

JAN 09 2001

Change

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 8, No. 9

Adrienne Rich

Standing at the Intersection of Art and Activism

Books Issue: Politics, Spirit, and the Streets

Tent City Hosts Say Stop the Fines

Hard Luck Fisher's Tale

\$1

April 19-May 2, 2001

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PHOTO BY ADAM L. WEINTRAUB.

Interview by Pat Simpson, Michele Marchand, and Anitra Freeman

It could give you hope. On Monday, April 9, Town Hall was filled with people who read Adrienne Rich. We wish there'd been a multiple-choice attendance card:

Are you here as a (check all that apply)?

- Grateful mother whose sanity was saved by *Of Woman Born* while tending young children
- Feminist willing to face our unfinished work at the intersections of race, class, and gender
- Citizen of the United States, fed up with degraded public language, hungry for honest writing that isn't selling me something
- Friend and lover, trying to create honest, honorable personal relationships
- Writer (circle all that apply: homeless, marginally employed, published for money, academic, waiter, barista, *Real Change* vendor), seeking inspiration for the long effort
- Human citizen of this planet, still learning what justice, solidarity, and freedom might look like
- Lover of women. I admit it. I'm here for the love poems
- Person in need. Tell me I'm not alone
- Person in need. Tell me my work matters

Most of us gathering that evening would have checked most of the boxes. This was a gathering at the intersection of art and activism, personal and political — a place Adrienne Rich has marked by her poetry, prose, and public witness. The spot is hard to find, camouflaged in this time, this country. Rich has sought, measured, explored, and expanded it through more than 50 years of writing.

Because she's a writer, this place is public, a plaza where we can gather. We come (to her reading, and to her books) to enjoy and study her craft, to recognize the sweat and struggle it takes to live an engaged life and turn it into words. We learn what integrity looks like in order to recognize it in our own lives, and to know when it's missing. Just as important, we find each other.

In the forward to her new book, *Arts of the Possible*, Rich writes, "At times in the past decade and a half I have felt like a stranger in my own country. I seem not to speak the official language. I believe many others feel like this, not just as poets or intellectuals but as citizens — accountable yet excluded from power."

[x] Tell me I'm not alone. [x] Tell me my work matters. Everybody checks those. The isolated mother, the midnight writer, the activist in a movement — toiling alone or surrounded by people, we need reminding. Rich gives us a hopeful image: workers designing and building together in stone, a foundation that will last.

For the days we can't believe it, when we watch our work come undone, we have steadying images in Rich's poetry. The spider determinedly fixing her torn web. Mending the rift in the Great Nebula (both from "Natural Resources"). *The Dream of a Common Language*. A stone foundation deep beneath earth's visible surface (from "Transcendental Etude").

We are many more than a whole Town Hall-full. We can choose to connect across all that divides us, each hauling and hewing the rock of our own place to build a common foundation. Our human work builds on deeper stone, and it matters cosmically. Is that hope enough?

Interview on Page 9



A good idea

Dear *Real Change*,
 Since the oil corporations, the National Rifle Association, and the Christian Fascists have taken control of the American Government, and since nobody seems interested in controlling access to guns or controlling corporate greed, we feel there is a pressing need for Emergency Grief Kits.
 The kits should include a Counselor, balloons, flowers, yellow ribbons, dark glasses, handkerchiefs, white pigeons (to be freed to the tune of taps or Kumbaya), cards, ready-made speech and prayer manuscripts, parade manuals, candles for vigils, and white teddy bears for the youngest victims of our lunatic way of life — all the ghastly, asinine rituals for the television camera we Americans employ to avoid doing anything useful.

Or we could cut short the hugs and the social get-togethers and find out why the disasters happened, then make sure they don't happen again.
 You can cry; can you *act*?

Sincerely,
**Rajendra Shivapriyan, Director
 Society for the Establishment
 of Western Civilization
 Bainbridge Island**
 "Mr. Gandhi, what do you think of Western Civilization?"
 "I think it would be a good idea!"

Kudos

Dear *Real Change*,
 I have been reading your publication for over a year now and I just wanted to let you know what I felt about it. I am officially poor, but I have a job, an apartment, and friends and family that I can rely on to take care of me in a pinch, which is a great deal more than far too many can say. I have some experience with homelessness. I worked with the homeless in shelters in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Mary's Place), and Santa Cruz, California (Project Hope).
 My work with these organizations led me to one conclusion: church, grant, and donation-based facilities seem like a band aid for a brain hemorrhage. The gauze saturates and is overwhelmed very quickly, the elastic stretches far too thin, and no matter how many of them you have it's never enough. Public awareness is the intrinsic

problem. The vast majority of contact the housed have with the homeless is the annoying pangs of guilt that are felt by passersby, the yearly appearance of The Salvation Army buckets, and the popular media's distortion of political goings-on. To be perfectly honest, I stopped working for housing groups, beaming disgruntled and disillusioned as I felt more overwhelmed and bitter.
Real Change has renewed my desire to help. It effectively promotes the real change it professes by offering an alternative news source that makes no bones about its bias, but delivers the facts and the feeling of an enormous sector of the population that mostly goes silent. Brilliant work. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Tim Archer

Correction:

The Coalition on Women, Religion, and Spirituality is sponsoring weekly Women in Black gatherings at Westlake on Thursday. WHEEL (the Women's Housing, Equality, and Enhancement League) is the focus of April's Thursday vigils and co-sponsor of Tent City, which we neglected to mention in Dean Taylor's interview last issue. —ed.

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Change

Puget Sound's Voice of the Poor and Homeless

Real Change is published every other Thursday and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Annual subscriptions are available for \$35. All material is copyrighted to the authors. Submissions should be mailed to "Real Change," 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 441-3247.

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

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

Mission Statement:
Real Change organizes, educates, and builds alliances to create solutions to homelessness and poverty. We exist to provide a voice for poor people in our community.

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. Programs include the *Real Change* newspaper, the **MacWorkshop** computer lab, **StreetLife Art Gallery**, the **StreetWrites** peer support group for homeless writers, the **Homeless Speakers Bureau**, and the **First things First** organizing project. All donations 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. *Real Change* 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 501c3 non-profit umbrella, so all donations are tax deductible.

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Leave Tent City Alone

An open letter
to the City of Seattle

By Reverend Rich Lang

On April 5, the Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use (DCLU) began fining Trinity United Methodist Church for using its parking lot as sanctuary for the residents of Tent Village. I am writing on behalf of the congregation in response to the city's action.

In response to threats of fines, we urged the DCLU not to create a public issue out of what is, for us, a religious and humane response to human suffering. We acknowledged that the DCLU must respond to public complaints. We requested an extension for our temporary sheltering of Tent Village. The DCLU refused us. This has provoked a collision of values between our congregation and our city. The city insists that we evict Tent Village from our parking lot. We cannot cooperate.

Trinity sees the encampment of Tent Village as a temporary response to a people in much distress. Had the recent earthquake shaken our neighbors from

their homes, we would have provided sanctuary. Would the City have "fined" us for this? On the contrary, we would have been honored and held up as examples. That we are now being condemned as "law-breakers" is both discriminatory and hypocritical.

We cannot, in good conscience, force Tent Village out of our parking lot. The implications of such an expulsion border on (to use our language) the demonic. Tent Village provides a safe, sane, sober, warm, and dry community for persons seeking transitional refuge from homelessness. The removal of Tent Village would disrupt, and perhaps even destroy, this community. Men and women would be forced to scramble for shelter out of doors, since as our city admits, it does not have enough beds to shelter all its citizens. This consequence is offensive to us. We have, therefore, no intention to evict those who have sought our protection.

Churches have always provided sanctuary for people in distress. Indeed, the city

Human Services Department is currently asking faith-based communities to assist in providing answers to the problem of homelessness. We have opened our property for the purpose of a six-week sanctuary space. It is our assumption that another faith-based community will be Tent Village's next sanctuary. We can only conclude that the fine's real purpose is to intimidate congregations so that they will not provide for the needs of the poor. But solidarity with the poor is constitutive of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The church can do nothing less.

We realize that homelessness is a complex problem, and that solutions will come only as we use our enlarged imaginations, creativity, and courage. Government is not our enemy. On the contrary, the church practices partnerships to build the common good. Working together, we can accomplish something redemptive. Working against each other, we further the chaos.

We are frustrated that the city perceives us as disruptive law-breakers. We are law-abiding citizens who love our country, this city, and its people. We seek to be reconcilers and peacemakers for God's vision of justice. Now we find ourselves "shamed and dishonored" for our hospitality. We are sorrowful and bewildered.

And so we appeal to the conscience of our fellow citizens and of the whole Body of Christ in Seattle. We may be breaking city ordinances, but are we really disrupters of the common good? Surely we have not, in creating safe space for the homeless, acted disgracefully. Rather, we believe that we are helping Seattle be a more compassionately "livable" city for all people.

We are in urgent prayer that this city and its neighborhoods not turn from the plight of the poor. We pray that the City of Seattle and the whole Body of Christ protest against policies like DCLU's, which put the vulnerable homeless at further risk.

We urge you to:

Call Mayor Paul Schell, City Attorney Mark Sidran, and the City Council today, telling them you object to DCLU's fines. Pray to the God who is the Defender of the Poor, for justice. ■

Mayor Paul Schell: (206)684-4000

City Attorney Mark Sidran: (206)684-8200

Seattle City Councilmembers: (206)684-8888

Rev. Rich Lang is Pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church.

We are law-abiding citizens who love our country, this city, and its people. We seek to be reconcilers and peacemakers for God's vision of justice. Now we find ourselves "shamed and dishonored" for our hospitality.

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THIS JUST IN! On National Public Radio's *Morning Edition*, Nina Totenberg said that if the Supreme Court supports Congress, it spells the end of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). This situation creates great concerns about Congressional funding for creative arts in America, since NEA provides major support for National Public Radio, the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), and numerous other creative and performing arts.

Totenberg went on to describe a scene in which seven fat cows came out of a river, followed by seven skinny cows. The cows were making a kind of "wrrr-wrrr" sound, rather than a "wreee-wreee" sound. It was probably the carburetor, said Click and Clack, but it could also have been the lack of investment capital.

Then Jesus was the subject of *This American Life*. There was this scene where he was reintroduced to his Father, who was played by M. Emmett Walsh as a barfly with an emphysema wheeze. There was talk, maybe a joke, about a nationwide book tour.

Terrible things from Zagreb on *All Things Considered*; someone suggested it was the Apocalypse. But really the Apocalypse was when Garrison Keillor lost his place in the middle of a story, right then in that quiet space.

Someone else said that the whole thing was a hoax — they checked it out on hoaxes.com. No one had to call their congressman at all. "You guys," said Heather, "it was so real, it was just like a movie!" ■ — Bob Redmond

Two homeless men die after assaults

It's spring, and open season on homeless people. In the early morning hours of April 2, a homeless man named Walter Jackson, age 74, was assaulted, robbed, and left unconscious near the 7-11 in Bremerton. According to Bremerton police, he suffered facial injuries and blunt force trauma, and briefly regained consciousness enough to describe his two attackers. He was treated at Harrison Hospital on Bainbridge Island, but was then airlifted to Harborview, where he died on April 9.

Bill McClure, an investigator with the King County Medical Examiner's Office, said Jackson died of a pulmonary embolism — blood clots in his lower legs. When asked whether the clots were preventable, he answered, "They are a known complication of therapy, when people are consigned to bed for days on end. You take every precaution, but something may go wrong. He might've had predisposing factors."

Jackson had been homeless for just a couple of weeks, and had been on the waiting list at Seattle's St. Martin de Porres Shelter, where he is remembered by shelter staff as a smiling, friendly, independent man who kept to himself and didn't ask for referrals. He listed no next of kin when he was registered for the shelter.

Captain Craig Rogers of the Bremerton PD says they have no leads in the homicide. They have assigned just one detective to the case, and the case will remain open until it's solved, but he doesn't sound encouraging: "There's a lot of work to do with very little answers." Bremerton PD encourage anyone who might have had contact with Jackson Sunday night, April 1, or who has any information concerning this crime to contact Detective Davis at (360) 478-5228 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-CRIME-13.

Jackson was the second homeless man beaten to death in Washington in the past month. On Sunday, March 25, Rick Rice was beaten to death with a 7-foot metal pole. He was asleep under a bridge in downtown Spokane when he was attacked.

One day later, a tip led Spokane police to arrest two suspects in the murder: Justin White and Jonathan Michel. Michel has accused his friend White of solely perpetrating the beating, and has given the police a picture of what happened the night of the attack. In a *Spokane Spokesman-Review* article, he said he watched White "smash a defenseless Rice five times on the head with the pipe, lift the blanket Rice was sleeping under, and then hit him another half-dozen times. White then dipped his hands in puddles of fresh rain to rinse off Rice's blood. He'd wanted to end his 21st birthday celebration with a brawl."

In the year 2000 there were 35 homicides in Seattle; three victims were homeless. Although homeless people make up just 1 percent of Seattle's population, they comprised 10 percent of its homicides last year. If the trend continues, we can expect more murders this year.

WHEEL — the Women's Housing, Equality and Enhancement League, a grassroots organizing effort of homeless and formerly homeless women — stood its Women in Black silent witnessing vigil for these two men on April 18. WHEEL will mobilize Women in Black vigils whenever a homeless Seattleite dies outside or is murdered. For more information about WHEEL's efforts, call (206) 956-0334. ■

—Michele Marchand and Adam Holdorf

Renters win

On April 29, Seattle's latest tenant-landlord law will take effect.

At the end of March, Seattle City Councilmember Judy Nicastro's "rent retaliation" ordinance passed the full city council by a vote of 6-3. Councilmembers Jan Drago, Jim Compton, and Richard McIver voted against the ordinance.

Seattle's tenant rights organizations concurred with the sentiment of the Tenants Union's Scott Winn, who was "overall pleased with" the ordinance. The new law changes a landlord's violations from a criminal penalty to a civil one, which lowers the threshold of proof a tenant has to provide against a landlord who has unfairly raised his rent or evicted him. Under the civil penalties, a tenant can sue on their own for up to \$1,000 and can force the landlord to prove that his actions, such as raising the rent, were not retaliatory. The ordinance also explicitly protects tenant organizing, such as the posting of signs about meetings and the ability to meet in common building areas.

There are no tenants lined up to put the newly-strengthened law to the test, mainly because only violations that take place after April 29 can be prosecuted. The law may get its first test in May, when a Seattle tenants group plans to hold its first meeting in the apartment building's laundry room, the only available common space, without the management present, noted Winn.

Yet "the jury is still out," in Winn's words, over whether a greater ability for the city or a tenant to sue a landlord will actually provide immediate relief to a tenant facing eviction. Even if the city attorney agrees to take on a tenants' case, trials against landlords could take weeks if not months before the ten-



ant can ever hope to see any financial retribution and look forward to stable housing again. There is also concern that lowering the landlord violation from a criminal to a civil one might also lower the Seattle Police Department's priority in responding to illegal evictions. Tenants groups hope the police will put as great a priority on enforcing a civil law as it does on enforcing criminal ones — judging someone forced out onto the street to be as immediate a threat as an armed burglary or assault would be. ■

— Molly Rhodes

Lock 'em up

King County's newest tool to take "chronic public inebriates" off the streets sailed through the state Legislature in early April. It's a bill equating chemical dependency with an "incapacitating" mental illness, and allows county officials to commit people to treatment against their will (see "Throw Away the Key," Jan. 11). Its prime sponsors included Seattle-area Representatives Velma Veloria, Kip Tokuda, and Darlene Fairley.

At the same time, there's little chance that more money for treatment for alcoholism will come through the cash-strapped state budget. As *Real Change* reported when the bill was introduced, people seeking long-term residential treatment for alcoholism typically have to wait 36 days before a berth opens up.

The bill was supported by King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng and the county Chronic Public Inebriates Task Force, a coalition of county addiction specialists and non-profit providers of alcohol and drug treatment. Last year, it passed the Senate but died in the House due to the short Legislative session. ■

—Adam Holdorf

For sale: the Morrison

One day after Easter, the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) handed the Downtown Emergency Services Center a big egg. Now we get to watch what hatches.

On Monday, April 16, capping months of public discussion, the SHA Board of Commissioners voted 5-1 to begin negotiations for the sale of the Morrison to DESC, which operates its mezzanine-level homeless shelter.

The negotiation process should begin shortly, said DESC director Bill Hobson. "Everybody's now focused on getting the most positive outcome we can." He says SHA staff are "working in very good faith" as they begin to appraise him of the building's condition.

In an April 16 memo, deputy executive director Al Levine outlined SHA's consideration of the factors in a sale. First of all, SHA wants a one-time payment of \$1.5 million from the city Office of Housing. The money would conclude the series of \$100,000 annual payments SHA receives for supplying senior housing in the Morrison and at other buildings. The City Office of Housing must decide whether to ask the City Council for special funds to fulfill the request, or find room somewhere else in the city budget. Other concerns Levine outlined include:

- The Task Force recommended raising the Morrison's subsidized rents from a low of \$459 to \$500 a month. But a HUD inspection report saying the Morrison doesn't meet neighborhood housing quality standards would prevent the rent increase. It's unclear when a rent increase could occur.
- Then there's the other money that makes the Morrison go, like federal funds for case management. If any operating losses occur between now and the sale, the building's \$500,000 capital reserve account should compensate SHA.
- The check cashing outlet and the convenience store located in the retail spaces could leave — Check Mart's lease ends in June, and Jean's Deli is on a month-to-month. DESC would have to decide whether to renew a month-to-month lease with either. If it chooses not to, the owner could miss out on thousands of dollars in monthly rent. But if they stay, it could face the wrath of Pioneer Square residents hoping to "clean up" the block.
- Saying that the current management staff "contribute to the stability of the building and well-being of the residents," Levine hopes they get to stay.
- A transitional program for Morrison residents wishing to move to other SHA properties should lower its minimum residency limit from two years to one. The change would mean these "current, stable Morrison residents have some options during this difficult transition," says Levine.

John Fox of the Seattle Displacement Coalition called the vote "a tremendous victory for the community, and for all of us who've been working so hard to preserve that building in perpetuity for the people who use it." ■

—Adam Holdorf

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



Sims' "blunt tool" ticket increase raises hackles

By Adam Holdorf

PHOTO BY CASEY KELBAUGH.

Gina Guth had come to a daylong "Transportation Alternatives" forum, discussing substitutes for Sound Transit's deep-sixed regional light rail system. As boosters for the monorail, the Ride Free Express, and sundry other sketched-out plans made their case, she had something more here-and-now on her mind. Guth, a student at Seattle Central Community College, raised her hand and asked King County Councilmember Maggi Fimia, "What about the fare increases on students, the seniors, the disabled?"

Fimia, who was facilitating a discussion between about 16 outspoken citizens, tried to answer. "I'm in a fight right now to keep student fares low," she replied. Last month, she and six fellow councilmembers bucked County Executive Ron Sims' proposed across-the-board increase, raised only commuter

fares by a quarter, and actually lowered the youth bus fare from 75 to 50 cents. Their legislation hiked only the peak-hour commute fares by a quarter, from \$1.25 to \$1.50.

Guth wasn't too satisfied with Fimia's answer, though; she knows that bus fares are more likely to go up than down. And she's concerned about working classmates who are, like her, dependent on public transit. "Those students are in minimum-wage jobs," she says. "The government doesn't take [community] college students into account when they do this."

Guth and her classmates aren't the only ones who'd be impacted by Sims' proposal, which he says is necessary to offset Initiative 695's hit to Metro's budget. While last month's .2 percent sales tax hike will make up for most of the lost tax revenue, a fare hike, he argues,

is supposed to account for the rest. But six Republicans and Fimia (a Democrat and a bus rider from Shoreline) spoke up for transit-dependent folks of all stripes: They called Sims' proposal "a blunt tool" and pointed to forecasts showing that fewer people would ride when faced with a 25-cent hike.

In response, Sims declared that the Council's action would leave Metro \$6 million short this year. He vetoed the legislation, and canceled service increases on five routes that Metro had been readying for June. Partisan lines hardened; Council Democrats Greg Nickels, Dwight Pelz, Larry Gossett, and Larry Phillips backed Sims, saying the county had "promised" that fare increases would pay the rest of the I-695 shortfall.

Fimia, the only Democrat in the keep-'em-low faction of the Council, muses on the spectacle of Republicans rallying behind her. "They are representing the interests of the [transit-dependent] people on the East Side," she says, "and you've got Democrats arguing for raising fares on low-income people."

There's a semantic conflict tweaking the whole debate. Can Metro spend millions in leftover transit revenue that it collected last year? Or is that money a "reserve," to be used only in an emergency? Sims and his supporters say the Council's reserve-dipping would torpedo the county's credit rating. Fimia and fellow Councilmember Rob McKenna says that pile of money is fair game.

"There's a cushion in both the operating and the capital budgets to pay for the June service changes and keep the fares low," says Fimia. For McKenna, it's about power. "Sims keeps saying 'You can't spend down the reserves.' That's bullshit. That money isn't [in] a

reserve, it's simply unspent. What's really at issue here is who controls Metro's budget, the Executive or the Council," he says.

Fimia and McKenna have also framed the fare fight as a choice between a cash-rich Metro and a full Metro — if higher fares pay for more bus service, they also discourage fixed-income seniors and poor people from riding.

Over the past several months, Councilmember Dwight Pelz studied one way to fine-tune Sims' increase: with a reduced fare for people earning less than 60 percent of the county median income level. Council staff could not gauge its impact, and it died quickly before being presented before the full council.

"Dwight's proposal was just administratively unfeasible," says Gossett. "The bus drivers... would be trying to explain to people, who maybe just saw something on TV, that you have to go down [to Metro's headquarters] and apply for I.D." There goes another good-hearted attempt to give low-income people some relief.

People who use Metro as their main mode of transportation are none too happy about the fare increase. Jesse Petrich, 93, a resident of senior housing at the Pike Place Market, says he scans the newspaper for sales on butter and other essentials. Getting to Safeway to do the shopping would cost a little bit more.

Ethel Boyar, the transportation liaison to the Puget Sound Council of Senior Citizens, said doubling the cost of a monthly senior pass, as Sims proposed to do, would be "a huge impact on someone who's counting their pennies to pay for food. You can shortchange yourself on food, but you can't shortchange yourself on medicine." ■

Policy Watch

By Nancy Amidei

Week 14 is Crunch Time in Olympia. With time running out for the session, the House has still not released its version of the budget, few bills have been signed by the governor, and major, MAJOR budget decisions remain to be settled. Given the budget constraints, any decision legislators make to help one interest group means not helping another — a fact of which everyone in Olympia is painfully, stressfully, nail-bitingly aware. These are not easy days.

And so, while the session is still scheduled to end on Sunday, April 22, hardly anybody thinks it will. Most people assume the Governor will have to call a Special Session to get the job done.

Budget: The Senate version of the budget would spend about \$22.8 billion. It accepts some of the Governor's cuts, rejects others, and relies on a combination of surplus pension funds and reserve money to avoid more drastic cuts.

The House version of the 2001-2003 operating budget (HB 1315) — if there is one — is still not out. There may be a budget, or they may simply agree on some basic principles and go into negotiations with the Senate budget writers starting this week.

Long-Term Care: HB 1341, which would allow nursing home-eligible individuals with income above \$1,590 per month to receive long-term care services, is waiting for reconciliation with the Senate version before it is sent to the Governor for signing. Another bill to enhance investigations of vulnerable adult abuse, SB 4184, is also awaiting signing by the Governor.

Child Welfare: A bill to continue DSHS services to youth who are leaving foster care, HB 1259, passed both the Senate and House and now await signing by the Governor.



Disabilities: A new form of the bill to support individuals with disabilities in leading fully productive lives by implementing the federal "Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999," HB 2230, could be pulled to the House Floor at any time. A bill to authorize a county transportation authority to provide vehicles for public transportation for persons with special needs, SHB 1596, passed both the House and the Senate and is awaiting signing by the Governor.



Health Care: A bill to create a senior pharmacy assistance program, HB 1774, appears to have died, though some are trying to keep it alive by a thread. Another bill to extend family planning services to persons with family incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, SB 5186, appears to have died but is being kept alive in the budget process.



Housing: A bill to provide additional funding for housing projects for the developmentally disabled and farm workers, SSB 5936, refuses to die and is being kept alive in the Senate budget. It would raise funds by assessing a \$3 surcharge on all document recordings and

filings — chiefly from real estate sales. Sixty percent of the money would go to counties and cities trying to fund low-income housing; 40 percent would go to help support operations and maintenance of special-needs housing. There is also work to increase the budget funding by \$2.4 million for domestic violence shelters.



Juveniles: A bill to stack time against runaways, SSB 5500, has been amended in ways that have eased the concerns of youth advocates. If the House and Senate versions can be reconciled, it awaits signing by the Governor. A bill to create youth courts for cases involving juvenile offenders, SB 5692, also awaits signing by the Governor.



Mental Health: A bill requiring comparable mental health benefits for children, SSB 5211, died. The Senate Budget would save \$9.2 million in spending on medications by restricting access to the most expensive drugs — including anti-psychotic medications. ■

This bulletin is available at <http://depts.washington.edu/ssweb/policywatch.html>. Information on these and other matters can be tracked on state websites, such as the state Legislature's website, <http://www.leg.wa.gov>.

Book Reviews

Landscapes of War: From Sarajevo to Chechnya

By Juan Goytisolo

Translated by Peter Bush

City Light Books, San Francisco

2000

paperback, 225 pages

\$16.95

Review by Molly Rhodes

Terrorists. Intolerant. Fanatical. Violators of human rights. A *raison d'être* based on hostility and a hope to one day eradicate the Western world.

These are the instinctive associations for many to the word "Islam." The stereotypes only grow more fixed in the midst of four of the most violent wars still bubbling across the globe: in Sarajevo, Algeria, the West Bank and Gaza, and Chechnya. Yet it was through his visits to these desolate, volatile lands from 1993 to 1996 that Spanish journalist Juan Goytisolo began to uncover the path to a new kind of acceptance of and future for Islam.

Landscapes of War gathers together Goytisolo's essays as they were first published in the Spanish daily newspaper *El País*. While Goytisolo possesses an acute understanding of the intricate politics of each region he visits — and is thus able to gain access and trust that others might not — he does not mire himself in a history lesson. "I had no need to have recourse to political analysis or unreliable statistics," he writes upon arriving in Algeria. "Experience showed me the harsh realities hidden by 'revolutionary' myths and demagogy."

Goytisolo shows us people exhausted by the endless fighting, talking, as soldiers in Chechnya, "not of victory but of peace." Civilians and soldiers alike live in the literal shells of their formerly splendid cities, with "signs warning off possible marauders: 'People live here,' or even more laconically, 'People alive.'" Others survive, like the residents in Sarajevo, by living "their life as inmates of an open prison, with integrity, dignity, and sangfroid." One Bosnian Muslim woman, after escaping from a Mosque in which the Serbians killed almost 300 people, only keeps on living "in order to bear witness."

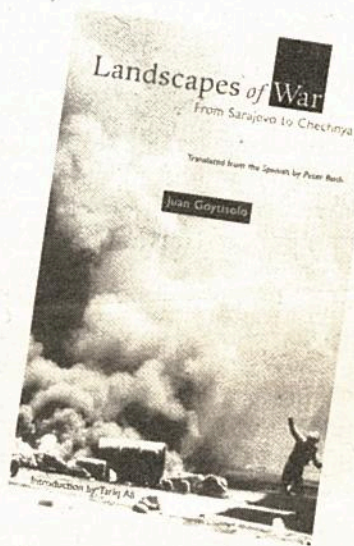
Yet while Muslim civilians suffer the brunt of the brutality in these wars, skirmishes, and insurrections, Goytisolo does not turn to the West as the ultimate responsible party. Yes, Western countries directly or indirectly supply many of the weapons and act as miserly keeper of ever-precious humanitarian aid — points that Goytisolo lays out laced with bitterness — yet they are not where he directs his most impassioned attention. What lays at the heart of Goytisolo's essays and leads up to his final essay on "Approaches to Islam" is not how Muslim countries could have allowed the West to devastate them, but how they can stop the destruction of close-mindedness in themselves.

"The conflict, in its present phase," writes Goytisolo, "is less between the West and Islam — however much the reality of the arrogant, domineering West, alert only to its neocolonial interests, is demonized... — than between Islamists and non-Islamists, traditionalists and reformers, the religious and the secular *within Islam itself*." (Italics in original.)

Goytisolo argues powerfully for a change that is needed not only to the West's misbeliefs about Islam but also to Islam's own acceptance and tolerance of the differences and riches among its own people. Loosening strict dress codes for

women is one obvious change, yet it is not enough. Muslim leaders enjoy sumptuous lifestyles "while outlawing the climate of freedom that led to their creation as contrary to their own religious principles and social norms." The intellectual classes rail the loudest against the corruption of the West, yet they would also grasp the first opportunity to emigrate.

The new Islam does not require a complete shaking off of everything religious. On the contrary, says Goytisolo, "the reforming impulse... cannot come from outside unless elements exist within the religious nucleus of their own cultural identity ready to generate their own transformation." It is only through this transformation, that, in the words of the 1994 Carthage Declaration, "the grandeur of Muslim civilization... based on pluralism, hybridity, questioning, exploration and exchange... can renew its greatness." ■



Change is needed not only to the West's misbeliefs about Islam but also to Islam's own acceptance and tolerance of the differences and riches among its own people.

Spirit Matters

By Michael Lerner

Walsch Books/Hampton Roads Publishing, 2001

256 pages, \$22.95

Review by Matt Crichton

Michael Lerner believes that most people have a hole inside they don't even know about — a hole that the new car, the bigger house, and the other toys will never fill. That is the message that Michael Lerner delivers in his book *Spirit Matters*. He shows how deeply spirituality matters in our daily lives — and how deeply we suffer because our spiritual needs are constantly denied.

What is this spirit stuff? Lerner says that it is seeing the awe and wonder of nature and the potential in each and every human being. But spirituality does not have to be equated with conceiving of a God. There are many spiritual people who do not see God as the source of creation. Do you feel there are things that cannot be purchased? This is one aspect of spirituality that Lerner's book explores.

Our materialistic world doesn't exactly foster spirituality. The consumer marketplace celebrates those who are successful at looking out for Number One, and ridicules those motivated toward a higher purpose. Our physical world — our Mother Earth — and our emotional and spiritual lives are in great peril, and there are many forces pushing us into the role of mindless observers of the next new fad beamed down from Madison Avenue.

This slow destruction will not be reversed until each one of us makes a conscious decision that things can be better, says Lerner. Things can be better than they are, but many people don't realize this. We would like to live in a different world, but we feel one person cannot make an impact. Most people do not know that there is a deeper reality shared by all humans, but have an uneasy feeling that something is missing from their lives. We are fascinated and repelled by the poverty around us, and hopeless to change it alone.

Lerner describes "growing up" as "coming down" from a higher level of awareness we had as children. How often do you see childlike expressions, radiant with joy, on the faces of adults? Society and its ways hurt us deeply. Our cynicism and pessimism is our protection, but it eats away at our insides.

A fundamental problem is the lack of meaning. With so many images being flashed at us through TV and other advertising, many of us don't have time — or the will — to stop and reflect on what is really important to us. Talking about spirit is also hard in the public realm — our language is so limited.

Lerner comes right out and says, "I know that my perspective isn't 'the truth' but 'a truth.'" You don't believe in this "spirit" stuff? Think it is only for monk-like people? Lerner asks the reader to consider the ideas in his book and look at their own life and the things going on in it and take the parts that relate most to them. Not all of it will. "Please take time to connect to whatever spiritual reality does seem real to you." If you are totally against the idea of spirituality, don't read any farther than this review. His book wants you to slow down long enough to listen to your heart and do what you feel is right. ■



Street People: Short Stories

By Paul Perry

Pocol Press, Clifton, VA

2000

paperback, 163 pages

\$14.95

Review by Aubrey Hiers

Strict People, a compilation of short fiction written by Paul Perry, tells the tales that are typically ignored or romanticized by many writers. Perry gives voice to people who are seldom heard and often misunderstood. This series of hitchhikers, prostitutes, prisoners, battered women, runaway teens, winos, people living under bridges, and drug addicts returns humanity to the often cold perception of the down-and-out.

This is not a warm and fuzzy rendition of street life. This is not chicken soup for anyone's soul. True, some of

the stories revolve around moments of accepting and appreciating a situation. However, these shorts tell it like it is and they tell it all.

In one story, a man sits next to the by-way, stone dead for a week, before his buddies find him. It is then another two weeks before the cars that pass bother to read the sign they propped up on him that says "I am dead!" In another, Lupe, a woman who goes to visit her son in prison each week, calls herself a "lifer."

There is a car thief named Karl, followed by a runaway teen named Bobb who falls in love with an abandoned yellow car. Sylvia has a perfect middle class life until she catches her husband sleeping with both the neighbors, she is fired, and her husband sells the house. That is when Sylvia takes to the streets. Millie walks off the street corner to have her premature baby, the runs away when she realizes her pim-

The Post-Corporate World: Life after Capitalism

By David C. Korten
Berret Koehler, 2000
paperback, 300 pages
\$18.00

Review by Anita Freeman

"To create a world in which life can flourish and prosper we must replace the values and institutions of capitalism with values and institutions that honor life, serve life's needs, and restore money to its proper role as servant."

—David C. Korten,
from a presentation in Canada, 11/98

The *Post-Corporate World* is basically a book for people who are already un-happy with our current economic system and are looking for a practical replacement. Korten proposes creating a new life-myth for our culture to replace the Capitalist Ideal, then living as if that vision was here. This idea is philosophically and psychologically sound. In both his poetic images and his accounts of real people doing real projects, Korten is inspiring and encouraging.

If you are looking for pragmatic arguments to persuade your Libertarian friends that you're not an idealistic air-head, hide this book. With all the lines about rising planetary consciousness and shifting paradigms, I got queasy, and I grew up on theosophy.

To be fair, Korten has solid facts and critique. He points out, for instance, that Adam Smith's "free market" that capitalists so passionately defend as the foundation of democracy was based on these essential elements:

- Buyers and sellers must be too small to influence the market price.
- Complete information must be available to all participants and there can be no trade secrets.
- Sellers must bear the full cost of the products they sell and pass them on in the sale price.
- Investment capital must remain within national borders and trade between countries must be balanced.
- Savings must be invested in the creation of productive capital.

If you want a detailed explanation of how what we have does not fit those

criteria, Korten provides it. He also details the alternative, the "mindful market," which includes:

- An index of economic prosperity based on the standard of living, high literacy rate, low infant mortality and child hunger, health of the environment — not stock prices and amount of money being spent.
- Businesses bearing the cost of their own decisions, not pushing them off on the government in corporate bailouts or on the consumer in government-subsidized prices.
- Encouraging locally-owned, small-scale firms, run by people who have a stake in the effect of the business on its community and environment.
- Maintaining an ethical culture.
- Actively working for equity.
- Honoring government's necessary role in enforcing equity and ethics in the market.

Seattle is currently experiencing the results of a runaway capitalism that has no mechanisms to make it mindful. Several thousand millionaires driving prices up while the wages of the majority of

our residents do not rise to meet them is a textbook illustration of shareholders making monetary wealth by draining the living wealth of the stakeholders. A perfect example of the corporate market versus the mindful market is Boeing's decision to move its corporate headquarters to another location. Because they won't be living here anymore, Boeing's executives will be able to make business decisions that affect Seattle without being distracted by considerations of the effect on the community.

"The market is a sophisticated, but somewhat fragile mechanism for organizing economic life," writes Korten. "[...] Each individual contributes to the whole while meeting their own needs with maximum freedom in the exercise of responsible choice. The healthy market thus encourages diversity, individual initiative and creativity, and productive effort."

It worries me that the dense language and mystical, poetic imagery of David Korten may prevent these core ideas from reaching the people we really have to convince. Perhaps if we read and apply it ourselves, we can reach them. ■

Have a Great One! A Homeless Man's Story

By Laurie Anthony
Anthony Publishing, 1999
Box 3522
Dublin, OH 43016
\$12.95 + \$3.20 shipping + handling

Review by Anita Freeman

In 1998, Laurie Anthony took a year off from teaching. She and her husband T.J. moved from Columbus Ohio to Manhattan so that their son Joey could attend the Professional Performing Arts High School. After a lifetime of donating to the needy and working with her students to do the same, she was face to face with homeless people.

Forming a friendship with J.C., a charming panhandler on the corner of Seventh Avenue and 57th Street, Anthony began to research homelessness. She and J.C. began this book as a joint project to tell the world J.C.'s story, and through him, the story of homelessness.

"Relating to someone who had a unique perception of reality, and finding ways to form a genuine relationship... was an ongoing challenge. ...but once I accepted his reality as his own, I was able to return to genuine compassion."

— Author Laurie Anthony

The project transformed both their lives.

This is a tale of healing through relationship. Both J.C. and Anthony make journeys that take them from fear and isolation to a greater sense of responsibility for their world.

It is also a thorough discussion on homelessness, far more clearly and in far less room (198 pages) than any of the other treatises I have read over the years: from who the homeless are and why they are homeless, to what shelters are like, what programs really

work, and where you can find out more information.

Laurie Anthony is a remarkable person to start with, possessing both the investigative skills to seek the truth about homelessness and about J.C. and the emotional skills to confront her fears and J.C.'s.

"My time spent with J.C. was a learning experience for me," writes Anthony. "Relating to someone who had a unique perception of reality, and finding ways to form a genuine relationship in spite

of that, was an ongoing challenge. Many of my feelings surfaced—feelings of anger, frustration and powerlessness, but once I accepted his reality as his own, I was able to return to genuine compassion. My struggle was a difficult one, but I finally felt at peace with myself."

Anthony's patience did not extend to dealing with the traditional publishing world, and she published this book herself. She has a website <http://www.anotherwaytohelptothehomeless.com>, which not only markets this book, but also presents information about homelessness and ways to help, reviews other books, assists networking, and grows daily.

J.C.'s story is not a simple one, but as Anthony unfolds it we can recognize, as she does, that although we all make bad choices at times, looking back, we all made the best choices we could.

"The story I did get from J.C., although incomplete, was more than just words," Anthony describes. "His story was about the resiliency of the human spirit and mind when faced with difficulties. It was about human weakness and pain and the importance of forgiving ourselves for our imperfections. And mostly, it was about the goodness that lies deep inside us, even when our clothes are tattered and our emotions are troubled. That goodness, that pure state of unselfish love, is the cord that holds us all together. I found it in J.C.—and he found it in me."

Pain and punishment seldom helps people to make better choices; love and support does. J.C. got love and support from Anthony, and from others; he also receives 50% of the profits from the sale of this book. He has been in an apartment for over a year now. ■

is going to sell the child.

There is the social worker at a women's shelter, the AIDS patient and her volunteer driver, the wino trying to recover his stolen shoes. This book covers homeless life from the point of view of those on the street to those working in social programs. Perry impressively shifts perspectives between social, gender, and age differences.

Street People serves one audience, humans. It is something that members of the fringe society will relate to and mainstream Americans can learn from. Unfortunately, not everyone has the time, patience, or comfort level to approach a stranger and begin a conversation discussing life experiences. Too often it is forgotten that it is through the exchange of stories that understanding is reached and wisdom is exchanged. Perry presents a book that broadens the view of many individuals who are frequently regarded through a

narrow perspective.

I admit *Street People* is not a groundbreaking book of literary genius, but it is a well written and easy to read book. It is not *Dubliners*, but it does show ordinary people finding epiphany in daily activities. *Street People* is the perfect book when you are sitting on the bus, avoiding strangers' eyes, but curious about someone else's life. There is plenty of time on the 43, between Broadway and Third Avenue, to read at least one account with your "sheltered" eyes. ■



Laurie Anthony is currently working on a children's book, *Saturday's Cups*, the story of a young girl and her mother who go into the city each Saturday to visit their homeless friends. She is also collecting notes for a book continuing the story of "J.C. and me."

Book Reviews

Change Room

By Mark Cochrane
Talonbooks, 2000
142 pages, \$11.95

Sparks from the Fire

By Sandy Cameron
Lazara Press (lazara@web.ca), 2000
86 pages, \$14.95 (Canadian)

Review by Adam Holdorf

In poetry, as in a lot of literature, a good story is not quite enough. Who's hiding behind that pen? We want full disclosure. And a poem is a poor scrap to hide a person — less space to dip a detail under a subordinate clause. So it's no surprise that poets have to supply a certain amount of autobiographical facts along with their more timeless truth. Dead poets, compressed into prefaced anthologies, serve this purpose best. Both of these Vancouver poets are alive, and they put together their books in the face of the voyeur's demands. While Sandy Cameron sees the autobiographical expression as a prerequisite to his poetry, Mark Cochrane is playing a slippery shell game.

The three-part *Sparks from the Fire* begins with 13 poems on "Inheritance," concerning the descent of men from what they learn from fathers, mothers, uncles and other elders. In the first poem, he hears his father's war night-

mares in the middle of the night: "crouched on the stairs as a small boy... I heard the sound of weeping, / and gazed in the green night with eyes of stone." The older miner sat apart from his co-workers: "Other men told me / he was a holy terror / when he got drinking, / but they didn't laugh about it / as they did with some of the others. / 'It was the war,' they said."

These ghosts of terror come in dreams and hearsay, until they materialize in the final poem: "I met him on the path down to the lake / A drunkard stumbling to a dismal fate. / He held a bottle tightly in one hand / And with the other touched the sacred land. / He talked of murder and of suicide / I felt the doors of hell had opened wide. / Eyes seeing what I did not dare to see / My mirror image reaching out to me."

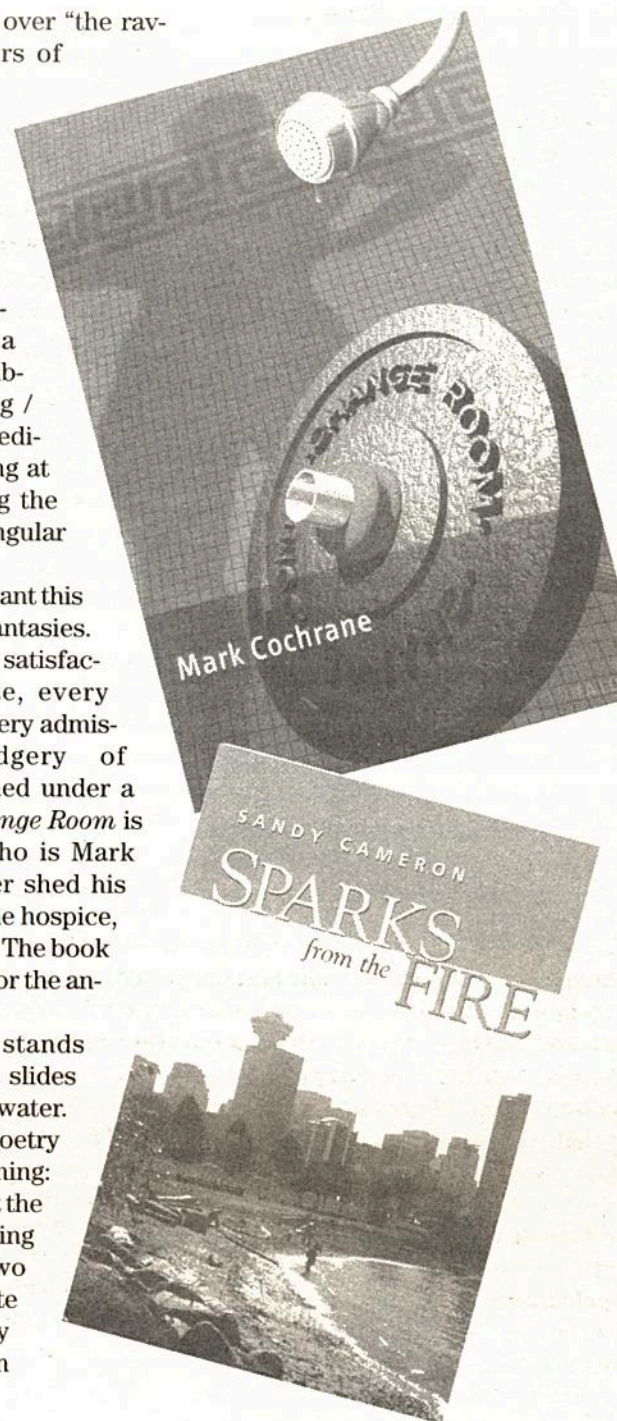
Cameron's horror spurs him on to action, just as similar apparitions — in our memories, in our communities — spur us all on. The next two parts chronicle his work, first as a teacher and then just a participant struggling to understand his connection with these realities across British Columbia.

Cochrane has his own mirror images — in the polished steel of a gym where vanity rules, commanding its adherents to move in "thralldom to the StairMaster, the Master of Stairs, the rack with a name straight out of S/M or D&D." In "Platinum Athletic Club,"

Cochrane rhapsodizes over "the ravenous / entrepreneurs of lean mass, & a parking lot / full of Beemers," then confesses, "I hate this place / but can find no better way to hammer out my days." His "dull disciplines" are "a substitute for writing... a substitute for faith. A substitute for hang-gliding / cleaning the toilet / meditation: / for volunteering at the hospice / or feeling the full present / of her singular love."

Sympathizing, you want this man to step out of his fantasies. He won't give you the satisfaction. At the end note, every Whitmanesque lyric, every admission to the drudgery of weightlifting, is drowned under a foggy declaration: "*Change Room* is a work of fiction." Who is Mark Cochrane? Will he ever shed his narcissism and go try the hospice, or hang-gliding, or love? The book finally says, don't look for the answer here.

Cameron's poetry stands like a rock; Cochrane's slides out of your grasp like water. But they're using their poetry to describe the same thing: themselves, going about the lifelong labors of building their identities. If the two looked up from opposite ends of their assembly line, I doubt they'd even see each other. ■



Memorial

Balancing the Blues

A loving look at Randy Ritter

By Toni Ritter

[Ed. note: In "For a Pike Market Friend," (April 5), Artis the Spoonman memorialized a fellow street performer; "scruffy, derelict, and strung out on heroin for maybe 20 years," and shared his sorrow that he couldn't get Randy into treatment for his drug problem. Often at Real Change, those we remember have few family left. In Randy's case, his loving ex-wife is still with us. Here she offers her own intimate memories.]

I took a walk this morning through the alleys of the U-District, where Randy and I so often walked early in the '90s. Back then, he wasn't as scruffy as he appears in this picture, nor was he heroin-addicted — though he was often fortified with a few shots of bourbon. In the crisp chill of sunrise I could still feel the warmth of his strong, callused, guitar-pickin', flute-playing hand as I tried to summon the words

to celebrate his life in light of the inaccuracies in the memorial printed in the last *Real Change*.

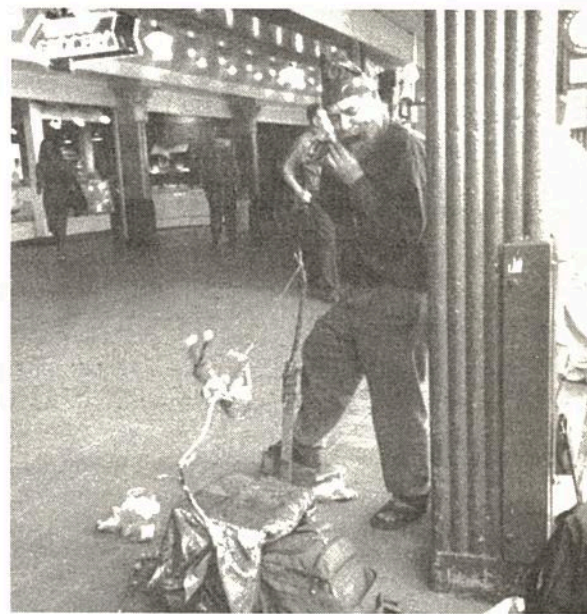
Randy was a gentle and loving man. He loved a world which didn't always love him back. It was a privilege to have shared his life.

Randy Ritter died March 9 at Harborview Hospital with his dad, stepmom, and younger brother at his side. His son gave permission to discontinue life support, knowing that Randy wouldn't have wanted it. Also surviving Randy are his daughter and mom, two sisters, and an older brother.

Though both alcohol and opiates were in Randy's system, legally requir-

ing a post-mortem, he did not O.D., but died of a composite of factors, some of which remain unclear.

Randy's reality was not like ours. He coasted the high crests of bipolar disorder and tumbled in the waves of its depression — knowing little calm water in between. His intense energy expressed itself through his art and his music: energetic puppet show performances, portfolios full of painting and sketching. He could cook up a mean pot of chili, and cut out an elaborate lace doily of art paper. He would arrange a bouquet of flowers and a candle on the doily, to greet me when I came home from work. Randy was a gentle and loving man. He loved a world which didn't always love him back. It was a privilege to



RANDY RITTER PERFORMING AT THE PIKE PLACE MARKET LAST FALL. PHOTO COURTESY OF TONI RITTER

have shared his life as Mrs. Randy Ritter. But now it's time to give the floor to our troubadour and let Randy tell it in his own words, from a song he wrote years ago at the close of a Folklife Festival where he'd performed with his puppets, Jethro and Peggy Sue:

"Thank God for the chance / to have played for you all / I made 'em dance and took a glance into the heart / of or and all, and / we had a ball." ■

RICH Continued from Page 1

Real Change: We wanted to ask about a phrase you used in an interview — “radical happiness” — that you said was a touchstone for you in your work; happiness that comes from public participation in a process for real change. When have you witnessed or experienced that kind of radical happiness?

Adrienne Rich: Well, it's interesting that you ask me that, because I just got back from Chile, from an International Poetry Festival, and I realized after I'd been there a day and a half that I was witnessing a huge expression of public happiness. And it's about the end of the dictatorship, it's about the new hope that's in the country at large, it's about the fact that they've got a democratically-elected socialist government again — not as left-wing as Allende's government was, but still, more in that direction. And they again have freedom of expression. People are not terrorized, they're not being disappeared; people are not being tortured, and they have such a strong tradition of poetic life and poetic culture in that country that this festival drew crowds of 50,000 people at a time.

People have said to me, what does it feel like reading to 50,000 people, but you don't even think of yourself as doing that, it's *seeing* 50,000 people listening to poetry, who are *there* because it is poetry. It's just something we don't see here. It was important to me to be there, coming out of a time of such hopelessness, to be in a country where new hope is emerging, particularly among young people who maybe were very small if they were even alive during the early time of the coup. But they are learning the history of what happened, trying to take it in. That was to me the most marvelous demonstration of anything I'd ever dreamed of when I wrote about radical happiness.

I would like to think that at different times and places you've felt that here in Seattle—

RC: — During the WTO —

Rich: In a true sense, even the little that was coming over the media, it inspired

Excerpt from *Arts of the Possible: Essays and Conversations*

by Adrienne Rich

What prose I wrote in the 1990s was fired by a hope of bringing together ideas that had been forcibly severed from each other or thrown into competition.... Sometimes I felt ideas that attracted me mutually repelling each other. Or I felt the shortcomings of my own language pitted against a lethargic liberalism or a despicable rhetoric of “spin.” Sometimes it all seemed mere Sisyphean effort, pushing uphill and futureless a rock bearing sweaty handprints of so many others.

But Sisyphus is not, finally, a useful image. You don't roll some unitary boulder of language or justice uphill; you try with others to assist in cutting and laying many stones, designing a foundation.

people all over the country. It gave everybody hope at a very tough time. You sent out sparks of radical happiness from Seattle during the WTO, I can say that.

RC: What makes you angry?

Rich: I think, complacency makes me very angry. The kind of complacency that either doesn't want to see, or that's seeing and knowing [that] it's gliding over the truth.

RC: In *What Is Found There you wrote, “The question for the North American poet is how to bear witness to a reality from which the public — and maybe part of the poet — wants to turn away.”* What realities do you see us turning away from?

Rich: Well, until recently, until the stock market fell, these were supposed to be the best times in history, this was supposed to be the happiest country in the world; everybody was supposedly doing well, and I mean it was all a lie, of course. The realities of who is not on that side of the equation... that's what people have wanted to turn their eyes away from, and have successfully

turned their eyes away from. And then ultimately blaming the victims of the society for their own problems, and accusing them of creating the problems.

RC: That's happening more and more here. There's a new computerized tracking system they're proposing, to track homeless people from service to service as though the reason they're homeless is their own fault.

Rich: So they're sort of like a virus or something that's travelling through the system?!

RC: How do you identify the things that you yourself turn away from and then turn yourself back to?

Rich: That's a very painful matter, and some of it is kind of like trying to see what you don't see. I've lived all my life as a middle-class person, and I've never been hungry and I've never not had a roof over my head. And that puts you

in a certain position. It makes you assume that those are the conditions that everyone lives under. If someone doesn't have those advantages then it must be their fault.

I feel it in myself, I feel it all around me, a tremendous way of turning one's eyes away by saying that person doesn't deserve my vision, doesn't deserve my attention. It's very painful to realize the extent to which one has been brainwashed.

I find that sometimes my dreams will tell me things that I am not consciously wanting to know — things about society, things about people.

RC: Who are some of your heroes and heroines?

Rich: You know, I always feel when I'm asked that I'm going to leave out the most important names. I think of Muriel Rukeyser, whom I wrote about in this book, and who is still kind of an exemplary figure for me, in terms of what she *did* see, and *did* say, and *did* embody, and *did* exemplify.

I think about someone like Eduardo Galeano, a Latin American who's also published widely here, who writes a lot about the accountability of the writer and the necessity for the writer to look into what he calls “the open veins of the society.” Who believes that it's important to do that and at the same time not to feel that writing and language and literature are going to solve everything, because they won't.

A lot of my heroes are writers because they were the people who've shown me ways of possibly being or paths to start.

RC: You used the image of building a foundation... your work and ours, it's all the same building. Thank you so much for deconstructing the myth of *Sisyphus*, because it's not just one of us alone pushing that boulder up the hill, it's all of us together.

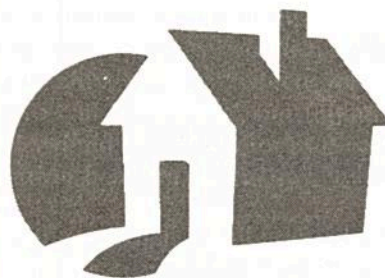
Rich: I know. I know. It's a relief to realize that. ■

“Complacency makes me very angry. The kind of complacency that either doesn't want to see, or that's seeing and knowing [that] it's gliding over the truth.”

— Adrienne Rich

VOLUNTEER TUTORS

Help at-risk youth succeed in school by volunteering with Catholic Community Service's Youth Tutoring Program. Tutor elementary, middle or high school youth living in low-income public housing. Help with skill building in reading & math, assist with homework/computer activities, play educational games, and encourage children to succeed. 6 tutoring centers located in NE, central, SE and SW Seattle. Centers are managed by qualified teaching staff & are equipped with lots of learning resources. Tutor 2 hours a week for 6 months. Initial orientation/training provided. (This is a non-religious program). For more info., call Karen at (206) 328-5659. Visit our website at www.ytpseattle.org



PorchLight

Community Services of the Seattle Housing Authority

907 NW Ballard Way, #200, Seattle (near 8th Avenue NW and Leary Way) (206) 239-1500

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- ✓ public housing
- ✓ senior housing
- ✓ housing choice vouchers (“Section 8” rent subsidy program)

Open Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Accessible by the Number 28 bus from downtown.
Free PorchLight shuttle runs from Seattle Housing Authority's central office building, 120 6th Avenue N.



Imagine what it would have been like if Emily Dickinson had ever been homeless. I think we can say this much for sure: it would have been a drag on her career. Ha, ha, just kidding. No, seriously, her whole image would have been blown! She was so far from being homeless, she was the Anti-Homeless Poet. Any ideas she might have had on the subject would have been purely theoretical.

Emily Dickinson said, "There is no frigate like a book to take us lands away." Likewise, there is no frigate like a pair of old dirty gym socks to haul our breath to China to be sold into slavery. Another exceptional frigate is the homeless frigate. Where does the homeless frigate take us? Could we get there some other way? What's with the hardtack and salted limes? Shuffleboard, anyone?

Maybe since the book frigate takes us on a world cruise, the homeless frigate does the opposite: it takes us to a house in the middle of Amherst.

Come to think of it, Emily was pretty theoretical on most subjects, wasn't she? Emily Dickinson called hope the thing with feathers. If Emily had your hope, what kind of thing would it be? My hope is the thing with pizza stains down its front. Maybe your hope has chocolate all over its face.

According to Emily, a word starts to live when you say it. That means she was an early exponent of meme theory. She must have known that the only way to kill words outright is to delete them from all memory files. It's like killing blackberries: The only practical way to kill them in your own back yard is to crowd them out with something worse. Go ahead, try it. Kill the word "is." Good luck.

"A wounded deer leaps the highest." How would Emily have known? What was she, some kind of sadist, wandering through the forest poking various animals in the butt? Maybe the wolverine jumps higher, huh? Always the theorist.

Then again, maybe she was torturing more than just animals. She also said, "I like a look of agony, / Because I know it's true; / Men do not sham convulsion, / Nor simulate a throe." Could this be insight born of experiment?

"Where thou art, that is home." All afternoon my roof leaked. It had a hole in it as big as the sky. No, wait, that *was* the sky. Doh.

Poverty Is the Gust

by ©Dr. Wes Browning
(sing to the tune of the *Gilligan's Island* Theme)

Poverty is the blowing Gust
That flattens us to the dirt
And drags us down an ugly ditch,
While ripping up our shirt;

It leaves us there, but lookit how
We build ourselves a yurt,
We're a little worn and slightly torn
We add up all the hurt.

Speaking of hurt, I notice from the news reports that the Liberty Bell was seriously injured by a homeless man the other day.

Let me get this straight. A piece of crap bell that was given to us by the English in 1752 and never worked is so important to us that if anyone should dent it they get locked up?

Frank Eidmann, director of special projects for the Independence National Historic Park, had this to say: "Anyone who attacks a national symbol is disturbed. What he was disturbed about, we don't know."

Gosh, I don't know, Frank, let me think... could it be because he was homeless, Frank, could that be the problem??!!

The man could get five years for, among other things, "damaging an archaeological resource." (I'm not making this up.)

The Liberty Bell is not an archaeological resource. It's a piece of junk, which was used by the Abolitionists to symbolize this country's failure to live up to its promise of freedom for all. That is how it got its name, that is the only reason it has been preserved.

All this man did was remind us of that fact. ■

Street Girl

Her youth is the only beauty
left on her pockmarked face.
Her needle tracks in the sunlight
are old and tattered lace.

There is no mother to hold her,
just men who treat her rough.
They give her beer and cigarettes
and tell her that she's tough.

No daddy taught her she's worthy,
no one kept her safe.
No do-gooder ever understood
this lost and lonely waif.

She shoots her dope with dirty rigs...
sells the only thing she owns.
She sleeps along the roughened path,
amid the filth and stones.

Ask her why — she'll look at you,
then laugh right in your face.
She has run and spun and tiptoed,
but she's lost the human race.

—SHERRY ASBURY

The Poor Man Admires the Humvee Stretch Limo

Coming off the freeway
go right hard down hill
magwheeled van coming up
spins wheels on wet asphalt

We park in front of perched
black men and women brown bagging
against the cold looking on
as we lock the car

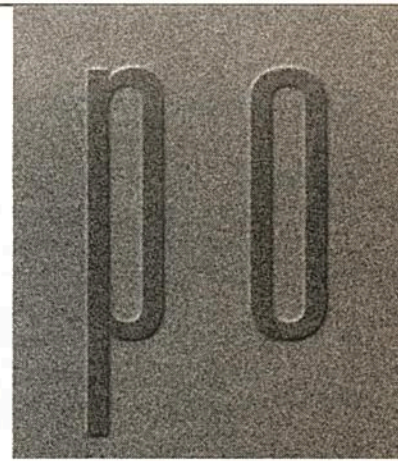
Hurry downhill toward Puget Sound
a man scurrying uphill
hatless wet haired breathing hard
says to me

"Do you see the Humvee limo?"
pointing across the street
military specifications stretched
to fit wealthy demands

a white low-slung coffin
recut to take in the worthy
and leave the rest behind
a barge of metallicized money

beating up the asphalt Nile
like Cleopatra on her way to Marc Anthony
admired by the poor on the shore
nothing changed since then and now

—DAVID THORNBRUGH



Sexual

The Statue
becomes t
of holding
No one wa
yearning t
I was livin
of elephar
and tosse
welded sh
fused into
pitch man
street wal
for freedo
on TV, a s
can take p
care what

t r y

easy days

some days easy days
i sang songs those days

when winter playing
with nuts all over the ground
i saw snow's face grin

let orange shadows fall
gloves on alleys outside my arms
pressing sky's white winds

marvelous snow flake
all laid out in the dust of ice
got my snow shoes on

—ETABU ETABUI

Queen's Prisoner

No vacation here,
No currency, even, to spare yourself—

Police will get creative with your empty pockets,
Manufacture charges and,
Arrest you just the same.

We teach these City Jails to that nation,
Exchange system for the poor who trade the risk of

Sleeping out of doors and rabid skunks for
Peeling dirty paint and panels of steel grating cots,

Exposed bare-metal toilets
Vend staph infection, typhoid.

Choking down these agonies,
Again you stare in the tears of other men.

—HANS LILLEGARD

ation for the Statue of Liberty

ty has a sex change
reen Giant. "I got tired
ned lamp beside the golden door.
red huddled masses
crap anymore,
ast iron breasts the size
off by arc welders
harbor, heroic labia
uitably grandiose phallus
at do you think makes the frozen vegetable
New York's most prominent
iger whores herself
n but hawks frozen peas
career change the free enterprise system
nd who but a few scruffy intellectuals
h think of us?

—DAVID THORNBRUGH

Howdy Doo Like an Angel

It's too cruel to see
how you have been used
close your eyes for it seems that way
you can see completely to forever
but no clue appears as to the author of your pain
no whisper of intuition
no sign no mark on the wall
when you open your eyes
numerous hands, numerous strangers
but nothing betrays the demon in your blood
howdy doo like an angel.

City spins around ya
bridges umbrella your head
the garrulous streets scrape your shoes into rags
your dreams into rubble
as paperdolls pad the pages of newspaper chairs
seats made of concrete and ashes
howdy doo like an angel.

The book of morality
came laden with firefights
your response time was fast
as the radar of bats
but a big piece of the moon
dropped out of the sky
and fell on you all dead weight.
Free men are fools for a luckless fate.
Howdy Doo like an Angel.

—MAC CRARY

poetry

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left on her pockmarked face.
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are old and tattered lace.

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easy days

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The Poor Man Admires the Humvee Stretch Limo

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admired by the poor on the shore
nothing changed since then and now

—DAVID THORNBRUGH

Sexual Liberation for the Statue of Liberty

The Statue of Liberty has a sex change
becomes the Jolly Green Giant. "I got tired
of holding that damned lamp beside the golden door.
No one wants the tired huddled masses
yearning to be free crap anymore,
I was living a lie." Cast iron breasts the size
of elephants lopped off by arc welders
and tossed into the harbor, heroic labia
welded shut and a suitably grandiose phallus
fused into place, what do you think makes the frozen vegetable
pitch man so jolly? New York's most prominent
street walker no longer whores herself
for freedom's illusion but hawks frozen peas
on TV, a successful career change the free enterprise system
can take pride in, and who but a few scruffy intellectuals
care what the French think of us?

—DAVID THORNBRUGH

Queen

No vaca
No curr

Police w
Manufac
Arrest y

We teach
Exchange

Sleeping
Peeling

Exposec
Vend sta

Choking
Again yo

Bad Luck: A Horror Story

What drove a man to homelessness, drink, suicide attempts—and finally murder

By John Merriam

This is a true story. Names have been changed to protect the attorney-client privilege, to protect the privacy of the characters, and to keep the author from getting sued.

Shelby was born under a bad sign. I thought he should have had "BAD LUCK" tattooed on his forehead, so he'd never forget that nothing would come easy in this life. He didn't use all the muscles in his head. He made some bad choices. There was a dark side to him I never saw. But a lot of what happened to Shelby was just from lousy rolls of the dice.

I was his second lawyer, after he got hurt working on a fishing boat in Alaska. His first lawyer asked me to take over when Shelby's bad luck caused the case to become time-consuming and complicated.

When I met him, Shelby was a 40-year-old bear of a man, 6 feet tall, 300 pounds, and barrel-chested. His head was shaved and his large, heavily muscled arms were completely covered with tattoos, from shoulder to wrist. By his own account, he was born unwanted in Los Angeles and put up for adoption. At age 1, a couple from Memphis, Tennessee, took him home to grow up near the Mississippi River. As a teenager he smoked cigarettes, did some drugs, and developed a problem with alcohol.

After graduating from high school in 1978, Shelby went downriver and spent most of his adult life near Gulfport, Mississippi. He quit drinking — with occasional relapses — and worked construction, and on shrimp boats in the Gulf of Mexico. He married and adopted a daughter of his own, Carmen, born in 1988. He got hurt quite a few times at work, mostly on construction jobs, but always bounced back. Both his adoptive parents were killed in a car accident in 1998. Shelby headed north later that year to escape a marriage gone bad.

In January 1999, Shelby got a job as a deckhand aboard a 170-foot processing boat bound for the pollock and cod fishery in Alaska. The *Pacific Prowess* was a 472-ton ship built in Olympia just after World War II and later converted for fishing. She stayed near smaller catcher boats and processed the fish they brought, or took the catch to canneries on land. Shelby was to work long hours for \$6 per hour, plus overtime after 40 hours per week.

Shelby got hurt the month after he joined the *Pacific Prowess*. He was walking forward on the main deck around midnight, working the spring line as the vessel moored in a lonely northern port. There was a hawsehole on deck near the bow, designed to let a thick anchor chain play out from the forepeak until the heavy anchor finds its resting place. The opening wasn't covered and floodlights from the wheelhouse were not turned on. Shelby stepped into the hawsehole. He screamed as his left leg plunged in to the hip, wrenching his back. Other deckhands pulled him out.

Shelby tried to keep working but finally could stand the pain no longer. The captain let him go to the hospital in Kodiak. The Alaska doctor told him to quit working and take it easy for a while, until the problem in his back could be properly diagnosed. After he spent a few days in a Kodiak motel, the fishing company gave him a ticket to Seattle.

Shelby stayed at the Bread of Life Mission for four or five days, trying to get the fishing company to authorize a doctor visit. Their insurance adjuster finally showed up, a woman named Laura.

Laura took Shelby to an orthopedist, Dr. St. John, on Pill Hill. The doctor put him through some tests, told him not to work for at least a month, prescribed a muscle relaxant called Soma, and determined that Shelby had a bulge in his spine at the fourth lumbar disc. Laura had already arranged a motel room for Shelby that night, on Aurora Avenue. When she heard about the treatment the doctor recommended, Laura bought Shelby a plane ticket to New Orleans, a 50-mile bus ride away from his home in Mississippi. Shelby later told

me that Laura said: "You don't expect the fishing company to pay for your hotel while you go through treatment, do you?"

Laura hustled Shelby off to the airport on March 3, 1999. He saw a lawyer the evening before he left, wondering if Laura really had his best interests at heart.

Flying toward the Gulf of Mexico, Shelby dwelled on what Dr. St. John had told him. It started to sink in that he'd never work on boats again, or do any kind of physical labor for that matter. When he got to New Orleans, Shelby learned that his divorce was final, his ex-wife had taken his daughter Carmen to parts unknown, and he no longer had a house. At that point, Shelby ate 15 Soma tablets — the prescribed dose was one tablet three times per day — went to Bourbon Street, and bought a six-pack of beer.

Shelby woke up in Charity Hospital. Although the New Orleans doctors diagnosed him with a high risk for suicide, Shelby was cut loose with the Soma tablets six days later. This time, he made it to the station to catch a bus to Mississippi.

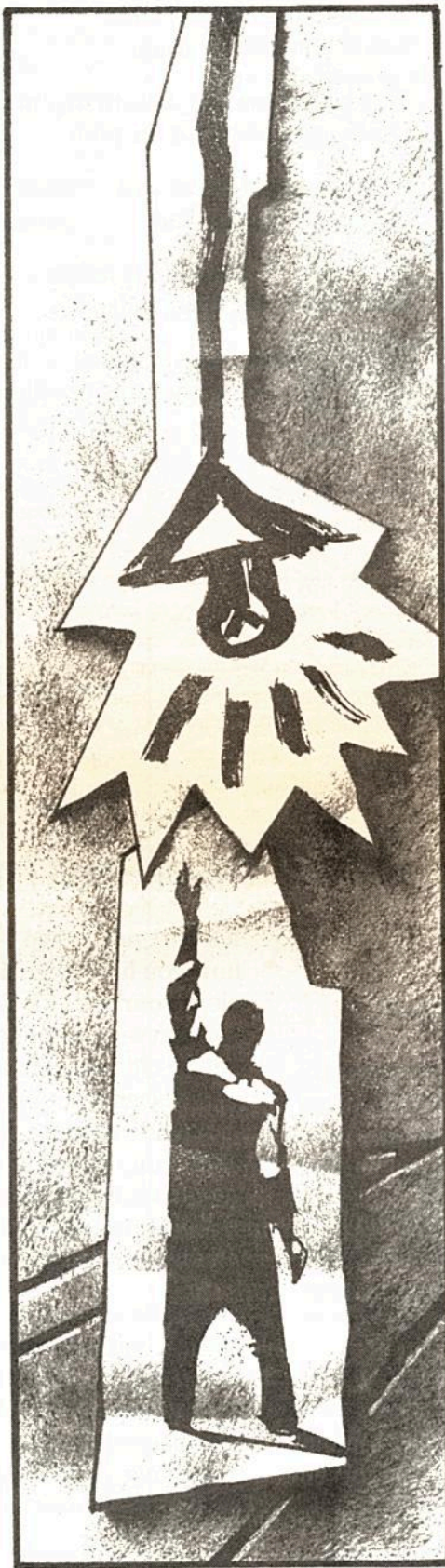
Shelby used beer and his Soma for another try at suicide. He first landed in a Gulfport hospital, then was involuntarily committed by the sheriff's department to a psychiatric hospital in Biloxi. When he was about to be discharged a month later, from a hospital in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, by then, Texas detectives showed up and arrested him as a material witness.

It seemed Shelby had worked a couple years before as a carry at an amusement park in Texas. A young girl had been killed when one of the rides went awry because of shoddy safety practices, the detectives claimed. They were convinced that Shelby knew enough about the lack of safety to convict operators of the amusement park for manslaughter. The operators of the park were not thought to be very nice people. Sometime in April, Shelby was taken to Austin, Texas, and placed in a witness protection program. At this point, Shelby's first lawyer threw his hands up in the air and asked me to take the case.

Shelby was put up at a motel in Austin. His back hurt a lot. He testified later that the Texas cops made it difficult for him to see doctors because they thought it was too dangerous. He made it to doctors' offices anyway, but claimed he could never get treatment because Laura, the insurance adjuster, would never authorize payment of the bills. Shelby swore that he would hand Laura's business card to the billing person at whichever doctor's office he was in, to call for her OK, but the adjusting company in Seattle would tell the doctor's office in Austin that they had never heard of a "Shelby."

Fishermen and other seamen aren't entitled to workers' compensation. Instead, when they're injured on the job, they get a judge-made remedy called "maintenance and cure." The maintenance and cure remedy is about 1,000 years old, starting with the sea codes adopted in the Middle Ages by seafaring states on the Baltic and Mediterranean. It consists of a bare-bones living stipend — \$20 a day is customary for fishermen in this area — and payment of medical bills until the seaman reaches "maximum cure," or as good as he or she is going to get. Laura had given Shelby \$20 a day for the month of March, after Dr. St. John said he couldn't work for at least that long. She refused my request to pay any more than that, claiming Shelby wasn't getting medical attention to improve his condition.

Also included in the maintenance and cure remedy is a limited wage-loss component called "unearned wages" — wages the seaman would have earned, if not for getting sick or hurt — but only for a short time. Unearned wages are due for the immediate period of employment the employer and the worker think the job would have lasted if the seaman had been able to keep working. For fisher-



GRAPHIC BY DANIJEL ZEDEL

Shelby headed north to escape a marriage gone bad. He got a job as a deckhand aboard a 170-foot boat bound for the pollock and cod fishery in Alaska.

men, that usually means the season for a particular species of fish or crab. Shelby had contracted to work aboard the *Pacific Prowess* for the pollock and cod seasons, which he thought would end sometime in June 1999. He left the fishing boat with an injury in February, but told me he had not received any wages for dates after that. I called the insurance adjuster assigned to his case.

I'd never met Laura in person, though we had spoken on the phone many times for other cases. She said that Shelby had been paid unearned wages — perhaps more than he was entitled to — including a plane ticket from Seattle to New Orleans.

"How much did the plane ticket cost?" I inquired.

"I think it was about \$800."

"Why so much?"

"I had to get it on short notice because Shelby decided all of a sudden that he wanted to go home to Mississippi." Laura said she would send me documentation proving that all unearned wages had been paid.

I took over Shelby's case in May 1999. On June 2, I got a call from the office of one Dr. Smith, an orthopedist in Austin, Texas. The woman on the phone said

When he got to New Orleans, Shelby learned that his divorce was final, his ex-wife had taken his daughter Carmen to parts unknown, and he no longer had a house. At that point, Shelby ate 15 Soma tablets, went to Bourbon Street, and bought a six-pack of beer.

that Shelby was there for treatment. She wanted to know how the doctor was to be paid. I gave her Laura's name and number. I didn't find out until later that Laura refused to authorize the treatment.

Laura gave me a lot of reasons why she couldn't obtain the promised documentation proving payment of unearned wages to Shelby. By the end of summer I wearied of waiting and filed a lawsuit in federal court. One of the first things I needed to do was take Laura's deposition to see if she was going to deny, under oath, having been contacted by the office of Dr. Smith in Austin. In the lawsuit, I asserted that the fishing

company, through their insurance adjuster, was interfering with Shelby's recovery by refusing to authorize medical attention. At the outset of the case, I wanted to know whether I was to be Shelby's lawyer or his witness. Under lawyers' ethical rules, I couldn't be both if my credibility was to be challenged at trial. And if Laura took the witness stand and said Dr. Smith's office never phoned her for permission to treat Shelby, credibility would be an issue.

Meanwhile, back in Texas, Shelby was getting frustrated and claustrophobic, to say nothing of having a back that hurt like crazy. He ran away from the witness protection program and hid out for a couple months, "living under a bridge," as he put it. Then he hitchhiked to Seattle.

Shelby appeared at Dr. St. John's office one day in September, without an appointment. The good doctor examined him and wrote a report saying that maintenance and cure should have been paid the whole time, since the doctor's last examination in March. Shelby took a copy of the doctor's report and walked to my office a few miles north, in the University District. It was the first time Shelby and I met in person. We got along well. But there was a whole bunch of stuff Shelby wasn't ready to tell me.

Armed with Dr. St. John's report, I demanded more maintenance-and-cure money for Shelby. By this time I was dealing with the insurance company's lawyer, rather than the adjuster, because the lawsuit had been started. Brett Wagner was a tall man who had opposed me in many cases over the years. He was from the old school of lawyers, someone who could be trusted, and I took him at his word. Brett agreed to start paying Shelby \$20 per day immediately, along with the medical bills, but he said one question would have to await a trial for resolution: Had Shelby been diligently seeking medical attention during his series of suicide attempts and encounters with the Texas detectives, between April and September?

I knew he was right. Brett would have no problem finding a doctor he could pay to dispute Dr. St. John's opinion, and it was unlikely I would be able to persuade a judge, by way of motion, to choose between medical opinions before trial. That's what trials are for. But trial wasn't scheduled until September 2000. I agreed to let Brett schedule Shelby's deposition real quickly, now that he was back in town, to help us both identify which legal issues were in dispute.

Brett worked for a large law firm. Shelby's deposition was taken there, on the 24th floor of an expensive high-rise building in the heart of downtown Seattle. We were seated in a handsomely-appointed conference room with a view of the harbor. Shelby was sworn in by the court reporter, and Brett commenced a seemingly endless stream of questions. Insurance company lawyers are paid by the hour, and get wealthy by looking for dirt under every rock, examining minute details for any possible way to save their clients money. Shelby's background was a fertile field for Brett to plow. When the questioning came around to why he ended up at Charity Hospital in New Orleans, Shelby broke down and started crying. He got up and ran out of the conference room toward the elevators. Fearing another suicide attempt, I requested a recess and followed my client.

I found Shelby at the bottom of the building, outside on a plaza where smokers gather to inhale and meditate on a view of the King County Jail. He'd just lit

a cigarette. I myself had quit smoking almost exactly one year before.

"Hey, Shelby, can I bum a smoke?" I knew I was playing a dangerous game after having beat that habit for such a short time, but I was worried about my client's emotional state. Shelly handed me a cigarette then lit it with a disposable lighter. I coughed and gagged. "What do you roll these things out of, horse manure?"

"No, man, I got store-boughts." He showed me a box of Marlboros.

"I'm not tough enough for this anymore." I was dizzy and almost lost my balance. "Shelby, look, you've got to hang in there until the case gets over with." I snuffed out the cigarette. "If you don't, the fishing company will skate on what they did to you. Get through this or those jerks will get a free ride." He finished his cigarette and pulled himself together. We went to the elevators.

Some insurance lawyers go on the attack whenever they smell vulnerability, regardless of whether it helps their case. My guess is that many of my brethren in the Bar just enjoy being bullies. Back in the conference room with the court reporter, however, Brett cut to the chase and covered the ground he needed. Ever the gentleman, my opponent ended his questioning of Shelby sooner than I'd expected. I asked a few questions, trying to clear up some of my client's answers that seemed unclear, then the deposition was over. Laura was next. Her deposition would take place on a day soon to come, at my office.

I later found out there was good reason for concern about another suicide attempt. My client hadn't confided about the shape he was in when he blew into town that September. Shelby had told me that he went back to the Bread of Life Mission when he returned. Four nights were free, but they charged \$5 per night after that, he said. What he hadn't told me was that he spent his first night in Seattle at Harborview Hospital, after the police brought him in for psychiatric evaluation. When I got records from Harborview — to follow Shelby's treatment for a blood disorder that prevented him from getting back surgery — I learned my client had been picked up by Seattle cops before I even knew he was here. On September 16, police encountered Shelby in Interbay. He had self-inflicted wounds and a blood-alcohol content more than twice as high as needed to convict drunk drivers. He told them that he was trying to kill himself and, at the same time, that he came to Seattle to see a doctor for his back pain. Shelby was released from Harborview, and strolled over to the office of Dr. St. John as though nothing had happened.

It turned out Shelby had a blood problem that complicated everything. He took a blood-thinner called Coumadin because he had blood clots. Dr. St. John wouldn't operate on his back because the Coumadin might cause him to bleed to death during surgery. As near as I could understand from the medical records, Shelby had a condition called portal vein thrombosis, which meant he couldn't have back surgery, even though his back was killing him. Physical therapy was the only alternative. The doctor prescribed physical therapy sessions, but they didn't help Shelby's pain. Dr. St. John ordered an epidural injection that September, to see if his patient would get relief from steroids shot into his spine. Shelby had a bad reaction to the steroid injection and ended up in Swedish Hospital, arriving by ambulance on October 1. He was diagnosed with an enlarged liver and heart, and a spleen that was massively enlarged and at risk of hemorrhage. My client's dissipated youth was catching up with him.

On October 7, Shelby was admitted to Harborview Hospital again — this time for chronic abdominal pain. The doctors there thought he was at risk of bleeding to death if he had an injury to his spleen. They nevertheless gave him more Coumadin because of a portal vein clot.

Shelby again used up the four-free-night limit at the Bread of Life Mission, then took his spleen, liver, and bad blood to live under a bridge. He tried working casual labor, but couldn't put up with the pain in his back from lifting. Twenty dollars a day isn't enough for a stranger to live on anywhere near Seattle, so Shelby didn't stay in motels, joining the ranks of the homeless instead. He never had any money. His eyes were always clear, those times he came to my office, but I had a feeling he was drinking again.

Laura's deposition was scheduled for just before Halloween in the building where I work, a couple blocks off The Ave. The court reporter got there first to set up. My assistant, Marni, showed her upstairs to the conference room where the deposition would take place. Brett and Laura arrived, and I escorted them up.

The court reporter had Laura raise her right hand and swear to tell the truth. I wasn't sure she would, so I got right to the point: "I need to know if I'm to be Shelby's lawyer or his witness."

Laura dodged the question about receiving a call from Dr. Smith's office in Austin, but she didn't deny that I may have gotten one. That was all I needed. If my

Continued on the Next Page

SHELBY Continued from the Previous Page

testimony was undisputed, I could remain Shelby's lawyer. She claimed ignorance about how long pollock and cod season lasted, for purposes of unearned wages.

"Did Shelby receive any unearned wages whatsoever?"

"His airfare from Seattle to Mississippi was considered an advance against wages."

"How much was that?"

"The airfare was either \$375 or \$385." So she'd lied to me earlier, claiming it was \$800.

"Whose idea was it that Shelby go home to Mississippi?"

"Shelby's."

"Did you ever ask Shelby if he thought it was fair that the fishing company pay for his hotel while he underwent therapy in Seattle?"

"I don't remember."

"I notice that in the medical records Dr. St. John writes, 'It is my understanding that the insurance company will require Shelby to go back to Mississippi for his treatment'. Do you have any idea where the doctor got that notion?"

"I don't."

Later, toward the end of the deposition, I returned to the subject of whether she was ever contacted by doctors' offices in the Gulf of Mexico area for permission to provide medical attention to Shelby. Laura conceded that the office of a doctor in Austin had called her on June 2 of that year. She refused to authorize treatment for Shelby, claiming to be unsure of the link between the February 1999 injury and the need for treatment in June. I finished. Brett had no questions and the deposition ended.

"It's cold here." Shelby sat in my office a few days after Laura's deposition. "I'm going back to Mississippi." It didn't seem to me that Seattle even had a winter that year, but I wasn't living on the street.

Shelby hitchhiked south. He phoned in every week or two, but I'm not sure he went to Mississippi. He was hospitalized in San Antonio, Texas, for some of his numerous problems in late November and early December 1999. In January 2000, 11 or 12 of the amusement park operators were indicted by a Texas grand jury. I'm not clear about Shelby's role in those indictments but he told me on January 31 that he'd fled Texas — calling collect from the pay phone at a truck stop that he wouldn't identify — and said he might have pursuers. Shelby was on the lam.

I had been sending my client the \$20-a-day maintenance payments while he was in the Gulf area, but those got cut off when he hit the road, and there were no more medical records to prove to the insurance lawyer that Shelby was getting treatment. Even if I had some money for him, I didn't know where to send it.

Shelby showed up at my office, surprising me, on March 7, 2000. "They found me."

"Who found you?"

"The carnies."

"How do you know?"

"When I was in Texas, a guy came around where I was staying, right after they got indicted, and was asking questions about me. That's when I took off."

"How do you know he wasn't an investigator for the criminal defense lawyers trying to keep those carnies out of jail?"

Shelby paused. "I don't, but I wasn't going to stick around to find out. The only way they could have found me in Texas was through Laura."

"I don't know about that." Shelby sounded paranoid, but he had good reason to be. If Laura was informing the carnies of Shelby's whereabouts, and I told Laura that he was back in town, I could have Shelby's blood on my hands. "I won't tell the insurance company lawyer you're back in town. But if you don't get medical attention, I can't get you any benefits."

"They'd track me through the medical records. I used to work with a guy in Stockton, California, who said I could stay down there with him and his wife, because if I stay here they'll find me through your computer."

"I doubt it, but I'm not very computer-savvy. I'll ask my assistant to take as many precautions as possible in handling your case, without sacrificing efficiency."

Shelby didn't hitchhike to Stockton. He stayed, sleeping under bridges, and applied for public assistance from the State of Washington. He used my office address for correspondence with the Department of Social and Health Services. Fearful of the computer and the carnies, he was going underground, where he wouldn't be getting medical attention — and the maintenance and cure I'd gotten from Brett would be cut off.

About three weeks later, Shelby came in to tell me that a Harborview surgeon informed him his spleen was close to rupturing and had to be removed if he were to live, but that Shelby could bleed to death from the surgery. My client gave new meaning to the term Hobson's choice.

"What are you going to do?"

"The doctor says I got to have the surgery. I'll probably die, but without surgery he says I'll die for sure. I don't want to die in Seattle, John. It's too cold up here. I want to go to Mississippi and see my daughter once more. I'll get it done down there. I've got some time before I have to decide, but he didn't say how much."

"OK, but I want you to make out a will before you leave."

"Can you get me some money from this case to take with me, John?"

"Probably not. Insurance companies prefer paying lawyers to fishermen. They won't pay anything to you until they have to, 'on the courthouse steps,' and trial's not for six months."

"I can't wait that long. I need money to see Carmen before I have surgery."

"Why? Is back child support a problem?"

"No. My ex, Wendy, smokes crack. All she cares about is getting money for more crack. She's on welfare and turns tricks to support her habit. She won't tell me where Carmen is unless I give her money."

"How much money?"

"I don't know; a thousand dollars? John, if I got five grand out of this business I could fly home, see Carmen, and have the operation."

Shelby would be awarded 10, 20, or even 50 times more than that at trial — it was hard to estimate so early in the case. But getting money out of the insurance company before trial was imminent would be as easy as pulling teeth. Subtracting expenses and my one-third contingent fee, I figured the case needed to settle for \$10,000 to put \$5,000 in Shelby's pocket. "I'll see what I can do."

After Shelby left to prowl the streets I put in a message to Brett Wagner, then talked to a lawyer in my building who did wills as part of his practice. "Hey, Bob, what do you charge to draft a simple will? Minimal assets, in fact nothing except the injury case I represent the client on."

"Two hundred dollars."

"My guy is homeless and doesn't have a lengthy life-expectancy."

"One-fifty."

"Deal. I'm working for a contingent fee but I'll personally guarantee payment of your bill." I arranged a meeting between Shelby and Bob for the next day.

The insurance company lawyer returned my call. I picked up the phone. "Christmas for your client came in April this year, Brett. Give me \$10,000 for Shelby, within a week, and the case is over."

Seamen like Shelby are entitled to a trial, by judge or jury, to determine how much they should be compensated for on-the-job injuries, in addition to maintenance, cure, and unearned wages. To receive more than those basic, no-fault entitlements, a seaman has to prove that the injury resulted from an unsafe condition aboard ship, or from the negligence of the employer or a fellow employee. Trials over injury to seamen are like car accident cases: you have to discover who is at fault. If the seaman is not completely responsible for the injury, he or she is entitled to compensation for pain and suffering, and for lost earnings beyond the period for which unearned wages are payable.

"We have witnesses who will say that the deck was lighted and that the hole for the anchor chain was never covered, and wasn't supposed to be. The underwriter takes the position that this injury was your client's own fault."

My opponent was doing the dance he was paid to perform. Better than 95 percent of cases like Shelby's settle, usually just before trial. Brett was paid to bluff — many of his colleagues were willing to lie as well — to convince me he would go to trial and expect to win. He and I both knew that his chances were not good. Even if he did win, the insurance company would probably pay more than \$10,000 in expenses for the trial, mostly on lawyer fees.

I love my job. It's like playing 35 games of chess, simultaneously, for money. But getting ready for trial is an effort both time-consuming and expensive. I have to write a trial brief and motions, line up witnesses, and pay big bucks to doctors to arrange their schedules for testimony. So do my opponents. The settlement dance involves a staring contest over who will spend more time and money getting ready for a trial that won't occur.

"Laura is playing games with how much money Shelby has coming for the last four months of the season. Dr. St. John says he's owed maintenance for at least five and a half months. And I notice that you haven't paid Swedish for handling an allergic reaction Shelby had to the epidural injection. The hospital wants nearly \$2,000 for treatment pretty clearly related to his back injury, even though it hasn't put a lien on this case yet. All that probably comes to well over \$10,000. If the underwriter wants to do this the hard way, I'll make a motion for an order of partial summary judgment for maintenance and cure entitlements, get Shelby at least \$10,000 ahead of time, then ask for more at trial. Plus, I'll throw in a request that the insurance company pay an attorney fee to me for filing the motion, because their refusal to pay maintenance and cure is unreasonable. I was going to file that motion pretty soon anyway, but it would take a month or more to get a decision from the judge and Shelby wants to go to Mississippi right now. If he can get instant gratification he'll settle cheap."

I briefly explained my client's dilemma, neglecting to mention that he might not be alive on the trial date. Under the court rules, Brett was entitled to see Shelby's medical records and sooner or later would find out even if I didn't tell him.

"I'll relay your demand to the underwriters." Brett knew I was offering to settle Shelby's case at a fire-sale price, but I wasn't sure he'd be able to convince his clients, the fishing and insurance companies, to recognize a good deal — both had to agree. The fishing company would likely accept immediately, but the insurance underwriter(s) — I wasn't sure if there was more than one, nor whether it or they were foreign or domestic — might prove a problem.

My limited understanding of marine insurance is that most of the big money comes from England and elsewhere in Europe. I have seen European insurance types exhibit active hatred toward the American system of contingent fees, unknown in Europe, that allows a low-life like Shelby to obtain a lawyer to represent him on an injury claim. Those underwriters are willing to pay any amount of money to their lawyers, rather than give even pennies to plaintiff-scum assaulting their citadel of wealth — until they absolutely have to. Brett's challenge was to convince the insurance big-boys that I was serious about making a motion for partial summary judgment and they would likely have to pay \$10,000 or more to

Shelby before the trial even started. Even if he could convince them not to look a gift horse in the mouth, extraordinary steps would be needed to get the money fast. Getting settlement funds from underwriters for clients in the past often required more than a month.

"OK. I doubt you'll get authority to settle, so I'll start outlining my motion." The conversation ended. In addition to making preparations to draft a maintenance and cure motion, I started drawing up requests for Brett's supporting materials, to turn up the heat. Lawyers are entitled to discover what evidence the other side has. Fulfilling my requests would take time, and I knew Brett would charge that time to his client. If the insurance company wanted to pay their lawyer rather than my client, I wanted to make sure they paid Brett a lot of money.

Shelby came in to sign his will a few days later. He left everything to his daughter, Carmen, even though he didn't know where she was. He named me as personal representative, to carry out the wishes expressed in his will, because I was the only person he knew that he thought reliable. Since proceeds from the lawsuit were Shelby's only asset, I was the logical choice. I didn't protest, despite vague misgivings about what I should do if there was money to give Carmen. How do I find her and keep it out of her mother's hands?

Brett called me six days after our previous conversation. "We'll pay \$10,000 tomorrow to settle this case, provided you guarantee in writing that the signature on the release is Shelby's."

"It's a deal. Send me the release papers."

I started working on a closing statement, showing how the settlement money would be distributed. The expenses were more than I'd expected — better than \$2,000, even though the case was nowhere near trial. Most of what I'd spent was for so many medical records that Shelby's case took up an entire file drawer. Shelby was getting a raw deal. I reduced my fee from a third to a quarter of the \$10,000 settlement, to make sure he'd have enough to do what he needed to do.

Brett sent the release papers to my office by special messenger. Shelby came in to sign.

Brett guaranteed me I'd have the settlement money the next day. I gave Shelby \$200 to get a motel, a shower, and a thick steak — hoping he wouldn't get drunk as well. The ethical rules for lawyers forbid advancing money to clients, and the \$200 put me in technical violation. I don't agree with the rules when it comes to helping hurt seamen get by on \$20 a day or less, and purposely violated it for Shelby. It is my intention, one of these days, to request that mucky-mucks in the Washington State Bar Association change that rule. It gives unfair advantage to insurance companies trying to starve injured seamen into settling their cases for cheap.

The settlement check arrived the next day. So did Shelby. He walked with me to the Bank of America branch on The Ave to deposit the check into my trust account. The bank didn't put a hold on it, so I was able to disburse my client's share of the settlement immediately. Shelby wanted greenbacks.

I sent Shelby to the airport with more than fifty \$100 bills in his pocket. I went back to my office. In the foyer I noticed that Shelby had forgotten the paperback he'd been reading. I picked it up to put with his other papers, perusing the book on the way. It was a detective novel written in 1986 by a Doug Hornig, entitled *The Dark Side*.

The court clerk was informed of the settlement and the case dismissed on April 17, 2000. I got ready for depositions to be taken in Norfolk, Virginia, for another case and flew to Chesapeake Bay the day after Shelby left.

"A district attorney in Austin, Texas, called about Shelby while you were back East." Marni was helping me quell anomie upon my return from Virginia. "He said he ran the witness protection program Shelby was in."

"What did he want?"

"He asked if we knew where Shelby was."

"What did you tell him?" I silently wondered why the Texas Rangers couldn't control their own witness.

"I said I didn't know. You don't want me giving out information about clients, so I didn't say I thought he might be with his ex-wife in Mississippi. I don't know for sure where he is so, technically, I told the truth."

"Good work."

"There's more to this, John. The district attorney told me Shelby called him from somewhere, crying hysterically, and said, 'I killed her. I didn't mean to do it!' then hung up."

"Oh, brother, he killed his ex-wife." I didn't share with Marni all I knew of Shelby's motives. "I wonder if he's on his way back here."

I was pretty sure Shelby killed his ex-wife because she wouldn't tell him where Carmen was. Maybe she wanted more money than Shelby had. Maybe she took the money he gave her, then wouldn't tell him unless he gave her more money. I didn't know how it happened. But I was also pretty sure I would get a call from the Mississippi police as soon as Shelby was picked up. They would want to

know about Shelby's money — where he got it and how much he had — and I was not sure what I was allowed to tell them. Would it tip them off to a motive in his wife's murder? I tried calling a professor who taught legal ethics at Seattle University School of Law. We traded phone messages but never made contact. I concluded on my own that I should tell the police only what was in the court file: The case had settled for an unspecified amount of money. That much was public record, and it wouldn't break the attorney-client privilege.

The Mississippi police never called. "No news is good news," I thought. It was the middle of May. "Shelby must have blown his settlement by now. I wonder what he's living on? What is he doing about his spleen?"

Meanwhile, notices from DSHS had been piling up in Marni's office about Shelby's public assistance. In early June, one came stating his medical benefits would soon be cut off because of lack of contact. At that point I decided I had to do something and got the phone number of the Austin DA from Marni.

"Did you ever figure out where Shelby was?" I introduced myself over the phone to a calm, helpful-sounding man named Maxwell Johnson, district attorney in Austin.

"He's in jail in New Orleans, charged with murder."

"Why Louisiana instead of Mississippi?"

"He killed a woman in a New Orleans massage parlor. He never made it to Mississippi."

"How do you know?"

"He confessed."

"What happened?"

"When Shelby got off the plane from Seattle he went on a three-day binge with cocaine and alcohol. By the third day he was on his third prostitute. She laughed at him because he couldn't get it up. He killed her."

I was too stunned to respond. Questions started racing through my head. Does Louisiana have the death penalty? Would Shelby's blood problem kill him before Louisiana did? What about his testimony at the trial of the carnies in Texas? What if there was some of the settlement left after three days of booze, drugs, and whores? How would I find Carmen? Was Shelby's ex-wife the biological or adoptive mother of Carmen? How would the state of Mississippi define their relationship if she were neither? How could I give money to an 11- or 12-year-old girl and exclude her mother? What if Shelby had money left to give Carmen, but not enough to cover the expense of me going to Mississippi to find her? Why didn't I take the class on Wills and Trusts in law school?

"Are you there?"

"Is there a way to contact Shelby?" I was almost stuttering.

"I've been in touch with a detective in the New Orleans Police Department named Allen Jones. He's good people." Maxwell rattled off a phone number.

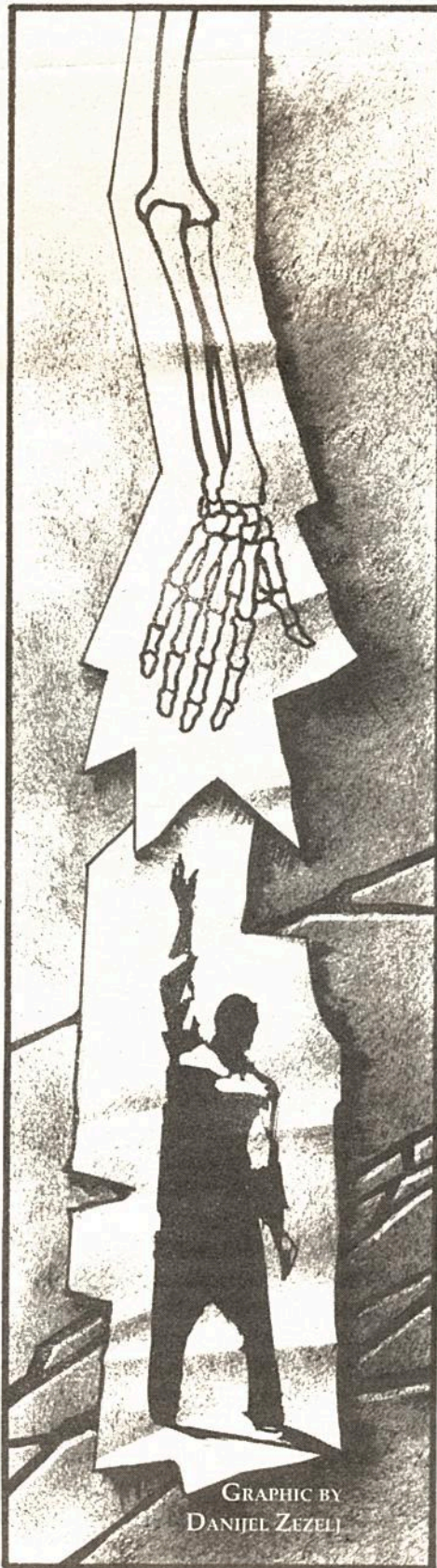
"Thanks." There were a lot more questions I should have asked, but I was in shock and wanted to get off the phone to gather my thoughts. I mouthed the customary concluding courtesies and hung up.

It's been nearly a year since I learned Shelby was in jail. I tried calling the detective in New Orleans, but the police department there got aggressively unhelpful when I identified myself as a lawyer. I don't really want to talk to the detective, but I know that I must. He will ask me questions that I'm not allowed to answer; and I will ask him questions for which I don't want an answer.

I doubt I'll ever see my client again. The type of lawyer he needs now won't specialize in maritime law.

Farewell, Shelby. ■

I gave Shelby \$200 to get a motel, a shower, and a thick steak — hoping he wouldn't get drunk as well. The ethical rules forbid advancing money to clients, but that gives insurance companies trying to starve injured seamen an unfair advantage.

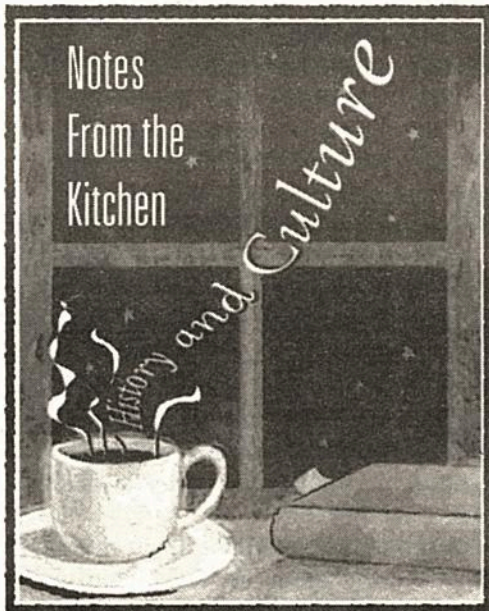


GRAPHIC BY
DANIJEŁ ZEZEŁJ

John Merriam is a former merchant seaman and a Seattle lawyer who represents seamen on wage and injury claims.

A Thoughtful Approach to Gardening

By Liz Smith



ing and harvesting the heirloom varieties, they keep available seed stock from dwindling down to a few hybrid types.

Here are a few seed banks to contact:

Abundant Life Seed Foundation

P.O. Box 772
Port Townsend, WA 98368
(360)385-7192 or (360)385-5660
abundant@olpen.com

A non-profit organization that supplies seeds chosen especially for our maritime climate and short growing season. A few examples: Ireland Creek Annie (bush bean), Fireworks (tomato), Moon & Stars (watermelon), Cinnamon Basil.

Seed Savers Exchange

3076 N. Winn Road
Decorah, IA 52101
(319)382-5990

Seed Savers has rare and heirloom seeds and rootstock for flowers, nuts, fruit, berries, and vegetables. This is the group at the forefront of heirloom seed promotion.

The Northwest Horticultural Society

(206)527-1794

Part of the University of Washington. A members-only seed exchange for unusual and rare varieties.

After you've sent off for you seeds, there are a couple of places to visit while you're waiting for the ground to warm up. The first is the Center for Urban Horticulture, at 3501 N.E. 41st Street, run in conjunction with the Arboretum. They have demonstration gardens, where you can find out which plants grow well in shady spots and which are good for conserving water. You can see the Hyde Hortorium, where plants are preserved for research and identification. There is the interestingly named Goodfellow Grove, which has native plants for urban landscapes. The center has guided tours and classes in such things as garden design or how to get rid of urban moles. You can learn how to build up your soil so you won't need harmful chemicals. On April 28 they are having an African Violet plant show and sale; there also are weekly plant sales at the Arboretum greenhouses.

While you're there, amble over to the Elisabeth Miller Library. It contains an amazing selection of 8,000 books, 1,000 nursery catalogues, 300 magazines and journals, and an online service with a growing collection of CD-ROMs. If you bring a photo ID and proof of residence, you can check out books from their lending library. They are setting up a Plant Answer line for quick answers to gardening questions.

I also recommend dropping by the Seattle Tilth (4649 Sunnyside Ave. N.) in Wallingford. Their mission is to promote and teach about organic gardening, composting, and healthier living through conserving resources. Membership begins at \$15 and includes a monthly newsletter. If you are a member, you'll pay less for classes. These range from growing better tomatoes, city chickens, container gardening of vegetables, or composting. The demonstration garden is large, peaceful, and beautiful. Part of it is for little kids; Tilth schedules school tours and has summer programs to let children learn about healthy growing methods. In one class, you and your child can build a worm bin together.

Tilth also operates a bookstore, publishes a month-by-month guidebook especially for Seattle gardeners, and maintains a list of local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms, the small outfits surviving in the face of agribusiness. On Saturday, May 5, Tilth is having its annual spring Edible Plant sale. For sale will be herb, flower, and vegetable starts. While there you can see the gardens and stroll the grounds of the Good Shepherd Center, admire the orchard, or walk to Meridian Park, which adjoins the grounds. ■

This is one way to garden: Pick any old kind of seeds at the nearest store. Plant them. When a bug or a brown spot on a leaf is observed, go back to the store and buy a gallon of Kilz-It-All™. Drench everything in sight. This is the Better Growing Through Chemical Warfare method.

There is another way, a gentle and healthy way: organic gardening. In today's column I'll point you toward the pros, who can tell you how to grow your garden the old-fashioned way.

Fifty years ago, home gardeners planted seeds from their own reserves and raised tasty varieties of fruits and vegetables that weren't grown merely to fit well in a lug (a lug is a cardboard box for transporting produce). After harvesting, they carefully saved their seeds for the spring planting. Genetic diversity was preserved through these so-called heirloom seeds, which were often handed down through the generations. Seed banks now preserve these links with the past. By plant-

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Tuesday, March 27, 12:04 a.m., Volunteer Park. Officer responded to Volunteer Park to investigate a 911 call. Upon arrival the officer found the subject, a 21-year-old homeless white man, waiting by the phone. He told the officer he was feeling depressed, as his grandmother had just kicked him out of the house because he was gay. He told the officer he had attempted suicide several times this year by lying in front of traffic and by attempting to overdose on his meds. He requested transport to Harborview Medical Center so he could talk to someone, and was transported without incident.

Tuesday, March 27, 11:39 p.m., Broadway QFC. Officers were dispatched to QFC to investigate a shoplifting. The security guard stated he had observed the suspect, a homeless white female, pick up two six-packs of beer and walk past the cashiers without attempting to pay. She was also carrying a jug and a box of wine. As she attempted to leave; the guard detained her, and found she did not have a receipt for the items, valued at \$27.11. He called 911, and as he waited, he got her ID and found she had been trespassed from the store the previous September for one year. Officers arrived, and the woman was taken to King County Jail for theft and criminal trespass.

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Thursday, March 29, 4:54 p.m., 14th Avenue convenience store. Police were dispatched to Pike Street to handle three homeless men urinating on the building and refusing to leave the area. They were described as two white males and one Indian male, all in their thirties. Upon arrival the police found nobody at the scene. They drove a block north, and saw two of the suspects standing outside the market on 14th Avenue. The officers recognized them as homeless men who are frequently intoxicated. The men appeared to be drunk, and also to be waiting for something. Then the third suspect came out of the store with a 40-oz. bottle of Steel Reserve in his hand. He was staggering and smelled strongly of liquor. He admitted to buying the beer for himself and his friends, but when he failed a street sobriety test, the beer was returned to the store, and the man's money was refunded. No arrests were made.

Thursday, March 29, 8:01 p.m., Elliott Avenue Burger King. A customer reported witnessing a man in a green jacket harassing people in the drive-through line, and damaging property. The manager told police that the suspect had gone into a fenced area enclosing the dumpster. The suspect was placed under arrest and transported to the West precinct for questioning. The witness had left the restaurant, and nobody else had observed the suspect damaging property. The suspect, a 40-year-old white man, explained that he had gone to the dumpster to look for food, and had caused no damage. After questioning, he was released. ■

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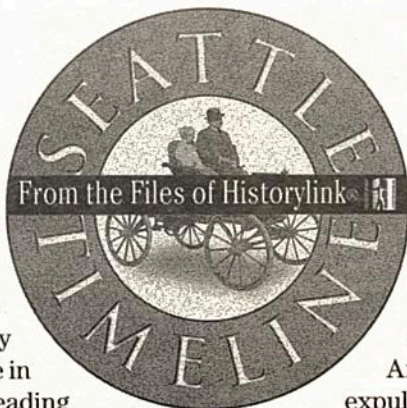
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On April 25, 1894, approximately 650 unemployed men calling themselves the Northwestern Industrial Army marched out of Seattle in military formation, heading toward Washington, D. C., to urge Congress to relieve joblessness following the Panic of 1893. The Seattle men planned to join a similar force from Tacoma at Puyallup, and then to travel by train to meet Jacob Sechier Coxe, whose movement for federal relief was called "Coxey's Army."



650 MEN MARCHED OUT OF SEATTLE IN THE NAME OF FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF.

On April 25, 1912, the Alaska Steamship liner *Alameda* rammed the Colman Dock. The *Alameda* was attempting to dock at Pier 2 at about 10:30 p.m. after taking on a load of fuel in the East Waterway. The master signaled full speed astern, and the engineer mistakenly applied full speed ahead. Police patrolman O. J. Larsen saw the danger and warned passengers in the Colman Dock waiting room to run for their lives. The *Alameda* smashed into the dock and into the base of the 100 foot clock tower, going on to strike the *Telegraph* amidships. The *Telegraph* sank in eight fathoms of water.



COLEMAN DOCK SUFFERS THE IMPACT OF THE ALAMEDA.

The first women were elected to the Seattle City Council on May 2, 1922. The two women elected were Bertha Knight Landes, who won 80 percent of the vote and later served a term as mayor, and Kathryn Miracle.

On April 21, 1942, "evacuation" announcements addressed to Japanese Americans were posted on Seattle telephone poles and bulletin boards. The community was ordered to leave the city in three groups on the following Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor in De-



SEATTLE'S JAPANESE RESIDENTS READ THE WRITING ON THE WALL AFTER PEARL HARBOR WAS BOMBED.

cember had set in motion a series of decisions that led to what has been called the worst violation of constitutional rights in American history: the expulsion and imprisonment of 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast. Two-thirds of them were American citizens.

On April 22, 1948, the Aeronautical Machinists Union, IAM District Lodge 751, struck the Boeing Company. The Machinists wanted to preserve long-standing seniority rules that the company wanted to scrap, and get a 10-cent-an-hour raise for all workers. Another union, Dave Beck's Teamsters, collaborated with the company to defeat the machinists. On September 13, 1948, the Machinists returned to work without a victory, but in the subsequent election they soundly defeated the Teamsters.

On April 25, 1958, the state Toll Bridge Authority agreed to give Native American names to two new ferries currently under construction. The state had officially chosen the names *Vacation State* and *Washington State* for the sister ships of the previously launched *Evergreen State*, but public outcry caused them to reconsider. Native American names for ferry boats had been a long-standing Northwest tradition.

An Air Force F102 airplane crashed into the Mountlake Terrace neighborhood during the 1962 World's Fair opening ceremonies. The crash killed two people and damaged seven homes.

On May 1, 1978, the Seattle City Council legislated the use of "deadly force" by police officers, the first major U.S. city to do so. The ordinance limited the use of firearms to self-defense, to the arrest of persons who have actually committed dangerous crimes, and to the apprehension of arrested felons who have escaped. Officers were expected to exhaust alternatives to deadly force, or be convinced that anything other than deadly force would be ineffective. ■

After a year's run, the Seattle Timeline is ending. Thanks to Alan Stein and the Historylink staff for their work. For more Seattle and King County History, visit www.historylink.org. All photos are courtesy of Historylink. Copyright ©2000 History Ink. Historylink is a registered trademark of History Ink.

CLASSICS CORNER



by Perfess'r Harris

Having decided to compose our very first epic, we at Classics Corner have struggled with the question of form. One method would be to distill the bulk of human experience into a few thousand lines of perfect poetic expression. We could do this, but we don't feel like it right now. Another possibility is to grasp the universal within our particular selves. This seems immodest.

Thus we inevitably arrive at the trilogy, everyone's favorite epic shortcut. Recent examples include *Star Wars*, *The Godfather*, and *Lord of the Rings*, all of which, by the mere fact of their tripartite natures, are epic. Having no actual ideas, we will not compose a trilogy of our own. Instead, we will discuss Aeschylus' *Orestes*, his only tragedy that survives complete.

The three plays of *The Orestes* — *Agamemnon*, *The Libation Bearers*, and *The Eumenides* — tell the sordid tale of the House of Atreus, the family where everyone is screwed but no one knows it. As the first play opens, a messenger learns that Troy has fallen and King Agamemnon is on his way home. The city is filled with joy but a cloud looms. This is, after all, a tragedy.

Agamemnon is the Labrador Retriever of epic heroes. He thinks everyone loves him. Sadly, they do not.

As it turns out, Queen Clytemnestra has been miffed at Agamemnon ever since he made a blood sacrifice of their first-born daughter. The queen has taken on a new lover, Aegesthus, who happens to be her husband's first cousin. Apparently, Agamemnon's father once slaughtered Aegesthus' siblings and served them for dinner. The queen's new lover still bears a grudge.

To make things worse, Agamemnon has some explaining to do. Ten years ago, he sailed off with all the young men to rescue Helen from Troy. Now, on the day of his return, his only company is Cassandra, the psychic concubine with a credibility problem.

A smarter man might wonder just how welcome he is. He might, like Odysseus, spend a week or so undercover, exploring the lay of the land. But not Agamemnon. He is the Labrador Retriever of epic heroes. He thinks everyone loves him. Sadly, they do not.

To make a long story short, Clytemnestra gives her husband a hero's welcome and then offs him in the bathtub. In the final scene, she and Aegesthus stand over the bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra and exult in their revenge. Justice, they believe, is on their side. This is what gives the *Orestes* trilogy its charm. Everybody, no matter how heinous, believes they are right.

We suppose most of us do. We imagine that mayoral candidate Mark Sidran felt right was on his side when he tried to rent a campaign office in his own Pike Market building. He probably said to himself, "Mark, you deserve this." But instead of pocketing a symbol of Seattle, he suffered a humiliating defeat. Aeschylus would say that we are blind to our own circumstances, but are steered by painful events toward true understanding. Some people, however, just can't take a hint.

Join us again next time for part two of Classics Corner, the epic trilogy. ■

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Spring Notables

Thursday, 4/19

"Feminists say no way to FTAA," speakers examine the effects of impending Free Trade Areas of the Americas (FTAA) agreement, especially on women and the poor, 7:30 p.m., dinner with vegetarian option available at 6:30 p.m. for \$6.50 donation, New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., info 206-722-6057.

Friday, 4/20

"Fatally Flawed: the Death Penalty from the Rosenbergs to Mumia Abu-Jamal," a talk by Robert Meeropol, the youngest son of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. On June 19th, 1953, when he was 6 years old, the United States Government executed his parents for conspiracy to commit espionage. He and his brother Michael are the only two people to have both their parents executed by the US Government. In the 1970s, the Meeropol brothers successfully sued the FBI and CIA to force the release of 300,000 previously secret documents about their parents. 7 p.m., Central Lutheran Church, 1710-11th Ave. on Capitol Hill. The event is free, donations will be accepted for the Rosenberg Fund for Children, which provides for the emotional and educational needs of

activist youth and children whose parents have been targeted in the course of their progressive activities. Info 206-324-8165.

Saturday, 4/21

Columbine Memorial Walk-a-Thon Big Steps Toward Safe Schools, a community event including speakers and musical entertainment by Coleman Brown, produced by and benefiting the CeaseFire Foundation of Washington to support educational efforts to reduce gun violence, particularly in schools, to raise awareness, and to remember the 15 dead and 29 injured in the Columbine High School shooting in Littleton, Colorado, on April 20, 1999, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., at Seward Park, info 206-322-1236 or <http://www.ceasefirefoundation.org>.

Earth Day Yard Sale and Cultural Creativity Potluck Lunch, yard sale 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., potluck lunch 1 - 3 p.m., at Colonial Square Homes, 1616 156th Ave. NE, Bellevue just north of Crossroads Mall. Save the planet - recycle your stuff! Everybody welcome! Free, except for the stuff you buy! info <http://www.neighbornets.org/culturalcreatives/parties/EastsideApr2001.htm>.

Sunday, 4/22

Earth Day 2001 celebration and planting along new East-West Path, sponsored by Jefferson Park Alliance and Student Conservation Association, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., at Jefferson Community Center, 3801 Beacon Ave. S. and in Jefferson Park, info Dave Budd d_budd@hotmail.com or Alex at SCA, 206-324-4649 to pre-register, info <http://www.cityofseattle.net/beaconhill/jpa.htm>.

Special Seattle Peace Chorus Earth Day Concert, "Pursuing Peace for People and the Planet" featuring Dona Nobis Pacem, a cantata by Ralph Vaughan Williams, words of Walt Whitman, directed by Fred West, followed by food, fellowship, and community speakers including Rev. Robert Jeffrey and Vana Jakic on "How is Peace Possible?" \$12 advance, \$15 at door, 4 - 8 p.m., at Town Hall, 8th and Seneca, info Hermine Basnight 206-523-9404, tickets by phone 206-623-8632.

Saturday, 4/28

Community Dialogue forum Creating the Political Will to End Homelessness, convened by bishops, denominational heads, and ecumenical leaders standing together to declare that homelessness is morally unacceptable, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, 1245-10th Ave. E., registration info Stephanie 206-323-0300 or David Bloom 206-256-0368.

Opening event at Community Dialogue forum, Creating the Political Will to End Homelessness, procession of signs, each with the name and dates of someone who died homeless in Seattle within the last year or two carried by women (and possibly some men) in black, 9 a.m., at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, 1245-10th Ave. E., volunteers wanted for a 10-minute commitment event in walking up the aisle in silent mourning for someone who died homeless, call Alison Slow Loris 206-615-1574.

Benefit for Real Change Homeless Newspaper, with The Pulses, The Intelligence, Mojo Rhodez (aka The Cripples); Cover \$5.00, 21+, ID required, 9:30 p.m., at Gibson's Bar, 116 Stewart St., info 206-448-6369 or <http://www.antennaradio.com/gibson.html>.

Tuesday, 5/1

May Day 2001, Free Speech Seattle and Friends present the 2nd annual Music Art and Youth Day: A Political Rally, dealing with issues like Teen Dance Ordinance, Poster Ban, 2 percent (or more) for Art, Homeless Youth, The Noise Ordinance, WorkPlace Free Speech Ordinance, Lower Voting Age, Peace and Freedom, Harm Reduction, Censorship, Police

Accountability, Youth and Police Relations, and the Death Penalty, decorate the park with protest songs, as well as colorful banners, flyers, and posters. Heath Merriwether and Cary Thomas for Seattle City Council. Music will be provided by Mea Culpa, Portrait Of Poverty, DJ Elevate (Zion's Gate Sound System), Zion 12 (Digital Rockers), and Boom Bap Project. Free Speech Seattle is the founder of this event and in 2001 is partnered with The Vera Project, 2:00 - 8 p.m., at Victor Steinbrueck Park, just north of Pike Place market, info Tim Crowley 206-442-9404 or <http://seattlemusicweb.com/mayday/>

Ongoing Saturdays

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

Ongoing Sundays

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

Ongoing Daily

Free HIV Testing for people ages 14-24, using the Orasure method (no blood), Mondays 6 - 7 p.m., Tuesdays 5 - 8 p.m., Thursdays 7 - 8:30 p.m., Saturdays 6 - 8 p.m., and Sundays (by appointment only) 3 - 5:30 p.m. at Lambert House, for Sunday testing leave a message at 206-322-2515 ext. 30 with time, anonymous, info Becca Hutcheson 206-322-2515 ext. 13.

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, upcoming chefs include Ludger Szmania from Szmania's and Daniel Braun from Carmelita's. A three- or four-course dinner is only \$14.50 plus tax and tip, with all of the proceeds going to FareStart, 1902-2nd Ave. between Stewart and Virginia, please consider logging on to <http://www.farestart.org> and making a donation.

Aradia Women's Health Center, the Northwest's pioneer feminist women's health center, has openings available for community outreach volunteers! Come speak about feminist health care while staffing our information table at exciting events like International Women's Day 2001, Pride March/Freedom Rally, Northwest Folklife Festival, and many others! Call Amie Newman, Community Outreach Coordinator, 323-9467 or aradiadev@juno.com. ■

Real Change

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless

Wants to Rock Your World

Saturday, April 28

Gibsons

116 Stewart

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Sunday, April 29

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A blues benefit for Real Change

The Hudson Blues Band and Special Guests

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Proceeds Benefit Real Change.
Please support independent journalism and self-help for the homeless.

citizens participation project



President Bush's Tax Cut Is Unfair

Issue: Let your Senators know that President George W. Bush's proposed tax cut would benefit the very rich while not helping America's poorest citizens and threatening the country's ability to pay for basic services.

Background: As AFL-CIO President John Sweeney put it in a speech on March 1, President Bush's tax cut "is too big, it is irresponsible, and it is dangerously tilted to the wealthy." It jeopardizes our nation's ability to meet domestic and foreign responsibilities, threatens fiscal stability and security, and inequitably distributes its benefits.

The tax cut would end up costing us \$2.6 trillion total, which would not only devour the entire Social Security, non-Medicare surplus, but cost us even more than the current surplus projections — which of course may not even be accurate.

According to Citizens for Tax Justice, 45 percent of the total proposed tax cut would go to just the wealthiest 1 percent, whose annual income is already at least \$373,000. Their average tax cut would be \$150 per day. Americans in the middle would receive an average of just \$1.39 a day. The 20 percent of Americans with the lowest income, less than \$15,000 a year, would receive only 13 cents a day.

More than 12 million low- and moderate-income families with children would receive no benefits from his proposed tax cuts; more than half of all African-American and Hispanic families with children would receive nothing. We have an unprecedented opportunity to fix the urgent problems facing working families — problems that voters tell us again and again are their top priorities, well ahead of a tax cut — and then still have room for a fair, responsible tax cut.

But President Bush has it backwards, as Sweeney noted. He would have us squander the surplus on a tax cut that goes primarily to the wealthy, and then discover that we have no ability to improve our children's schools, to address the staggering gaps in health care, and to strengthen and protect Social Security and Medicare.

Members of Congress face a historic choice: they can stand with the wealthy special interests for a tax cut that robs us of the ability to meet the priorities of average citizens and recklessly jeopardizes our nation's economic footing for years to come; or they can stand with the working families who put them where they are.

Action: Tell your Senator to vote against Bush's proposed tax cut by sending a signed copy of the following letter:

Dear Senator,

I strongly oppose the tax cut that President Bush has proposed. It is far too large, it is irresponsible, and it is fundamentally unfair. The Bush tax cut jeopardizes the nation's ability to meet its domestic and foreign responsibilities, threatens the nation's fiscal stability and security, and inequitably distributes the benefits it provides.

Any tax cut enacted into law must be far smaller and much more equitable than the Bush tax cut in order to meet the needs and interests of the American people.

Please ensure taxes are fair for ALL and vote against the Bush tax cut.

Senator Patty Murray
2988 Jackson Federal Building
915-2nd Avenue
Seattle, WA 98174-1001
(206) 553-5545
senate_murray@murray.senate.gov

Senator Maria Cantwell
512 Jackson Federal Building
915-2nd Avenue
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(206) 220-6400
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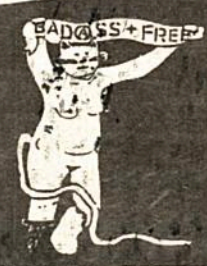
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