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Change

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 8, No. 12

Sisleyfied

**Cheap Apartments, Bad Landlords, and
Forgiving Tenants in the U-District, page 7**

**Also: The Bunkhouse Reopens • The Aloha Celebrates •
Rape at Mardi Gras • Adventures in Poetry • And More**

PHOTO OF SISLEY TENANT BY ABE DEYO.

Tent City South

Portland's Dignity Village has been
sheltering homeless people for six months.
The city says time's up

By Adam Holdorf

If you were driving south along Highway 99 through Portland early last month, you would have seen the vans pulled up along the roadside. A fleet of police vans was idling next to the bank beside a pile of wooden planks, tarps, garbage bags, and shopping carts. It's not an uncommon sight along the greenbelt that runs for miles through southeast Portland, between the Ross Island Bridge and the Sellwood Bridge, where as many as 1,000 people are believed to live. This was a routine outing for the Portland Police Bureau and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), and they repeat it throughout the year, especially when the weather gets better. They find a camp, tear it down, bag up its inhabitants' belongings, and tell anyone who's lurking nearby to get lost.

But four miles north and across the river, under the majestic Interstate 405 overpass, about 70 people have been staying at one camp since January. They've made peace with the highway noise above and with the upscale neighborhood to the south. The cops and the highway cleanup crews let them alone, mostly out of benign neglect. The camp is called Dignity Village, and it has the official blessing to stay, unmolested, right where it is — until the end of June.

Like up here in Seattle, Portland's response to the fact of homelessness is inadequate. But at the risk of prompting a bout of back-patting at the City of Seattle's Human Services Department, I'll say that the response of Portland city officials is less adequate. In December, when Dignity Village started, Mayor Vera Katz pledged an extra \$120,000 to pay outreach workers to get homeless people into the shelter and referral system. Never mind that the system is already overloaded — Portland's year-round shelters are always full. An outreach worker can't get someone off the street without having some place to offer them. There's nowhere to go. Hence, Dignity Village.

The power of prayer

I went down to Portland last month to see another Tent City, a little like Seattle's. I found some unsurprising commonalities: there are homeless people in both cities; neither city provides enough shelter space to ensure their survival; city officials demonstrate a real lack of understanding when confronted with other people's ideas about what to do. And then there are the people involved, like Jack Tafari or Ibrahim Mubarak, who put their own

unique fingerprints on the project.

The camp was the brainchild of Tafari, who went to the protests surrounding the Democratic National Con-

**In Seattle, moral
outrage helped
Tent City reach a
turning point.
Portland's
Dignity Village
could use a turn
for the better.**

vention last summer and witnessed Dome Village, a space-age community of homeless people in pre-fab structures in Los Angeles. He came back jazzed to undertake something similar in his home town. Then, in September, a Multnomah County judge overturned Portland's city ordinance barring camping. It just seemed like the time was

right. He approached *street roots*, the local homeless newspaper, and got some early support. On December 16, a small camp began under the Morrison Bridge.

By email, I asked Tafari which Dignity Villagers were in negotiations with the city over the camp's future, and what their "current line" was. Replying in his standard Rastafarian lingo, Tafari said: "We current line? Line doan change really, we are human beings, we live inna very public way (i.e., in public). We live on public land which we utilize in a more sensible way. We have good sanitation, de whole a we a safe. We have security. Security is about the

Continued on Page 10



Defending Emily

Dear Editor:

Mmm, mmmm. What happened to ©Dr. Wes? He's wasting his time and mine dissing a dead old lady poet ("Adventures in Poetry," April 19-May 2)? What's his problem with Emily Dickenson — sounds like a man with a woman problem. Leave old Emily alone — ain't you got better things to write and fuss about? Anti-homeless — what? Anyone with a home is anti-homeless? What? That's sick, Wes, dissing a dead old lady poet who ain't around to speak up. Look into your sickness, man, and don't trouble the readers with your personal anger. Thank god we got all those good poets printed on the page next to you. Hope you feel better tomorrow, but if you don't, don't write about it. Write about today and today's shit that needs attention. Leave a dead old lady poet lie.

She was a courageous woman in her time — but I won't tell YOU how or why.

Herb Sundvall
Seattle

Wes Browning replies: When I said that Emily was the Anti-Homeless Poet, I meant it in the good way, as a nerd would mean it, as in "Cap'n, the anti-matter generator canna take this kind ae beating!"

Caseworkers and clients, unite!

Dear *Real Change*,

As a state worker at UW, I appreciated most of Pati Wilson's article on the state workers' strikes, ("Out with a Whimper," May 3-16). I especially liked Ellen Carmody's statement that "We have some of the wealthiest people in the country, in the world that live here, so there's something wrong with our tax structure that we can't share the wealth."

That's why I disagree with Pati's statement that "the fiscal interests of DSHS workers are at odds with the needs of the people they serve" and her appeal at the end for union leader Duwane Huffaker to "compromise." If the union compromises and settles for some layoffs, how does that help the recipients of state services? Workers' jobs are recipients' services. We need to defend both.

State workers and service recipients need to unite! We need to demand full funding of services, no layoffs, and raises that keep up with the cost of living — and full funding of our health care.

The legislators (even the Democrats, who claim to favor the interests of workers and the poor) claim "there is no money." The real problem is there is no political will. They have given away \$2.7 billion in tax cuts, mostly to business, for this coming biennium.

We don't need to compromise! We need to strike, rally, demonstrate, and keep the heat up until they come up with a budget that meets the needs of the poor and workers in the state!

Steve Leigh
SEIU-CSA-925
Seattle

Stay human

Dear *Real Change*,

I recently was in San Francisco and my colleagues kept commenting to me about the amount of homeless people on the streets. I have no clue as to whether SF has more or less homeless people than Seattle, but I must say, I was struck by the few who were selling the local *Real Change* newspaper.

After reading a story on this site (www.realchangenew.org) about one man being able to afford an apartment from his newspaper earnings, I did not hesitate to give money to those who were selling the newspaper. The people were gracious, but they were also outspoken, showing no hesitation to talk or walk up to me.

Perhaps what my colleagues noticed was not necessarily more homeless people, but that those who were homeless were (indeed) people, because they gave no chance for avoiding eye contact with them.

Thanks, *Real Change*, for offering such a wonderful newspaper for the public to read. It is humanizing.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Ring
Seattle

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Change

Puget Sound's Voice of the Poor and Homeless

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Mission Statement:

Real Change organizes, educates, and builds alliances to 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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It's the Brutality, Stupid

On rape, death, and rage at Mardi Gras

By Helen Gilbert

The city's Mardi Gras taskforces seem more concerned with the specter of public scrutiny than what's at the bottom of the Fat Tuesday mayhem. Given the record so far, these committees may come through with a few platitudes denouncing violence, but the issue of sexual assault is likely to stay swept under the carpet. This is unacceptable. Seattle needs meaningful action on both fronts.

To start, we must understand the problems. Like much of popular culture, Seattle's Mardi Gras was created to make a buck. It was initiated by Pioneer Square bar owners to sell bucketloads of beer. So instead of a kaleidoscope of parades and street performers as in New Orleans and Rio, our event is little more than an overgrown frat party characterized by mass drunkenness and ogling of women's breasts.

And when boys will be boys, women often become prey. On Fat Tuesday, the scene changed from one of would-be sex goddesses flashing their boobs to a nightmare in which hundreds of drunks chanted for women to expose their breasts. A large number of women were groped, had their clothes stripped off, and were sexually violated by groups of up to two dozen men.

To this day, not one woman has filed a complaint. Sexual assault victims fear public humiliation, retaliation, and condemnation for being part of the ruckus. And why should they come forward to the same police force which abandoned them that night and instead played it safe on the perimeters?

This was a departure from previous, calmer nights when the SPD instigated confrontations with riot-geared street sweeps, rubber bullets, and pepper spray. By Tuesday, the cops had turned the festival into a showdown, making Pioneer Square the place to be for thrill-seekers looking for a rumble. The city added to the errors by canceling an outdoor radio stage which might have focused the crowd's energy. Instead, there was nothing to do but mill around while alcohol levels rose and the pressure built for something, anything, to happen. When it did, the cops stood back and let it fly.

The violence was ugly, brutal, and multi-racial. Women were in there slugging, too. Kris Kime was fatally attacked. People, cars, and shops were smashed up.

In a context of unrestrained belligerence, ordinary people can be overwhelmed by a rage they suppress every other day. And youth are angry at a system that promises much but delivers little. Seattle has to provide a better deal for all young people and must alleviate the grinding racism experienced by youth of color. The fact that some, not all, of the attacks were of the "take that, whitey" kind shows how much discrimination African Americans endure in Seattle.

They are routinely stopped for the "crimes" of Driving While Black and Shopping While Black. Underage clubs are banned. It's been years since any Pioneer Square nightclub catered to African Americans. Tuition is astronomical. Affirmative action is gone. The drug wars imprison people of color at mind-boggling rates. Seattle's working-class black neighborhoods are bought up by white yuppies who inflate housing prices. These are just a few reasons young African Americans in a free-for-all melee might see raucous, drunk, misbehaving, middle-class white kids as especially worth taking a poke at. And the problem continues: while the majority of those arrested were white, all but one of the 17 arraigned by the end of March were people of color.

"Riot is the language of the unheard," said Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Seattle has to listen and act. The problems are solvable, but will require challenging the status quo.

Here's what I believe is needed:

- An elected civilian review board over police with the power to investigate and discipline.
- Well-advertised, public funds for free, confidential sexual assault counseling to Mardi Gras victims. The city owes these women for having failed to protect them.
- City, state, and federal funding to improve the schools, provide tuition assistance, and create well-paid jobs and free recreational activities for youth. Reinstate affirmative action in trades, professions, and education. Guarantee affordable housing through rent control and property tax rollbacks. Overturn the ordinance against underage clubs.
- A city-wide educational campaign that provides serious discussion of sexual assault and racism.
- If the Mardi Gras celebration continues, training for young men and women of all races to act as peace-keepers. The Pioneer Square bars should provide free, outdoor entertainment for the thousands at the festival who can't get into the taverns because they are too young, too poor, or too many.

None of these solutions are hard. But they require a shifting of priorities. How many lives must be lost, and indignities suffered, before this city provides every human being with an equal chance for fulfillment, happiness, and the right to party? ■

Helen Gilbert is the managing editor of Red Letter Press and serves on the Executive Committee of Seattle Radical Women.

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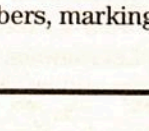
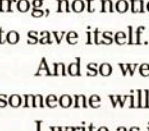
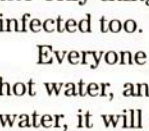
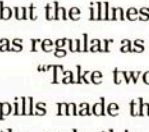
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THIS JUST IN! The Sickness started innocently enough. Seasonal allergies, the flu. An outbreak here and there of E. coli and the Hantavirus. Cancers, AIDS, Hoof and Mouth, all of which we met with different treatments, each with varying effectiveness.

Everyone thought that one by one we were creating cures, but the illnesses were growing ten by ten. Everyone ill, all the time. Pills as regular as meals.

"Take two of these every hour," said the docs, but every hour those pills made the Sickness stronger. Eventually, "Go home and sleep" was the only thing they could tell us. "Drink lots of water," but the water was infected too.

Everyone has heard the story of the boiling frog: put a frog in a pan of hot water, and of course it will leap out. But put a frog in a pan of warm water, it will stay there, happy as can be. Heat the water slowly, and the frog, not noticing the incremental change, will boil to death, never moving to save itself.

And so we have cooked ourselves alive. I only write in case of a miracle, someone will hear the story of our last days.

I write as if calculating formulae, like a mathematician, counting numbers, marking time. We already know what the answer will be. ■

— Bob Redmond

Tent Cities far and wide

Seattle and Portland are not the only cities where homeless people have organized tent camps (see "Tent City South," page 1). In an effort to provide shelter for homeless people, and to challenge local government to create more stable housing, temporary dwellings have gone up since the Hoovervilles of the Great Depression. Tent cities in the news recently include those in Philadelphia, Fort Lauderdale, and Los Angeles. These have been established near public thoroughfares, in order to draw attention to the cause.

After being evicted from an abandoned HUD complex, about 40 people, consisting of homeless families and Kensington Welfare Rights Union (KWURU) workers, set up a tent city in the middle of Philadelphia's business center, protesting the city's lack of commitment to find housing for its homeless families. Two days later the tent city moved to the Liberty Bell, deciding to join Philadelphia in "Welcoming America," for the Fourth of July weekend. It was a defiant statement that juxtaposed the romanticized patriotism commercialized for Independence Day. The protestors were later asked to leave by Park Rangers. Free speech activity like this protest is not allowed in front of the Liberty Bell. When they refused to leave, some of the homeless families and their supporters were arrested. Those detained were released later in the day; however, the momentum of the tent city had been crushed.

In Fort Lauderdale, Florida, the construction of the Huizenga Homeless Assistance Center (HAC) in 1999 spelled the end of the town's tent city and consequently put thousands out of stable shelter. Although HAC was constructed to serve the homeless, it can only serve 250 people per night, far less than the estimated 6,000 people in the county without a roof over their heads. Government officials were opposed to the tent city, located in downtown Fort Lauderdale, which they insisted was hurting the image of local businesses. Unfortunately, homeless advocates countered, HAC would not make the homeless disappear; rather it would merely make them more vulnerable. Advocacy groups in the area are worried that, as happened before the tents were erected in 1993, homeless people will be harassed and jailed while trying to find a safe place to sleep.

Los Angeles has probably the most famous temporary housing city. Instead of tents, the village consists of white spheres. Homeless advocate Ted Hayes founded the Dome Village in 1993, when over 20 Omni-Sphere domes were constructed to provide transitional housing for 18-24 individuals each. In contrast with other temporary homeless enclaves, Dome Village has been permitted by the city. When the Democratic National Convention was being held at the nearby Staples Center, Hayes led a group of Dome Village residents in protest of neglect of the homeless by the federal government. "Don't just come into our neighborhood and pretend we aren't here," Hayes said. "It would be an incredible gesture for these super-rich to walk over the two blocks and say it is time to take the hand of the homeless with some real solutions, but not give them a handout. Hold a news conference with us. Do something." ■

—Andrew Block

Skewering the water hogs

If you're planning a summer luau, turn out the lights and light up the tiki torches. Then barbecue a water hog.

One citizen initiative and two measures in the Seattle City Council aim to do just that. The City Council would like to establish high rates for the most wasteful energy users. But a new group proposes to do more: Impose a surcharge on water users, then take some of that extra revenue and use it to retrofit the region's low-income apartments with water-saving faucets and shower heads. The idea has brought advocates for low-income housing and environmentalists together around a single signature-gathering effort: Initiative 63.

"We have recognized that the City is behind the people on a lot of issues," says Knoll Lowney of Yes for Seattle, a new organization behind this signature-gathering effort. "We're using the initiative process to bring our elected officials up to speed."

Lowney predicts that water rates will stay high after the summer, and could double over the next year. Without water-saving faucets, low-income households and their landlords will be hit especially hard.

As Lowney says, it looks like those in government are playing catch-up. In early May, City Councilmember Margaret Pageler proposed a similar water-rate ordinance. Councilmember Heidi Wills has pledged to protect low-income households from rate hikes by passing a new surcharge that won't apply to low-income City Light customers in the Rate 26 or Rate 27 plan — people making less than a family wage. The 9 percent temporary increase will last only until the end of 2003, says Wills, while City Light scrambles to



sell municipal bonds to finance more power purchases.

Signature gatherers hit the streets for Initiative 63 on Wednesday, May 16. They need 20,000 signatures by early July. To volunteer, call (206) 956-8050. ■

—Adam Holdorf

Stalking a vendor

Mark Sidran's mayoral campaign kick-off was followed hard by the reaction. A coalition of activists united in their opposition to the city attorney's track record on everything from black-owned nightclubs to sidewalks and parks

formed the Sidran Truth Squad. Members have been following the candidate to public appearances, armed with leaflets. But Sidran's been following others around — notably, longtime *Real Change* vendor Robert Hansen, who sold papers with Sidran at Westlake Park on city *Real Change* day, Tuesday, May 1, when dozens of "celebrity vendors" partnered with real vendors to hawk this paper.

Sidran's affable comportment was creepy, Hansen reported. "First he asked me if I would come sell papers outside his campaign office in the Pike Place Market," he said. "I told him, 'No, I work in West Seattle, in Seward Park, and downtown a little.' I was being evasive, that's what I was trying to do."

"Then, I was selling papers at the U District Street Fair" the weekend of May 19, "and I turn around, and there he is. 'Hi, Robert, how ya doing?' he says."

Hansen jokes that he's thinking of getting a restraining order. ■

—Adam Holdorf



VENDOR ROBERT HANSEN (RIGHT) GETS CHUMMY WITH MAYORAL CANDIDATE MARK SIDRAN. PHOTO BY ANDREA M. LEE.

Photographer says: See you in court



PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

When a policeman turned his canister of pepper spray on *Real Change* photographer George Hickey at Sixth and Union on November 30, 1999, in the midst of the police response to the WTO protests, Hickey fled, blinded and in pain. Within a month, he found civil rights lawyer John Muenster to pursue the case.

Muenster has made a career prosecuting police on behalf of victims of police brutality. He's best known for representing the family of Robin Pratt, an Everett housewife killed by a SWAT team during a drug raid in 1992. He also represented the two young women pepper-sprayed by a King County Sheriff's Deputy who was recently reinstated to his job.

Hickey and Muenster could not reach a settlement during mediation with the Seattle Police Department in April. Talks conclude before Hickey's date in federal court, July 2. ■

—Adam Holdorf

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

Renovated, Revived, Reopened

New Bunkhouse does double duty for homeless workers

By Andrew Block

On a balmy afternoon in late May, about 30 organizers, architects, and residents mopped their collective brow and celebrated the grand opening of the newly remodeled SHARE Bunkhouse, a transitional housing project for homeless men and women. Established in 1990 by the Strand group, led by the late Robert Willmott, the Bunkhouse has helped the homeless get back on their feet for more than a decade by providing a place of temporary shelter. Until now, however, it has never had a comfortable home.

Once situated in the aged confines of the former Hilltop nursing home, residents of the Bunkhouse can now enjoy facilities with a functional heating system, with rooms free of mildew, in a home created specifically to serve them. Such amenities contrast sharply with those of the previous building.

"The old Hilltop nursing home was falling apart both literally and figuratively," said resident Robert Marillo at the ceremony. "The Bunkhouse was losing its ability to serve as transitional housing, slipping more into the role of a shelter." When deteriorating facilities were failing to provide the stable, home-like environment needed to facilitate the pursuit of stable work, both residents and community organizers were aware that change needed to occur.

Managed by SHARE (Seattle Housing And Resource Effort) since 1997, the Bunkhouse was once located in the adjacent lot in the former Hilltop nursing home. Leased by Strand in 1990 and purchased, with much help from the state, in 1993, the Bunkhouse established itself as a reliable location for homeless men and women to sleep on a consistent basis, giving them the opportunity to leave their belongings at the shelter during the day in order to pursue work.

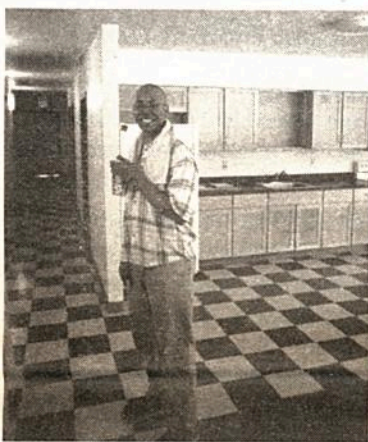
After taking over in 1997, SHARE collaborated with the Archdiocese Housing Alliance to lobby the city and state for financial support in the development of a new housing complex. By 1998, funding commitments were made by the city and state, followed shortly thereafter by grants from the Federal Home Loan Bank. Construction of the new facility began in August of 2000 and was, much to the delight of everyone involved, finalized in mid-May.

"There is no comparison between this place and the old Bunkhouse," says Jeff Lee, a veteran of the first Bunkhouse and current resident of the new one. "The other place was a hygienically filthy, old, dilapidated building. The facilities here are a privilege."

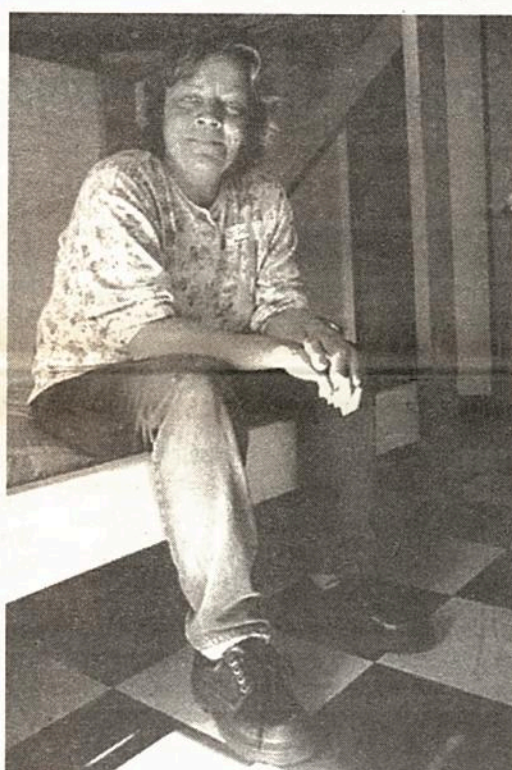
It is not only the building, however,



LEFT: SHARE STAFF MEMBER MICHAEL STANFORD AND KAREN BRANLEY OF THE BEACON DEVELOPMENT GRANGE IN FRONT OF THE NEWLY RENOVATED BUNKHOUSE; ABOVE: BUNKHOUSE RESIDENT ROBERT MURILLO. PHOTOS BY BILL EVANS.



ABOVE: STANFORD SHOWS OFF THE NEW MEN'S KITCHEN; RIGHT: SHARE2 WORKER JOANN SEMERAD IN HER ROOM AT THE BUNKHOUSE. PHOTOS BY BILL EVANS.



that makes the Bunkhouse notable. A total of 58 homeless adults will soon be able to call the Bunkhouse home, in a community that is composed of two programs organized by SHARE. In one part of the building, the Robert Willmott Program will provide 25 beds shared by 50 adults: night workers get to stay from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and day workers come home at 6:30 until their turn ends the next morning. A smaller portion of the two-story edifice will room eight SHARE2 program participants, composed of homeless men and women who work in some capacity for SHARE.

The work of maintaining the facility is delegated to the residents, in the form of assigned, daily chores and monthly work parties. This provides an autonomy designed to impress upon them the themes of self-sufficiency and cooperative responsibility.

"The residents take care of themselves, as opposed to being cared for by shelter organizers," says Michael Stanford, Organizer of the Bunkhouse. "In order to stay in the Bunkhouse, each person must pull his own weight. It is these activities that really make this place a community."

In addition to the chores and work parties, and a \$60 monthly rent fee, attendance at the weekly and monthly meetings is mandatory. The conferences are a time when chore groups are assigned, future work projects are discussed, and residents get to bring personal issues to the community forefront. This process of communal discussion has been utilized not only within the walls of the Bunkhouse but was also practiced between the partners in the project, throughout the construction of the facility. As Paul Purcell, of Beacon Development Group, joked, "It took 24 people to make every decision, including the color of the floor tiles."

The meetings also provide the forum in which the course of disciplinary action is discussed. In order to maintain residence in the Bunkhouse, one has to abide by a strict set of rules, including staying clean and sober, and uphold the work standards set at the meetings. "The standards are good for us," says resident Joe Walsh. "It gives us some structure and makes for a safe community where only the responsible

"The old Hilltop nursing home was falling apart both literally and figuratively. The Bunkhouse was losing its ability to serve as transitional housing, slipping more into the role of a shelter."

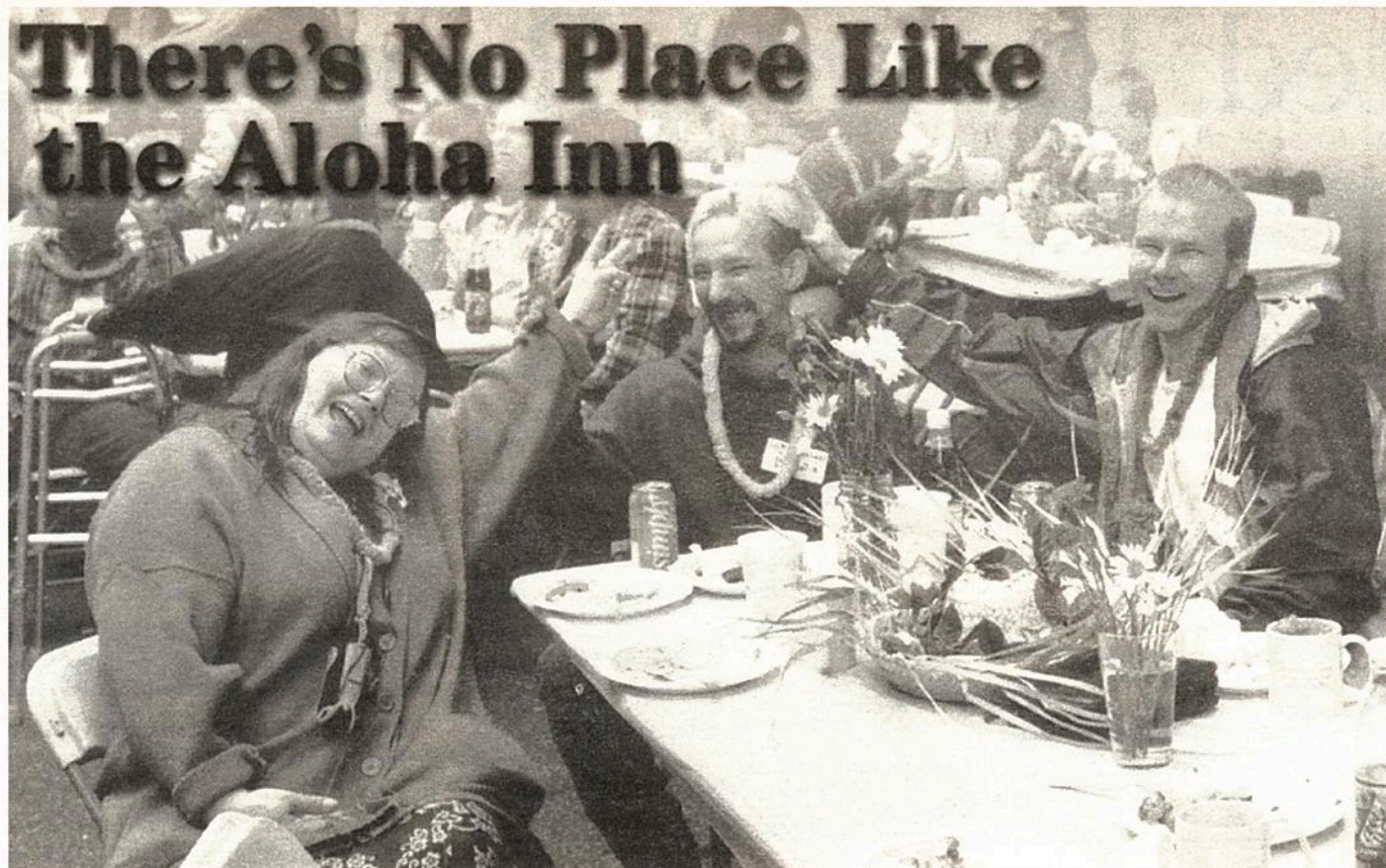
—Robert Marillo

people can live."

The broader vision for the residents of the Bunkhouse is that they can save up enough money and subsequently move into permanent housing. Residents are allowed to stay for as long as two years.

The consummating ceremony of this \$602,000 project witnessed the congenial mingling of SHARE officials, homeless advocates, and government officials alike, an uncommon scene in light of recent debates over SHARE/WHEEL's Tent City. Although there was skeptical eye-rolling and suspect coughs when Deputy Mayor Tom Byers took the podium, the speaker and audience were united in hope. "I don't see why we can't build a dozen more of these," Byers announced. Judging by the prolonged applause that followed, neither could anybody else. ■

The Bunkhouse has 50 berths for night and day workers. For more information about applying for housing, call SHARE at (206) 517-9011.



FORMER ALOHA INN RESIDENTS SHARE IN THE FUN AND THE MEMORIES. PHOTO BY DAN CAPLAN.

There's No Place Like the Aloha Inn

Homeless self-managed program hailed as national model

By Casey LaFran

It didn't occur to Scott Smith that he would be homeless until he arrived in Seattle. He had an illustrating/advertising degree that was collecting dust, with only the vaguest idea of what to do with it, and an empty wallet, but that didn't matter. He was just glad to be out of Las Vegas.

Smith wandered around the first week and did what many people without a home do. He went to the Union Gospel Mission downtown.

"That place was horrible, so undignified. First of all, the staff, right when you walk in, is all in starched business suits and they got a metal detector, a Breathalyzer, checking people when they come in. The sermons were dry — just no life — the ministers didn't even believe it. People were depressed... the cafe was cold, unsanitary, you only get one serving, and everyone carries a grudge. They order you around and then say 'Go to sleep.' They spend all this money on a computer filing system — keeping track of who's living there... it seems like they're getting all this funding and just using it to take care of their program, like they don't really care for the people. I found the total opposite to be true at the Bread of Life Mission."

While receiving renewed inspiration from the sermons at the Bread of Life, and looking for a job at a Greyhound station, Smith made his first friend in Seattle, John Provoch. Provoch was living at the Aloha Inn and told him about it. Smith decided to give it a try. That is when things really started happening for him.

The Aloha Inn is a transitional housing project supported by the City of Seattle and a host of community participants, including the residents of the Aloha, who manage and work to maintain the building. Requirements for residents are:

- **Sobriety.** No alcohol or drugs. You need to finish a recovery program successfully or have a solid amount of clean and sober time *before* trying to get a room at the Aloha. References are recommended.
- **Participation in management.** Each person has a role and a vote in the democratic system. Be ready to participate in monthly meetings and take responsibility for your role in the community.
- **15 hours of work per week** which goes to paying for your food and rent. After two weeks, you need to pay \$5 per week in addition to the 15 hours you work.
- **A source of income.** Residents need to save \$60 per week. The Screening Committee monitors your savings in a bank account. After a successful six-month stay you will have over \$1,400, a bank account, and a good reference for your own, permanent place.

Because the Aloha Inn is resident-managed, ideas and opportunities are sparked by the people whose lives they will affect. Residents vote on how money is spent, who is allowed to move in, and who has to move out. They think of ways for improving the building, managing it, and vote on these proposals—one per-

son, one vote. So, besides giving residents job experience in reception, security, kitchen prep, maintenance, etc., it empowers them to exercise real decision-making ability. For Smith, this meant an outlet for his creativity.

Smith was an artist at heart, with a degree that he had never done much with. "During my first week [at the Aloha] I met this artist-musician, Henry. We were looking out this window over the back parking lot and he said 'Do you see the canvas?' I looked at him like he was crazy and he said it again, pointing at the concrete wall behind the parking lot."

Later that week, at the first General Assembly meeting, Henry stood up and said "We now have the artist to do the mural!" A mural, which Henry had envisioned for a long time, was finally put into action. Smith found himself collaborating with other residents, organizing a budget, sketching a design, and having the house vote to approve the project. Soon he was organizing 12 people to help paint the 14-foot mural that now decorates the concrete retaining wall behind the Aloha.

Flo Beaumon, who is a coordinator for the Aloha, says, "It's not your traditional situation with 'those poor homeless people.' This isn't charity. Instead, I'm working with them as colleagues." For some reason, the idea of working with homeless people as colleagues is revolutionary. "I've been to Chicago, New York City, this is the best program in the nation," says Joseph Dookram, a

former resident from 1994. It seems the greater majority of the country is still thinking on one-dimension when it comes to decent housing for "those poor homeless people." Instead of a give-and-take exchange of charity, Seattle has developed a partnership where both sides work together for a win-win situation. Over 1,700 people have found permanent housing, social tensions from neighboring Queen Anne have subsided, and a powerful communal bond has formed between residents, staff, and supporters of the project.

But of course, there have been problems. From the beginning, the Aloha, which sits off the bottom of Queen Anne hill, was opposed by some residents of the neighborhood. Typical worries and fears that come from "bums" living close by provided an unjustified basis for three lawsuits against the renovation project.

"But that opposition died down once we moved in and they saw that we take good care of the property and our residents," says Bowman. The attitude of a neighborhood should not be judged by a few eccentrics. When a visitor couldn't find the Inn and asked people only blocks away, she said that none of them had even heard about it.

Also, not every resident at the Aloha moves on to permanent housing and a full-time job. "It's not a perfect world," says Beaumon. "Some don't get it together for whatever reason, and they have to go. It's too bad they didn't make it through the Aloha, but they're still welcome to come by and talk. We provide the community and emotional support."

For some, the Aloha also educates and inspires. After finishing the mural behind the Inn, Smith began to get involved politically. During a City Hall meeting, with all council members present, he read a speech arguing against the Safe Harbors project, the initiative to create a computerized homeless tracking system. "We showed up to just voice our opinions, to say how the money could be better spent for the homeless... then security came and kicked us out."

Two years after his stay in Seattle, Smith is now back home in Kansas, volunteering at the Topeka Rescue Mission, and working on an outreach mission, hoping to do direct ministering for people without homes or those in prison. He says that he owes a lot to the Bread of Life Mission, downtown, and to the Aloha Inn. "Everybody who walks through the Aloha is somebody to me," he says at the building. "Everybody who comes here plays a role in the grand scheme of the empowerment of not only their own life, but also in influencing and encouraging others." ■

To apply for housing at the Aloha Inn, call 283-6070.

Ten years after the Aloha Inn opened, over 1,700 people have found permanent housing, social tensions from neighboring Queen Anne have subsided, and a powerful communal bond has formed between residents, staff, and supporters of the project.

Abby's Story

Stuck between a bad landlord and a hostile neighborhood, tenants get a new enemy: the city

By Adam Holdorf

Abby Frankenfield says city officials had no right to come in.

On May 31, 2000, an officer with the Seattle Police Department and a city housing inspector entered her home at 1318 N.E. 65th Street without her consent. The city officials brandished a request for inspection from a man claiming to be one of Frankenfield's housemates, Kent Faure. Frankenfield says the city trumped up this reason: Faure had moved out weeks before. That morning, he'd sneaked back to let them in.

Frankenfield has filed suit against the DCLU and the City of Seattle, naming Mayor Paul Schell and City Attorney Mark Sidran as defendants. Her papers indict Schell and Sidran for, "under color of official right... tortuously interfering with her use of property, a liberty interest protected by the United States Constitution."

While her landlord and his resident manager continue to rake in cash from renting to her and more than a hundred Roosevelt neighborhood tenants, Frankenfield is going after the inspectors who entered her home, stepped on her bed, and opened the fishing tackle box in her hallway.

She rents from the infamous Roosevelt slumlord Hugh Sisley. And she says there's nowhere else to go.

Sisley's 44 Roosevelt neighborhood properties have been cited for numerous housing code violations. When DCLU inspectors find a code violation, Sisley and resident manager Keith Gilbert respond with a suit — over anything from racketeering to trespass to tenants' rights under the Landlord-Tenant Act. Most have been thrown out of court as frivolous nuisances. So far, the city's been unsuccessful in getting her case dismissed. It's being heard in U.S. District Court.

There goes the neighborhood

Frakenfield admits to feeling like a patsy, caught in the crossfire between city government (trying to act in the interests of the neighborhood by targeting run-down properties) and her landlord (who's holding on to his land, waiting for city zoning code amendments to allow for high-rise apartments). She's aware that a court victory would probably benefit her landlord's cause.

"I filed my suit on principle," she says. "I'm an advocate for shared housing rights in Seattle. How else in God's name can we protect ourselves from the [DCLU's] new policies?"

The other players in this story are the Roosevelt Neighborhood Association (RNA) and the Neighborhood Action Team. In 1999, at their urging, DCLU shifted its fining procedure to impact trouble properties more directly. Issuing fines became more like writing a traffic ticket. It was a move prompted in part by the neighborhood's alarm over Sisley's derelict properties.

But without consent from a tenant or a search warrant, inspectors aren't allowed into the building.

Jim Diers, of the Department of Neighborhoods, formerly of the NAT Leadership Team, says NAT's interdepartmental problem-solving takes on Seattle's "most challenging neighborhood problems." As he recalls, NAT tackled the issue of landlords who were not keeping their properties livable. "The problem in Roosevelt was the run-down housing, and how to address these concerns without being able to get into the houses," says Diers. It was a question of derelict buildings versus their inhabitants' rights.

Because of the work of NAT and the neighborhood, the Department of Construction and Land Use began its ticketing practice. But DCLU inspectors still can't enter without tenants' consent, or a warrant. So the emphasis turns to what people inside are doing.

Frankenfield feels like the Neighborhood Plan, which emphasizes homeownership at the expense of renting, turns her into "a problem to be solved. As a tenant, rather than a homeowner, I have a negative impact."

Sisley, 75, rents his 44 properties as shared housing to people unlikely to get it otherwise — the disabled, the recently paroled, people recovering from addiction. He's sitting on the land, waiting for Roosevelt to grow up into a high-density urban corridor that allows multi-story developments. Then he'll make a windfall.

"This location is strategic for transportation and development. Most of these houses would not pass today's codes," he says. "The city would do anything to get me off my land. I'm not going to let them in." So long as no tenant breaks ranks and reports code violations, Sisley's safe. And if tenants have nowhere else to go, their allegiance is assured.

Keith Gilbert manages the house that Frankenfield lived in. As a result of his long history of pointless litigation, Gilbert's even been banned from

the courts. Last year, U.S. District Judge Barbara Jacobs Rothstein passed a motion for an order restricting Gilbert from filing any actions against the City of Seattle. Could Frankenfield be filing on his behalf?

She insists that she did not file with Gilbert, and nowhere in her suit is his name mentioned. But Gilbert and another tenant filed a similar suit alleging unlawful entry in September 1999. It doesn't help that Frankenfield's attorney, David Vogle, has represented both Sisley and Gilbert before.

The city tried to get the case dismissed last October, but District Court Judge Marsha J. Pechman said the claims against the defendants were sufficient, and the motion to dismiss was denied. A second motion for summary judgment was struck down in May. In

it, City Attorney Darby DuComb called Frankenfield a functional alcoholic and tied her suit to Gilbert.

"The powerlessness we feel..." says Frankenfield. "This city may have a gripe against Hugh Sisley, but that's none of my business. The people that suffer in this are the tenants."

Frankenfield is scared for her future. On May 17, she checked herself into the UW Hospital's seventh floor psychiatric unit. "I woke up in the morning feeling really bad. I was afraid to be alone. I felt very suicidal. I couldn't stop obsessing over how [the city] tried to get my case dismissed."

"They don't want us living here anymore. Where do they expect us to go?" ■

Susan Friedrich contributed to this story.



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIEDRICH.

"The powerlessness we feel.... This city may have a gripe against Hugh Sisley, but that's none of my business. The people that suffer in this are the tenants."

— Abby Frankenfield



When I was six I knew that I would never lack a home. I could stay at my parents until I finished college. After that, I could always sleep in my spaceship, if necessary.

As I grew older, I came to realize that I was being silly. It didn't have to be a spaceship. It only had to be an all-terrain ground vehicle with a self-contained ecology. The ecology would include me of course. It would have a fully automated hydroponics system that would not only grow my food for me, but prepare it and serve it to me. If it weren't also a spaceship, that would be OK. It could be a time machine, for instance.

I pictured the thing being only half as long as the average camper. My design didn't even call for a convenient door, because there would generally be no reason to leave the contraption. I imagined that I would have a television screen with which to communicate to the outside world. I could manipulate external objects with robot arms. Somehow all the books I might want to read would fit in the on-board computer.

My seat would recline to a bed. When I needed exercise I could pull a lever (all the best inventions were controlled by levers and large impressive dials in those days) and suitable exercising devices

would appear at my hands and feet.

Eventually, I began to sense a crucial flaw in the design: there was no passenger seat. I came to realize that there must not only be a passenger seat, but there must be no levers between it and me. So I was finally led to appreciate the idea of a camper with a separate space for a bed.

Taking a daily crap in the air is still OK for Lynnwood, Everett, and Mark Sidran. Just keep it off the rhododendron roots.

Campers, and their latest incarnations, the SUVs, are not just alternative homes that can ease the suffering of the houseless, they are also archetypes. The security they represent is the security of the womb. I am sure that this is why so many American guys feel they have to have an SUV. They miss their mothers, in a physical way.

Clearly though, the homeless have especially good reasons to appreciate the camper. Lets say you live in Lynnwood, in a house, and the backwards government of Lynnwood criminalizes people who live in houses. Well, then, you're stuck. But now, suppose you live in Lynnwood in a camper, and the backwards government of Lynnwood criminalizes people who live in campers. Then you can drive to Bothell and wait for them to be backwards. Bothell is prettier anyway.

Lynnwood's stated problem with the camper-endowed and other such homeless, is that they often relieve themselves in bushes. This doesn't prevent everybody in Lynnwood from owning campers and/or SUVs and polluting the air I breathe by driving them unnecessarily to and from work. Taking a daily crap in the air is still OK for Lynnwood, Everett, and Mark Sidran. Just keep it off the rhododendron roots.

Then there are people like Dave, whose real name is also fake. Dave is an old friend of mine who once made the mistake of morally opposing a war while people with guns were transporting him to it. They put him in the brig. After that his life sort of went downhill.

What makes Dave interesting, besides being a man of convictions, is that he is a whiz at creating shelter in deep forest, but his livelihood (recycling the cast-off toys of the middle and upper classes) depends on living in the city. So he would be a perfect candidate for a camper, except he can't drive.

But Dave shares the dream we all have for that mobile womb. He just had to scale his dream back to more of a rickshaw-like vehicle. He would build a home on wheels which he could physically pull from parking space to parking space as needed.

Such dreams are so powerful that they consume men like Dave, so that they spend years fretting over blueprints of the perfect home away from mother, and never demand more from society than that their dreams should be possible. ■

root cause

Ink on your hands,
falls
slowly. Because,
you
love mother . . . raise
your hands (yes!
your
own!) to the

skies

(you see them,
growing.)

There are others.

In time.

They can be friends—your
own! once you
all

come

together, in circles described
at

home.

By your own, there.

—STAN BURRISS

Original Man

Adam, original man,
good friend,
we are safe here.
within a bomb shelter,
after the end of time,
we imbibe shared sacrament
we renounce paradigm hell
and all other romantic insanities.
because we are safe here,
life is gone
outside the distant siren
and the World Cries:
please give me a drink of water
before i die.

Adam, original man,
homeless scholar, we are safe here.
within an outhouse shelter,
after closing time,
we burn down shared smoke.
we denounce paradigm analysis
and all other academic madness.
although we are safe here,
life goes on
within the distant sirens.
and the World Cries:
please give me a drink of water
before i die.
and the World Cries.

—PATRICK McCABE

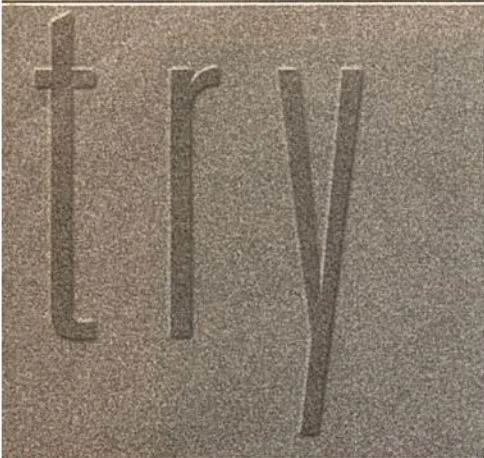


Astronomer

Maybe he was
a displaced person
an immigrant
sitting behind
picking at the
Einstein-like
his eyes pained
their gaze de-
fallen from the
of the Metro,
his satchel as
to the univer-

composer kept
to a new symphony
what he was
a man who had
had not been
his casual suffering
inner distress
angular, his suffering
furrowed from
I imagined him
next to a wall
I swear I have
out of window
transfixed by
that has crushed
He was the angel
the brooding
a solitary life.

for my stop
then I walked
where the im-
into the air by
from the Inter-
rolled in front
of a little man
the sky with
of a migrant
I turned around
gone as if it
hovered over
that is, until
walking in a
straight ahead
as it stood tra-
At that moment
and the deer in



al Transit

erbian astronomer,
cist from Croatia,
anian mathematician
own shadow,
unds of his wiry
on top of his balding head,
ling for a two-bit smile,
e, dense with sadness,
o across the front aisle
large hands clutching
held star maps
r maybe he was a Czech

g the score
ny that cried out
afraid to say with words,
lose to his chest whatever
ed out of his arms already,
r suit rumped from his
nose and cheek bones
rawn, his wide forehead
orry over personal intrigues.
noking a French cigarette
rred with Italian graffiti.
en him before staring
nes beaded with rain,
grayness of the past
him with heartache.
in a film who said nothing,
cer whose shoulders articulated
en I pulled the cord

anced briefly at each other,
into a sunny city park
of a man was shot
et of intermittent spray
ional Fountain. A hacksack
my feet like the head
ile a juggler ignited
laming baton, the song
cer singeing the air.
quickly but the Metro was
never there; yet it has
ry street I have been on since,
he other day while I was
by wood. I had looked
a deer, as if it was a ghost,
arent in its stillness.
he man in the Metro
ie wood became one and the same.

—JOHN JOSEPH PAJER

Late Nite Metro

Two minutes
Too late
To catch the midnite bus
I get to wait for the one-fifteen
The sole shelter bench
Already taken
I sit on the stone wall
By the “M” streets arch
My seat insulated and cushioned
By discarded newsprint
I read my book
Cold winds soon drive me
Back to standing with the others
My eye gazes with envy
At that occupied bench
(Why only one?)
Busses come and go
Siphoning the crowd
While I stand and read
But still none comes to take
The man from the bench
Another bus leaves and I
Taste — Smell ——— Feel
A sudden change
I’m the only woman left
Five pairs of eyes are on me
My book slides into its bag
Allowing no fear I ask the time
I smile thanks at the differing replies
Keep them talking
‘Til they’re talking to each other
’Til we all see each other as people
’Til the Smell of Predator fades
Another bus
The bench is mine
Two walls at my back
My feet free as weapons
I relax

Another bus
The one remaining
Drops his drunken Indian facade
Straightens his shoulders
Into his backpack frame
We share an intelligent conversation
A second Native man shows up
He is genuinely drunk
Perhaps I should go to de-tox
He mumbles half-heartedly
Then he tries to talk up another fight
His hand still swelling
From the previous one
He talks of having to pull his blade
And slice the man
For calling his mother a bitch
He says when it comes to fighting
He’s ready
He bounces on his toes like a boxer
I say when it comes to fighting
I try to talk my way out of it
And if that doesn’t work I run
He gives me an odd look but backs down
A black man with short pepper and salt hair arrives
He is bouncing even more than Mister Blade
He talks...a lot
Mister Blade walks away . . . comes back
Another bus
Both Natives get on
I’m sorry to see the wise one leave
Mister Bounce tries to become
Mister I’m-so-right-for-you-how-can-I-see-you-again
The metamorphosis fails
Another bus
Mine
I get on and take out my book
I read all the way home
Another metro late nite behind me

—RENEENE ROBERTSON

Thinking of Jody in Virginia Mason

I heard about you from a friend of a friend.
Lying quietly, asking for nothing.
Chest softly rising and falling with each peaceful breath.
Voice stilled, eyes closed.
John works all day and comes to your hospital bed.
He parks the car in light cast by cold distant stars.
Sits by your side and speaks to you.
He knows you hear him, he hopes you hear him.
Forty-two gentle kisses he has kissed on your cheek.
One for each day you’ve been lost to him.
He prays for you to wake up.
My prayer for you is this poem.

—LIZ SMITH

root cause

Ink on your hands,
falls
slowly. Because,
you
love mother . . . raise
your hands (yes!
your
own!) to the
skies

(you see them,
growing.)
There are others.
In time.
They can be friends—your
own! once you
all
come
together, in circles described
at
home.
By your own, there.

—STAN BURRISS

Original Man

Adam, original man,
good friend,
we are safe here.
within a bomb shelter,
after the end of time,
we imbibe shared sacrament
we renounce paradigm hell
and all other romantic insanities.
because we are safe here,
life is gone
outside the distant siren
and the World Cries:
please give me a drink of water
before i die.

Adam, original man,
homeless scholar, we are safe here.
within an outhouse shelter,
after closing time,
we burn down shared smoke.
we denounce paradigm analysis
and all other academic madness.
although we are safe here,
life goes on
within the distant sirens.
and the World Cries:
please give me a drink of water
before i die.
and the World Cries.

—PATRICK McCABE



Astronomical Transit

Maybe he was a Serbian astronomer,
a displaced physicist from Croatia,
an immigrant Ukranian mathematician
sitting behind his own shadow,
picking at the strands of his wiry
Einstein-like hair on top of his balding head,
his eyes panhandling for a two-bit smile,
their gaze desolate, dense with sadness,
fallen from his lap across the front aisle
of the Metro, his large hands clutching
his satchel as if it held star maps
to the universe. Or maybe he was a Czech
composer keeping the score
to a new symphony that cried out
what he was too afraid to say with words,
a man who held close to his chest whatever
had not been pulled out of his arms already,
his casual summer suit rumpled from his
inner distress, his nose and cheek bones
angular, his skin drawn, his wide forehead
furrowed from worry over personal intrigues.
I imagined him smoking a French cigarette
next to a wall scarred with Italian graffiti.
I swear I have seen him before staring
out of windowpanes beaded with rain,
transfixed by the grayness of the past
that has crushed him with heartache.
He was the actor in a film who said nothing,
the brooding dancer whose shoulders articulated
a solitary life. When I pulled the cord
for my stop we glanced briefly at each other,
then I walked off into a sunny city park
where the image of a man was shot
into the air by a jet of intermittent spray
from the International Fountain. A hackysack
rolled in front of my feet like the head
of a little man while a juggler ignited
the sky with his flaming baton, the song
of a migrant worker singeing the air.
I turned around quickly but the Metro was
gone as if it was never there; yet it has
hovered over every street I have been on since,
that is, until just the other day while I was
walking in a nearby wood. I had looked
straight ahead at a deer, as if it was a ghost,
as it stood transparent in its stillness.
At that moment the man in the Metro
and the deer in the wood became one and the same.

—JOHN JOSEPH PAJER

Late Nite Metro

Two minutes
Too late
To catch the mi
I get to wait for the
The sole shelter bench
Already taken
I sit on the stone wall
By the “M” streets a
My seat insulated ar
By discarded newsp
I read my book
Cold winds soon drive m
Back to standing wi
My eye gazes w
At that occ
(Why only
Busses come and go
Siphoning the crow
While I stand ar
But still none comes
The man from t
Another bus leaves and I
Taste — Smell —
A sudden chang
I’m the only woman left
Five pairs of eyes ar
My book slides
Allowing no fear I ask th
I smile thanks at the diff
Keep them talking
’Til they’re talking t
’Til we all see each c
’Til the Smell of Prec
Another bus
The bench is mine
Two walls at my back
My feet free as weap
I relax

DIGNITY Continued from Page 1

safety of our person, our property, and our perimeter."

I didn't meet Tafari in my two-and-a-half day stay, but I heard his name frequently. Dignity residents and supporters aim to govern in a leaderless community, and say that Tafari and others who take important roles aren't necessarily in charge. Every resident gets a say in important decisions. But there's probably something more ineffable about the power of people like Tafari. It's charisma. Another leading light, Ibrahim Mubarak, who is responsible for admitting and evicting campers, told me that prayer leads him to making decisions that his camp-mates respect — a kind of divine right to rule, which helped him to do the right thing with a large private donation recently.

It's not really important whether the decision-makers in Dignity Village rule with God's blessing or their own earthly agendas. Anyone can see, walking into the camp under the Fremont Bridge, that survival overrides process.

Perhaps Dignity Village has had its problems. Bob Durston, chief of staff to City Commissioner Erik Sten, told me that police have been called in response to reports of violence — "one of the leaders assaulting another resident," he said darkly. I couldn't confirm his allegation before press time. What I heard when we talked again was that some people who'd been evicted from the camp — probably for breaking the rules listed on their "admittance agreement" barring drugs and violence — were calling the police in retaliation for the leader's decision. The cops' reply: "We're going to have to either leave you alone or sweep you all," Durston told me, because, "You technically don't belong here."

That sums up Portland officialdom's amiable but boneheaded approach to Dignity Village: give a little amnesty at first, but finally, just tell them to disappear.

Utopia out of time

Durston spent years working in the shelter system before joining Sten's staff. He knows the homeless social-service system inside and out. The entire system was reconfigured several years ago, and the city has sole responsibility for homeless adults. Married couples who find themselves homeless have no place to go. And while the anti-camping ordinance was struck down, the state can use a trespass ordinance against people staying on ODOT property. None of that has happened since January, when Dignity ended up on its current campground. City and state officials got together and, with the neighbors' leave, gave Dignity a reprieve. Durston says,

"You try to do the right thing by people who have no other options."

Sitting in his office in City Hall, Durston sounds like an ex-hippie trying out his leftover '60s-speak. He refers to Dignity as a "utopian" experiment, seeking alternatives to the "paternalism" of the shelters downtown. The people in Dignity are choosing to live this way. But he also acknowledges that the city isn't providing enough shelter. Perhaps

Durston doesn't want to see that there's no safe alternative to an "experiment" like Dignity. Or perhaps the Villagers haven't communicated that effectively enough yet.

The city's benevolence is running out. Early last month, Durston and state ODOT officials told Dignity residents that they must leave the state-owned property by July 1, and that they would be booted off any other public property. The campers' efforts to lease state land have gone nowhere. Later this month, Dignity Village is holding a public

meeting to figure out where to go next.

"For me, it's good and bad," says Rev. Ronald Williams of Bethel AME Church, a Dignity supporter in northeast Portland. He doesn't like the city's new deadline. But for five months, the residents "have had some stability there. They know where they're gonna sleep at night, they know where their things are during the day; in that sense it's been good. It's quite possible someone with property could come forward."

Here's where the Seattle experience sheds some light on this Portland predicament. Fourteen months ago, the current Tent City (now staying out at Lake City Christian Church) was an outlaw, running scared. It formed on April 1, the day the city-run "winter response" shelters closed down for the cool, wet spring. People marched south out of the downtown core to Martin

Housin' Problem

Time dem a rough
an' de time gettin' hard
when Rasta doan get live inna tenement yard
not a tenement yard an' not a government yard
but get live inna de street
out upon de boulevard
Ah'm a tellin' yuh right now is a hell of a ting
when yuh poor an' yuh Rasta fe get some housing

But it doan jus' Rasta
yuh mus' understand
plenty people 'ave a housin' problem inna Portland

Between dem waitin' list at Housin' Authority
an' a next concern name Central City
dem 'ave nuff poor people
runnin' to an' fram
dem waan sign yuh up
fe dem homeless program
waan come inna yuh life an' invade yuh space
an' put a case manager deh pon yuh case
Ah'm a tellin' yuh right now is a hell of a ting
when yuh poor 'bout yah fe get some housing

No, it doan jus' Rasta
yuh mus' understand
plenty people 'ave a housin' problem inna Portland.

— JACK TAFARI

Excerpted from the October Issue of street roots with author's permission.

Luther King Jr. Way, and set up camp on a vacant lot. The cops showed up with a fleet of garbage trucks, threatening to haul off everybody's belongings.

Within weeks, the campers had found a willing host: a church. Then they found another. Now, nearly 20 hosts later, congregations and church leaders have emerged from positive experiences with Tent City. The Very Reverend Robert Taylor, Mayor Paul Schell's minister at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, brought Tent City to his church and then convened an all-city conference on ending homelessness. In April, Rev. Rich Lang of Trinity United Methodist Church spoke out with holy righteousness against the fines mounting against his church. The city backed down, and stopped their practice of fining Tent City's hosts for breaking land use code.

Reeling from the church community's moral outrage, the city attorney's office is figuring out what to do next. Members of SHARE and WHEEL, the homeless people's group sponsoring the camp, have called it a turning point. Portland's own camp could use a turn for the better.

Layla Iranshad, a volunteer for *street roots* and now Dignity Village, has a better bead on the camp than the city. "Nobody calls it an experiment," she says. "Everyone believes it's a positive alternative to overcrowded shelters, and it's an empowering process when people can make decisions in their own lives." ■

For more on Dignity Village, see www.outofthedoormways.org.

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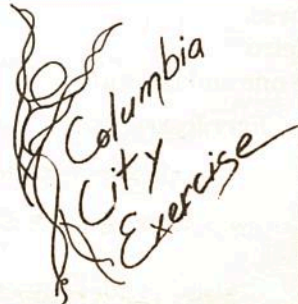
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Help the Helping Profession

A social service worker speaks out

By S. J. Skourtes

I work with teen parents on welfare. One 18-year-old, Debby, with an eight-month-old baby, is typical of the people I see. I'm going to tell you what I can do for her.

Debby has three needs: housing, employment, and education. She has been essentially homeless for 15 months, as her mother asked her to leave when she became pregnant. Since that time, she has been jumping around between the homes of friends and relatives. She is on welfare and receives \$440 a month for herself and her baby. This puts her well below the federal poverty level and would qualify her for Section 8 housing, but there isn't any available. The average wait for low-income housing in the City of Seattle is more than three years.

In instances like this, I refer girls to transitional group homes for teen mothers. Debby rejects this idea, however, because the homes firmly restrict the presence of men. The baby's father is very involved in their lives, so she doesn't want to live someplace where his visits will be limited. The remain-

ing option is to get on the waiting lists and come up with a plan to make more money. This leads to issue number two, employment, where her options are even more dismal.

A large portion of individuals coming off of welfare are not moving out of poverty. Mothers receiving welfare are required to enroll in a mandatory training/job placement program called Work First. Individuals who enter the program with few marketable skills are usually offered six- to nine-month vocational training programs, and are then quickly moved into the first job that comes along — typically low-wage, low-skill jobs with little room for growth or skill enhancement. Last year, for the second year in a row, people coming off of welfare were not getting the kind of jobs they need to support their families, even if they're working full time. The median household income for full-time workers who got jobs through Work First was \$1,100 a month — not enough to lift a family of four above the federal poverty level, but high enough to disqualify them from

Food Stamps. I can send Debby to a job training program where she can learn basic office skills or take computer classes, and in the meantime she can work at a convenience store, but when her classes end, she'll have scarcely more options than she had when she began. What have I done to really change her situation?

Now I'm not saying that people with immediate needs shouldn't get help. It is our obligation to assist, whether you're a paid service worker or not. However, as a method for dealing with the problems of poor people in any lasting way, social services is not. My job, and the role of all social services, is to deal with the aftermath of a system that creates poverty. You've heard the old saw about the broken dam. We are continually pulling people out of the flood, never looking at how to close the breach. For every three people like Debby whom I assist, 10 more like her will walk into my office next week.

They come to me in part because, as a social service worker, I am the keeper of information. I'm constantly amazed when able-bodied individuals call me up asking for this service or that — information they could easily find if they opened a phone book. However, no one ever showed them how. Rather than learning how to get out of the system, people keep coming back to have their needs met. Then the public blames them for being "dependent." Please don't put down this article feeling completely hopeless. Rather than turning our backs on social services, I'm calling out to the people within the industry to make a change. First, top off a hard day of providing direct services with some effort to change the system.

The Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition educates and empowers low income people to challenge and improve welfare policy. The School of Social

Work at the University of Washington has a student group called the Radical Social Work Forum.

In concrete ways, we can educate people while delivering social services. Rather than only doing things for clients, we can transfer the knowledge we've accrued. If people know how to access resources on their own, or how to decipher the welfare laws, then they are no longer dependent on others for such information. These kinds of skills will outlast any apti-

tude in the latest version of Microsoft Word.

Poor people are made to feel that their situation is solely their fault. We need to see our clients for who they really are: not misguided individuals, or unlucky souls, but as victims of an economic system that creates poor people, and we need to help them put their individual experience within that context. Then, they can move from being passive victims to empowered warriors believing in their capacity to change their lives. Real change comes through political awareness. All the major social movements in this country (civil rights, women's rights, queer rights, etc.) share a single theme: Change comes from individuals who recognize their oppression, link up with others, and start making demands. When that happens, our work here will be finished. ■

S.J. Skourtes (sjskourtes@hotmail.com) is an advocate for teen parents at the East Cherry YWCA.

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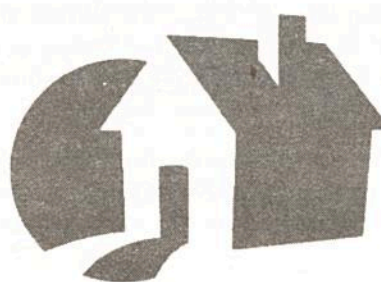


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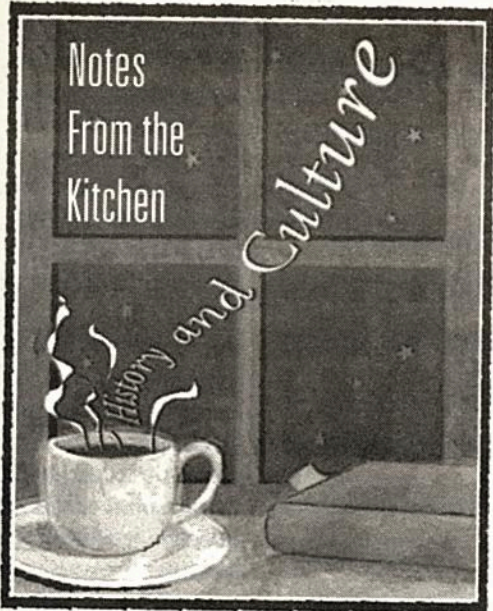
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Forget Your Cares, Go on a Picnic



By Liz Smith

Some folks sure know how to throw a picnic. Last year on July 14, more than one million French people came together to commemorate the first Bastille Day of the new millennium. In a line that ran from Calais in the north down to Perpignan in the south, they joined their picnic tables end to end, clinked their wine glasses, and unleashed their *joie de vivre*. Also their dogs — the whole country is an off-leash area.

Just think of it: Hundreds of linear miles of salmon in *beurre blanc* sauce, little pots of tapenade, fragrant stews, lemon tarts, strawberries in clouds of *Crème Chantilly*. The women are in beautiful silky dresses, the men are wearing caps and crafty peasant looks as they brag about their wives' cooking. And I bet they did it all without one single focus group or recycling committee. Or guillotine.

You don't have to be French, however, to have yourself a fine picnic. You just need a sylvan glade, some

nice things to eat and drink, and a small group of kindred spirits. Dogs are optional; leashes not.

Here are some lovely and soothing places in which to commune with nature, each with its own particular charms. All are peaceful settings where you can unwind your frazzled nerves and relax. If I may drop a broad hint — please, leave your dang cell phone at home. Or take it to a babysitter if you don't want it to be lonesome.



The first place to visit is the **Montlake Bridge**. Go early on Sunday morning. To gaze into the mist, to hear the rowing crews as the coxswain chants the rhythmic beat, to observe the gulls swirling about on their invisible currents of wind — this is tranquillity. From the south end of the bridge, walk east to reach the Foster Island Nature Trail. It's great fun to squish your way along the marshy boardwalk. At the end of the trail is a little island with an unbelievable view.

To eat: bagels, english muffins, cream cheese and honey, fresh cantaloupe.

The next bucolic locale to go and see is at the very end of East Madison Street. This is **Madison Park**, where you will find yourself in a great squat chunk of upscale citizenry. If you're wearing holey jeans, you will receive snuffy looks from the matrons getting out of their Jaguars. Just ignore them, as I did, and go down to the beach there. All is blue, a thousand shades of blue. While you're collecting shells, you can hear red-winged blackbirds, black-capped chickadees, wrens, and many other kinds of birds. Find a cozy rock, rest your feet, and feel the kindly benediction of the warm sun.

To eat: pasta salad and iced jasmine green tea.



My third recommendation is the **Ballard Locks**. In June they begin their summer series of weekend concerts. They have jazz, Big Band, classical — something for everybody. There are spacious grounds shaded by big leafy trees, and a divine rose garden. There also are many geese, so bring some chairs and wear your oldest shoes. After the concert, walk south through the multicultural hordes of tourists. Stop and see all the interesting sloops, crab boats, yachts, and tiny defenseless kayaks as they lock through from salt to fresh water. Keep walking and follow the bike trail signs up to Harley Avenue.

To eat: chicken salad sandwiches, icy soft drinks. A truck by the front gate sells popcorn, cold drinks, ice cream and hot dogs. The hot dogs have pleasant nuances of pork which are nicely balanced by the tangy finish of the French's mustard and the mellow acidity of the pickle relish.


The fourth and final place for a picnic is a small park high on a breezy hilltop. **Parson's Gardens** is at Seventh Avenue West and W. Highland Drive. Depending on what time of day you go, you may observe a sweetly hopeful wedding party, or a rough group of night-owl degenerates swilling beer. There are sunny benches overlooking Elliott Bay and a shady bower across the street which is full of flowers and more benches. Even if you're a dunce about F-stops (as I am), still bring your camera. And this spot practically cries out for one of those muddy 25-cent-per-minute telescopes. I don't know why they don't have one, but they don't. Call the mayor's office and maybe he'll make a campaign promise about it.

To eat: Drop in to the Queen Anne Thriftway. They have the best service in town without being obsequious about it like Whole Foods. Their produce is perfection on a plate. They also have a very good selection of breads and cheeses. Pick up some of each, and there's your picnic. ■




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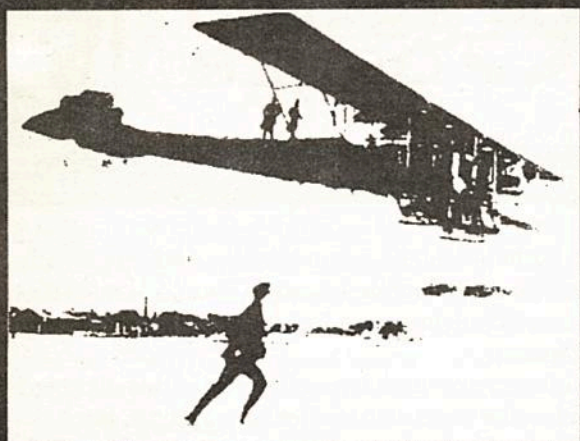
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Tuesday, May 8, 12:30 p.m., Westin Hotel, Virginia Avenue. A rolling line of security was formed around anti-trade demonstrators gathered for the Asia Pacific Cities Summit meeting in front of the Westin. One officer was separated from the other police units ahead of him, creating a gap between the front and back of the crowd. The officer saw two demonstrators dressed in black, each of whom noticed the gap and, one after another, stepped in front of the officer to block his way. The officer yelled at the demonstrators to move, and when they remained still, used his left shoulder to press past them. After the officer passed, a man with a gas mask and a baton confronted him. When he was ordered to move or be arrested for obstruction, the man, who had no address to give to arresting officers, grabbed onto the branch of a nearby tree. Several officers came to the scene to help wrench his grasp free from the tree. Many demonstrators tried to break police lines to rescue the homeless man, but he was taken into custody for obstruction.

Monday, May 7, 2:11 p.m., Thomas St. Officers responded to a call from an employee near the Space Needle who observed a mentally ill homeless man harassing people. The witness told the officer that the man was there in the morning and was no problem, but he returned three hours later and was extremely agitated, threw rocks, and screamed profanities. Officers observed that the homeless man was "unkempt, wearing dirty clothes, unresponsive to questions, usually muttering unintelligibly, and appeared unable to take care of himself." The man gave officers several names and birthplaces. He said he heard voices telling him what to do. A check with King County Mental Health Professionals showed that he had already been diagnosed with chronic schizophrenia. He was then taken into protective custody to Harborview Medical Center.

Wednesday, May 9, 11:33 a.m. Belmont Avenue. Officers responded to a trespassing report of persons in an apartment building. Upon arrival, officers saw the apartment manager escort out a homeless woman whom the manager claimed was one of the trespassers. The apartment manager told officers that she had spoken with a tenant 10 minutes earlier and told her there were not to be other people living in the apartment. The legal tenant said she understood the rules and denied there was anyone else in the apartment. When questioned by the officers, the homeless woman said she was subletting the apartment from her friend. At first, she gave a false name to the officers, but soon gave her real name and admitted she was hiding from a misdemeanor warrant. The officers then questioned the man accompanying her, also homeless. He was taken to the East Precinct for trespassing and later released, while the woman was taken to King County Jail. ■

Streetwatch is compiled from Seattle Police Department incident reports by Emma Quinn.

Not Just Bread

Bread and Roses
Opens Friday June 1 at the Broadway Market
Broadway Avenue and East Harrison Street

By Kevin Vanderhoef

Bread and Roses starts out on the far side of the Mexico/California border as the lead character and heroine, Maya (Pilar Padilla), sneaks across to the Estados Unidos. She scrambles into a van which races off to outrun the border patrol, as the opening credits start rolling and we are treated to a rather bawdy Mexican ballad.

Bread and Roses is a portrayal of the Justice for Janitors campaign in California in the 1990s and its effects on illegal immigrants. The key event in the movement was in Century City in 1988; to this day it is celebrated as "Janitors Day."

The story line itself follows Maya, as she comes across the border to live with her sister Rosa (Elpidia Carrillo). Naive at first, Maya gets a job with the janitorial company that Rosa works for. She's soon faced with the stuff she has to stomach to get by. The overweight and imposing supervisor (George Lopez) charges her a "commission," explaining that it is to cover her papers. Later Maya meets Sam (Adrien Brody), a union organizer, as he runs through the building where she works to escape the security guards. Sam pauses at the service elevator to pick Maya's name off a list of employees that he has procured; thus begins her training as an organizer.

Upon finding out that she has "rights," even as an illegal immigrant, Maya begins encouraging her co-workers to join the union, an action which is opposed by her volatile supervisor and the company he represents. After several demonstrations and protests between the company representatives and the building owners, Maya and a group of her fellow employees are fired for their activities. Rosa explains certain "facts of life" to Maya about how her job was attained and how Rosa earned the money she was sending to her family. At the end, as we are treated to a protest march and rally to get Maya and her fellow employees reinstated to their former jobs, the history of the "Bread and Roses" slogan comes out: "We want Bread, but we want Roses too."

While Maya learns that her actions have consequences, both good and bad, the union she helped organize is successful. Within the last five years, tens of thousands of workers and their families have gained health insurance, decent salaries, and freedom from multiple part-time jobs, according to the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) president Andrew L. Stern.

Brody and writer Paul Laverty researched the history behind their roles. Brody went off to a real-life course in union organizing.

"They taught us all the techniques about companies' scare tactics, house visits, assessing leadership qualities, who'd be helpful among the workers — basically tactics and strategy," he said. "I even had to share the room!"

Carillo was also drawn to her character, Rosa.

"She's a Mexican woman who has had to struggle for work most of her



ADRIEN BRODY AND PILAR PADILLA FIGHT FOR THEIR RIGHTS. PHOTO COURTESY OF LIONS GATE FILMS.

life," she said, "so I can identify with that. Ken wanted me to go to Tijuana to visit the *maquiladoras*, the sweatshops where the character worked when she was young. We also went to Coahuila Street, where all the prostitutes are. I guess that was the hardest part of the 'homework.'"

The film itself is well laid out. Director Ken Loach gives us a balance of character and humor as he pursues a relatively serious topic. We are treated to tactical discussions and told some of the history behind SEIU's Justice for Janitors 2000 campaign. Both Loach and the writer, Laverty, have given us an enjoyable, introspective view of the lives of "invisible" service employees, a good share of which are illegal immigrants as well.

"Spending time with organizers, I soon realized they face an enormous task," said Laverty. "Many workers don't speak English and arrive in The U.S. illegally. Cleaning companies threaten them not only with dismissal, but with deportation. Many workers are too scared to get involved."

I would especially recommend this film to students learning the recent political history of union organization. If you are looking for special effects and cheesy plot devices, spend your money somewhere else. However, if you want to learn about human rights, and the effect of people organizing to fight for those rights, *Bread and Roses* is a film you might want to see. ■

CLASSICS CORNER



by Perfess'r Harris

Everyone, ourselves included, hates a know-it-all. Add this to Athens' long list of reasons to kill Socrates. Next to Plato, Socrates was quite possibly the most annoying man in Athens, and in fifth century B.C., that was saying a lot.

The Euthyphro provides an excellent case in point. In this dialogue, our hero runs into a friend on the steps of the Athenian assembly. Socrates is shocked to learn that Euthyphro is about to file murder charges against a family member.

Euthyphro's father has apprehended a hired hand who has killed another servant. He bound the murderer hand and foot and tossed him into a ditch, where he was left until a seer's advice could be obtained. The question was settled when the man died.

One person's life, says Euthyphro, is as valuable as the next. As early Greek morality goes, this is a very advanced position, but Socrates will have none of it. He says Euthyphro must be very sure of himself to bring his own father up on charges. Please explain to me, Oh Learned Euthyphro, says Socrates, what piety is, so that I too may have this knowledge.

Socrates, as usual, is being a facetious jerk. He doesn't believe for a moment that Euthyphro can adequately define piety, or any other non-quantifiable term. This is what makes Socrates Socrates. He thinks that ideas like Justice, Truth, and Beauty have some sort of reality apart from what we assign them. They have an essential form, he says, that sets the divine standard, and he's always getting some fool or another to define the ineffable. They never can, and neither can Socrates.

In *The Euthyphro*, he uses both of his standard tricks. He lures his friend into a definition that seems absolute, and then he attacks the contradictions. When that gets dull, Socrates resorts to half-assed analogies that confuse things even further. After about a half-hour, the two of them return to where they started, and Euthyphro suddenly remembers an urgent need to be somewhere else.

The Euthyphro is an unintentional reminder that we create our ethical world through the actions that we take and by the assumptions we make, not through hair-splitting philosophical debate. In a world where family loyalty was everything and unattached workers were lower than slaves, Euthyphro, as a matter of religious conviction, was expanding the definition of who matters. Socrates, by demanding an impossible standard of knowing, did his best to resist any idea of progress.

Even now, in our modern sophistication, we lack solid definitions of justice, truth, and morality. We establish what these mean in our daily lives.

When churches, for example, allow a homeless encampment to stay on their property, they are saying, "We assert that people have the human right to exist somewhere." When City bureaucrats fine and harass such churches, they are saying, "This camp is breaking the law." We choose our truths from the options we create. This is how moral standards come to exist, through belief and conflict, and having the courage to act, even in the absence of perfect knowledge. ■

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Late Spring Notables

Friday, 6/1

Office Warming Party for Radical Women and the Freedom Socialist Party, in step with the revitalization of Seattle's historic Columbia City neighborhood, celebrate the opening of their refurbished offices at New Freeway Hall, complimentary multi-ethnic hors d'oeuvres and beverages, 4 - 9 p.m., 5018 Rainier Ave. S., info, rides or childcare, 206-722-2453 or rwseattle@mindspring.com

The World Sits Down to Dinner: An Evening of Art and Heart, a feast of entertainment and information where visitors will have the opportunity to be representative global citizens and experience firsthand the uneven distribution of planetary wealth, guests will be welcomed at the door by a team of global ambassadors and invited to draw a ticket indicating the economic level at which the guest is "living" for the evening, sponsored by Town Hall and The Whidbey Institute, donations of non-perishable food or cash are accepted, 7 - 10 p.m., at Town Hall, 1119 8th St. at Seneca, info The Whidbey Institute 206-467-0384 or http://www.geocities.com/promorese/worldsitsdown/press_release.html

Sunday, 6/3

Join other feminists in a **Rant and Rave Feminist Round Table Discussion**, desserts and coffee, open discussion, suggested donation \$5.00, 1 - 3 p.m., at Tully's Coffee, The Mountain Room, 3100 Airport Way S., info Seattle NOW (National Organization for Women) 206-632-8547.

Monday, 6/4

The Coalition of Anti-racist Whites First Anniversary Celebration/Reflection. Potluck. 6 - 8:30 p.m. Central Lutheran Church, 1710 11th Ave. (at Olive). For more information call Scott Winn at (206)324-8165 or email winn@scn.org

Jewish Family Service Gala with dinner and mini live auction to benefit programs of JFS, 5:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., at Four Seasons Olympic Hotel, info 206-461-3240 x225 or <http://www.jfsseattle.org>

Thursday, 6/7

General Radical Women Meeting, learn more about their current activities and campaigns, dinner with vegetarian option, available at 6:30 p.m. for a \$6.50 donation, everyone welcome,

7:30 p.m., at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., info, rides or childcare, 206-722-6057

Friday, 6/9

Train to become a **volunteer advocate** for an abused/neglected child in court. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., also on June 15 and 22. More info at 296-1116 or gal.group@metrokc.gov

Saturday, 6/9

Race Unity Day 2001, featuring: Bochinche, intoxicating rhythms and dance from South America, the Caribbean, and dance from Africa. Sponsored by the Bahai Faith and the City of Bellevue Parks and Community Services Cultural Diversity Program, free, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., at Main Stage, Crossroads Shopping Center, 156th and NE 8th in Bellevue, info 425-452-2835.

Monday, 6/11

City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods free leadership workshop on "Getting the Word Out" information on writing and distributing press-releases, no pre-registration required, 6 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., at Seattle-King County American Red Cross; info Randy Wiger 206-684-0719 x1 or Randy.Wiger@ci.seattle.wa.us

Wednesday, 6/13

General Meeting of Homestead Community Land Trust, CLTs are a grassroots, membership-based group creating permanently affordable homeownership opportunities. Homestead is currently in the midst of developing Seattle's first-ever permanently affordable home-ownership project. This and subsequent 2nd Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., at Homestead's office, 1309 13th Ave. S., info or to confirm meeting time 206-323-1227 or homesteadclt@yahoo.com

Ongoing Saturdays

Seattle Food Not Bombs re-distributes free produce to the members of the Yesler Terrace Community Center, 10:45 a.m., sort vegetables, noon - 1:00 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>

Radio Show "Teen Talk" live, 30-minute show for, about, and hosted by teens, features teens interviewing people and experts about a variety of subjects such as eating disorders, employment, good nutrition, anger management, gangs and youth, and crime prevention, 11 a.m., on KSRB-AM, 1150, info 425-452-2834.

Ongoing Sundays

Seattle Food Not Bombs collects food and serves free vegetarian meals to the homeless 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.

Ongoing Daily

FareStart assists people who are homeless through training in life skills, food service, the culinary arts, and job placement, and runs their own restaurant, lunch daily and dinner on Thursdays only, with guest chefs from area restaurants. A 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 log on to <http://www.farestart.org> and make a donation.

Volunteers needed for "Yes for Seattle Water for Salmon Signature Gathering Campaign" signature-gathering and information on the Water for Salmon Initiative (63) provided, help salmon and water conservation efforts in Seattle! Water for Salmon, Not for Sprawl! This initiative also creates a "water hog rate" that creates a fund to be used to retro-fit low income housing with water conservation devices, info 206-956-8050 or <http://www.yesforseattle.org>

The Seattle Police Department is currently seeking nominations for the Community Policing Action Council, a group of citizens appointed by the Chief of Police to represent the people of Seattle, who work to develop programs and strategies that enhance positive community/police partnerships. This 24-member council is a planning and advisory group with citywide perspective and responsibility to identify critical community concerns. Help make Seattle a safer place to live, work, and play! info Ginny Heller 206-615-0062 or ginny.heller@ci.seattle.wa.us

Do Something!



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

Name _____

Address _____

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



Give us your huddled computer masses!

Is your business looking to upgrade your Macintosh computers? Then *Real Change* could be the perfect place to donate your old machines. It's also a great way to become part of our computer mentoring program. The Mac Workshop is looking for Power Macs and better to use for a new program teaching people how to refurbish computers. All donations are tax deductible.

Let your old software help others!

Real Change is also in need of both old and new versions of any word processing programs that work on a Mac.

If you're interested in getting involved, call Real Change at 206-441-3247 and ask for Matt

citizens participation project



Protect low-income hotel and office workers

Issue: As the city looks to increase downtown-area development, low-wage employees who would work in these new developments shouldn't be left out in the cold.

Background: By the end of June, the full Seattle City Council could decide on a plan to reshape the future of downtown development, by increasing the ability of developers to "swap" density between building lots. Developers are allowed to pay for building higher residential and commercial complexes in some areas, and the city hopes to use the money to build affordable homes and protect historic, low-density buildings on other areas.

While the plan could provide some level of funding to protect and build affordable housing — in some proposals, 75 percent of all the money paid by developers for increased building rights — it is also a huge gift to developers who don't intend to use the extra space to build housing for working families. Make sure the city considers the full range of impacts when it considers giving this tremendous benefit to downtown hotel and office developers. Expecting the change in development restrictions to generate enough housing either directly or through the charge for extra building height does not take into account the potential impact on all the low-wage workers that will be needed to run the new commercial businesses. The city should consider:

- how bigger hotels and offices will affect the distribution of income by gender, race, and immigration status;
- how more offices and hotels will affect the city's Comprehensive Plan goal of reducing the number of households in need of low-income housing;
- how bigger offices and hotels will impact the city's ability to provide quality jobs and meaningful economic opportunities for its residents;
- how bigger hotels will impact the proportion of the population that has complete access to quality healthcare;
- how more downtown hotels will contribute to the degree of residential segregation by race, income, and immigration status in our region;
- how more low-wage jobs in downtown hotels and offices will contribute to the amount of time that people spend commuting in our region.

In order to offset the potential social impacts of encouraging larger downtown developments, the city council should consider requiring developments, especially those that employ workers at relatively modest wages, to more fully fund housing and provide higher wages in return for taking advantage of the TDR/Bonus program.

Action: Write your city councilmembers and attend the full council meeting (expected to be on June 25 or July 9) to show your support for a change in development plans that not only generates money to protect existing affordable housing but has safeguards against bringing in more unpaid workers with nowhere in downtown to live.

Jim Compton	684-8802	jim.compton@ci.seattle.wa.us
Richard Conlin	684-8805	richard.conlin@ci.seattle.wa.us
Jan Drago	684-8801	jan.drago@ci.seattle.wa.us
Nick Licata	684-8803	nick.licata@ci.seattle.wa.us
Richard McIver	684-8800	richard.mciver@ci.seattle.wa.us
Judy Nicastro	684-8806	judy.nicastro@ci.seattle.wa.us
Margaret Pageler	684-8807	margaret.pageler@ci.seattle.wa.us
Peter Steinbrueck	684-8804	peter.steinbrueck@ci.seattle.wa.us
Heidi Wills	684-8808	heidi.wills@ci.seattle.wa.us

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