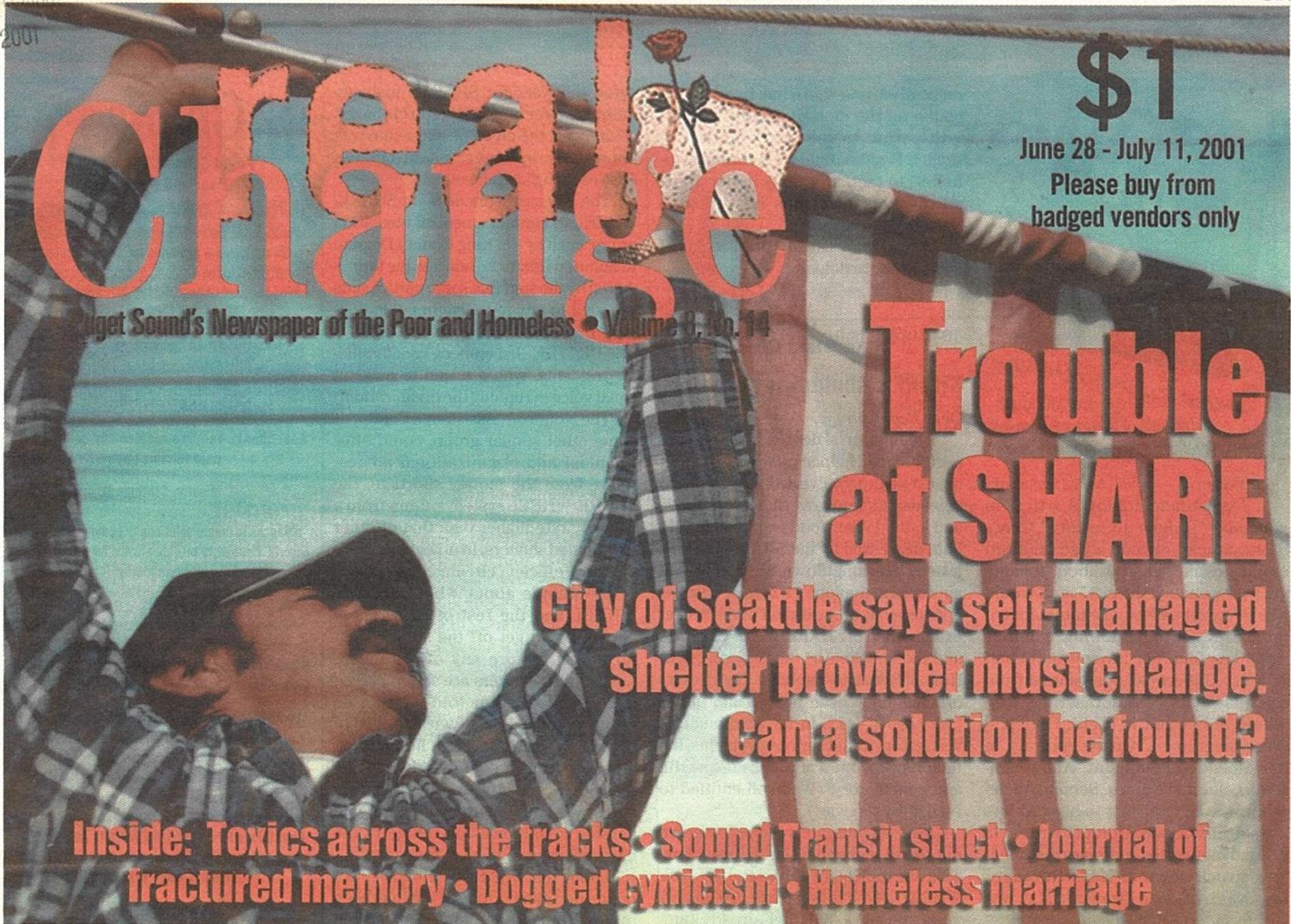


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Real Change

Budget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 8, No. 14

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June 28 - July 11, 2001
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Trouble at SHARE

City of Seattle says self-managed shelter provider must change. Can a solution be found?

Inside: Toxics across the tracks • Sound Transit stuck • Journal of fractured memory • Dogged cynicism • Homeless marriage

TENT CITY RESIDENT JIM CRUZ. PHOTO BY PETTER ALEXANDER GOLDSTINE.

By Adam Holdorf

Hire an accountant. Get the bugs out of your books. Organize a Board of Directors. Follow your own bylaws. And don't use our money for Tent City.

That's the word from the city Human Services Department (HSD) to Seattle Housing and Resource Effort (SHARE), which shelters about 260 homeless people per night in dozens of church-based shelters. In a report issued June 14, HSD found room for improvement, faulting SHARE's fiscal management and operations while praising its "admirable" and "creative" self-government system.

The city says it's a routine assessment, done about once every three years at every city-funded nonprofit social service. SHARE says the city's playing politics: trying to erode support for Tent City while ignoring the group's petition for emergency funding.

Now, faced with a sweeping directive to change, members of SHARE point to their record: providing more shelter than any other agency in the city, and doing it on a shoestring budget. SHARE needs money badly, says Anitra Freeman, board president, "and it's not because we're not doing our jobs."

Continued on Page 10

Note from the editor: Four of the homeless and formerly homeless members of the Real Change Editorial Committee are affiliated with the homeless people's group SHARE. All have abstained from editorial decisions on this story. Real Change will continue to cover SHARE's funding problems and its conflict with the city fairly and independently.



THE CITY BELIEVES PART OF SHARE'S FINANCIAL WOES COME FROM DIVERTING MONEY FROM CONVENTIONAL SHELTERS TO TENT CITY. PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

ment filed, and there has been no decision on the motion. Lastly, Holdorf writes that in the city's motion, it "called Frankenfield a functional alcoholic." In fact, it is Abby in her deposition who describes herself as a "functional alcoholic."

Other than these three items, I thought the article was well written.

Sincerely,
Darby N. DuComb
Assistant City Attorney

SHARE's shutdown blues

Dear *Real Change*,

I've been an ardent Tent City 3 supporter since I helped raise the first tent over a year ago. I've written letters to newspapers and government officials, and I still deliver food every week. But I am distressed by the SHARE/WHEEL letter ["Shutting down Shelters"] that appeared in the June 14-27 *Real Change*. It gives a false impression of the recent examination of SHARE/WHEEL's books and shelters done by the Department of Human Services, implying that the city officials have been hostile and unfair [see page 1 -ed.]. In fact, although investigators found serious problems, the final report comes across as respectful and conciliatory. (We're all entitled to read it, by the way.)

Assessments are regularly carried out for all municipal shelter providers. This one took place early, after SHARE/WHEEL asked for an extra \$70,000 beyond the \$171,000-plus already bud-

geted this year for SHARE's management of over a dozen church-based shelters for the city. The extra sum was apparently to cover "unanticipated cost-of-living" expenses.

The city assessors do want SHARE/WHEEL to contact a neutral mediation group, such as the King County Dispute Resolution Center, to address the intimidation by the staff that some participants revealed to city investigators. ("Participants" is the word used to refer to SHARE/WHEEL members, usually shelter residents, who are said to have an equal voice in running the organization.)

The Nonprofit Assistance Center, or some other similar group, could offer financial and organizational advice. Aside from the money shortage, the SHARE/WHEEL system suffers from a vacancy rate higher than that of other city-funded shelters. In other words, under more efficient circumstances, more of the people about whom SHARE/WHEEL and the rest of us are concerned could get off the streets right now, even before any of the much-needed new shelters are set up.

One investigator told me that he didn't want to lay down the law to SHARE/WHEEL because he appreciates the group's goal of self-management. However, he also hopes that measures will be taken to protect the vulnerable people seeking refuge in the city's emergency shelter system.

I hope that SHARE/WHEEL will act on the pertinent criticism that has been offered. I also hope that the city will provide more shelter (and accept Tent City in the meantime!). Both "sides" could certainly improve their track record. But I'll root for whoever works to respect the safety and dignity of our neediest citizens.

Sadly,
Chris Gordon Owen

Real 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.

Thank God for good writing

Dear Editor:

I read Adam Holdorf's article in your May 31-June 13 issue ("Abby's Story: Stuck between a bad landlord and a hostile neighborhood, tenants get a new enemy: the city") and would like to correct a few misstatements of fact. First, in questioning whether Abby has filed her lawsuit on behalf of Keith Gilbert (who is banned from filing lawsuits), Holdorf writes, "nowhere in her suit is [Keith Gilbert's] name mentioned." On the contrary, in her amended complaint, Abby mentions Gilbert six times. Second, in detailing the city's efforts to have Abby's lawsuit dismissed, Holdorf writes, "a second motion for summary judgment was struck down in May." In reality, the city's motion to dismiss in May was the first motion for summary judgment.

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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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A Community Remembers

By Rev. Rich Gamble

On the wall of St. Martin de Porres Shelter Chapel, over 300 brass plaques bear the names of members of the St. Martin's community who have died. On June 7, the names of nine more recently departed men joined that wall: Marcus Manning, Henry Hurley, Rudy John, Ed Cristobol, Louis Mark, Ken Raney, Walter Jackson, Vincent Moro, and Tony DiBeasi.

A small group of shelter staff and residents gathered to honor these men with prayers and stories. Some of the men were well-known to the group gathered; others kept to themselves or were not in the shelter for long.

One of the men remembered was not a resident but a former member of the staff. Marcus started as a volunteer at the shelter. He had a hard-won wisdom that he had gained from the streets. Hardworking, compassionate, levelheaded, he was hired as a staff member while he was still in his teens, rapidly working his way up to shift supervisor. Marcus was respected for his fairness and his open manner. One of those attending the service recalled that she watched Marcus grow up in the years he was associated with St. Martin's. Marcus left St. Martin's for the Marine Corps. He was struck by a car and killed as he was crossing a road near his base.

The chapel stands as a witness to our failure as a society to provide adequate opportunities for so many. But it is a memorial to the ability of people to make meaningful connections with one another, and to create community, even in the most difficult of circumstances.

Henry Hurley had left St. Martin's on Alaska Way to St. Martin's on Westlake Avenue downtown, where he was living when he died. One staff member remembered Henry going with her to talk to a high school group about homelessness. Henry was not sure that he would have anything to say but came along as a favor to the staff member. Once he began talking to the high school students, Henry found his voice and spoke with clarity about the realities of being homeless.

Rudy John looked intimidating; he was a husky man with a time-worn face. Rudy's looks belied his calm, gentle nature. Rudy did not complain when the shelter was full and he had to sleep out in the weather. He took what life handed him without argument. He was remembered as the embodiment of the statement, "the meek will inherit the earth."

Ed Cristobol was a quiet, private man who worked construction. Louis Mark was remembered as a true friend by one of the men who came to the service, and as a man who was always ready to share his laughter. Ken Raney

had become a beloved member of the St. Martin's on Westlake community, renowned for his friendliness and his pool-playing ability.

Walter Jackson was not at the shelter long. He had a clear plan to find housing back in Bremerton, where he was robbed and beaten to death on April 2. Two teenagers are suspected in his murder.

Vincent Moro and Tony DiBeasi were also remembered. Their names will join the wall as well, reminding future visitors of their time here.

All these men had struggled with poverty, addictions, and/or illness. Some were able to move to permanent housing and some were long-term, regular residents of the shelter. Some were at peace with the world around them, and some were not.

Regardless of their similarities or differences, these men are drawn together in a community of volunteers, residents and staff, living and dead. Their names will join the hundreds of names inscribed on the wall of the windowless, cinderblock cubicle that serves as our chapel. Their faces and stories add to the memories of the living. The chapel stands as a witness to our failure as a society to provide adequate opportunities for so many, but it is made sacred by the names retained and the lives remembered. It is a memorial to the ability of people to make meaningful connections with one another, and to create community, even in the most difficult of circumstances. ■

Rev. Rich Gamble is the Chaplain/Resource Coordinator at St. Martin de Porres, a shelter for 212 homeless men over the age of 50 on Alaskan Way, south of downtown.

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Thanks for the Faxes:

News *Real Change* didn't cover this issue

Paul Schell Welcomes Dinosaurs to Fremont: Mayor wonders out loud how he can get Pacific Science Center to give him his own pair

Pragmatists Face off with Marxists: Socialists man the debate

Supermall Overtaken by Big Top: Circus Chimera wows them in Auburn

Scrabble Battle in Seattle: National tournament gives nerds a social outlet

Beware of Careless Tile Roof Foot Traffic: Leave it to the professional roofer experts

Counseling Corner Inspires: "The essence of every journey is not the voyage, but the decision to cast away from shore"

Victory for Stubble Burning: Washington Association of Wheat Growers, Michael Bolton celebrate

Take the Toyota Golf Skills Challenge: Watch an eight-year-old amateur beat some white guy over 50

Dealing with Full-Blown Job Burnout: Not just for Pioneer Square "seamstresses" anymore. ■

Low-income housing stalled on the Viaduct

A deal that would build housing for Belltown's Latino day laborers was suddenly suspended in late June. It got stuck on the Alaskan Way Viaduct, the highway that runs by the small property considered for sale on Western Avenue and Battery Street. The city now says it will hold onto the site, pending a decision by a planning committee on the future of the rickety road.

"Recent discussions have led to the conclusion that there's a high degree of uncertainty about the future of that lot," says Trang Tu, a staffmember in Mayor Paul Schell's office. "It could very well be needed as a staging point for whatever's going in" to replace or shore up the Viaduct.

Tu says Schell still supports finding the day labor center a permanent home — somewhere. With Belltown highrises soaking up the available land, the chances of another site in the high-priced neighborhood are not good. CASA director Hilary Stern says the organization wants to keep serving Belltown's Latino workers.

CASA's day-labor pickup facility is currently hosted on the site; its lease expires at the end of the year. CASA hopes the city will renew the lease for one year; the city has told the group that they may have up to six years before being displaced.

If the lot had been sold, Plymouth and CASA would have teamed up to provide 50 units of housing, a permanent day-labor pickup point, and an education center for migrant workers in a four- or five-story building ("Cementing a Deal," June 14-27). Neighborhood businesspeople raised objections to the deal, saying migrant workers create a public nuisance.

Despite the setback, CASA remains positive. Upon first hearing of the decision, "I was disappointed, I felt like it was an easy way to get rid of us," says David Ayala, the lead organizer at the day-labor site. "But we met with the city and heard how they want to help us out, and I feel better." ■

— Adam Holdorf

Damned if they do...

About the only thing dozens of citizens agreed on at yet another Sound Transit public meeting on the fate of Link light rail is that, more than four years after voters approved a \$2.3 billion tax hike for tri-county mass transit, something in the Seattle core has to be done.

"Why come down here to comment on this?" rhetorically asked Edwin Lambert of Snohomish. "Because this will affect all of [the regional transportation plan]. If the central portion is not built, the plan will not happen."

However, exactly what could or should be built in the critical Seattle portion of the Snohomish, King, and Pierce county transportation system walls in heavy debate. While express buses for east King County and commuter trains for south King County are already up and running, the original plan for light rail connecting South 200th Street and Northgate has had its opening year pushed back from 2006 to 2009, at the earliest.

That is, if Link opens at all. Even with a recently released survey showing 69 percent of people in favor of light rail, Sound Transit officials feel the heat of growing opposition. The second question asked in a survey given to all attendees at the public meeting, after "what is your zip code?" was whether light rail should be part of the region's transportation system at all.

The possibility — and the public demand — to abandon the light rail system in favor of buses, more commuter trains, or road improvements has been steamrolling since Sound Transit announced in December that its Link plans are \$1 billion over budget. Add to that the April announcement by the federal government that it was withholding \$500 million in matching funds and continuing questions about whether the light rail system would really alleviate traffic congestion in the first place.

"[Sound Transit has] understated costs, overstated benefits, deceived and stonewalled the public," said Matthew Fox of the University District Community Council. He also noted that current discussions about which portion of the Link line to build first are "akin to discussing setting up deck chairs on the Titanic in rows of four or five."

Yet for other people, these discussions — revolving around four possible sections, stretching in various permutations from the U-District to S. 200th — were vital to finally getting Link off the ground. They hoped that once Sound Transit board members choose a section by September, they can leave "planning purgatory" and actually get something built.

"Your job is to get light rail moving," said Michael Richman of Beacon Hill. "It's way past time. Pick one, any one, get going. I'm tired of it. I want to see this thing before I die." ■

— Molly Rhodes



Leave your bags at... home?

Although a homeless woman was recently asked to leave the Seattle Central Library for having large bags in her possession, staff there say they have fairly liberal policies when it comes to allowing people into the library.

"We welcome anyone into our library," said Andra Addison, the library's communications director, when asked if the library had any policies in relation to the homeless. "We're pretty lax with our rules. I'd hate to think anyone out in the community is unhappy with us."

Addison also said that library rules won't become more stringent when its temporary home opens Saturday, July 7 at 800 Pike Street, part of the Washington State Convention and Trade Center. The new downtown library will be built at the 1000 Fourth Avenue site over the next two years.

Last month, a homeless woman complained to SHARE/WHEEL about being ejected from the library. She refused to speak on the record with *Real Change*.

Two security guards, a male and a female who declined to give their names, met with *Real Change* as the library prepared to close on June 8. The male guard noted, "Technically we don't have to let anyone in who's carrying a bag. So we're being lenient by allowing people to bring bags into the library as long as they can fit under their chair."

His partner added, "We don't want bags left in the aisles where they're getting in other people's way, and we would ask someone to remove bags from the premises before we threw them out."

The library disallows smoking, sexual misconduct, and animals. The only rule that's publicly posted bans any behavior that may unreasonably interfere with the rights of other patrons, such as sleeping, exhibiting offensive personal hygiene, or bringing in large bundles or personal possessions.



LIBRARY SIGNS WARD OFF "UNREASONABLE INTERFERENCE." PHOTO BY JON CAPUTO.

The central library also had a sign at its Fourth Avenue entrance that said bags, briefcases, and parcels can be searched. Security guards are quick to say that they don't arbitrarily attempt to search patrons' bags.

"The only time we would go into somebody's bag is if they were getting sick," said the female security guard, "to check identification and see if they had any medication. There has to be provocation. We won't just look into somebody's bag." ■

— Raymond V. Murphy

Anti-homeless hate crimes increasing nationwide

A homeless man was stabbed and killed by three Seattle teens in the summer of 1999. They left his body in a pile of trash under Interstate 5. Another homeless man was set on fire and beaten with metal pipes in Memphis, Tennessee.

Horrible crimes like these are on the rise, according to a recently published report from the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH), "Hate Crimes and Violence Against People who are Homeless in the United States in 2000."

"If you would have asked me two years ago if hate crimes and violence against homeless people were a problem, a trend, I would have said 'no,'" says Michael Stoops, director of community organizing for NCH. "But in the fall of 1999, seven homeless men were murdered in Denver, prompting us to find out just how common such incidents were. Much to our surprise, we found that they were happening on a routine basis in all regions of the country."

In 2000 alone, 66 homeless people were victimized and 43 people killed in 42 cities, including Seattle and Tacoma. "When politicians and mass media dehumanize people, they become victims of these types of crimes," states Paul Boden, Director of San Francisco's Coalition on Homelessness.

The words "hate crime" conjure images of white hoods, shaved heads, and victims like Matthew Shepherd. Rarely would one consider an act of violence against the homeless a hate crime. The federal government does not recognize people forced to live on the streets as a class deserving protection from harassment or discrimination.

Homeless advocates would like that to change. NCH is proposing to amend current hate crime legislation to encompass those crimes that are committed

Continued on the next page

The Ties that Bind

Homeless couple renews wedding vows



PHOTO OF LONNIE AND BETTY EVERSON BY CASEY LAFRAN.

By Casey LaFran

Married for 29 years, and homeless for 19 of them, Lonnie and Betty Everson have just restated their wedding vows at a Saturday church service. Having lived through life-threatening illnesses, drifted across the states by freight train, and survived trauma leftover from the Vietnam war, they are still together, and their story is an inspiration.

"You got to have compassion, honesty, and friendship, that's the most important," says Betty. "You don't have to have special interests in anything, just faith." She remembers a time shortly after they were married, both unemployed and her husband, Lonnie, did not come home one night. "I was thinking, 'Okay, now, who is he out with?' I was so scared that something was happening. When he finally came in he looked like a grease monkey — just covered from head to toe. I asked him where he'd been, what he'd been doing. He said, 'Out working.' I've trusted him ever since."

The Eversons hopped trains (which was Betty's idea) for about 17 years, and lived in the mountains for six years. They were homeless because Lonnie couldn't stand to be around other people. But it wasn't always like that. Following the Vietnam War, the couple had a house in Kansas City, where Lonnie was making up to \$100 a day, but he couldn't hold a job for long. Lonnie could not control his temper. Everything would be going fine, "but then the boss would say something and I'd blow my cool."

Things started happening at night. Lonnie was plagued by insomnia. On nights he could sleep, he would kick and toss in the grip of nightmares.

When talking about the sleeplessness, Lonnie describes his most frequent flashback. "We were five clicks north of Da Nang at five in the morning when we got in a firefight. Fire from everywhere; it lit up everything like it was daytime. And all of a sudden I heard a guy screaming, and I couldn't

get to him, but I could see him. He was carrying his insides, his stomach and everything, in both hands, trying to push it in. He got halfway to me and fell. I made it to him, pushed it back in, and gave him a couple shots of morphine. That's all I could do."

Like many veterans, Lonnie suffered from night terrors, flashbacks, claustrophobia, and a painfully short temper, symptoms of what is now called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

In preparation for going to war, new recruits spent several months conditioning for battle, then more time in actual combat, but when the war was over, their return to modern living was stark and abrupt. It was not easy to

adapt to the new life: a 40-hour work week, grocery shopping, and house payments. Worse yet, veterans returned to the states as outcasts in a new society, victims of verbal abuse ("baby-killers"), out of place and out of touch. Many veterans went insane, turned to alcohol or drugs, or went to prison for various crimes.

Betty tried hard to understand what was going on, but it was frustrating. "At first I thought it was him, and I'd say, 'Why can't you just keep your mouth shut?'" But as time progressed, they knew it was more than just a short temper.

Another problem the Eversons faced, while homeless, was constantly being separated at night because few shelters allow married couples to share a room. Even the church where they were remarried is for women only; an exception was made for Lonnie during the special occasion. It was hard enough for the couple to deal with Lonnie's condition together, but separated, "It was a nightmare," he says. Workers at the mis-

sions had little sympathy for them as a couple, or for Lonnie's claustrophobia. "There was one [person] at Downtown Emergency Services who understood what I was going through," says Lonnie, "but there wasn't anything he could do. Being closed in with 200 men in a shelter, when they closed those doors you can't get out."

Frequently, Lonnie would take Betty to a women's shelter like the YWCA, and he would "sleep out." But there were times when they could not even get into a shelter. More than once, they were chased out of town by residents. In 1974, Grand Junction, Colorado, police drove Betty and Lonnie to the outskirts of town and dropped them off on the highway. "They told us to get lost, said 'Don't come back!'"

"When you're homeless, you can't let society get you down," says Lonnie.

"When you wonder why this happens to us, you realize it's a test," says Betty. "You realize, 'I'm alive.' After every trial — and there's going to be more of them — but after every test these 29 years I can say, 'We did it. We survived.'"

Now, after 14 months of waiting for subsidized housing, the Eversons have finally moved into the Frye Apartments. Betty's health stabilized after getting treatment for several illnesses over the last 10 years, including lung and gall bladder infection, pneumonia, and cancer.

Since getting help from the Veterans Administration last year, Lonnie has been on medication to control the PTSD, and his friends noticed the change immediately. But it still keeps him up some nights. "She always comes to me with an open heart, if I'm hurtin', which is quite often, she's willing to listen, even if it takes staying up to midnight."

"Just last night he was all over the bed," says Betty. "Nearly kicked me out, but this won't cause me to go anywhere. He's my husband, companion, lover, friend — without him I'm only half a person." ■

NEWSBRIEFS Continued from previous page

against people because of their housing status. If NCH is successful, then homelessness will be included in the pending Hate Crimes Prevention Act. With this come stiffer penalties for those convicted of violent acts against the homeless. NCH staff members hope that with a better system in place, victims will be more likely to come forward and the criminals' punishments will be more appropriate to the crime.

NCH staff members also hope to bring attention to the growing issue of violence against the homeless, and use their report to suggest some proactive measures. Recommendations include creating a national database tracking incidents of hate crimes and implementing sensitivity training for police officers. NCH also suggests that the Department of Justice conduct a research study interviewing perpetrators of these hate crimes, to better understand their beliefs and the circumstances surrounding the incident. ■

—Sierra Santoyo

Downtown Seattle: higher buildings, higher prices

On Monday, June 25, the Seattle City Council put its stamp of approval on major changes to Seattle's downtown area. Two bills will direct more money to low-income housing. Despite the effort, there's evidence that the city is falling behind.

The City Council approved the sale of eight South Lake Union properties to billionaire Paul Allen's real estate company — a deal that would give the city \$20.8 million. About \$2.25 million will go toward more affordable housing in the neighborhood. Another \$2.5 million for housing may come from a city contingency fund.

Under the final bill, the funds will serve people at or below 60 percent of the median income. Housing activists had hoped the money would be directed to those below 50 percent of median income.

As a condition of the sale, Allen's real estate company will have to build 50 units of housing affordable for those at or below 80 percent of median income. They also plan to develop 450 units of market-rate housing. Councilmember Judy Nicastro took issue with the 80 percent median income level, noting that it would allow rents of \$900 or higher.

Nicastro's concerns carried over into a preliminary vote increasing the height limit on new downtown buildings. That legislation would bring in more money for people at 50 to 80 percent of median income, in the form of developers' fees. Developers wanting to build beyond a base height must pay the city a \$14-per-square-foot fee that goes to affordable housing, child care, open spaces, and other public amenities. The council raised that fee to \$22 per square foot. Nicastro said the housing built with new funds should be directed to lower-income people.

Some developers have acknowledged that, even after the cost increase, the new fee is still well below the market-rate price of height increases, which go up to \$30 a square foot.

Low-income housing may be more necessary than ever. On June 23, the Seattle Displacement Coalition released a survey of downtown apartment managers. It found that in two years, rent increases have placed more than 1,400 formerly low-income apartments beyond the means of people earning less half the median income. The group says the city is failing to meet its goal to add thousands of additional low-income units in the area by 2013. ■

—Adam Holdorf and Sharon Lee

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

Fighting Trash Across the Tracks:

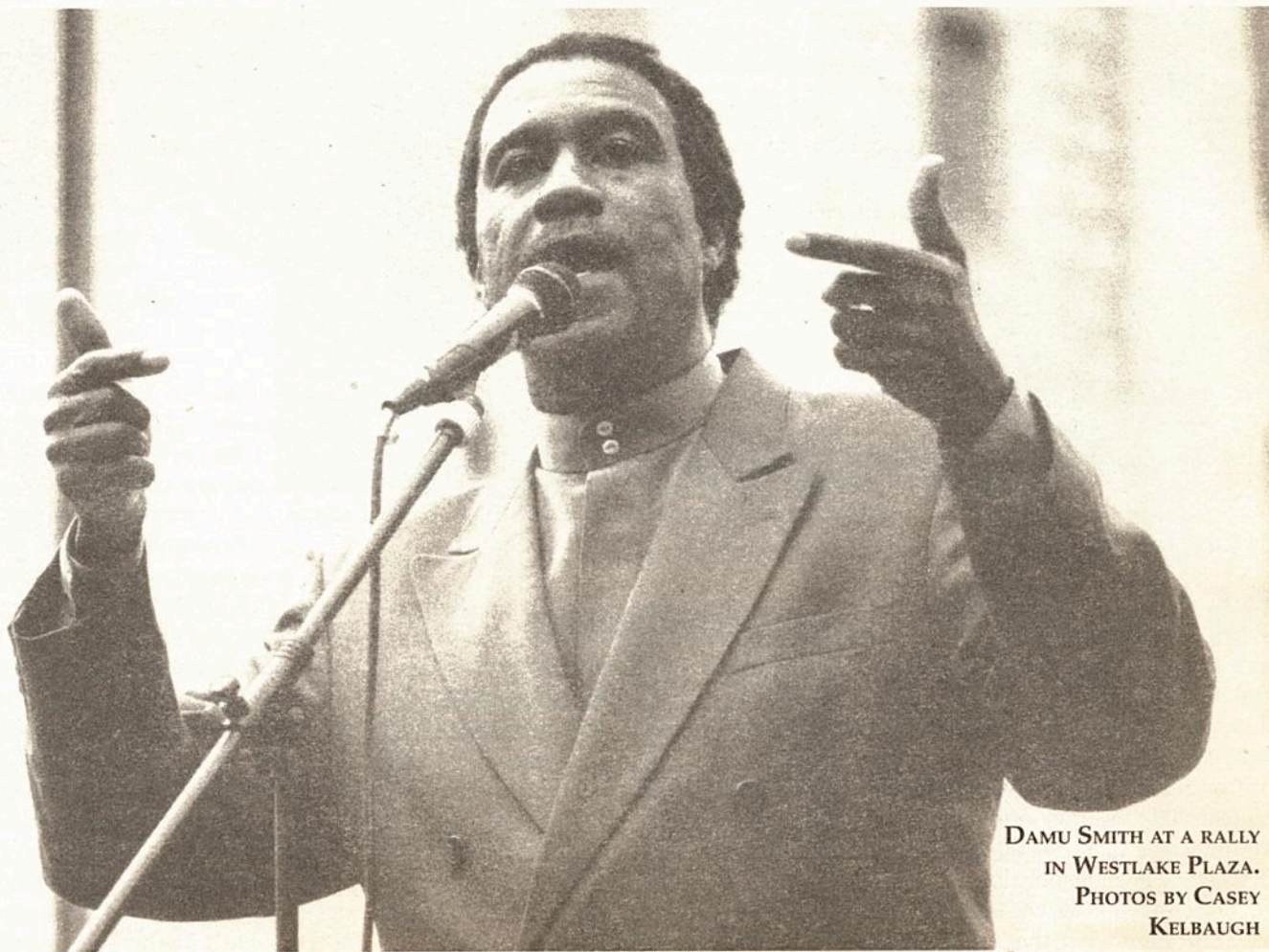
Interview by Brenna Wolf

What do you get for causing cancer in Louisiana, death in Africa, and smog all over the world? If you're Shell Oil, you get an award.

This May, Shell was recognized with an environmental award for its "outstanding, creative, sustained, and well-implemented global environmental policy" by the World Environmental Center, a non-profit group funded by Shell and other corporations. Shell has been accused of human rights violations in Nigeria; its refineries have been linked to hazardous emissions in Louisiana.

Here in Seattle, one local group took the occasion to highlight the similarities between Shell and local polluters. South Park, Seattle's working-class neighborhood, is home to the city's largest Latino population — and the highest concentration of toxic waste sites in Washington state. One local paint plant, Long Painting, is only eight feet away from some homes. Residents constantly endure noise, sandblasting fallout, and the smell of toxic fumes. The rally sought to "empower local folks, because they're feeling isolated in South Park about what's happening with Long Painting. We're showing that they're not alone. Because that's how people start to feel in the communities that we work in: 'Well, we can't fight Long Painting,'" says Yalonda Sindé, executive director of the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice, which sponsored the rally. "If we can fight Shell Oil, we can certainly fight Long Painting."

Also at the rally was Damu Smith, a long-time environmental justice activist from Washington, D.C., to lend support to the rally and march. Damu Smith currently works with Greenpeace on toxics issues. *Real Change* spoke with Damu about the award and the struggle for environmental justice locally and globally.



DAMU SMITH AT A RALLY
IN WESTLAKE PLAZA.
PHOTOS BY CASEY
KELBAUGH

"Those of us involved in the environmental justice movement have a different take on what it means to be an environmentalist. We view our fight for environmental justice as being organically linked to all of the other struggles for social justice. Against poverty. Against homelessness. Against police brutality and racial violence and racial profiling.... If we don't have political justice, if we don't have racial justice, if we don't have economic justice, how are we going to have justice in the area of environmental protection?"

RC: Why protest an environmental award to Shell Oil?

Smith: Shell does not deserve an award for anything having to do with environmental protection. I have been personally involved for the last several years in a major fight against Shell by the black community of Norco, Louisiana. This is a community that has a long history, founded by ex-slaves. And the people were there first. Shell and those other chemical companies came in after. They [Shell] have destroyed the land and the peace of the community.

This is a community whose citizens live 17 feet from the fence line of Shell Chemicals [and 1 1/2 miles away from a Shell Oil refinery]. Both of those facilities are wreaking havoc on the health and safety of this community.

There have been explosions there. Two people were killed some years ago.

There have been numerous chemical releases, where people have gotten sick. Their eyes have gotten burned. They've got skin rashes from these chemicals. People have had to go to the hospital. Shell opposed a law suit that the citizens filed some years ago for the contamination that [Shell] has caused,

which has created major health problems for the children.

The playground built by Shell is also 17 feet from the facility. So you see our children on swings, on slides, playing basketball, right in front of Shell Chemicals. And all of this pollution is coming out on any given day. This is what our people are facing in Norco at the hands of Shell Oil.

Has Shell ever paid one dime to these people? To help them when they go to pay these huge medical bills? No. Shell has not apologized. Shell has been insensitive to this community. And Shell has been doing this to the people of Norco. They have been doing this to the people in Nigeria, in Ogoniland, where they have devastated the land and the communities there, in cooperation with the military dictatorship that once ruled. No decent American has cause to give any kind of tribute to Shell.

RC: The World Environmental Center award to Shell is a really good example of "corporate greenwashing," corporate-funded public relations campaigns to slant or hide the real truth of their behavior. How does greenwashing affect the environmental justice movement?

Smith: Well, these major corporations engage in greenwashing because they want to protect their public relations image. They have to do everything possible to make it appear that they are a leader in the environmental field in a major industrial sector, which is doing dirty business. For years, Shell and other companies have devised a strategy to deceive the American public and world opinion by making it seem that they're doing things that are good for the environment. They talk about recycling programs. They talk about how they are engaging in innovative technologies on-site to improve safety. But the bottom line is, Shell continues to make all kinds of errors at many of its plants around the country. And they have very bad relations with communities.

RC: How would you define environmentalism?

Smith: Those of us involved in the environmental justice movement have a different take on what it means to be an environmentalist. We view our fight for environmental justice as being organically linked to all of the other struggles for social justice. Against poverty.

An interview with environmental justice activist Damu Smith



“Environmental racism ... is the deliberate and not-deliberate siting of polluting facilities in our communities. It’s the exclusion of people of color from decision-making processes that affect our lives.... In dealing with many of the problems we’ve been addressing, like incineration, destruction of forests, and polluting industries, we’ve had to deal with people of color. Why? Because people of color are the ones disproportionately victimized by the things that we’re working on. Not only in the United States, but all over the world.”

Against homelessness. Against police brutality and racial violence and racial profiling. Against the prison industry. All of our democratic rights in the social, economic, and political arena are linked to our ability to get environmental justice. If we don’t have political justice, if we don’t have racial justice, if we don’t have economic justice, how are we going to have justice in the area of environmental protection?

First, we’re saying that no community should be host to environmentally destructive practices by polluting facilities. But we are saying, until we get to that point, certainly our communities should not bear the brunt, the disproportionate share of the nation’s waste. That’s why we have to fight for environmental justice, to make sure that *nobody* has to be the recipient of any of these policies.

RC: *And environmental racism*

Smith: All communities have to be treated equitably and fairly when it comes to environmental policymaking and the enforcement of environmental laws. Environmental racism is racial discrimination in the formulation and enforcement of environmental laws and

policies. It is the deliberate and not-deliberate siting of polluting facilities in our communities. It’s the exclusion of people of color from decision-making processes that affect our lives in the area of environmental protection. All these things constitute environmental racism.

RC: *You’ve been working with Greenpeace for about 10 years, a group that’s not traditionally been associated with fighting environmental racism. How do mainstream and traditionally white, upper-middle-class environmental campaigns address and work for environmental justice?*

Smith: Greenpeace is probably the only predominately white environmental organization that I would be working with. Like other predominately white environmental groups, Greenpeace certainly has its issues of dealing with racism and environmental justice. But simultaneously, as a predominantly white organization, Greenpeace has been a leader in supporting environmental justice.

In dealing with many of the problems we’ve been addressing, like incineration, destruction of forests, and polluting industries, we’ve had to deal with

people of color. Why? Because people of color are the ones disproportionately victimized by the things that we’re working on. Not only in the United States, but all over the world. And thanks to the progressive leadership of some of our recent directors, Greenpeace has embraced environmental justice. It has supported me and other people of color who work on the staff, in our efforts to incorporate environmental justice activities into our ongoing campaigns. Greenpeace has been the leader among the major environmental organizations, in confronting environmental racism and advocating environmental justice. We have always confronted Greenpeace from within, to be true to its principles.

RC: *What tools does the federal government have at its disposal to deal with these issues?*

Smith: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating on the basis of race, color, and national origin. The activism of the environmental justice movement compelled President Clinton to issue the Executive

Order on Environmental Justice in 1994. The Executive Order requires all federal agencies to design their programs and policies so that people of color and low-income communities are not disproportionately impacted by environmental policies in a negative way.

You have state regulatory agencies, like the state Department of Ecology, who routinely issue permits for polluting businesses to operate. We’re saying that’s federal financial assistance. They have staff employed, making decisions that give permits to industry polluting in our communities. That’s a violation of the law — that, in itself, constitutes racial discrimination. Especially when we look at white, more prosperous communities, that are not being inundated with polluting facilities permits.

RC: *What are other things that communities and organizers can be doing, in conjunction with lawsuits to struggle for environmental justice?*

Smith: The reality of globalization is that working people in every country need to figure out how we can coordinate a strategy against those policies. But it’s going to require a coordinated global strategy. But in order for this to work, we have to fight racism. We’ve got to strengthen the movement against globalization in the United States by making it more multi-racial, to expand its consciousness so that it has more depth and substance in terms of the constituencies involved and its political analysis of what it takes to win.

Now we have a situation where there’s a national movement by conservatives and sinister forces in the nation, to undermine the enforcement of Title VI. Our struggle has included protests, trying to democratize the way decisions are made at the local and state level — decisions that affect our lives. A lot of people come in and testify about why a facility should not be where the company says it should be. This has become a very important part of what we’re doing.

We cannot contaminate the water, contaminate the air, contaminate the land, contaminate the food, contaminate the oceans and expect that we’re going to have environmental justice for anyone. We have to prevent that from happening in the first place, by engaging in economic activity that generates jobs, development, and growth for everybody, at the same time as protecting the health, welfare, and safety and quality of life. We can do that in America, if we have the vision, if we have the commitment. But unfortunately, because of the addiction by corporate America to profits and putting profits over people, we all suffer. ■

To help get involved locally, please contact the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice, 206-720-0285, <http://www.ccej.org/>



Happy July Fourth, Noise Day.
I was reminded of this the other day when I watched a vendor of ours wear earplugs while vending.

I didn't talk to him about it. Vendor training isn't one of my official duties, and besides, as one of *Real Change's* worst all-time vendors, I personally support every vendor's right to sell badly.

Meanwhile, speaking of earplugs and rights, I had to think about all the times I have been homeless and worn earplugs out on the streets.

One day a year we may want to celebrate the right to make as much noise as we like, but the rest of the year most of us try to get away from noise when we can. Guess who can't?

Anybody who doesn't have a house to retreat to, that's who can't! And after a while it drives them crazy! You see, I do too have an excuse! The noise! The noise! Get it out of my head!

We all want to escape the noise pollution around us. For example, I'd like the right to be able to walk down Third Avenue around Pine Street without having to listen to Merle Haggard, if I don't want to.

**If you are homeless...
moving from café to
café looking for a
place to rest and
maybe hear one of
your own thoughts,
good luck at getting
any pleasure. Muzak
rules Seattle.**

Hello, McDonald's: I can wear a Walkman if I want to hear that sort of stuff. I shouldn't be subjected to it on the street. Play it inside, that's your business. Play it outside, that's my business.

But I digress. The McDonald's situation is bad because it is deliberate noise pollution and the city ignores it. But for the homeless, unintentional noise pollution is much worse, just because there is so much of it and it all adds up.

If you are homeless with a couple of dollars to spend and you are moving from café to café looking for a place to rest and maybe hear one of your own thoughts, good luck at getting any pleasure. Muzak rules Seattle.

When most people complain about Muzak, the focus is on the quality. But to the homeless, it doesn't matter if it's Muzak or if it's KBCS, it's still sound, and if it is ubiquitous it is as inescapable and therefore as maddening either way.

It comes down to biology. I can close my eyes. I can't close my ears.

Well, maybe I can, a little. Federally approved over-the-counter ear plugs give just under 30 decibels of relief. And I can try to drown out their music on my own with the aid of earphones. What I can't stop I may be able to control, partly. But "partly" isn't enough when the problem goes on 24-seven.

Don't even get me started on sirens. If you do, you'll be sorry.

If I got started on sirens, I would probably scream HEY EVERYBODY, SIRENS ARE TOO LOUD! CAN YOU STILL HEAR ANYTHING ANYONE IS SAYING? TURN THE DAMN SIRENS DOWN!

Oh, but you can't turn them down, you would say, because they have to alert both motorists and pedestrians.

BUT I would scream THEY ALREADY ARE MORE THAN LOUD ENOUGH TO ALERT PEDESTRIANS. THEY ARE IN FACT LOUD ENOUGH TO INJURE THE EARS OF PEDESTRIANS. THAT IS LOUD ENOUGH, OK?

Oh, yes, we have to alert motorists too. Why is that so difficult? That's so difficult because cars are deliberately built to be soundproof, by and for irresponsible idiots.

And instead of passing laws against irresponsible idiots buying and riding around in cars designed to be soundproof by irresponsible idiots, our government PREFERS TO JUST LET EMERGENCY VEHICLES RAISE THE VOLUME OF THEIR SIRENS INDEFINITELY, TO HELL WITH PEDESTRIANS.

THAT'S WHAT I WOULD SAY. So you don't want to get me started on sirens. ■

in spelling

You have less. Your
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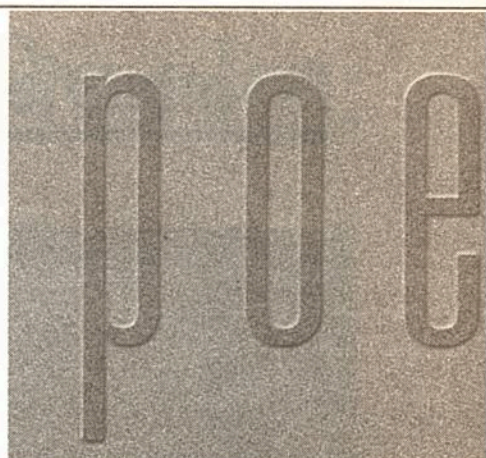
own,
next to your
own!
means

next
to nothing, until
I
see it. Share it.
And

so,
stand!

There's a difference.

—STAN BURRISS



Being a Grandma

Being a Grandma is better
Children do not gaze
With such adoration
Into the eyes of their parents

—RENEENE ROBERTSON

CIA Playa

The CIA sent the drugs to my block...the same folks sold me my glock...They gave my Benz...gave a party and invited all his friends...to see the new house he put his mammy who had all the ho's...they gave him a gold spoon to shove up his nose...

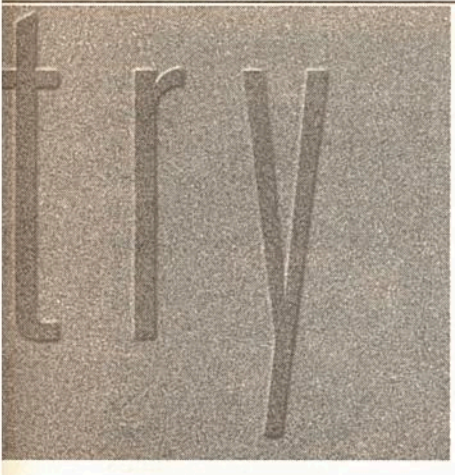
There's a lot of wanna-be's in the dope game today...but there's no playa like the CIA...junkies to get used by drugs...to make it in life you don't have to be thugs...be strong grow up to be men...If you don't we'll see the Black race end!...

"Do what you want to do, we've got your back."... "Kill anybody you want to, as long as you don't get caught."... "Leave them in the streets, we'll call it drug related."... "So the little girl got in the way..."

"Start a new business to hide all the cash."... "Cause the IRS will soon be on your ass."... "You had all the dough..." "You've done what we want, we don't need you no mo."...

So, they set him up, and they put him in jail...He paid two million to get a million dollars worth of lawyers to get the court dates extended...feds got him anyway when it all ended...facing life to the door...wishing for the friends he had no more...Feeling real bad...nobody to turn to...They found him hanging in his cell...a sheet around his neck...

There's a lot of wanna-be's in the dope game today...but there's no playa like the CIA...junkie to get used by drugs...to make it in life you don't have to be thugs...So be strong grow up to be men...if you don't we'll see the Black race end...



Standing with Dignity

Standing here with dignity waiting through all kinds of weather selling Real Change Newspaper
Waiting for those smiling eyes hopeful wanting to be helpful to say paper please
Can you see that your generosity is appreciated?

Standing here with dignity I see another kind of eyes
Cold cruel and full of contempt
Walking past me without seeing
Taking the long way around
Can you see my pain?

Am I in your way? When I say hello?
Do I jerk you out of your cocoon to reality?

Standing here with dignity I have time to reflect on why
I am selling Real Change Newspaper
In another time and another place I have had several jobs
I have lost them to accident, illness, disease or my bigshot ideas
Society deals harshly with people who have bigshot ideas
So where is the forgiveness?

So today I am standing here with dignity selling Real Change Newspaper
Waiting for those smiling eyes to say paper please
I hope you can see my gratitude for your generosity.

—PAUL VON KEMPF, JR.

Twin Within

e a twin
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ver strays
lways stays
ise, you see, he's me
—RENEENE ROBERTSON

How Long Will We Stay Poor?

Poverty is a state of mind
How long will we stay poor?
We are the stupid, followed by the blind
How long will we stay poor?
If I am poor, and so are you
How long will we stay poor?
Why don't we tax the rich, make them poor too?
How long will we stay poor?

Can't you see it's time to emigrate
from the state of mind behind the State?
You can cross the border anytime —
just catch the Train of Thought that's headed for your mind.

In my phone book, the Blue Pages multiply
How long will we stay poor?
While one bureaucrat spits in the other's eye
How long will we stay poor?
In the war of ideologies
How long will we stay poor?
Do you dare to read the list of casualties?
How long will we stay poor?

Can't you see it's time to emigrate
from the state of mind behind the State?
You can cross the border anytime —
just catch the Train of Thought that's headed for your mind.

—CHARLOTTE VANDERWOLF

a new red
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—EARNIE CHURCHILL

in spelling

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next to your
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 to nothing, until
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 see it. Share it.
 And
so,
stand!

There's a difference.

—STAN BURRISS



Standing v

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Am I in your w
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In another time
I have lost them
Society deals h
So where is the

So today I am st
Waiting for thos
I hope you can s

The Twin Within

I have a twin
A twin within
To keep me company
He never strays
But always stays
Because, you see, he's me

—RENEENE ROBERTSON

Being a Grandma

Being a Grandma is better
Children do not gaze
With such adoration
Into the eyes of their parents

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The CIA sent the drugs to my block...the same folks sold me my glock...They gave my boy a new red Benz...gave a party and invited all his friends...to see the new house he put his mama in...He was the new playa who had all the ho's...they gave him a gold spoon to shove up his nose...

There's a lot of wanna-be's in the dope game today...but there's no playa like the CIA...You don't have to be junkies to get used by drugs...to make it in life you don't have to be thugs...be strong young brothers and grow up to be men...If you don't we'll see the Black race end!...

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—EARNIE CHURCHILL

SHARE Continued from Page 1

The report was spurred in part by SHARE's request for city funding to make up for a \$70,000 budget shortfall. The organization says 5- to 13-percent cost-of-living increases in everything from utility bills to rent have torpedoed their budget. Despite a \$15,000 stopgap grant from United Way, SHARE says it will have to shut down in mid-August. Hundreds of homeless people would be without even a mat in a church basement.

Where did the deficit come from? SHARE says the slow-footed city bureaucracy didn't account for their needs in the November 2000 budget planning process. The city begs to differ, saying that they discussed SHARE's operations in a December meeting, and the group only came to them for money in February.

Whatever the truth behind the conflicting claims, the report was intended in part to shed light on SHARE's ongoing sponsorship of Tent City. Since winter emergency shelters closed on April 1, 2000, the group has operated the roving encampment of up to 100 homeless people. It's currently out in the Lake City neighborhood. Last month, SHARE took the city to court over its decision to deny the camp a land-use permit at its Beacon Hill location earlier this year. In the wake of the report, the media is no longer presenting sympathetic stories on residents of the camp. It's casting doubt on the organization that runs it.

Former SHARE boardmember Sean Smith, who stays at St. John Lutheran Church on Phinney Ridge, thinks the city has reason enough to retaliate. "One is Safe Harbors," the new computerized client tracking system SHARE has spoken out against. "The other is Tent City. This is a political agenda," he says of the report, "not a practical one."

A report "full of holes"

Other members and participants in SHARE point to what they see as the report's factual inaccuracies. From an analysis of private contributions over 1999 and 2000, for example, city auditors concluded that Tent City is sucking money from the regular shelter programs. SHARE counters that the city miscalculated its contributions by tens of thousands of dollars, and asserts that no money has been diverted to the camp.

While other parts of the report may be factually correct, SHARE says, it

suggests reshaping the homeless people's organization to compromise its bottom-up, people-first doctrine of self-management and group decision-making. Based on interviews and meeting notes, city investigators concluded that SHARE's Board of Directors does not effectively oversee finances and planning. SHARE members interviewed for this story respond that the weekly Power Lunch, a meeting of dozens of current and former shelter residents, suffices for board oversight. To give authority to a board would be taking power from the people. No SHARE member could see any room for organizational change.

Despite the city's scrutiny, SHARE doesn't seem to be failing to do the job the taxpayers pay for. In the first four months of this year, city-funded SHARE shelters provided for about 260 people per night; the city asks SHARE to serve at least 190 a night. Could the high numbers of people served cause to this year's budget shortfall? No, say SHARE staff: over the last few years, the number of people staying in its shelters has changed little.

And while the city's contract obligations have been low, the report had greater expectations: it noted a somewhat higher vacancy rate in SHARE shelters than in other city-funded programs. The city may ask SHARE to tweak its referral process to fill those beds.

Still, staff and members emphasize, they run the shelters at about one-fourth the cost of other city-funded providers, like the Compass Center or the Downtown Emergency Service Center.

City contract monitor Javier Pulido believes that's true, in light of SHARE's bare-bones shelter program. Other groups have a bigger budget, and use it to provide case managers or referrals for help at other agencies. When sizing up SHARE's effectiveness, "you have to compare apples with apples and oranges with oranges," he says.

Other staff say the report isn't about SHARE's money.

"This isn't about the cost of the shelters," says Alan Painter, head of the city Community Services Division. "This is about strengthening SHARE's program."

"We expect any organization we have an association with to engage in dialogue with us; we're looking forward to thoughtful communication with SHARE about these issues," he says. "There's nothing in there that says self-management can't work. But any organization needs basic things, like a financial accounting system, and fair ways

to appeal judicial decisions. SHARE's been very creative and very caring. We want to help SHARE succeed, and there are ways to make them stronger."

SHARE is expected to make an official reply to the city by June 29, detailing their willingness to address the report's findings. And the two parties may be aided by someone respected on both sides: Bob Santos, former northwest representative to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Santos was contracted by Mayor Paul Schell's office to help find a permanent solution to the roving Tent City; SHARE says he may contribute to mediation between it and the city Human Services Department as well.

City Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck, chair of the council Hu-

man Services committee, has chosen to let HSD resolve the issue before taking action. If he were to bring an emergency funds proposal to full council, it would need six more votes to pass. The Human Services Department, which has no discretionary reserve fund, encouraged SHARE to look for funding from private sources. Even with the new money coming from United Way, SHARE faces shutdown.

Some shelter residents think that's the way to get what they want. Jason Sandberg, new to Seattle from Arizona, shared his experience on a campaign for shelter against a recalcitrant Phoenix city council. "They were like, 'They can sleep on the streets, who cares?'" he recalls. "It's just that they don't want to spend the money. Once we were on the streets, it was different." ■

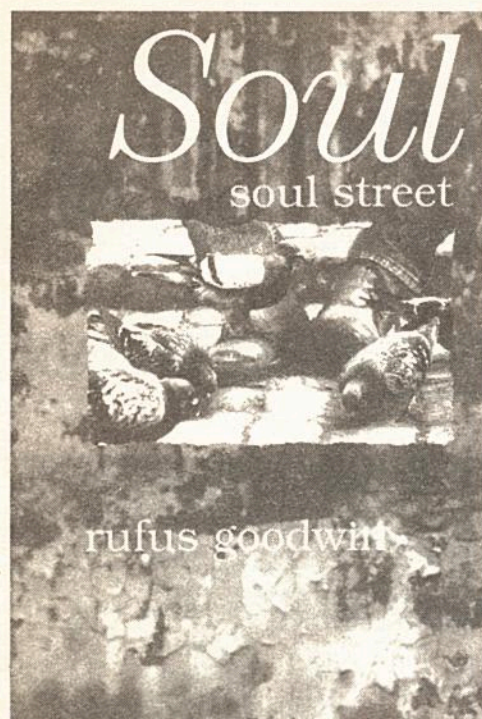
"We want to help SHARE succeed, and there are ways to make them stronger."

— Alan Painter, city Community Services Division

Shelter shape-up

The city Human Services Department interviewed dozens of current and former homeless shelter residents, staff, and church hosts of the Seattle Housing and Resource Effort (SHARE). Its June 14 report tells SHARE to undertake organizational and financial reforms. All quotes are taken directly from the report. Here are the results.

- **Get an accountant.** Financial management and accountability are not vested in any one person, staff don't have the expertise, and board oversight is weak. Without a financial manager, the temptation to spend beyond the budget is strong.
- **Fix the books.** The city pays SHARE to provide church shelters, not organize Tent City, which violates city zoning code. Employees involved in multiple programs funded from different sources need to track their time closely. And the city is charged for staff reimbursements, but often can't tell which shelter the purchase went to. This is "particularly critical" in light of Tent City, "since activities supporting this program [e.g. moving truck rentals] are similar in nature to SHARE's other programs."
- **Dump Tent City.** SHARE is "putting a greater burden on the city and other funders" by diverting money from conventional shelters. SHARE responds that the city bungled its calculations, and that all undesignated money continues to the old programs.
- **A person for every mat.** SHARE-operated shelters have higher vacancy rates than other homeless shelters, partly because of SHARE's rule allowing homeless people to miss up to two nights in a row before they lose their berth. The city says: when people registered for a shelter don't show up, fill those unoccupied beds with people referred from Operation Nightwatch, which often fills up and has to turn homeless people away for the night. SHARE responds that while it is working to lower the vacancy rate, it wants to continue the screening system, for safety reasons.
- **Excuse the absent.** Some shelter residents fear that if they miss too many mandatory meetings, they will be denied shelter. The city's asking SHARE to excuse people who have conflicting job schedules from attending.
- **Hey, SHARE, be fair.** Some sources (which have remained anonymous for fear of retaliation) reported being threatened or barred from shelters simply for disagreeing with staff. They reported that judicial bodies within SHARE also bend to the will of staff. City says SHARE should go to dispute resolution with some current and former residents. SHARE responds that this is a minority opinion, and there's been no chance to directly address these grievances.
- **Get accountable.** SHARE staff have no supervision, though "personnel policies, board information, and some job descriptions refer to 'supervisors' that hold SHARE staff accountable." And the lack of a distinct board of directors hamstring the organization. An independently functioning board, says the city, would play a key role in fixing the financial problems. ■



Survivor

Memory and identity on the mean streets of Boston

By Joe Martin

Soul Street
By Rufus Goodwin
Educare Press
2001
Hardcover; 175 pages

Rufus Goodwin is a street poet from Boston. And he is the author of a strange and intriguing new novel entitled *Soul Street*. "On *Soul Street*," he writes, "it is always time to be moving on."

In Goodwin's meandering tale, the reader meets the homeless protagonist, Crusty. True to the culture of the street, Crusty is a jumbled mix of mystery, tragedy, and comedy. Despite his problems, Crusty exhibits a gentle fortitude which enables him to survive the vicissitudes of the urban labyrinth, to endure the physical and psychic vagabondage that has become his life. Under his awkward layers of anonymity and psychological wooziness, Crusty is a kind and amorous man, even a heroic one.

The setting is Boston, Massachusetts. More specifically, Crusty's world centers around historical Boston Common and its immediate environs. He is a regular at the famous Pine Street Inn

for the homeless, a real Beantown institution that's been around for decades. A jobless loner with a quiet demeanor, Crusty is not incapable of friendship and conversation, but these would seem to be less than common things, and they are initiated usually by others; Crusty enters into them with diffidence. There is, however, a mainstay in Crusty's minimal social life: his friend Madeleine, a rather sad homeless woman of whom little is known beyond her relationship with Crusty. Crusty himself remains pretty enigmatic throughout the book. His real full name and place of birth are never revealed. But such anonymity is commonplace on the streets among the homeless and the impoverished. It is evident, though, that both Crusty and his bag lady friend have been floating on the hard city sidewalks for a good while.

This is a story about memory, and about efforts, often imperfect, to recall and reconstruct events and individuals from the past. In Crusty's case, it is difficult to ascertain just how much of his recall is the product of profound psychological upset: Is he fantasizing portions of that sliver of his past to which the au-

thor treats us? Is his entire attempt at recollecting things past faulty? Homelessness, joblessness, and the streets have clearly done a number on Crusty, and this rough treatment doled out to him (and to so many homeless persons in real life) is depicted plainly and painfully. Whatever normal existence Crusty might once have had, he is now practically another person altogether, utterly changed from the individual he had once been. Now he drifts; he walks; and he must keep moving, for there are not many places hospitable to a scruffy indigent man in tattered clothes. He becomes profoundly self-conscious in those parts of the city where he is out of place; where middle-class matrons with beauty parlor coiffures give him disapproving, hurtful glances; where there is "no garbage to melt into."

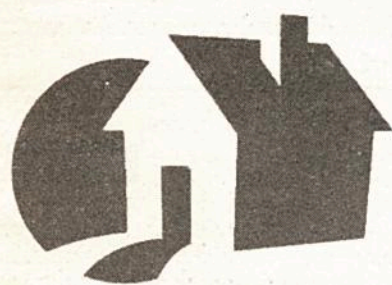
Although the soul man shuffles demurely through a limited section of Boston, Crusty's fractured memory takes the reader to Greece and the late Soviet Union. The author limns a few hilarious moments of fiercely suspicious Communist bureaucrats trying fecklessly to make sense of Crusty's desire to live in Russia. Other characters encounter Crusty in and around Boston. Common, and these make for some interesting, even somewhat fantastic, relationships. There is no grand plot to this story. Like Crusty and Madeleine, the book sort of floats. That's okay, because Goodwin does ably evoke the frustration, isolation, the ennui and disconnection that characterize the lives of a great many folks caught up in persistent poverty and homelessness.

Crusty is the sort of character that the legendary Irish playwright Samuel Beckett might have dreamed up. Crusty is a hobbled man, stripped down to the basics of survival; he has no credit cards, no heirlooms, no place besides his pockets to put anything. His very identity, both inwardly and outwardly, seems a frayed and fragile thing. Beckett could easily lift Crusty off the pages of Goodwin's novel and find an

apt place for him in one of his own prose works or on the stage. Of course, in Beckett's hands this would be a differently structured sort of book. But on the subject of memory, Beckett said that the conscious effort to recall the past "provides an image as far removed from the real as the myth of our imagination or the caricature furnished by the direct perception." Crusty and others in this novel certainly resonate with that thesis. Memory, especially when forced and filtered through a tortured mind, can give up a distorted portrait, perhaps more imagined than real, flavored more with the exigencies of current events than with the limpid shades of the past.

Beckett made this comment on the vagaries of memory in his essay on the great French writer Marcel Proust, who is also given a nod by Goodwin in *Soul Street*. It was Proust, in his magnificent *Swann's Way*, who made the small, rich madeleine cake synonymous with a more primal, involuntary evocation of memory: "And suddenly the memory returns. The taste was that of the little crumb of madeleine...my Aunt Leonie used to give me, dipping it first in her own cup of... tea." Thus Goodwin names Crusty's tatterdemalion companion Madeleine.

One need not be a student of literary heavies like Beckett and Proust to enjoy Rufus Goodwin's work. What is real and important in Goodwin's little book — his straight-up depiction of the brutal marginalization and degradation of many human beings caught in an extensive web of penury and hopelessness — comes through hard and clear. Goodwin laces this harsh urban tapestry with elements of poetry, humor, and grace. And Crusty, like a lot of homeless people I've known over the years, is a very likeable sort. In old folk tales, sometimes Christ appears anonymously to people in the form of a ragged beggar. While it would seem evident that the very human Crusty is not Jesus in disguise, he is indeed representative of the growing ranks of discarded persons proliferating on the mean streets of our nation. Yet Crusty's very name sounds somewhat close to Christ's name. The book is published by Educare Press, based here in Seattle. Find a copy and check it out for yourself. ■



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Warm Memories of a Cooler Time

By Liz Smith

Mark Twain claimed the coldest winter he ever lived through was the summer he spent in San Francisco. Great quote. All wrong. Guess he never wintered in Wyoming. Snow up to your earflaps. Icicles in the bathroom. Thermometer at twenty below.

My so-called friends talked me into it. "You're wasting your life here in Texas," they scolded. "Why not come to Cheyenne with us? You can waste your life up there just as easy. You can keep us company. It'll be fun!"

Yahoo, some people have a strange idea of what is fun. Crammed in a pickup truck and driving through 994 miles of snowstorms while listening to country music and hog farm reports is not my idea of a good time. We finally arrived after narrowly avoiding what seemed like thousands of ditches, thanks to flat terrain and a good set of chains.

Wyoming is a big square state, but so sparsely populated that it has only one area code. There is a fun part. Up in the northwest corner, where you'll find Yellowstone Park and Jackson Hole. We were in Cheyenne, the flat part. On the map, it's east of Tie Siding and south of Chugwater. What they have there is ranchers and snow and farmers and snow and, at the Francis Warren Air Force Base, Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles. That was where one of my friends worked, oiling the hinges and manning the feather duster so the bombs would stay clean. (Just kidding, he was in the motor pool.)

What Cheyenne did not have was a public transportation system. What I didn't have was a car, or a job, but I did have cabin fever. They had a pretty good library (kind of surprising, that) and even if it was 25° below, it was hard to stay cooped up in the house.

So I was downtown one day, walking around, and wondering to myself why had I ever come to such a forlorn place where you had to put on clothing for 30 minutes just so you wouldn't get frostbite, and it starts to snow.

The snow came in waves, like heavy Egyptian cotton sheets shimmering on a clothes-

line. There was a diner on the next block, a little heaven of warmth. I had just enough dough to get a cup of coffee. I tried not to look like what I truly was — a pathetic wretch stalling for time till the blizzard let up. The counterman came out of the kitchen with a bowl of steaming chicken soup, and set it down before me. "I can't pay for this," I stammered. "It's OK," he smiled. That was all he said.

So many years ago. I will always remember his kindness and courtly manner. What a sweet guy.

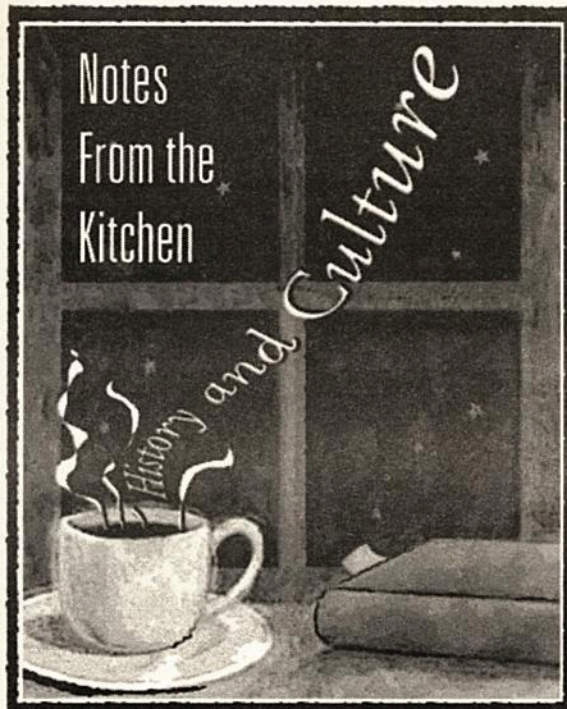
For the recipe in today's column, I have used chicken but not in a soup. It's too hot. You'll find it goes together very quickly, so as not to heat up the kitchen too much. The reduced chicken stock will give a rich flavor to the final sauce.

Pasta with Chicken and Mushrooms

(serves two)

10 ounces spaghetti	1 tsp pepper
1 Tbsp butter	3/4 lb mushrooms, sliced
14 - 1/2 ounces chicken stock	1 garlic clove, minced
1 Tbsp butter	4 ounces sour cream
2 half chicken breasts, cut into half-inch cubes.	3 ounces swiss or gruyere cheese, grated

1. The night before, cook spaghetti according to directions on package. Drain, toss with one TB butter, refrigerate.
2. Using the same big pot, reduce the chicken stock at a rapid boil for eight minutes. Observe closely during the last three minutes of reducing so it does not burn. Pour into a bowl and refrigerate.
3. The next day, prepare all your ingredients and put in bowls on a tray in the order in which they'll go into the pot: pepper, mushrooms, garlic, stock, sour cream, and cheese.
4. In a skillet, melt 1 Tbsp butter on medium heat until it sizzles. Put the chicken in and sauté for about three minutes. Add pepper and cook one more minute.
5. Add mushrooms and garlic. Cook for five minutes, stirring frequently. Add reduced chicken stock and simmer one or two more minutes.
6. Remove pot from heat. Stir in sour cream, then the cheese.
7. Pour boiling water on the spaghetti to warm it, stir 30 seconds, then drain well.
8. Put spaghetti on two plates, then top with chicken mushroom mixture. ■



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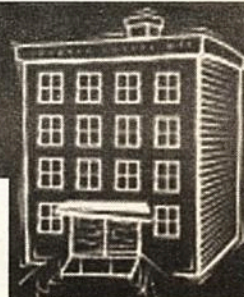
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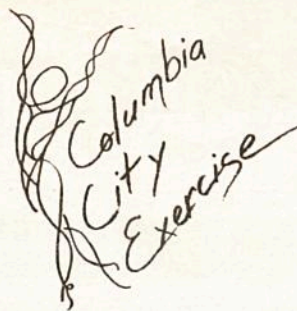
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Tuesday, May 15, Second Avenue and Pike Street, Street Outreach Services' Needle Exchange, 12:30 p.m. Reader David Harrison provides the following: "I was witness to incidents of excessive force, illegal search and seizure, and entrapment by the Seattle Police Department. Police officers were randomly stopping and searching people on the streets, waiting for people to emerge from the needle exchange, and in one case I saw a man dragged off in a headlock. I watched the whole exchange between the officer and this man, and the suspect did nothing to warrant this excessive (and I believe, illegal) use of force. I am a school teacher, husband, and father, with no criminal record, an everyday citizen outraged and sickened by what I saw. This occurred the day after a TV news story detailed the complaints of business owners regarding the neighborhood. Also, all of the people being searched and manhandled were white, and mostly male. This on the heels of comments by Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske [responding to the disproportionate arrests of black males] to make a concerted effort to "arrest more white males." The police seem to be responding to public sentiment, crime statistics, business interests, and the media. They are not operating on principles of fairness and justice for all. This says nothing of the ways in which they are undermining a service like the needle exchange. If people can't feel safe to use it, then what good can it possibly achieve?"

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Saturday, June 9, Melrose Avenue, 10:33 a.m.
A citizen contacted police to report that an unknown person was sleeping in a vehicle on the street. Police arrived, and found a white Volvo with a broken-out window — it appeared abandoned. They contacted a black male, age 42, who was sleeping in the back seat. The man was read his rights, and he explained that he was homeless and had been given permission to sleep in the car by an unknown person he had met by the car, and who he assumed was the owner. The real owner of the vehicle lived a block away, and was on vacation. The vehicle owner's apartment manager stated that the man did not have permission to sleep in the car, and he was arrested. The suspect was transported to the East Precinct, interrogated, and released. Police requested that misdemeanor charges of vehicle prowling be pressed, pending the city prosecutor's review.

Saturday, June 16, E. Pine Street, 2:42 p.m.
Officers observed a homeless white male, age 33, passed out on the sidewalk in front of a restaurant, and approached him to check on his welfare. The man woke up, obviously intoxicated, and became verbally belligerent. Officers asked him if he required transportation to the sobering center, which he refused. Police advised the man that he would have to leave, or be arrested for criminal trespass. He again refused to comply, and was placed under arrest and transported to the East Precinct. ■

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

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I Will Remember Richard

Wrecked, shunned, and abandoned on a Hawaiian island

By Billy Whelan

I'm an outreach worker for St. Michael's and All Angels church in Lihue, on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. I work with mentally ill homeless people. One of my clients, Richard, a long time Kauai resident, recently died in Honolulu. He died alone in his muddled, confused schizophrenic state.

Richard was a 63-year-old homeless man, an ex-marine. He lived mostly under trees, behind bushes, or wherever his fatigue met him. When I first encountered him a few years ago at the courthouse park in Lihue, he said to me, "I'm hungry," simply, like a child would.

Last year we were able to find him a small apartment in Port Allen. He was a peaceful man unless he thought you were a drug dealer, as among many of his hallucinations he believed he was an undercover police officer. Then he lost his food stamps because he convinced his caseworker that he was awarded tens of thousands of dollars in a court settlement. Every other weekend, he would tell you he was in Las Vegas playing lead guitar for Tammy Wynette. I didn't have the heart to tell him she passed away. He believed he had been a four-star general in Korea and the recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor. He wore the same army fatigues for years, watches up and down his arms, and dozens of necklaces. The constant odor that permeated him was disgusting.

Gangs of young cowards would occasionally beat him up, effectively proving their machismo to each other.

I was appalled at how he was shunned by practically everyone he came into contact with. Judgment was the normal stench, smelling worse than he did.

While with him, I would occasionally remember Jesus saying, "The kingdom of heaven is within and God lives within that kingdom." Maybe he didn't live within Richard.

South of Puhi, a large and beautiful animal shelter is being built. As an animal lover, I'm glad that our island animals will be better taken care of. What I don't get is how the Richards of our

world are so shunned and judged by society at large. Too bad he didn't bark.

This past June, I was concerned about his feet. He had on the same three pairs of socks for months, and they were wet. His foot and lower leg were swollen like a soon-to-burst balloon. I convinced the Veterans Administration to send a couple of nurses to his home. I brought him outside, as his apartment was rife with the odor of the perennially unbathed. I was one of the few people Richard trusted, and when I told him I needed to cut his pant leg and sock off, he consented.

When I was finally able to uncover his toes, dozens of maggots scurried away, exposing a series of horrible wounds between his grotesquely swollen toes. They had been eaten right to the bone. And Richard, lost in his illness, never felt any pain. I rushed him to the Kauai Veterans Hospital emergency room in Waimea, where a very caring team admitted him.

We convinced Richard to allow them to bathe him, as fecal matter was encrusted up and down his legs. His healing, over the next few weeks, was nothing short of miraculous. He loved the hospital. People actually brought him double portions of food three times a day, he was so malnourished. Every day I visited, I brought him a Snickers bar. I sensed he wasn't particularly glad to see me, but especially glad to see that bar.

Three weeks later Richard was flown to Tripler Veterans Hospital on Oahu. Shortly thereafter he walked out of the facility through an alarm door and no one stopped him. He walked up away from town and fell off a cliff. God only knows how long he lay there before dying. Joggers eventually found his body.

I will remember Richard; a man who once had a family and a fairly normal life, and was shunned and judged by society in his later years. I'd like you to remember him also, even though he never barked. ■

Billy Whelan is the author of Friends of the Children, a book about a home for emotionally disturbed children in New Mexico. Check it out at www.billyskids.org.

I was appalled at how [Richard] was shunned by practically everyone he came into contact with. Judgment was the normal stench, smelling worse than he did.

CLASSICS CORNER



by Permess'r Harris

We at Classics Corner believe cynicism to be widely misunderstood. Even in this perfectly cynical age, many of us conflate disbelief in selflessness with the merely ironic, the world weary, and the just plain bored. Soon, we believe, the English language will be reduced to just a few thousand words or so, and we'll all simply point and click toward the objects of our desire, as though the world were one big WebTV.

Before cynicism meant skepticism of human decency, it meant dog-like, and Diogenes, the fourth century B.C. philosopher and follower of Antisthenes, an associate of Socrates, was the dog. Nearly all of his own writing has perished, and we know him mostly through Diogenes Laertus and Plutarch.

Diogenes the dog was said to be homeless, to live with animals, to sleep in a bathtub, and to proudly beg for his living. Yet he declared himself to be "Athens' one free man." He was exiled from Sinope, a city in Turkey, when his father, an official at the mint, was accused of debasing the coinage. Later, Diogenes would make this a metaphor for his own attack on convention itself. "I have come to debase the currency," he said. "Bury me prone: I have always faced the other way."

As an ancient Thoreau, Diogenes wanted to reduce life to its simplest elements; to live in nature. The mice, he said, who pay no rent or taxes and buy no groceries, should be our mentors. One should only own a cloak and a cane, he thought, and if one could get away with it, borrow even those. "To own nothing," he said, "is the beginning of happiness."

Even better, he hated Plato's guts. Plato, he said, was a tedious, vain windbag with an over-inflated ego. He despised his privilege, and thought even less of his philosophy. Plato taught that all things, from material realities to concepts themselves, have an ideal form from which they spring. A table, for instance, partakes in the ideal form of a table, and could not exist without it. The thing we see is but a shadow of its form. When we see a table, therefore, we know little of its true reality. Diogenes considered this to be a load of crap. "I have seen Plato's cup and table," said Diogenes, "but not his cupness and tableness."

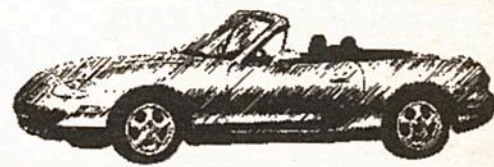
The early cynics believed that living in nature meant performing all bodily functions in public. They were Mark Sidran's worst nightmare: a whole philosophical school who peed freely, asked for handouts, slept rough, and made fun of the wealthy. "The porches and streets of Athens were built for me as a place to live," Diogenes said. He also said, "In the rich man's house there is no place to spit but in his face."

Like many mendicant philosophers, Diogenes brought a sense of entitlement to panhandling that was truly commendable. "Why praise Diokles for giving me a drachma," he said, "and not me for deserving it?" He could be downright cheeky as well: "Begging from fat Anaxamenes, I argued what an advantage it would be to him to share the makings of that paunch with the poor."

Asking for handouts, however, has never been an easy job. Diogenes' advice to other mendicants still rings true. "Before begging, it is useful to practice on statues." ■

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Early Summer Notables

Sunday, 7/1

"The Truth behind *Traffic*" multimedia forum, a public discussion on the local and national effects of the U.S. government's war on drugs. We will be showing and discussing snippets from the film, and addressing racial profiling and King County's drug enforcement policy. Panelists include representatives from Street Outreach Services, King County Bar Association, King County Council, and the D.C.-based Institute for Policy Studies. 2-5 p.m., Independent Media Center, 1415 Third Avenue, downtown between Pike and Union. Info, call Elizabeth Mendez Berry at 206-709-7958 or email tropicananatomica@yahoo.com.

Sunday, 7/8

Freedom Socialist Party presents: "The Problem with Pragmatism: A Marxist Critique," with East Coast socialist scholar Dr. Susan Williams discussing the limits of good old American practicality and common sense, summer brunch available at noon for a \$6.50 donation, everyone welcome, 1 p.m., at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., info or rides 206-722-2453 or FSPseattle@mindspring.com.

Monday, 7/9

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

Tuesday, 7/10

Series of Potlucks for the Progressive Community to come together and share ideas, no formal agenda and no formal speakers, just good food, good friends, and great conversation. Bring a food or beverage to share along with your own dishes and utensils, this and subsequent 2nd Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., at the Trinity United Methodist Church, 6512-23rd Ave. NW., near buses #18 and 75, info 206-632-7828 or seattlepotluck@yahoo.com.

Ongoing Saturdays

Seattle Food Not Bombs re-distributes free produce to the members of the Yesler Terrace Community Center, Produce to the People, Right On! 10:45 a.m., sort vegetables; noon - 1 p.m., free market, at the Yesler Terrace Community Cen-

ter, 835 E. Yesler Way, info 206-985-2247 or fjb@scn.org or <http://www.scn.org/activism/foodnotbombs>.

Ongoing Sundays

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

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

Ongoing Mondays

Social Ecology Study Group reads and discusses various books pertaining to radical ecological/social/political theory, now reading *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* by Murray Bookchin, discussing the fundamental change needed in revolutionary practice in a post-scarcity world, ecological theory, reconstructive social/political theories, and more, info Tamara tmeyers@u.washington.edu or just stop on by!

Ongoing Daily

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

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

Free Earthquake Preparedness Course "Surviving an Earthquake" can be accessed at <http://www.regionxoti.org> by clicking on the course icon.

Sign a petition on-line that is calling for a Moratorium on the Death Penalty by Moratorium 2000 and championed in the U.S. by Sister Helen Prejean, the author of *Dead Man Walking*, at <http://www.moratorium2000.org/action/petition.lasso>.

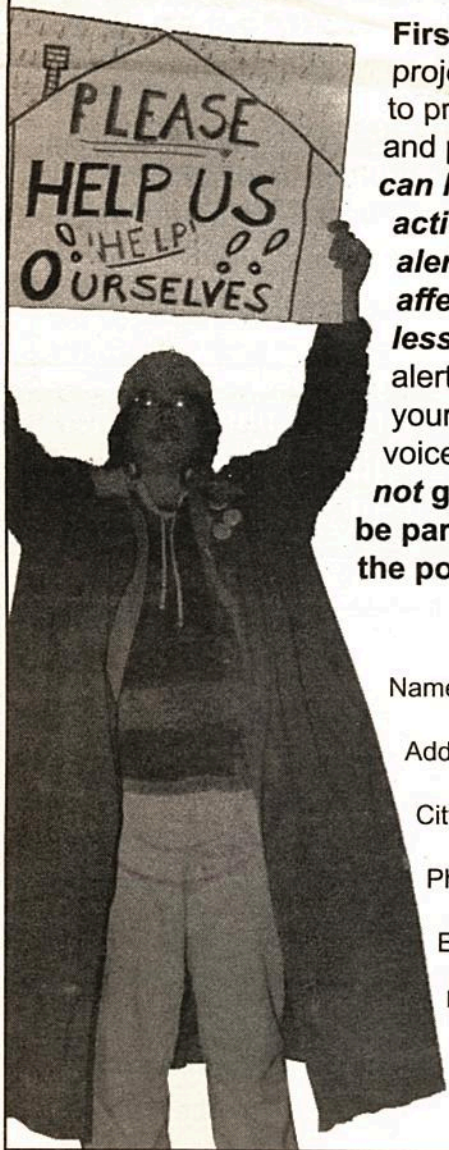
The Seattle Police Department is currently seeking nominations for the Community Policing Action Council, a group of citizens appointed by the Chief of Police to represent the people of Seattle, that will work to develop programs and strategies that enhance positive community/police partnerships. CPAC is focused on actively developing opportunities for police and community members to increase understanding of each other's values and 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.

The Community Police Academy of the Seattle Police Department is held twice a year and meets once a week for 13 weeks, 3 hours per meeting. Topics include use of force, domestic violence, officer safety and traffic, as well as demonstrations by officers assigned to the SWAT team, info and applications Ginny Heller 206-615-0062 or ginny.heller@ci.seattle.wa.us.

Studio X, a new community netcasting facility broadcasting to the world on topics such as politics, homeless issues, local news, youth issues, global issues, and police brutality. From downtown Seattle between 4 p.m. - 2:00 a.m. on the Internet at <http://www.microradio.net>, connecting you to 'unmediated' voices from Seattle's social movements including October 22 Coalition, Women's International League for Peace & Freedom, Street Writes/Real Change, and more, plus music, poetry, and plenty of weird sounds, info and to find out how to get your own show 206-736-1400. ■

If you have a comment or have an event that you would like to see published in the Calendar section of Real Change, please email your submissions to K_Alexander1@msn.com

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 _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

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



Help get Initiative 71 on the Ballot

Issue: Citizens for Shelter with Dignity must collect more than 18,000 valid signatures from registered Seattle voters to place I-71 on the November ballot.

Background: On any given night in Seattle there are between 1,000 and 2,000 homeless people who cannot get into shelter because existing beds are full. Initiative 71 would require Seattle to fund and provide at least 400 additional "year-round" shelter beds and additional support services. City funding for such support services would have to increase at least 20% over existing levels. The city would have to fund additional beds without interfering with existing or planned expenditures for health, human-service, or housing programs, and pursue "creative options" for low-cost shelter, including "faith-based shelter and self-management strategies."

Why Should Seattle Enact Initiative 71?

Initiative 71 saves lives and money.

Due to Seattle's shortage of emergency homeless shelter, people are forced to camp in cars, doorways, greenbelts, and other areas that are both dangerous and illegal. Providing additional shelter and services will save money by helping eliminate other costs for emergency healthcare, court costs, and jail time.

Initiative 71 is not a new tax.

This ballot measure requires the city to pay for new beds and services from the existing general fund without interfering with existing and planned funding for health, housing, and human services. The projected cost of Initiative 71 is approximately \$5 million, less than 1 percent of the existing general fund.

Shelter is the gateway to services and help.

Without shelter, it is nearly impossible for homeless people to access the services they need to become more stable and return to housing. While housing and services are essential to eliminating homelessness, shelter is the critical first step that allows homeless people help themselves.

Over the past year, much momentum has built to meaningfully address homelessness in Seattle. The human services and faith communities are agreed that this is the right moment to build the political will to end homelessness. Initiative 71 will build a base for change by mobilizing hundreds of activists around the concrete and winnable goal of increasing shelter and services. Most importantly, I-71 has the potential to show that voters believe solving homelessness should be a priority for this city.

Action: Initiative 71 needs people to help collect enough signatures to place this measure on the ballot. The time left to reach our goal is very limited, so your help is needed right now. Call I-71 Campaign Manager Trevor Griffey at 755-4850 to get involved. Or visit the I-71 website at www.sheltewithdignity.org. ■

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800 Pike St.
Seattle, WA 98101

