers in the Tukwila Police Department passed the hat for the homeless camp. And at a February 20 Tukwila City Council meeting, neighbors got face time with the newcomers.

"They wanted to make sure we wouldn't attack their kids," says Terry. "We've faced that [alarm] before."

Although it's a 40-minute ride from jobs and services in downtown Seattle, Terry says the move has given the homeless camp a breather. "We lost a lot of



people moving down there. Wherever we go, we absorb that neighborhood's misplaced people. The Capitol Hill street kids chose to stay behind." At St. Mark's, Tent Village was sheltering more than it could handle, "turning scores of people away." Terry says that Tent Village's population went from an all-time high of 130 at St. Mark's down to 80 or so, currently.

Tent Village's stay in Tukwila ends Wednesday, March 14, when it moves to Trinity United Methodist Church, at 6512 - 23rd Avenue NW, in Ballard. ■

—Adam Holdorf

## The drug bug

King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng was last month's poster boy for drug treatment. Maleng went down to Olympia on February 20 to promote a drug sentencing reform package before the state Legislature.

Maleng, whose office goes after drug offenders at all levels of the trade, is a treatment believer. "Drug treatment works," he told the legislators. Its effectiveness "can be calculated both in terms of the financial gains for society and the user's rehabilitation. Treatment is seven times more cost-effective than other programs aimed at controlling the supply of drugs — for every dollar spent on treatment, more than \$7 is saved on local crime enforcement alternatives. Treatment reduced serious crimes 10 times more effectively than conventional enforcement efforts and 15 times more effectively than imposing mandatory minimums."

There must have been something in the air that day. That evening, 75 people gathered at Seattle Central Community College to launch a statewide initiative modeled on California's successful Proposition 36, which sentences non-violent offenders to treatment instead of jail.

But Maleng called Prop. 36 a "wrong turn.... The California initiative need not be repeated in Washington if we take bold steps immediately to reduce the standard range [of sentences] and fund treatment within the criminal justice system." He spoke in support of Senate Substitute Bill 5419, which lightens the mandatory minimum sentences for drug-related crimes and uses the state's savings for treatment.

Maleng insists that county prosecutors like him should keep their prosecutorial power. In some cases, people need to cool their heels: "It takes an arrest and the threat of incarceration to bring about the motivation and self-realization for an addicted person to confront the fact and consequences of their own addiction." And then there are the kids: incarcerating drug users must remain an option for their sake. "Our society must provide a consistent message to our youngest citizens that drug use is wrong and harmful. This message can be delivered in a variety of ways within a school curriculum. It must be reinforced by maintaining laws against illegal drug use."

(Maleng's legislative presentation, "Beyond the 'War': Using the Criminal Justice System to Bring Addicts into Treatment," is available in its entirety at <http://www.metrokc.gov/proatty/Drugleg.htm>). ■

—Troy Skeels



THE MORRISON LOBBY.  
PHOTO BY DAN CAPLAN.



ONE OF THE SPEAKERS WHO LED A RALLY TO REFORM THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, INCLUDING THE TREATMENT OF NON-VIOLENT DRUG OFFENDERS, ON MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY, JANUARY 15. PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

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



# Snake Oil Solution

In the name of affordable housing, homebuilders take aim at the Growth Management Act

By Mark Gardner

**T**hey drive big trucks. They voted for George W. for President. They like their spotted owl, well done. And they fret that more and more Washingtonians can't afford a place to live.

Is there anything wrong with this caricature? Not according to the Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW), a special-interest group of more than 4,500 of the state's construction contractors. The BIAW says that government regulations — in particular, the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) — are the main culprit behind the last half-decade's skyrocketing housing prices. They believe state and county officials need to rein in building regulations and roll back land-use restrictions — government attempts at managing urban sprawl and preserving the environment.

Joined increasingly by eastern Washington legislators, the BIAW and other conservatives have seized on rising housing costs in an effort to split affordable housing advocates from the growth management consensus. The

BIAW has taken the campaign public, running a series of ads in major papers calling for readers to tell Governor Gary Locke to change the GMA.

According to one full-page ad that ran in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* last year, "The GMA has decreased the amount of buildable land, causing real estate prices to soar. The GMA also mandates numerous unnecessary fees and regulations that serve only to increase the cost of a home." The ad assured readers that reform will "make your dream of home-ownership a reality."

Some local

housing advocates appear skeptical. Jon Gould, a boardmember of the Low Income Housing Congress, worries that the BIAW and others are "packaging their agenda for the GMA in a wrapper of providing help to renters." Dana Wise, a researcher for the Hotel Employees Union and a member of a coalition of "smart growth" environmentalists and labor activists called the Seattle Alliance for Good Jobs and Housing for

Everyone, states that "eliminating growth management would allow developers to displace the cost of new growth to society — and to taxpayers."

This is not an idle debate, given the frighteningly fast escalation of housing prices since the mid-1990s. Median home prices in King County rose by 35 percent from 1996 to 1999. Average rent for a two-bedroom apartment rose by 21 percent countywide during that period. Currently, only one-third of all rental units are affordable to those making half of the median monthly income (just under \$30,000).

## Curbing sprawl, causing homelessness?

**E**conomic analyses suggest that other factors have more weight than anti-growth regulations: rising incomes and real estate speculation. Justin Phillips and Eban Goodstein, writing in the journal *Contemporary Economic Policy*, examined the effect on housing prices of Portland's urban growth boundary, widely acknowledged as the nation's strongest. From 1991 to 1996, Portland's median housing sales price climbed from \$85,000 to \$144,000. Restrictions on growth accounted for less than \$10,000 of that increase. According to

these authors, the main culprit was an impending economic boom, where "consumers scramble to purchase a home either because they think that it is a good time to buy, or because they are afraid of being priced out of the market."

Phillips and Goodstein note that, with or without growth management, home prices in other cities climbed apace with Portland's. During the period they examined, Salt Lake City led Portland in price gains, even though the Utah city had no growth boundary. Data from 1991 to 1999 compiled by the King County Office of Regional Policy and Planning show that price increases in Portland remained neck-and-neck with Denver, another city that does little to manage growth. And, in California's Orange County, despite world-class sprawl, the proportion of households able to afford a home dropped from 36 percent to 28 percent in one year, from 1999 to 2000, according to the California Association of Realtors. It wasn't growth management that spurred such land rushes.

There was more than enough money to fuel a similar boom in Washington. According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington led the nation in wage growth in 1997, 1998, and 1999, and was among the top three in personal income growth. Since King County accounts for about 40 percent of the state's economy, much of that income and wage growth occurred here.

"Look at the timing and you'll see that steep spikes in housing prices are not correlated with growth management," says Aaron Ostrom, executive director of 1,000 Friends of Washington, the environmental watchdog group.

*Continued on Page 6*

## Policy Watch

By Nancy Amidei

**T**he Human Services community racked up an unusually impressive showing at Human Services Day on Monday, February 19. This year's turnout was large (2,500-3,000) and broad (buses and car caravans came from all across the state).

By contrast, the legislative process appears to be running in low gear this year, not helped by the earthquake, which curtailed all legislative activity until Monday, March 5, when things slowly began to get back to normal. Any bills that were introduced in the House that did not get a 51 percent vote in a Committee Executive Session by February 27 are dead for this year. The deadline for the Senate was February 28, yet due to the earthquake, that deadline was pushed back to March 5.

Any bills that get voted out of a Policy Committee, and which cost money (more than \$50,000) must then get a hearing and a vote in an Executive Session in either the House Fiscal Committee, known as Appropriations, or the

Senate Fiscal Committee, known as Ways & Means. All that has to happen by the end of the business day Thursday, March 8. Go to the web site listed at the end of this article for more up-to-date information.



**Energy Assistance:** A controversy has arisen in the joint bill designed to fund the low-income energy assistance program, HB 1860/SB 5717. Some members claim that there is more than enough money for energy assistance coming from federal sources, and others note that fewer than one-fifth of those eligible currently get such assistance. Some fear the bill is caught in partisan politics, with those who want it passed being told it will be opposed unless they also support a bill they don't want. So much for bipartisan cooperation in the interest of meeting human needs. The Senate bill has already passed the full Senate. Another bill to authorize a public utility tax credit for home energy assistance programs for

low-income households, HB 1443, has moved to the House finance committee.



**Long-term Care:** A bill to ensure the availability of affordable prescription drugs, HB 1319, is dead. The Senate version is still technically alive, but because of the high cost of providing prescriptions, it will likely suffer the same fate by the end of the week. However, the bill to improve the quality of long-term care provided by the state passed out of its committee and is now in the House Appropriations Committee.



**Civil Rights:** Two bills to study the death penalty, HB 1647 and HB 1648 — one requiring a moratorium on the use of the death penalty until the study is complete — are both dead.



**Mental Health:** HB 1080/SB 5211 would require comparable mental health benefits for children and catastrophic coverage for adults. Both Health Committees are exploring various options and possible phase-ins, and other ways to lower costs before taking further action.



**Housing/Homelessness:** SB 5918 and SB 5965, two almost identical Senate bills permitting county governments to impose an additional tax on the pur-

chase and sale of real property and use the proceeds exclusively for the development of affordable housing, including maintenance, are currently in the Senate fiscal committee. The House version of SB 5965, HB 1972, could also be heard before the House Finance Committee.



**Juvenile:** A bill to provide youth courts for juvenile offenders, SB 5692, would allow youth participants, under

the supervision of an adult, to serve as jurors, lawyers, bailiffs, clerks, and judges. It is waiting to be scheduled for floor action. Renewing \$220,000 in funding for each of the five state-licensed youth shelters that the legislature awarded in 1998 is proving difficult, as no legislator has stepped forward to champion the cause.



**Welfare:** A bill exempting new mothers from the work requirements in WorkFirst until their youngest child is one year old is dead. ■

*This bulletin is also available at: <http://depts.washington.edu/ssweb/policywatch.html> - the UW School of Social Work Website. 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>.*



## Affordability Solutions

**S**hort of liquidating environmental rules, what can be done to help?

First, taking a page from the BIAW's play book, Washington might look to Oregon, which has sped up the governmental permit process for new construction. In exchange, builders have accepted new environmental restrictions. According to Rose Curran of the King County Office of Policy and Planning, "There are 40 jurisdictions in King County, and each does its own permitting. There is room for improvements in efficiency, and many complaints are probably justified."

There is also growing interest in changing building codes that raise the costs of housing by forcing all types of housing to conform to the same standard. The City of Seattle is experimenting with allowing apartments to be built with fewer parking spaces in non-auto dependent areas such as Capitol Hill. San Diego was successful in stimulating private development of affordable studio apartments by changing rules for parking and building placement.

Tim Trohimovich of 1,000 Friends of Washington touts Chapel Hill, North Carolina, which caps parcel size in some areas, thus encouraging smaller houses on smaller lots. He also mentions the City of Redmond, which now requires that 10 percent of housing units created in its downtown core be affordable. This follows the precedent of Montgomery County, Maryland, which simply requires all new developments over a certain size to contain at least 15 percent of units affordable to low-income renters.

Olympia is leaning toward more flexible rules for small-scale housing development. The BIAW supports House Bill 1534, which would streamline government approval of small-lot subdivisions — producing more housing on the same-size property. The BIAW says shorter plats would spur affordable housing.

Jon Gould of the Low Income Housing Congress supports Senate Bill 6103, a "mansion tax," increasing the real estate excise tax on home sales in the \$500,000-and-up range. Senate Substitute Bill 5965 also looks to the excise tax as a source for low-income housing. As of March 1, both were in the Senate Ways & Means Committee. ■

—Mark Gardner

## BIAW Continued from Page 5

Various statistics would seem to bear this out. According to data compiled by the King County Office of Regional Policy and Planning, from 1985 to 1990 (during the last recent boom in county housing prices), existing home prices rose at more than twice the current rate — even though the GMA was only implemented in the mid-1990s.

The same thing happened in Portland. According to Tasha Harmon, a member of Oregon's Coalition for a Livable Future, prices escalated at the same rate during the 1970s, even though all observers agree that back then, there was much more land available for development.

## Trophy homes

**C**oncerns over growth and affordability haven't translated into smaller houses. Tim Trohimovich, planning director at 1,000 Friends, says that most new construction isn't doing its part to curb growth: "Large single-family homes on half an acre of farm or forest land won't get us affordable housing."

According to data compiled by the King County Assessor's office, average home sizes in the county hovered between 1,100 and 1,300 square feet in the first four decades of the last century. Increasing by about 16 percent every decade since then, the average home is now over 2,600 square feet, according to the county's Office of Regional Policy and Planning. Multi-family units are not providing much of an opportunity to downsize, either: Condos, with an average of 1,200 square feet, are equal in size to the average detached house built during the first half of the last century.

But while King County land prices per average lot have tripled in the last decade, from \$10,000 to over \$33,000, the cost of land as a proportion of total housing costs for all houses remains the same: around 12 percent. Land prices as a percent of the cost of construction on new homes are even lower: about 9 percent. While land prices have gone up, construction costs have escalated even more.

Among affluent buyers, size and quality sells. According to an annual Affordable Housing bulletin published by King County in December 2000, an examination of two actual Seattle developments — a 2,100 square foot single-family home and a 1,200 sq. ft. townhouse — revealed a "quality premium" of about \$90,000 per house over a "standard quality" house, as calculated using a standard formula for estimating construction costs and contractor profits.

Walking down the streets of many Seattle neighborhoods reveals similar trends driving up prices. Most notable are the "teardowns" — smaller homes, perhaps affordable to those of modest incomes, demolished to make way for

larger, up-priced models. (*The Seattle Times* recently ran a profile of a home built near Seward Park that featured an architect struggling to keep a new house in scale with "modest single-story homes" while spending \$450,000 on construction). Equally important is the reconstruction boom in places like Wallingford and the Central District, where older homes with "good bones" are expanded, upgraded, and put back on the market.

Rising income inequality appears to be a key factor in the housing crisis.

While wages exploded in King County, median household income grew only 5.3 percent over the 1994-1998 period. According to the state Employment Security Department, wage increases were driven mostly by the high technology sectors. Taking high tech out of the wage numbers in 1999 reduced average annual King County wages from \$44,000 to \$37,000. Stock options exercised in the first three months of 2000 ac-

counted for 22 percent of the county's total wages. Recipients of this disposable income have tremendous clout when bidding for houses and apartments.

## Filling the gaps

**S**ome proponents of growth management argue that it could actually increase affordability. Building new houses and apartments on open land requires grading lots and building new roads, sewers, and schools. Researchers at Rutgers University's Center for Urban Policy Research found that New Jersey's growth management actually lowered the average costs of housing in the area. Also, according to the Housing Congress's Jon Gould, "the GMA allows people to live closer to amenities and jobs."

Thus far, growth management in King County has stimulated the development of "urban villages" — denser neighborhoods with a wider variety of housing. Unfortunately, the first

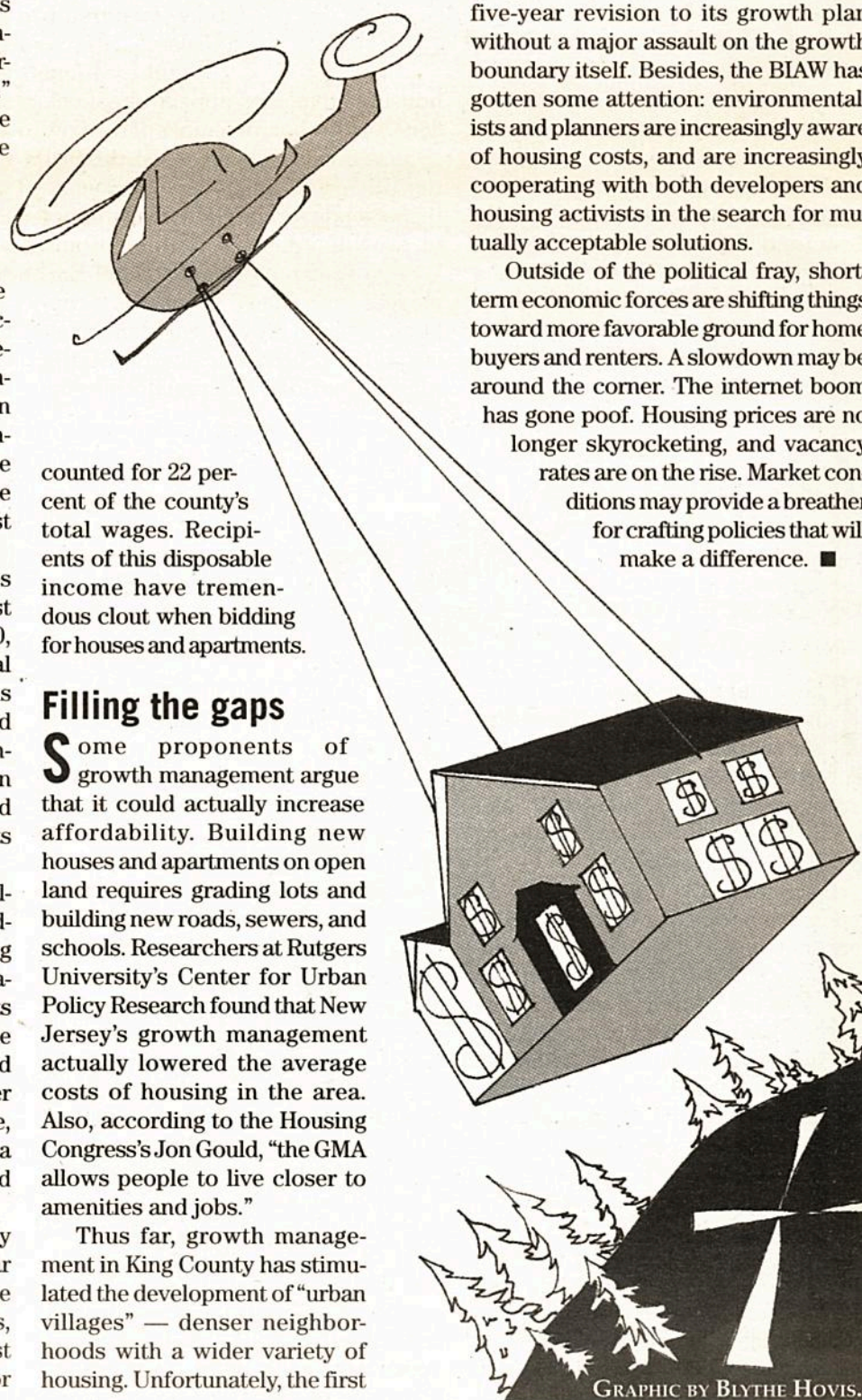
wave of urban village has been dominated by high-end housing that often displaced more affordable units. According to annual growth reports published by King County, Seattle has taken more than its expected share of new housing, while south King County cities have barely grown.

But this is changing. The GMA, along with a growing movement that values compact, old-fashioned town centers, has catalyzed a wave of high-density redevelopment of towns once hollowed out by sprawl: places like Renton, Burien, Auburn, Federal Way, and Tukwila. And, according to 1,000 Friends' Trohimovich, plans for affordable, in-fill housing only occur because the GMA requires it.

Rhetorically, at least, the BIAW isn't making it easy to strike alliances with housing advocates. Don McDonald, President of the BIAW, recently wrote in the association's newsletter that "low-income housing is an abomination run by socialists who are undermining a free society."

But despite the high-octane verbiage against nonprofit development and environmental rules, there are signs that the BIAW is fighting the last war. The King County Council just undertook a five-year revision to its growth plan without a major assault on the growth boundary itself. Besides, the BIAW has gotten some attention: environmentalists and planners are increasingly aware of housing costs, and are increasingly cooperating with both developers and housing activists in the search for mutually acceptable solutions.

Outside of the political fray, short-term economic forces are shifting things toward more favorable ground for home buyers and renters. A slowdown may be around the corner. The internet boom has gone poof. Housing prices are no longer skyrocketing, and vacancy rates are on the rise. Market conditions may provide a breather for crafting policies that will make a difference. ■



GRAPHIC BY BLYTHE HOVIS.



# Spineless

## Democrats play dead for Bush Administration

By Paul Rogat Loeb

Imagine Martin Luther King proclaiming, "Let civility roll down like waters, and politeness like a mighty stream." This, alas, would be how we'd remember King's speeches if they'd been written by our current Democratic senators. It's been painful to watch the Democrats roll over and play dead for George Bush since his coronation. They don't seem to realize that they can stand firm without reenacting Newt Gingrich's scorched earth destructiveness. They might do well to remember (or learn) some basic lessons of nonviolence: When facing a bully, you don't have to demonize. You can speak to your opponent's core humanity, and even at times work together. But you don't have to give your cooperation, just because they tell you to do something. And you have to honestly challenge actions you oppose.

It may seem odd to compare our Senate millionaires to civil rights freedom riders, the massed citizens who brought down illegitimate governments in Serbia and the Philippines, or the WTO protestors. But if the next four years are going to bring anything but a continual rollback of gains that took decades to achieve, Democrats are going to have to learn to draw the line.

They don't have to go to jail. They don't have to sit in, block streets, or be beaten by police. Unlike the rest of us, they don't have to march, write letters, and organize to be heard, although the more they reach out to their engaged constituents, the stronger they will be. They merely have to use a power that they already have — the filibuster — to stop any of Bush's actions that will damage our common future.

The recent vote confirming Attorney General John Ashcroft is now a few

weeks old, but it's a prime example of the pattern that's emerging. Senate Democrats wanted to be bipartisan and work together, they said. They deferred to Bush's presidential prerogatives, and to the collegiality of the Senate. Wisconsin Democrat Russ Feingold refused even to vote against Ashcroft, because he wants colleagues across the aisle to pass campaign finance reform. They wanted their politics to be civil, not a permanent state of war.

Civility has its place, in politics and in general. But it's what Natalia Ginsburg has called a little virtue, not a great one. As Martin Luther King

made clear, civility must be subordinate to the larger goal of justice. Learning from King, it's far better to spell out the destructiveness of Bush's policies than to mock him for being "dumb." King respected the core humanity of even the worst segregationists, but held them responsible for their actions. It wasn't a gratuitous personal attack, just being honest about Ashcroft's past, to point out that he blocked voter registration in inner-city St. Louis and gave a fawning interview to a neo-Confederate magazine, *Southern Partisan*, that had embraced David Duke. Similarly, it isn't uncivil to point out that Bush's tax plan will overwhelmingly benefit

that tiny minority of Americans who already control far more wealth than all the rest of us combined. Justice demands accountability.

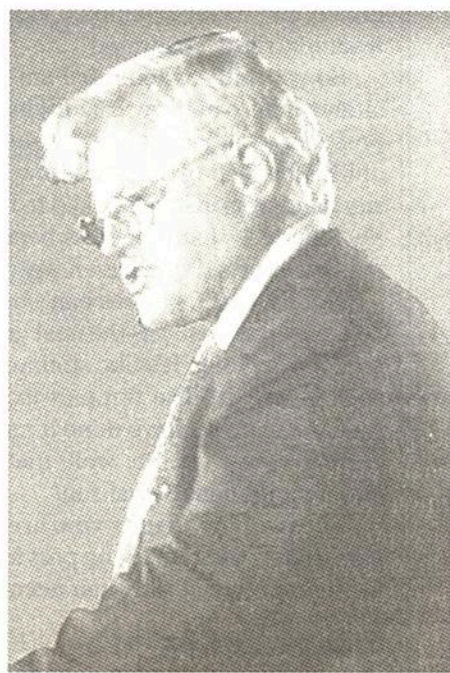
Pleas for bipartisan collegiality don't excuse cooperation with truly dubious actions, especially since this is no normal presidency. Bush lost the

popular vote, we need to remind ourselves, by 540,000 votes. He was handed a victory when the Republican Supreme Court abandoned their own long-proclaimed principles of states' rights to block the reexamination of contested and discarded ballots. Articles in major papers like the *Orlando Sentinel* and *Palm Beach Post* now suggest Gore would have won Florida in any fair and comprehensive recount. When Justice Scalia cynically used the rhetoric of "equal protection" to hand Bush the victory, it mocked the thousands of African-American registered voters who told of their ballots being tossed or of their being turned away from the Florida polls.

The Democrats can bury this history, as they mostly have so far. Or they can use it to refute any notion that Bush has a mandate. Every time he talks about fulfilling his campaign promises, they can remind him, straightforwardly but firmly, that a majority of Americans rejected his path. But they need to do more than hold out their bowls, like Dickens orphans pleading for gruel, hoping for a few morsels of bipartisan decency. They might remember that social progress can roll backward as well as forward. And that the last election where the popular loser was enshrined, that of Rutherford Hayes, brought about nearly a century of racial subordination, by ending Reconstruction and ushering in Jim Crow. In fact, the current Republican base is inseparable from the legacy of that event.

In the wake of his Ashcroft victory, Bush is now pushing a series of highly regressive proposals, touching every conceivable issue. Had the Democrats blocked Ashcroft, they'd have sent a signal that this Presidency is different: that they will insist their concerns be heeded and respected, not just condescended to with sentimental rhetoric. They'd have made clear that certain reversals of justice will not be permitted, and that if Bush wants to make his mark on history, he must address the concerns of the majority of Americans who opposed him.

Within that camp, some powerful grassroots alliances are growing. Building on the coalitions that came together for the Seattle WTO protests, AFL-CIO president John Sweeney challenged not only John Ashcroft and Linda Chavez, but also Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton, arguing that we need to fight both for workplace dignity and stewardship of the planet. Sierra Club executive director Carl Pope took a similar stand in opposing the nomination of Linda Chavez as Secre-



KEEPING AN EYE ON JOHN ASHCROFT WITHOUT TAKING HIM ON APPEARS TO BE ALL DEMOCRAT LEADERS LIKE SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY ARE WILLING TO DO.



DISCUSSING ATTORNEY GENERAL JOHN ASHCROFT'S BLOCKING OF VOTER REGISTRATION IN ST. LOUIS WASN'T A GRATUITOUS PERSONAL ATTACK BUT AN HONEST ASSESSMENT.

**Every group in the Democratic base, from labor to civil rights, is feeling angry and frustrated, wondering when today's Democrats will ever take a principled stand.**

tary of Labor, a reach beyond familiar environmental turf that would have been unimaginable twenty years ago. The Ashcroft nomination brought together every group in the Democratic base, from the labor and environmental activists, to civil rights groups, women's and gay organizations, consumer activists and gun control groups, all appalled at Ashcroft's track record. A firm stand in the Senate would have encouraged all of these groups to further involve their members, develop their alliances, and build public support. Instead, they're feeling angry and frustrated, wondering when today's Democrats will ever take a principled stand.

Now, we all face the next round of destructive proposals with less strength and momentum, and with the fundamental questions about Bush's legitimacy further buried. Eventually, as the Republicans continue to push, I hope the Democrats will discover a few lessons about nonviolent perseverance, and finally block some of the most dangerous proposals — either by convincing a few moderate Republicans to cross over, or by using the filibuster. The sooner the Democrats can do this, the sooner they can begin to reclaim their power to head this country down wiser paths. ■

*Paul Loeb is the author of Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Cynical Time (St. Martin's Press). Visit [www.soulsofacitizen.org](http://www.soulsofacitizen.org) for more information. An earlier version of this piece ran in the Christian Science Monitor.*





I'll confess, I'm not a terribly physical kind of guy. I'm not into rough competitive sports like baseball or rugby or marbles. I don't object to sports altogether, but I prefer the solitary sports, sports in which it's just me competing against myself.

My favorite of those is Olympic Style Nervous Pacing. Incidentally, my best score ever against myself in a pacing competition was 9.6 (it would have been a 10 if it weren't for the Russian judge). Not to brag, but I did so well I cost myself a medal. Myself was deeply chagrined and never competed again. Really. No, not really, I just wanted to say "chagrined".

So naturally, whenever I am in an earthquake, which seems lately to be whenever I am lying in bed naked in a vulnerable position, or at least once per decade, my feeling about it is not unlike the feeling of a student who, having tried out for the varsity band, was instead picked to be a center for the football team. My feeling is that there has been a horrible mistake, I don't do contact sports. I don't even watch them!

Not that earthquakes can't be entertaining to me. Hey, I can be amused as easily as the next guy. It's just that they don't amuse me for very long. It's like sticking your finger in an electric light socket, isn't it? The fun part is pretty much over when you've realized that you have done it and you haven't suffered massive cardiac arrest yet. So, well, that was an earthquake, wasn't it? Hey, I'm not dead! What fun!

Those of my friends who are sports enthusiasts tell me that part of the value of taking part in sports lies in testing their limits, learning what they can accomplish when they throw themselves into something.

**Whenever I am in an earthquake, which seems lately to be whenever I am lying in bed naked in a vulnerable position, my feeling is not unlike that of a student who, having tried out for the varsity band, was instead picked to be a center for the football team.**

I can see that now. I mean, it isn't often that I become so distracted that I forget where I put my pants. Ordinarily I am on top of those sorts of things; "life's little details." So I guess you could say that the earthquake allowed me to discover new depths of self-distraction, great new vistas of blind panic....

Speaking of senseless violence, how 'bout that Fat Tuesday? There's another contact sport I can live without.

The first few nights of the Mardi Gras violence had no impact at all on me, even though I live in the Pioneer District, because I ignored it.

(Some things deserve to be ignored, I believe. Like the practice of confounding the District and the Square. I simply don't let myself hear such idiocy. It's the Pioneer District, damn it. Or the Pioneer Square District, at the worst.)

But Tuesday night, as I was riding the bus home at about 11:30 p.m. with Anitra "not an actual Italian duck" Freeman, we were unable to not notice the crowds, as they were slowing the bus so much that we were better off walking. So we continued to our Pioneer District apartment building on foot, and I had to notice the way the police were deployed. Not interspersed with the crowds, but on the periphery, in fact, just next to our building.

So I told Anitra (I'm not making this up), "First, I am going to watch Letterman. Then, I am going to do my *Real Change* duty, and go out there and see what is going on in those crowds. Then I am going to come back, and together we will be tear-gassed by these police at about 2 a.m., when they can't think of any better way to control the crowds, which will be dispersing at about that time, under our very windows."

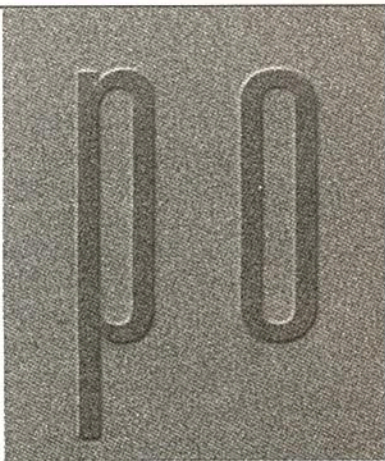
Did I guess wrong? No, I did not. I did exactly what I said. I watched Letterman. Then I wandered out into the Fat Tuesday crowd. I saw the beginning of the brawl that was filmed so well from the police helicopter. At that point I returned to my apartment, and waited to be tear-gassed. We were tear-gassed right on schedule, at about 2 a.m.

OK, there is a sport I love. I love predicting what Seattle will do next. It's poetry in motion. ■

## backtrack

Where you stand... they do  
  seem  
  to rise up, and  
  look back at you. To  
  fall (if  
  you see them) in  
lines.  
  Soup  
  lines,  
  if you see yours. Long  
  lines... if  
you imagine your own  
  where  
  others—  
  your  
  others! stand,  
today.

— STAN BURRISS



## "Negra Pen"

Coyote-moon bring  
men who're looking  
She doesn't see them

Neon lights — a  
and moon dance

Her crisp breaths

"Hey, Johnson  
I do it Cajun  
style..."

Pen drumming her  
I lay the yellow light  
down.

Ebon features are  
smiling, she walks  
click-click-click-

Gypsy's wet tea leaves  
her layered shadows

"Sometimes, they  
I whisper.

## When I Was Ten Years Old...

...I was given all of Hollywood (changing relatives) from year to year, which  
When my only sister left for a year (a head shorter and underweight); and my  
and overweight), I knew.

When that old Physician approached me for usual childhood shots — I froze  
they all thought that if "all was done while she was asleep," all would be

Consequently, I am the only known polio victim that is walking.

Eighteen years I laid around outside just due to that one issue.

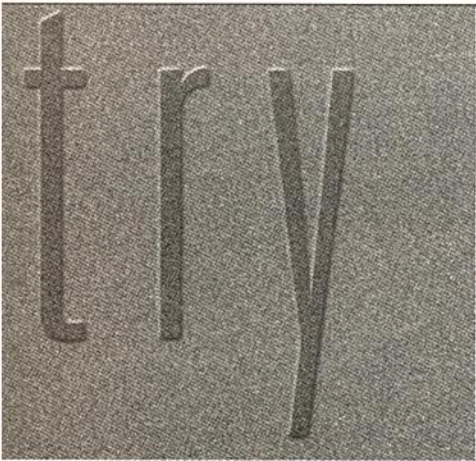
Bitter against "trained" medical people, I no longer trust, but rather endure

Unable to obtain secure employment that dictates income due to drag-thru  
against city properties.

Yes — "they" often give the impression that they will give a "bat" into heaven

Jesus was able to conquer death — I cannot.





Homeless people  
Are always getting back on their feet.  
Homeless people  
Are tired  
Of clichés.  
Their feet hurt.  
What homeless people want  
Is to sit down  
Like everybody else.  
That's illegal.  
Homeless people  
Are always getting back on their feet.  
They are down  
And out on the town.

— LIZ SMITH

Another Country,  
let

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ring,  
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under the skin,”

— EARLE THOMPSON

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head taller

quently,

it or stand

CAROL LENO

## Inside Myself

Sometimes when I'm inside myself  
I find that I deride myself  
While standing here beside myself  
And feeling all alone  
  
And now I've started hearing things  
And seeing things and being things  
I never would have dreamed could be  
When I was me before  
  
Now I'm not who I could have been  
Or would have been (or should have been)  
If I'd not strayed, if I had stayed  
On my life's road back then

And I'm not who I would be now  
Or could be now (or should be now)  
If I was still the she who was  
The me who was before

Now when I look into myself  
I rue myself (the true myself)  
And find I'm feeling blue  
Myself alone I have to blame

So now I must not trip me up  
But pick me up and whip me up  
Grab the strength inside myself  
I alone can break my chains

— RENEENE ROBERTSON

## Easter Rising

We rise like rabbits from our bed of lettuce,  
our cozy warrens and the little nest  
you have saved for me with its green  
malachite egg, as we stir in each other  
still trying to find our legs.

At night we drift in and out of sleep,  
until songbirds come, the breathing  
patterns we make before speech;  
there is nothing leftover but longing,  
Good Friday has been put to bed.

We are full of dew from each other,  
perfume from the night before.  
We must rise from the soft grass  
of our embrace where we slept quietly,  
not even breaking the shell.

Shall I or shall I not ask you,  
is it too early or too late, still time  
to decide and here I have been waiting  
for just this awakening, knowing we have  
nothing left to hide.

—MICHAEL MAGEE



backtrack

Where you stand... they do  
                                  seem  
                                  to rise up, and  
                                  look back at you. To  
                                  fall (if  
                                  you see them) in  
lines.

                                  Soup  
                                  lines,  
                                  if you see yours. Long  
                                  lines... if  
you imagine your own  
                                  where  
                                  others—  
                                  your  
others!   stand,  
today.

— STAN BURRISS



“Negra Pena”

Coyote-moon brings august  
men who’re looking at her;  
She doesn’t see them.  
  
Neon lights — a constellation — become stars  
and moon dance on her retinae.  
  
Her crisp breaths aerate the soul:  
  
“Hey, Johnson  
I do it Cajun  
style...”  
  
Pen drumming hardback of *Another Country*,  
I lay the yellow legal-size tablet  
down.  
  
Ebon features are etched by evening,  
smiling, she walks... her heels  
click-click-click- into morning.  
  
Gypsy’s wet tea leaves withering,  
her layered shadows writhe...  
  
“Sometimes, they’re sisters under the skin,”  
I whisper.

— EARLE THOMPSON

Homeless people  
Are always getting back on their feet.  
Homeless people  
Are tired  
Of clichés.  
Their feet hurt.  
What homeless people want  
Is to sit down  
Like everybody else.  
That’s illegal.  
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They are down  
And out on the town.

— LIZ SMITH

When I Was Ten Years Old...

...I was given all of Hollywood (changing relatives) from year to year; which kept me frightened.  
  
When my only sister left for a year (a head shorter and underweight); and returned (a head taller  
and overweight), I knew.  
  
When that old Physician approached me for usual childhood shots — I freaked; consequently,  
they all thought that if “all was done while she was asleep,” all would be well.  
  
Consequently, I am the only known polio victim that is walking.  
  
Eighteen years I laid around outside just due to that one issue.  
  
Bitter against “trained” medical people, I no longer trust, but rather endure them.  
  
Unable to obtain secure employment that dictates income due to drag-thrus — here I sit or stand  
against city properties.  
  
Yes — “they” often give the impression that they will give a “bat” into heaven.  
  
Jesus was able to conquer death — I cannot.

— CAROL LENO

Easter

We rise lil  
our cozy v  
you have :  
malachite  
still trying  
  
At night w  
until song  
patterns v  
there is no  
Good Frid  
  
We are ful  
perfume f  
We must r  
of our eml  
not even b  
  
Shall I or s  
is it too ea  
to decide :  
for just thi  
nothing le



## NICKELS Continued from Page 1

I think that has been my number-one accomplishment: simply keeping the level of investment in human beings close to what it has been, in the face of these three statewide votes.

**RC:** Paul Schell's office has often talked of a regional strategy on homelessness. What more could be done in this area?

**Nickels:** I was a leader some years ago in a housing levy we ran countywide. It got creamed. At the same time Seattle was passing housing levies. And I think it is time to try again. It is time for us to take on the education that is necessary to get the votes. I think it is time for us to recognize that homelessness is not simply a Seattle issue, but a regional issue and in fact a national issue and a national shame. And make sure that the financing of the solutions comes regionally.

**RC:** What type of agenda would you pursue to minimize the economic inequity that keeps people in poverty and homeless situations? According to the city's statistic, 30 percent of our residents are earning less than \$18,000 a year.

**Nickels:** I will give you a specific example of a place where I think we've got the opportunity to make some progress. Sound Transit, when it's under construction, will have several thousand people working on it at the height of construction. That construction could last 20 years if we go to a phase II and phase III. Literally, you could go to work on the Sound Transit project, spend your entire career on that project, and retire, having been able to raise a family and participate fully as a member in the community. What happens often is you bring people in from other states, who are already trained and skilled in the trade. We need to have trained people here for the jobs that we know will be coming. If you are talking a couple thousand opportunities, then that is a lot of people who have avoided the situation you're describing.

**RC:** You're on record in support of the Elevated Transportation Company's voter-approved Monorail plan. Councilmembers Jim Compton and Margaret Pageler have claimed that there are no funds for it and that voters don't understand how much it would cost. But funds are available for other capital projects: demolition of the current city hall and construction of a new building that voters never had a chance to approve. Polls show that 80 percent of the people say public transportation projects should be our first priority. Why do they still struggle to get off the ground?

**Nickels:** Over the 13 years that I've been on the county council, I've held dozens and dozens of town hall meetings. There are two questions that are always asked at every meeting. One, why aren't Lottery funds going directly to education? And two, what about the Monorail? Why wasn't it expanded or made into a system we were promised? There

is tremendous public support for the monorail. It's to Seattle what the cable car is to San Francisco.

There was a golden opportunity to take that vote in '97 and turn it in to a real change in how we view moving people in our city. I would have used it as a chance to find that funding. The fact that the voters said we want this puts this at the top of the priority list. The city hall, to me, is at the bottom of the priority list.

**RC:** Any thoughts on how you might do that?

**Nickels:** I think a mayor who shows leadership will be a catalyst for the City Council to rise to the occasion. I will set the agenda. And if they don't agree on every count, I won't take that personally.

I also think that when the voters speak on an issue that it is important that you respect that. You may disagree. I think it is fine for elected officials to say, "You know, I think the monorail was a bad thing and I oppose it." What I think is wrong is to hide in the background and wait for an opportunity to kill it surreptitiously.

A little over a year ago, I tried to get a small grant from Sound Transit for the monorail — I wanted to make sure when we build the light rail system, we're thinking about how they work together. The mayor and one member of the council killed that grant — while

publicly claiming to be supportive of the people's wishes. I think that is wrong. If you disagree, be straight with the public. I have a problem with people who are cynical and who treat the wishes of the people in that fashion.

**RC:** How do you respond to critics of light rail, who say it won't reduce traffic congestion?

**"You could spend your entire career on the Sound Transit project, raise a family and participate fully as a member in the community."**

**Seattle mayoral candidate Greg Nickels**

Snohomish County and Pierce County, and across the lake out through Bellevue to Microsoft. Ultimately, we'll have an I-405 corridor along with the I-5 corridor. It will carry hundreds of thousands of people a day who will be able to count on the service, they'll know when the trains are running, they'll know how long it will take them to get where they have to go. That will be a huge positive change for this community.

## The Nickels File

**Who:** Greg Nickels, 45

**Current position:** King County Councilmember, District 8, representing West Seattle, White Center, Burien, and Vashon-Maury Island.

**Work history:** Dropped out of college at the age of 19 to become City Councilmember Norm Rice's legislative aide. Stayed with Rice for the next three years, until 1987, when he ran successfully for County Council.

**Party hearty:** Nickels was elected President of the Washington State Young Democrats at the age of 21. He'd volunteered full-time for Congressman Jim McDermott's 1972 campaign for governor; in 1974, he worked as an intern in Sen. Warren Magnuson's D.C. office.

**On tenants' issues:** Over apartment owners' and developers' objections, Nickels pushed through a county ordinance requiring sprinkler systems and strong locks in new and remodeled apartment buildings. Disagrees with rent control, but supports lifting the state's pre-emptive ban on local efforts to curb rent increases.

**Locked into light rail:** As chair of the Finance Committee of Sound Transit, Nickels was privy to cost estimates and financial reports from Sound Transit staff. This fall, new reports showed the project is three years behind schedule and \$1.2 billion over budget. Nickels says Sound Transit staff never gave his committee the full story. And his support for transit hasn't wavered: "They say it is expensive, and they are right. It is extraordinarily expensive. And we're 30 years too late. I wish the last generation had not failed us, but they did. The only thing worse than having the last generation fail us, is if this generation fails."

**Nickels and dimes:** As of February 14, Nickels has raised more than \$83,000 for his mayoral bid, compared with the \$31,450 in Schell's campaign chest. According to city Eth-

**RC:** Some people say that Schell destroyed his chances for reelection with his handling of the WTO demonstrations. How do you think the mayor handled the WTO event and the demonstrations?

**Nickels:** Well, I'm not going to second-guess him. I am going to say that I would have handled it very differently. I'll give you one specific example: It has been reported in the papers that the mayor and the police chief went out to the police precinct about four weeks before WTO. And there was a pretty lively question-and-answer session with the officers. The officers were saying, "Why aren't we trained for this? Why don't we have the equipment we need for this? Why aren't we ready?" The mayor left in a huff, basically shooting back at them, "If you can't handle it, I'll find someone who can." Rather than blaming them, I would have asked the leadership of the police department why aren't we ready and what are we going to do to be ready in the next four weeks.

It was well-known that you were going to have 50,000 people here. It was also well known that there was a small group of folks whose intent it was to shut the city down and shut the conference down. I believe the city had a responsibility to make sure that the streets were safe, that people were allowed to make their demonstrations, people were allowed to assemble in their conference, and that both parties had a right to their free speech. And the city simply wasn't prepared. I think there was enough warning that that is inexcusable. ■



GREG NICKELS' SUPPORT FOR LIGHT RAIL HAS NEVER WAVERED. PHOTO BY RICK DAHMS.

ics and Elections reports, Nickels contributors include Charles Armstrong, president of the Seattle Mariners (\$375), and former team chairman John Ellis (\$350).

**Take me out to the ballgame:** Nickels sponsored county efforts to acquire Safeco Field's site; he also ratified the tax increase raising funds for the new stadium — against the outcome of the 1995 voter initiative. Nickels has season tickets, and goes to about 10 games a year. "I look around that stadium and see 45,000 people, mostly families with children, enjoying themselves and spending money in our city." But because of citizen outrage at the county's action, he says, "I have one regret: We should have taken [the tax increase] back to the voters." ■



# In the Git-Along Gang



## My life as a Safety Ambassador

GRAPHIC BY LIN LUCAS.

By Tom Buckley

**"S**ir? Sir? Sir! Sir, it's 8:30 in the morning and it's time to get up and get moving along, sir!"

No response from under the three or four grungy blankets, on top of an old piece of carpet, insulated from the cold concrete by an extra-thick cardboard box near Sixth Avenue and Lenora Street on a beautiful November morning last year.

"Sir?" repeated my partner for the eighth time, "you'll have to get up and get moving, or I'm going to call SPD and you'll get a ticket for camping."

Third day on the job. I'm a Metropolitan Improvement District (MID) "Safety Ambassador" in training. According to the Safety Ambassador's promotional brochure, "your safety and comfort are our foremost concern while you are visiting Downtown Seattle." This guy was obviously visiting

Downtown Seattle. I asked my partner/trainer, whom I'll call Roust 'em Roger, how in the world was this homeless guy's sleeping out of sight our foremost concern? After all, he was obviously visiting Downtown Seattle.

"We'll walk around the corner and come back in 15 minutes to make sure he's up and moved on," was Roger's answer. I got a funny feeling that I wasn't going to last long as a Safety Ambassador. As it turned out, I lasted less than 60 days.

I got pretty pissed off, and said "Roger, the dude is sleeping there, minding his own business, bothering no one! What do you want to get in his face for, for just wanting to sleep?" According to the MID brochure, Roger and I were "distinctively uniformed and friendly 'Safety Ambassadors' ready and waiting to make your metropoli-

tan Seattle experience as enjoyable as possible. You should consider the Safety Ambassadors as your personal guides to Downtown Seattle."

The DSA, a business association formed to support its members, runs the MID program. The fellow who we would roust that morning was not a rate-paying property owner or retail tenant in the downtown Seattle area. Why couldn't we let him alone?

We returned 20 minutes later and the guy was still there, trying to sleep. Roger was definitely not going to make his downtown experience as enjoyable as possible. The MID brochure explains that Ambassadors "help reduce crime by acting as additional eyes and ears for the Seattle police." And mouths. I then learned about the only piece of equipment that Safety Ambassadors use to put some bite into their bark: the radio to the MID "Base."

MID Base is at 2318 Sixth Avenue, Seattle. When they call in, Ambassadors speak loudly into the radio in hopes that the people who are sleeping, partying, drinking, trafficking, skateboarding, propositioning, or panhandling in the doorway, at the dock, on the sidewalk, or in front of a store will overhear. They might get a little anxious and move on. Base will continue radio traffic and try to determine whether or not the police, Emergency Services, or Detox should be called to the scene.

The fellow who was trying to sleep overheard Roger's radio call for SPD to come and roust the homeless guy for "trespassing," finally got up, wrapped up his stuff, and moved on, as usually happens in these sorts of situations. After he left, Roger showed me how to roll up the guy's piece of carpet and cardboard and put it in a dumpster, to make it difficult for him to come back the next evening.

"Thanks for the training, Roger," I said. "Whenever I want to learn how to be a real prick, I'll ask if I can go out on patrol with you again."

**F**or the rest of my time at this job, these situations occurred daily. I found it more and more difficult to be a real "Goodwill Ambassador," as some of the MID employees prefer to call themselves.

For men and women who were homeless themselves just months before, the starting pay isn't bad. Because the MID hires people from shelters and other social services, I met homeless people who referred to us Safety Ambassadors as "homeless people who have jobs" — distinctively uniformed "bodies" just out and about, looking for

and getting in the face of Seattle's marginalized and homeless population.

I took the job because I did sincerely want to be a goodwill ambassador. I wanted to give information to tourists and visitors, assist the local merchants with information about the many downtown activities, help homeless people get food, shelter, and medical referrals, and try to be a deterrent to overt, visible crime. Why was I unceremoniously "terminated" at the end of December? I just didn't fit into the program. Only two weeks before I was fired, I started getting premonitions that I wouldn't last long with the MID.

Instead of feeling fearful that I might lose my job, I took a positive view: it would be an honor to be fired for the first time in my life.

Later, when Bill Dietrich, the DSA director of the MID program, explained to me that I was entitled to appeal my termination, I thought, "I don't have any grievance about getting the ax from this bunch of DSA choreboys. Who needs it?"

I told Mr. Dietrich, "Well, I'll just go to the media and tell them about your overpaid, untrained, and unprofessional flunkies, and see what they want to write." He laughed and told me that the media wouldn't be interested.

"I'll bet *Real Change* would like to

use the story."

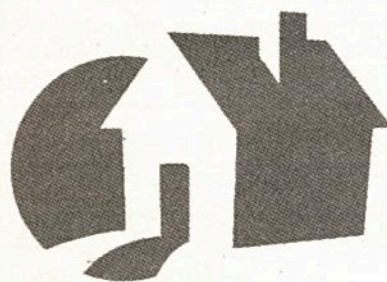
He laughed again and said, "No one who matters reads *Real Change*. The DSA has been around for 56 years, and we'll be around for another 56 years; you can't change anything."

Well Bill, you might be right, but unlike you, I believe that every one of us is accountable and will eventually be held responsible for what we did and did not do to try to make things better — whether or not this article is a "success" isn't the issue.

What got me was how insensitively the DSA's hirelings, former and "reformed" homeless persons, acted toward their old peers. Wouldn't the ratepayers' money be more wisely spent on initiating housing and job programs for the long-term homeless, rather than on these uniformed rousters?

The MID program is just an extension of City Attorney Mark Sidran's get-'em-outta-my-face, don't-confuse-me-with-the-facts, short-sighted fix-it plan. The issue isn't "Why are you sitting here?" The issue is very clearly, "Let's do something about it, folks." ■

*Tom Buckley prowled the streets as a Metropolitan Improvement District Safety Ambassador last fall.*



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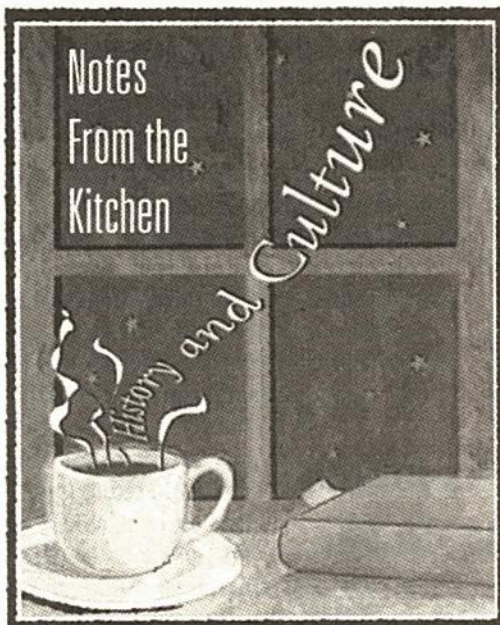
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# The National Dish of the Lone Star State



By Liz Smith

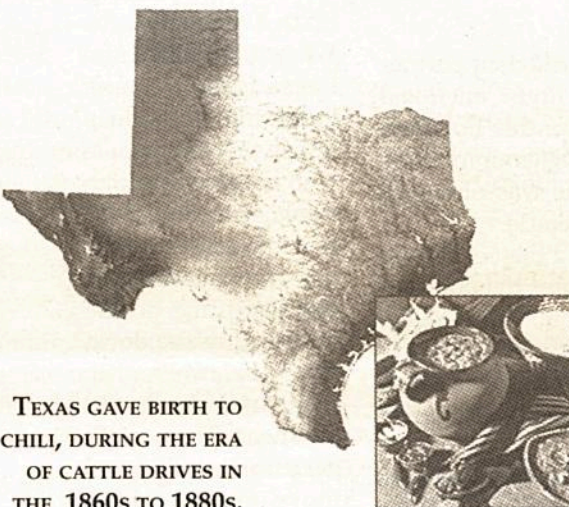
**T**exas is awash in chili. Every person you meet promotes their own partisan version. The smallest of one-horse towns has chili cookoffs. Even criminals in crummy little one-cot jails get a bowl of red for dinner.

Chili originated in Texas. It was invented during the era of the great cattle drives, from 1866 to 1886. Land-rich and cash-poor settlers would round up some longhorns, brand them, and mosey up from the high plains of the Llano Estacado to the Kansas railway terminals of Abilene and Dodge City.

On the four-to-five-month trip, the cook carried supplies such as flour, coffee, dried fruit and vegetables, sugar, and spices. The chuck wagon traveled ahead by night and set up camp for the evening arrival of the hungry cowboys. A big pot of spicy chili made a welcome change from a plate of sourdough biscuits and plain beans. And if one particular cow was troublesome, off he went to that great stew pot in the sky. A

tough side of beef, when cooked with the right spices and vegetables, would become tender and savory, and cause a different kind of stampede altogether.

The Old Chisholm Trail was the best known cattle route; the one that went through Austin was called the Goodnight-Loving Trail. It ran up Lavaca Street (*la vaca* — the cow). At Lavaca and 14th is a place called the Texas Chili Parlor. Their chili is the best — they've been cooking it up for 26 years. No beans sully their famous dish, and it comes in four variations on the theme of cow. Ordinary mortals ask for "1X" chili. Brave frat boys with iron taste buds go for the "2X" or "3X" bowls of fire. The waitress brandishes a "hold-harmless" document before the nose of any patron brave enough to order the special Habanero Chili.



TEXAS GAVE BIRTH TO CHILI, DURING THE ERA OF CATTLE DRIVES IN THE 1860s TO 1880s.



FRESH CHILES CAN BE SUBSTITUTED WITH THE EASIER-TO-USE CHILI POWDER.

for plump unwrinkled ones with dry, tight-fitting husks. They can be cooked separately and run through a sieve or food mill, or simply cut into quarters and added to the pot.

As you execute this recipe, keep in mind that it's not set in stone. It's a braised dish, which just means the ingredients are browned in fat, then cooked in a small amount of liquid at a low heat for a few hours. If you love garlic, put in more garlic. If you like fiery food, put in some cayenne or habanero. Add corn if you want, or some carrots. Feel free to improvise.

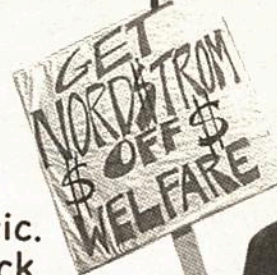
## Chili (Yields about 8 cups)

3 tbsp oil  
2 medium onions, peeled and roughly chopped  
1/2 cup water  
1-1/2 pounds chuck roast, fat trimmed off and discarded, cut into half-inch cubes  
28-ounce can tomatillos, drained and sieved  
two 14-1/2-oz. cans of diced tomatoes  
3 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped

15-oz. can dark red kidney beans  
15-oz. can light red kidney beans  
6-oz. can tomato paste  
15-oz. can tomato sauce  
4 tbsp chili powder  
1-1/2 tsp cumin  
1 tsp paprika  
1 tbsp sugar

1. In a 2-1/2-quart (10 cups) capacity pot, put the oil and onions. Stir on low heat for 10 minutes. Put in water, cover with a metal lid, and place in a 350° oven for 20 minutes.
2. Add the beef and stir until mixed. Let this cook 20 minutes more, covered.
3. Add everything else in the order listed. Stir well, cover, lower the oven's temperature to 300°, and cook for four hours.
4. Taste to see if meat is tender. If it is still a bit chewy, let cook 20-30 more minutes.
5. Serve on rice, macaroni elbows or shells, or with saltine crackers.
6. This makes a lot of chili, but it freezes well. Place in individual glass bowls, cover with plastic wrap, and put in freezer. To reheat, take off the plastic wrap, microwave on HIGH 2-3 minutes, and serve.
7. Alternately, chili will keep in refrigerator for up to three days. It makes a nice meal when you come home cold, tired, and hungry. ■

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**Wed., Feb. 14, 12:03 p.m., Broadway Ave.**  
Officers responded to multiple 911 calls about a white male juvenile brandishing a weapon on Broadway. Officers located the youth, aged 17, who was in possession of at least four toy rifles and guns. He was warned that this type of behavior could lead to his arrest, and he agreed to put the toys away and not take them out in public places. The next day the same officer again saw the boy on Broadway, wearing a toy pistol in a holster on his hip. The pistol was taken from him. The young man stated that he was living on the street and staying in shelters, has no adult supervision and no means of support. The officer warned him that his recent actions with the toy guns was placing him in extreme danger, and could lead to him being seriously injured or killed. Police contacted the Secure Crisis Residential Center (SCRC) on Spruce, and they agreed to accept the youth for family intervention, behavior management, and family reunification counseling. He was transported to the SCRC and released into their custody.

**Wed., Feb. 14, 6:57 p.m., Pine Street Parking Garage.** An officer on routine patrol observed the subject, a 49-year-old white male, sleeping in a sleeping bag, in the private garage. After making sure the man was O.K., a record check on the subject revealed an outstanding warrant. The man was arrested and transported to King County Jail.

**Fri., Feb. 16, 10:50 p.m., Little Theatre, 610 - 19th Ave. E.** Officers arrived at the location to investigate "suspicious circumstances." They were informed that several subjects were sleeping in the dressing room, and that they had broken into the building by crawling through a broken window. According to the caller, this had been happening over the last three nights. The trespassers, a white female aged 20 and a white male aged 27, were arrested without incident. Neither subject would admit to being in the building for criminal purposes, and both denied breaking in, stating that the door was open. Both were booked into King County Jail.

**Sat., Feb. 17, 8:39 a.m., E. John St.** Police responded to a report of a homeless male going through the pockets of a homeless female at a bus shelter. The Fire Department arrived first, and were treating a scraped shin on the male when officers arrived. The man denied he was stealing from his companion, and had not harmed her in any way. Both subjects were very intoxicated, and voluntarily took the county detox van to the Dutch Boren Ave Sobering Center. Four unopened bottles of wine found at the scene were also transported to the Sobering Center, and were placed with an employee for safekeeping. ■

*Streetwatch is compiled from Seattle Police Department incident reports by Emma Quinn. Do you have your own story to tell? Call Real Change, (206)441-8143, and we'll get the scoop.*

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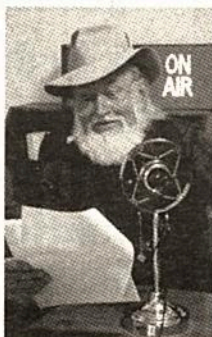
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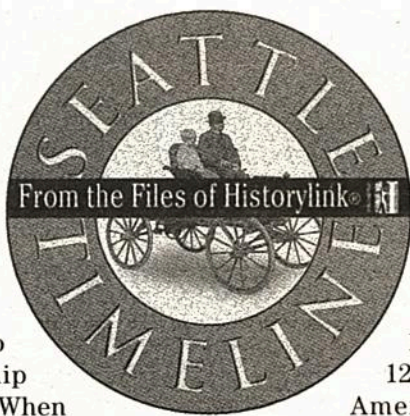
**Loafer's Glory:**

**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.





**O**n March 12, 1862, smallpox arrived at Victoria, British Columbia, carried from San Francisco on the steamship Brother Jonathan. When Indians camped near Victoria began dying of the disease, Vancouver Island authorities forced them to leave. The Indians returned to their homelands, carrying the virus north from Vancouver Island to southern Alaska, and south into the Puget Sound region. As Robert Boyd writes in his seminal work, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence*, "this [Indian] epidemic might have been avoided, and the Whites knew it." Boyd estimates that from April to December, 1862, 14,000 Native Americans perished, about half the Indians living along the coast from Victoria to Alaska. The epidemic reached King County, though its presence among Indians here is less extensively documented.

**O**n March 9, 1926 Bertha Knight Landes was elected mayor of Seattle, becoming the first woman executive of a major American city. Serving only a single two-year term, she followed through on her pledge to perform "municipal house-keeping" and led an honest, scandal-free administration.



SEATTLE WAS HOME TO THE FIRST FEMALE EXECUTIVE OF A MAJOR AMERICAN CITY, BERTHA KNIGHT LANDES, IN THE 1920S.

**D**uring March 1934, a census of Seattle's Hooverville, a shantytown formed at the beginning of the Great Depression, found 630 men and seven women living in 479 shanties located south of Pioneer Square. The residents living in the 12- to 15-square-block area

ran in age from 15 to 73. Ethnic breakdown of the occupants were: 292 foreign-born whites, 186 U.S.-born whites, 120 Filipinos, 29 African Americans, three Costa Ricans, two Mexicans, two Native Americans, two Eskimos, and one Chilean.

**O**lympia legislators created a Joint Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities in the State of Washington on March 8, 1947. The committee was charged with investigating groups and individuals that "foment internal strife, discord and dissension; infiltrate and undermine the stability of our American institutions; confuse and mislead the people, and impede the normal progress of our state and nation either in war time or a peace time economy." The Committee became part of "Red Scare" investigations occurring across the country that came to be seen

as hysterical "witch hunts" that disregarded the First Amendment rights of citizens.

**V**oters approved re-opening Pine Street to vehicular traffic by a 60 percent majority on March 14, 1995, five years after the street had been closed for use as a courtyard adjacent to Westlake Park. The controversial move to re-open the street came as a part of a large downtown redevelopment plan and an effort to restore the historic Frederick & Nelson building as a flagship store for the Nordstrom department store chain. Nordstrom owners said they would make the move only if traffic was allowed to flow past the new location, at Fifth Avenue and Pine Street. ■



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## CLASSICS CORNER



by Perfess'r Harris

**I**t's been said before, but Euripides, in *The Bacchae*, said it first. Drunken mobs are all well and fine until someone gets carried away, rips their firstborn son limb from limb, and impales his head upon a stick. Or, as our dear mother put it, "It's always fun until someone gets hurt."

Seattle's Mardi Gras is a case in point. After four straight nights of riots, leaving one dead and 68 injured, we are inclined to agree with Mayor Schell: "Something is wrong here, and we can't tolerate it." The Mayor is right. How odd those words look in print. We do hope, however, that Schell doesn't wind up like poor Pentheus, another of history's great killjoys.

In Euripides' great final play, written at the end of the fifth century B.C., the women of Thebes have taken to the hills. There, Dionysius' female worshippers, or maenids, spend their nights drunk on wine and nature. They are empowered. They tear live cattle to shreds and feast on the raw meat. The spell of the wine god is upon them and they are invincible.

Some, like old King Cadmus and his prophet friend Teiresias, understand this libertine strangeness as a gift from god and happily embrace the new religion. Like certain tavern owners, they understand the benefits to be gained. Dionysius is the son of Zeus and Semele, Cadmus' own daughter, which makes Thebes the home of the most popular demigod since Elvis. Cadmus and Teiresias grasp the obvious: Dionysius is good for business.

**The Mayor bans future Mardi Gras celebrations, and immediately the planet hiccups and rumbles out a 6.8 magnitude earthquake. Where have we heard this before?**

Part of Dionysius' appeal is that he is utterly democratic. "No grudge hath he of the great. No scorn of the mean estate. But to all that liveth his wine he giveth, Griefless, immaculate..." The power of "the grief-assuaging grape" has swept the East, and the Son of God himself has now come to Thebes.

But Cadmus' grandson Pentheus is threatened by all this female exuberance. He does the unthinkable and places himself above the god. Enraged, he jails all the maenids he can find and arrests Dionysius himself.

For a time, the rather Christlike Dionysius plays along, but he eventually loses patience. He frees himself from prison by conjuring up an earthquake and hypnotizes Pentheus to do his bidding.

To make a long story short, Pentheus is induced to disguise himself in a wig and dress to spy on the frenzied women. Sadly, his mother Agave mistakes him for a lion and rips his arm off. A feeding frenzy ensues. She triumphantly marches into Thebes with Pentheus' head on a stick. As the spell wears off, Agave realizes the horrible truth, and everyone lives tragically ever after, except Pentheus, who got what he had coming.

It is a lovely story.

Were we in Mayor Schell's well-polished shoes, recent events would give us pause. The Mayor bans future Mardi Gras celebrations, and immediately the planet hiccups and rumbles out a 6.8 magnitude earthquake. Where have we heard this before? We humbly suggest that if any rosy-cheeked Lydian strangers offer the Mayor a dress, he not try it on. ■

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# Marc Notables

Thursday, 3/8

**"A Matter of Trust: Women and the Microcredit Miracle,"** photography exhibit by Judith C. Haden, documenting the change in the lives of six women who received microcredit loans. Seattle Central Community College Art Gallery, through 3/21. Info 344-4379.

The Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle hosts its 24th Annual Art Exhibit, displaying works by emerging and internationally known artists of color, including Augusta Asberry, Jacob Lawrence, and George Tsutakawa. A reception honoring this year's participating artists and scholarship recipients will be held on 3/11, 2-4 p.m., in the International Meeting Place, Level II Galleria, at the Trade Center. This is open to the public. The exhibit runs until April 5 at the Washington State Convention & Trade Center. Contact 206-461-3792.

Friday, 3/9

Protest and march in solidarity with the Zapatista struggle for Land, Liberty, and Democracy. After a 200day journey from Chiapas, 24 Zapatista leaders will arrive in Mexico City on 3/11 to call for a true

dialogue toward peace and dignity. Join their struggle. Meet at the Mexican Consulate, noon on 3/9. Sponsored by the Committee Against Repression and for Democracy in Mexico. Contact [mexico@riseup.net](mailto:mexico@riseup.net) or 206-860-1400, ext. 3.

Sunday, 3/11

Impact Forums featuring Glen Gersmehl, director of the Peace and Justice Resource Center in Seattle, on **"Books That Have Changed the World,"** 9:30 a.m., at University Unitarian Church, 6556 - 35th Ave. NE, in the Social Hall, info Jerry Chroman 206-522-9384.

Monday, 3/12

Seattle Seniors' Internet Group (SSIG), this and subsequent 2nd Mondays, 1 p.m., at Greenwood Senior Center, 525 N 85th St, with off-street parking, info Ralph Pfister [seniors@transport.com](mailto:seniors@transport.com) or <http://www.nw-seniorsonline.org> or 206-361-0369.

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.

Wednesday, 3/14

Homestead Community Land Trust general meeting, CLTs are grassroots, membership-based groups creating permanently affordable home ownership opportunities, they help prevent displacement of lower-income families, strengthen our neighborhoods, and maximize limited housing subsidy

**"A Matter of Trust: Women and the Microcredit Miracle,"** an exhibit by photographer Judith C. Haden, documents the changes in the lives of six women who received microcredit loans. Today these loans — comprised mainly of small businesses giving \$50-\$70 — have distributed more than \$500 million to 10 million borrowers, one of the main means by which impoverished people are able to create a sustainable source of income and forge better futures for their communities. Seattle Central Community College Art Gallery, 1701 Broadway, through March 21, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday evening.



PHOTO BY JUDITH C. HADEN.

funds. Homestead is currently in the midst of developing Seattle's first-ever permanently affordable home ownership project, and wants you to be a part of it, this and subsequent 2nd Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., at the Homestead office, 1309 13th Ave. S., info or to confirm meeting time 206-323-1227 or [homesteadclt@yahoo.com](mailto:homesteadclt@yahoo.com)

Thursday 3/15

**"Investing for Success,"** personal finance workshop, offered by the National Urban League. Topics include setting investment goals, planning for retirement, and the "power of compounding." Meet fellow investors and get answers to your own investing questions. 6-8:30 p.m., Pigott Auditorium, Seattle University, 900 Broadway. To preregister call 1-877-358-5888 or 206-461-3792.

Saturday, 3/17

Irish Northern Aid will be honoring the 1981 hunger strikers on the 20th anniversary of the hunger strike by marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Look for the INA banner at 4th & James from 11:15 a.m. Info 206-246-4599.

Sunday, 3/18

Native American poet/activist John Trudell will appear in a benefit hosted by the Rainier Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Columbia City/South Seattle for the NW Leonard Peltier Support Network, part of Trudell's West Coast Spoken Word Tour, to raise awareness about imprisoned activist Leonard Peltier, convicted in a highly flawed trial, and imprisoned 25 years. \$10 tickets on sale at Bailey-Coy Books, Capitol Hill, and Left Bank Books, downtown, 8 p.m., at 4620 S. Findlay St., info 206-722-1191 or 206-722-4880 or Jess Grant 206-721-2063 (evenings) or Robert Free [robtfree@earthlink.net](mailto:robtfree@earthlink.net).

Joy and Justice Community Lectures, a weekly lecture-discussion community, presents Lois Canright of United for a Fair Economy. Canright will discuss the "Free Trade Area of the Americas" agreement now being put together by economic elites. At Trinity United Methodist Church, 6512 23rd Ave. NW. Contact Rich Lang 206-784-2227 or [oddrev@juno.com](mailto:oddrev@juno.com).

Tuesday, 3/20

**Monthly Business Meeting for Independent Print and Electronic Weekly Eat The State!** Come opine, meet, volunteer, how do we do it every other week? People like you! Come be one of them! This and subsequent 3rd Tuesdays, 7 p.m., at the Eat The State! office, Independent Media Center, 1415 3rd Ave. at Pike St., downtown, info 206-215-1156.

Ongoing Saturdays

Seattle Food Not Bombs redistributes free produce to the members of the Yesler Terrace Community Center, 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](mailto:fnb@scn.org) or <http://www.scn.org/activism/foodnotbombs>

Ongoing Sundays

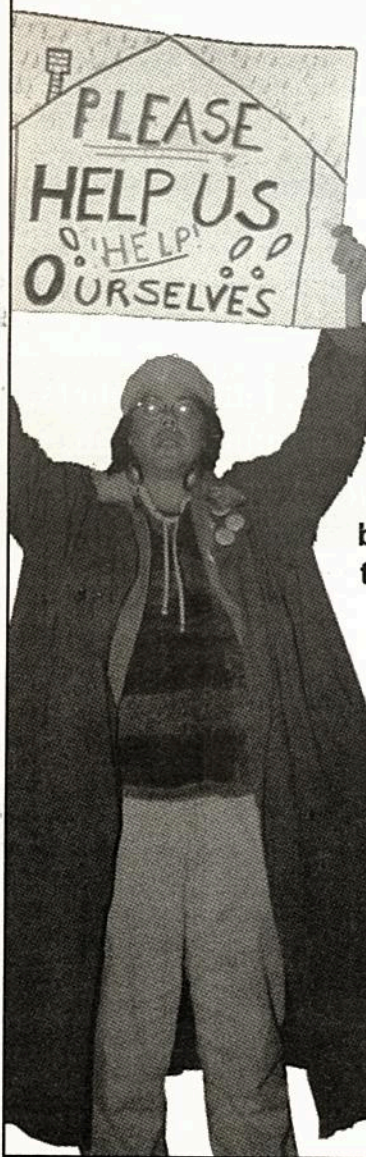
Impact Forums cover a wide variety of justice issues, 9:30 p.m., at University Unitarian Church, 6556 - 35th Ave. NE, in the Social Hall, info Jerry Chroman 206-522-9384.

Seattle Food Not Bombs collects food and serves free vegetarian meals to the homeless each and every Sunday, noon-4 p.m., cook, call for location, 5:30 p.m. share dinner at Occidental Park, info above.

Ongoing Daily

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, with all of the proceeds going to FareStart, 1902-2nd Ave. between Stewart and Virginia, log on to <http://www.farestart.org> and make a donation. ■

## Do Something!



**First things First** is the organizing project of *Real Change* that works to preserve low-income housing and put a roof over every bed. **You can help by pledging to take action when First things First alerts you to critical decisions affecting the poor and homeless.** When you join our action alert list we will contact you by your preferred method when your voice needs to be heard. **You will not get a lot of junk mail. You will be part of creating real change for the poor and homeless.**

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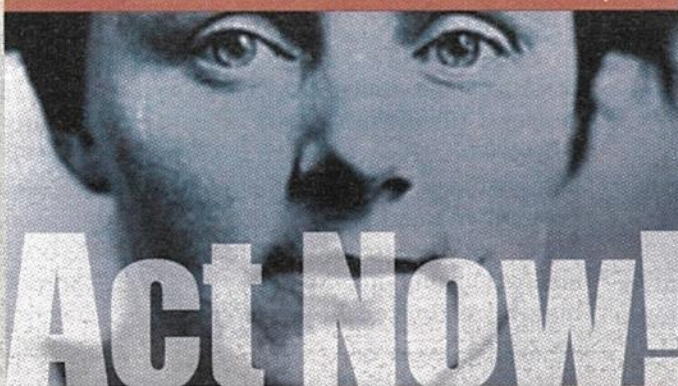
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Real Change  
2129 2nd Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98121.  
Call (206) 441-3247 for more info.



citizens participation project



## Protect the state Housing Trust Fund

**Issue:** Don't let the state legislature approve Governor Gary Locke's proposed budget plans to reduce the Housing Trust Fund by \$15 million.

**Background:** The Housing Trust Fund has been a phenomenally successful program, serving as one of the state's few sources of funds for affordable and low-cost housing. Currently there are many more requests for help than the Trust Fund can meet — the program currently receives twice as many viable applications per biennium as it can fund.

The Housing Trust Fund has a solid record of creating and preserving low-income housing. Tens of thousands of families through the state's 39 counties have benefited from the Trust Fund in the past decade. Non-profit developers also rely on the Housing Trust Fund for matching funds to leverage large, private contributions, such as from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. More than \$1.2 billion in additional funds have been leveraged. For every \$1 of trust fund money, another \$4 are raised from other lenders.

Housing advocates are seeking an increase in the Housing Trust Fund to \$100 million, and will work to protect the Trust Fund from any attempts to "raid" it for use on other purposes. Additional funds would create or preserve homes for nearly 1,400 households.

The Governor's proposed budget cuts the Housing Trust Fund from its current funding level of \$78 million to just \$63 million (despite a departmental recommendation that it be raised to \$87 million). The Governor would also remove the "set asides" for housing for people with disabilities, and for farmworker housing. So, although in theory those activities could continue to be funded at the same level, achieving that would require competing with other equally compelling housing needs.

Despite the success of the Housing Trust Fund, there is still a great unmet need for low-income housing in Washington that cannot be met without these additional funds.

- 430,254 low-income Washington households pay more than 30 percent of their income to rent.
- 114,295 homeless people were turned away from shelters from June 1998 to June 1999.
- More than 56,000 housing units are needed to house farm workers and their dependents.

**Action:** Contact your legislators and ask them to support the \$100 million level for the Housing Trust Fund. The following is a partial list of Seattle-area legislators that are particularly important to contact as they have voting power on the Senate or House capital budget committees.

### Senate Ways and Means Committee

Dow Constantine, Vice Chair (360) 786-7667 constantine_do@leg.wa.gov	Adam Kline (360) 786-7688 kline_ad@leg.wa.gov	Jeanne Kohl-Welles (360) 786-7670 kohlwelles_je@leg.wa.gov	Pat Thibaudeau (360) 786-7628 thibaudeau_pa@leg.wa.gov
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### House Capital Budget Committee

Ed Murray, Co-Chair (360) 786-7826 murray_ed@leg.wa.gov	Jim McIntyre, Co-Vice Chair (360) 786-7886 mcintyre_ji@leg.wa.gov	Velma Veloria (360) 786-7862 veloria_ve@leg.wa.gov	Luke Esser, Co-Vice Chair (360) 786-7836 esser_lu@leg.wa.gov
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Seattle Public Library, Serials Unit  
1000 Fourth Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98104

