

DEC 13-26, 2001

# Change

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## The Longest Night

### National Memorial Day for Homeless People

By Michele Marchand

And if I tried/to give you something else/something outside myself  
you would not know/that the worst of anyone/can be, finally/an accident of hope...

There ought to be something special/for someone/in this kind of hope.  
This is something I would never find/in a lovelier place, my dear,  
although your fear is anyone's fear/like an invisible veil between us all...  
and sometimes in private/my kitchen, your kitchen/my face, your face.

—from "For John, Who Begs Me Not to Enquire Further," by Anne Sexton

Standing in silent meditation at WHEEL's first Women in Black vigil, I had a strong clear vision of Debbie Cashio, whom I did not know, in a sunlit kitchen, in a farmhouse, happy. Long after the vigil I learned Debbie had grown up and had a happy childhood in a small town on Whidbey Island. Her family had often tried to find her here in Seattle and take her back home to that happiness; unsuccessfully, as it so often happens.

Debbie's body was found in May

2000 near the freeway at 8th Avenue and Jackson Street. A suspected homicide, the case is still unsolved. Debbie had been homeless, and had been known to use drugs.

Death is not the great leveler, I wrote in a 1998 article, about women found dead in Seattle's Jungle — a greenbelt near the freeway on Beacon Hill where homeless people often camp. Many of what is now a long litany of missing and murdered women worked in the sex trade, and many did that work in order

to support drug addictions. Single deaths, and sometimes even multiple deaths of women in this circumstance, are relegated to small newsbriefs buried in the local section of daily papers.

Every time a small newsbrief runs in the local papers about missing, dead, injured, or beaten homeless people, it talks of "transients," of "histories of prostitution or drug use." Every time, this reductive description hurts homeless people and their family members.

For example, an otherwise good, long article in the *Seattle Post Intelligencer* about the three 1998 victims of Seattle serial killer DeWayne Lee Harris used what appeared to be mug shots with its front-page article, and the painful subhead: "Crack addiction led three women down tragic path."

This is why news of the arrest of a suspect, finally, in the Green River killings spread so quickly on the homeless women's grapevine. Within minutes of the reported arrest of suspect Gary Leon Ridgway, three women came to the WHEEL office, where I work, to relay the news. By Monday, women reported that investigators found bodies in Gary Ridgway's backyard. This proved not to be true, but it is often the case that homeless women know more

than is ever published in the papers about the missing and the dead.

Buried in the massive coverage of the Ridgway arrest are file photographs of the women victims. Mercifully, they have not always been mug shots; more often they've been family photos of smiling women accompanied by respectful stories about the longstanding pain of those who loved and miss their daughters and sisters.

Buried also are photographs of groups of women — family, friends, and supporters of the missing and murdered — who mobilized in the mid-'80s to press for closure in the case.

#### Missing women

December 21, the longest night, the Winter Solstice, is "National Memorial Day for Homeless People," declared by the National Coalition for the Homeless. More than 100 cities nationwide plan memorial services in the last week of December each year for homeless people who have died. In Seattle the Compass Center has its annual memorial service at 4 p.m. Friday, January 4, at their 77 S. Washington building.

Continued on Page 10

Inside: Christmas Eve at the Bunkhouse • Annie Leibovitz's Women • An Interview with Barbara Ehrenreich • The Darkest Night



## More for youth

Dear *Real Change*,

Your article about the closure of the Capitol Hill Youth Drop-In Center ("No Place to Call Their Own," Nov. 29, 2001) makes some starkly compelling points about the lack of resources for homeless youth on Capitol Hill.

However, the image you paint of the U-District is a bit rosier than the complex reality facing U-District homeless youth. Yes, they have far more resources than the homeless youth of Capitol Hill. The sad thing is, that's not saying much. The shelters are constantly at risk of closing for lack of volunteers (ditto Capitol Hill). The one meal a day is a stunning accomplishment created by non-profit groups operating on shoestring budgets (University Street Ministry, which puts together

five of those seven meals per week, is phenomenal).

But the kids are still left to scrape together the other two meals any way they can. In addition, drop-in centers may provide temporary escape from gang violence and predatory adults, but simply walking from the center to the soup kitchen to the shelter presents a very real risk of assault.

That these U-District nonprofits accomplish so much with so very little is truly amazing. But so much more remains to be done.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Atkinson

## Into your soul

Dear Editor:

I am moved by the sincerity and honesty of your publication. I've purchased a few issues of *Real Change*, at first perhaps out of some internal guilt, but now I do so because it's one of the few places where humanity still resides. Not an easy humanity, but the kind that spits in the face of modernity and forces us to see the choices we make in our lives and how they affect others.

I was really moved by the short portrait of Sean Chapman (*Real Change* Profile, Nov. 15, 2001). He just stares at you, right into your soul.

Thanks!  
Taso Lagos  
Ph.D. Candidate  
UW School of Communications

## Poetry to die by

Dear *Real Change*,

I was getting ready to throw out the recycling and could not add the 11/15-28 issue of *Real Change*, even with the new one sitting unread on my desk. The poetry page was phenomenal this time! I almost always turn first to see what Perffess'r Harris and ©Dr. Wes have to say and then naturally have to catch up on Anitra's and Stan's thoughtful poesy. But this issue... WOW!

JL Navarro's "Zona Roja" is a flare announcing a major talent! "In the Generic Landscape" speaks volumes, and Thornburgh's "My Flag" is the first patriotic poem this pacifist has wanted to march to in 40 years! As for Wes's hebdomadals, I think more than a few of us remember the hebdomadary squalls from the bomb drill sirens. It's been only a few years since they finally took the last ones down from Phinney Neighborhood Center. And we still don't know what to do if we ever get bombed like sitting ducks 25 miles from the largest nuclear subs in the world! At least we have great poetry to read while waiting for the end. Thank you.

En paz,  
pablo paz hidalgo  
Seattle

## Valuable partners

Dear Friends,

Very late but very real congratulations on your 70th anniversary. I glean helpful things from each issue of your paper. We consider you valuable partners in the work to end homelessness.

Margaret Maxwell

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# Change

Puget Sound's Voice of the  
Poor and Homeless

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

#### On the Web at

http://www.realchangenews.org  
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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.



## Paul Von Kempf, Jr.

Earlier this year, standing outside the View Ridge PCC selling *Real Change*, and feeling a little bit sorry for himself, Paul Von Kempf, Jr., began to write a poem. "I was in a lot of pain, and wanted to learn how to express it," he recalls. "I have a lot of ideas that lie behind the self-pity; if I get rid of it, I can get to those ideas."

Paul sees the poem, "Standing with Dignity," as a capstone to a life he could put down in the same style. He followed that poem with a second one, recalling a moment in his childhood, called "Dragonfly Pond." Now, he's going to put down his own autobiography in verse.

That epic would take place mostly in Seattle, where Paul's lived and worked odd jobs since 1967. He helped solicit funds for the non-profit First Avenue Service Center when it opened in the early '70s, by telling his story to congregations. For a while, he made his living remodeling houses in the U-District. His boss owned a local ice cream parlor, and struck a deal: Paul would make 50 cents an hour plus all the ice cream he could eat. The deal was soon modified, once Paul's diet made too big a dent in the inventory. After paying for rent at a local hotel, "it was all I could afford" to eat, he said. ■

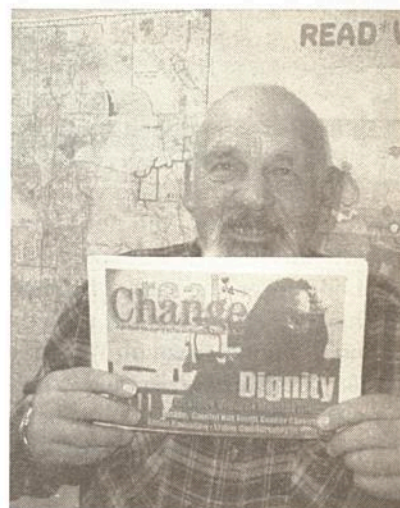


PHOTO OF PAUL VON KEMPF, JR., BY ADAM HOLDORF.

# Help *Real Change* Make a Difference

By Timothy Harris

**A**t *Real Change*, we don't just believe in social justice; we believe in being effective. We organize. We educate. We build alliances, and we make sure that poor people get heard. We win real victories for the people we serve, and we make a real difference in the lives of hundreds, even thousands, of people.

- The *Real Change* newspaper provides income opportunity for nearly 200 vendors each month. We offer immediate work that matters to those who may have few alternatives. We entertain while we inform, we write from the heart, and we are committed to fairness and accuracy. We consistently publish the voice of the poor, and we advocate for issues that matter. *Real Change* is not a "pity purchase." We offer quality journalism that fills a vital need.

- This year, *Real Change* organized the Initiative 71 campaign. In just a few months, more than 200 volunteers collected 27,000 signatures to place the need for more shelter on the ballot. This campaign resulted in \$2.75 million in additional funding for shelter and transitional housing, a commitment to a downtown homeless day center, and guarantees that the next housing levy would serve those most in need. *Real Change* is building for power.

- Our MacWorkshop computer lab quietly offers free computer use and training to about 30 people a day, and gives donated computers to those in need. *Real Change* provides the skills training that people need.

We do all of this, the newspaper, the computer lab, the grassroots organizing, and more with just a handful of staff, a dedicated board, and many incredible volunteers. Every year we manage to do more with the few resources we have.

But our biggest accomplishment is nearly impossible to measure. Anyone who has worked our front desk has seen it. Maybe you see it yourself when you buy your paper. Our vendors have pride. They stand on their own two feet and look you in the eye. What's that worth to you?

Next year, we plan to expand in several key areas. You can help us reach more people, provide new opportunities, and achieve more progress for the poor and homeless. Here are just a few of our goals for 2002:

- We will offer more training to help our vendors succeed. Selling a newspaper on the street is not easy, and we want *Real Change* to be a positive experience that rewards personal initiative. Just a little more attention could make a very big difference in the lives of many.

- In 2002, the Seattle Housing Levy is up for renewal, and its passage cannot be taken for granted. Over the last two years, our organizing project First Things First has proven that we can mobilize hundreds of people to take action on issues that matter. This year, we will make sure that the Levy passes and that housing is produced for those most in need.

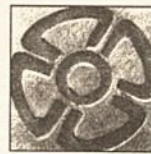
- We will remodel and expand the MacWorkshop. Currently, our six-terminal computer lab is full most hours of the day, with people waiting up to an hour for 90 minutes of free computer time. This year, with the help of a \$45,000 grant from the Gates Foundation, we will replace our obsolete equipment with fast new computers and add three new stations as well. Our volunteer teachers will expand the training offerings, with increased emphasis on skills building and self-guided study.

These are especially difficult times, and the poor, as usual, are most vulnerable. Even now, budget cuts at the city, county, state, and federal levels threaten programs that are already inadequate. This year's One Night Count, which found a 16 percent increase in homeless men, women, and children on the street than just one year ago, shows that the problem is only getting worse.

*Real Change* goes beyond charity by providing opportunities for self-help, providing the information we need to act, and organizing to make a difference. We cannot afford to lose ground when the need is only growing.

Your gift of \$500, \$250, \$100, \$50 or whatever you can afford will build power for the poor at a time when it is needed most. Please support our work as strongly as you are able. ■

## Inside:



### Opinion

Help *Real Change* Make a Difference  
By Timothy Harris ..... 3



### Regular Features

Profile: Paul Von Kempf, Jr.  
by Adam Holdorf ..... 2

News You Can Use: Freezing in more ways than one  
by Adam Holdorf ..... 4



Adventures in Poetry: Military tribunals  
with Dr. Wes Browning ..... 6

Notes from the Kitchen: Merry Christmas dinner  
By Liz Smith ..... 12

Street Watch  
by Emma Quinn ..... 13



Classics Corner: Ancient times meet '70s cult  
by Timothy Harris ..... 14

Calendar  
compiled by Sandra Enger ..... 15

### Features

The Longest Night: National memorial for the homeless  
by Michele Marchand ..... 1



What Makes Your Marbles Move: Barbara Ehrenreich  
by Adam Holdorf ..... 5

Christmas Story for Homeless Nobodies  
by Albert Bliss ..... 8



Women: Annie Leibovitz at the Seattle Art Museum  
by Cynthia Lee Ozimek ..... 11

### Poetry

Insights and surprises from L.E. Cornelison, Anitra L. Freeman, Carol A. Leno, Selma Waldman ..... 6-7



### Activism

Citizens Participation Project ..... 16

## More Than Meets the Eye

*Real Change* is much more than just a newspaper. We are a respected voice of the poor that reaches more than 30,000 people each month. We are a powerful grassroots organizing project that wins real gains for the homeless. We offer cultural and educational opportunity through our art gallery, writers workshops, and computer lab. Your support makes our work possible. Please give generously. All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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## It gets worse

More people were turned away from the door step of Operation Nightwatch in the first nine days of December than in the entire month last year, according to the referral agency's own numbers. That means more homeless people sleeping outside because they have no other options.

All told, 268 people seeking shelter were turned away from Nightwatch over the first nine days of December. In those same days last year, the agency turned away just 35 people. That's an "astounding" increase in need, says Nightwatch director Rev. Rick Reynolds.

Why is there such a huge increase in the demand for shelter? Could be that there are more homeless people on the street, and less response from the city's Winter Response Plan.

There are 200 more people sleeping outside this winter than the same time last year, according to this fall's One Night Count. And another part of the problem lies in what has been hailed as a victory for homeless people: the year-round operation of the 50-man shelter in the Municipal Building lobby. As part of the city's Winter Response, the Muni Building was previously open every night from November through March. Last year, the city allocated enough funding to continue operations through the warmer months.

And though the Muni Building means more year-round shelter, this year, it meant there were no more beds opening when the cooler months come along.

"Winter Response feels like it's nonexistent this year," says Reynolds. "There's been no real expansion in capacity."

The other component of the city's Winter Response Plan is to open so-called Severe Weather Shelters, only during heavy rains or when the mercury is expected to drop below freezing. Run out of the basement of the Frye Hotel in Pioneer Square and the South Lake Union armory, these shelters can accommodate many people — but they have only opened twice so far this winter.

Al Poole, head of the city's Survival Services Unit, says his office is adhering closely to city rules that dictate that Severe Weather shelters only open when it's frightful outside.

"The criteria are really closely looked at by a lot of people, including City Council," he says. "People are conscious that we [need to] use it in the right way."

Rules or no rules, there's plenty of money to accommodate Nightwatch's turnaways, even on a slightly drizzly 40-degree night. As of Tuesday, December 11, the Severe Weather shelters had enough money budgeted to operate for 15 of the 20 nights left in December.

Nightwatch's statistics reflect only the people that make it up to the head of the line, notes Reynolds. "People come in, take a look, and walk away. They can tell there's a long line and no place to go."

Nightwatch's own shelter, which can accommodate up to 200 people, is bursting at the seams. Now, it's not just his job to shelter people, but to turn them away as well — which his agency did to 57 men on the night of December 4.

Reynolds says it forces him to adopt "lifeboat ethics.... I've got to make these horrible, nasty choices that I don't want to make."

There's one consolation in the Winter Response scene: King County has found enough money to continue the 50-man Administration Building shelter at least into March, according to county staffer Debbi Knowles. Budget cuts were expected to cause the shelter to close on January 11. ■

— Adam Holdorf

## The freeze has thawed

In early December, after a two-month freeze, Governor Gary Locke got the state's construction spending going again. The thaw will free up \$880 million that promises to pump up the economy. Included in that is millions of dollars for housing for low-income people.

"There were a lot of projects at risk of not happening" because of the spending freeze, says Rep. Ed Murray, the Capitol Hill Democrat who's chair of the House Capital Budget Committee. "And not only do they house people, but they create jobs."

Locke froze the funds as the state economy slid this fall, fearing that the ebb of sales tax revenue wouldn't cover the government's bonds. Murray's committee is proposing to back the bonds with \$25 million from a state lottery fund that usually goes to education.



At a November 29 committee hearing, representatives from both parties stated their eagerness to get rid of the spending freeze, according to Seth Dawson, a lobbyist for the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless. As both sides hailed the outcome, saying it would boost the economy, the leading Republican on the Capital Budget Committee, Olympia Rep. Gary Alexander, told *The Associated Press* that he was "dubious" about a raid on the education fund. Though Locke released some money December 6, the entire Legislature will have to approve the committee's proposal. Northeast Seattle Representative Jim McIntire, also on the committee, said it's "a question of when the state wants to move forward."

McIntire called Locke's freeze, which the Governor carried out without consulting the Legislature, "the opposite of a stimulus package." "For the state to be holding back capital programs at a time when the economy is in a downturn, it compounds the hesitancy. We were behaving like any other consumers, wondering, 'Do I really have the money?'" ■

—Adam Holdorf

## Last-minute save — sort of

Locke's spending freeze threw a real estate deal into chaos, jeopardizing the homes of 28 working families in central Washington.

The Chelan County/Wenatchee Housing Authority had been preparing to buy an empty lot and develop a new mobile home park for 28 low-income families, mostly farmworkers. Owners of their old park had stated their desire to sell, possibly to a commercial developer, since the park sits next to a new shopping mall.

The families, working with the housing authority, had found an empty site to purchase and move their homes to. Just before the sale closed, Locke cut off the money flow.

The residents asked the state to make an exception and release emergency funds. They got a response only at the eleventh hour, says Marty Stierlen of the Housing Authority: The state said it would come through with the money — to purchase the old park, not the new one.

"It was our only alternative," says Stierlen, who helped put together the deal. She notes that the old park has suffered from some neglect, and needs fencing and painting. "This isn't perfect, but at least these families aren't going homeless."

Another East Wenatchee mobile home park is scheduled to close next month; its residents will have to find another place to hook up their homes. ■

— Adam Holdorf

## When the levy breaks

A nine-month-old homeless community in Santa Cruz, California, survived a judge's ruling and city officials' opposition, only to be cleared out by a heavy winter rain.

Camp Paradise was vacated on the night of Saturday, December 1, when the swollen San Lorenzo river rose right up to the communal kitchen. The first sign of a crisis was tents floating downstream past the campers. According to the Santa Cruz Parks and Recreation department, more than 600 campers were staying along the same riverbank.

Camp Paradise sheltered 40 people over the summer; this August, two of its residents were ticketed for illegal camping. They argued in court that they were compelled by their economic situation, and the lack of suitable alternatives, to sleep outside. Local advocates estimate that Santa Cruz has as many as 2,000 homeless people, and one 39-bed emergency shelter to serve them. During winter, its local armory accommodates 160 more — but since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, only homeless people with valid California IDs are admitted. Despite the shortage, the judge rejected the campers' arguments and upheld the tickets.

City officials distributed hotel vouchers to refugees of the rising river; when the vouchers run out later this month, residents of Camp Paradise say they'll have to move outside and regroup. ■

— Adam Holdorf

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

# What Makes Your Marbles Move

Barbara Ehrenreich on working, welfare, and the aftermath of 9/11

Interview by Adam Holdorf

Author Barbara Ehrenreich is the left's most prominent pundit. Her opinions have been published everywhere from *Time* Magazine to the *Washington Post*. Even as she keeps her feet squarely on the liberal side, as a regular columnist for *The Progressive*, freelancing for the bigger outlets promises better pay. But she aims for the media mainstream also because that's where the most readers are. It's called the "marble theory of social change," she told *Z Magazine* in 1997: "You have a whole mass of marbles on the floor. You roll one toward the center of the mass; it hits another, which maybe hits another.... If you're lucky, and if a whole lot of other people are rolling theirs in the same direction from time to time, maybe all the marbles will eventually, bit by bit, begin to move."

*Real Change*

caught up to Ehrenreich earlier this fall to talk about class, current events, and how to be an intellectual.

**Real Change:** How do you think the economic slowdown is changing the circumstances of the people you worked with in Nickel and Dimed, your field study of low-wage work?

**Barbara Ehrenreich:** It can only be for

the worse. I mean, people at the bottom had made some wage gain between 1995 and 1999. Not a very great gain, compared to the salary gains of the people at the top. But there had been some increase in wages for people in the bottom [20 percent] of the income distribution. And I'm sure that gains like

that will be wiped out with rising unemployment. These were not anywhere gains that [approached] even a living-wage level — but it was something.

**RC:** Your next book is about the realities behind welfare reform. Can you tell us more about it?

**Ehrenreich:** I'm working with Frances Fox Piven — a wonderful inspiration and guru to me [and author of *Regulating the Poor* (1972), a landmark analysis of the role of welfare in American politics]. We're looking

at what really happened: the studies that do show a great increase in hardship as a result of welfare reform. And we're going to look at ways in which the media and politicians have consistently tried to bright-side the whole thing — show us the occasional success story, rather than the many people who are really floundering.

We are going to talk also about what this represents: a deep disrespect for

caring work, such as parenting, starting with the assumption that a woman raising children on her own isn't doing anything and needs to have a job.

Most mothers do work outside the home, but raising children in poverty is a double job. It's not like being an upper-middle-class mother in a nice suburb where the kids can run around and play, or where you have a nanny.

**RC:** Can I ask you something about your own class background? You're the daughter of a miner —

**Ehrenreich:** My father was originally a copper miner in Butte, Montana. [His was] a story of upward mobility. He ended up as a corporate executive. When I went away to college I was leaving a fairly upper-middle-class home, but it had been quite a tour of the social classes.

Certainly in terms of educational background, having a Ph.D. puts me in an educational elite. And I am an intellectual, I say that proudly — I don't think that intellectuals are confined to the educational elite. Intellectuals do all kinds of work, and have very little formal education — people who think a lot, read a lot, who like to ask questions and discuss things. That's what I mean by an intellectual.

**RC:** So intellectuals don't necessarily have power, right?

**Ehrenreich:** Oh, no, no, no. They are fairly estranged from power.

We tend to equate intellectuals with people who teach in colleges. Certainly a lot of people who teach are intellectuals, but they are not the only ones. Not everybody who teaches in a college is very intellectual, frankly. I think the term is misused, and leaves out a considerable number of people who are really smart, really curious, really trying to learn, but they're not college professors. They may be manual laborers.

**RC:** Do you have to have a product of your intellectual labor — a book or something — in order to be an intellectual?

**Ehrenreich:** Oh, it could be your conversation. You could have a lot of influence on people by the questions you raise, the kind of discussion you have with them. Not everybody writes things down.

**RC:** How do you look at the events of the last few weeks in respect to your book, *Blood Rites*? [Note: This interview took place Sunday, Oct. 7, on the

**"I think the term [intellectual] is misused, and leaves out a considerable number of people who are really smart, really curious, really trying to learn, but they're not college professors."**

Barbara Ehrenreich



PHOTO OF BARBARA EHRENRICH BY SIGRID ESTRADA, COURTESY METROPOLITAN BOOKS.

first day of the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan.]

**Ehrenreich:** [In *Blood Rites*] I wrote about the kind of thrill that people often get from war, and speculated on where it comes from, in an evolutionary sense. I think we're seeing it now in many parts of the country — a lot of flag-waving, chanting, etc., which is very much like sports fandom. CNN [reported] that some people heard about the beginning of the bombing in a football stadium today, and immediately started chanting "USA! USA!" It is a kind of thrill to feel a bond with other people we don't even necessarily know at all, especially because our culture is so individualistic and so competitive — we don't have many opportunities to feel that kind of solidarity.

**RC:** Do you feel like the media has done a good job of representing us in the last few weeks?

**Ehrenreich:** Well, I think, yeah, they sort of had to immediately. On 9/11 and a couple days thereafter, they actually had to report something, and they were completely taken aback — I mean, they stopped having commercials on TV. It was a strange moment of a kind of honest and unfiltered reporting.

Then, in a few days, it got extremely sentimental. Now when I say sentimental, I don't mean that there aren't strong emotions that are appropriate to that kind of disaster. By sentiment I mean it's like maybe they don't trust us sometimes to feel those emotions, so they've got to put up the artificial ones. You started getting gauzy photo montages on TV of America and firefighters and so on. I watched a painfully long interview on CNN with an eight-year-old girl who spent her allowance to help World Trade Center victims. You know, that's nice — but 10 minutes of news time? That's what I call a kind of emotional manipulation which we don't need. We know how to feel. ■

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# poetry

## Birthday

Up late; I rushed to ready my apartment for the day. Not wanting to be up all night; I threw the bedding into the laundry. It was past 4 p.m.; when I left.

Arriving at Seattle Center past 6 p.m.; and having to walk back from the bus stop several blocks too far; I walked past the skateboarders' section; which I didn't like; because my son had his foot ruined in an accident on a skateboard, years ago.

Heading past kiddy rides; I arrived at the Food Circus. Told that everything would be closed; it all wasn't.

I walked around it several times; and settled for a barbecued cheeseburger, fries and a vanilla shake (expensive!).

Years ago, there were specialty shops from specific countries downstairs. Now there is a children's camping venture.

About three souvenir shops are all that is left (no outside stands). I looked several times in each shop, and purchased some small mementos.

Then I sat outside by the fountain (octopus shape) and read my pile of mail. One Pastor sent me an interesting book,

I lived close when my son was a baby; and pushed him all over Seattle Center in his stroller. His favorite was the fountain mentioned.

A few good memories of a better time.

A HOLY CHILD IN A MANGER—— GAVE HIS LIFE; YOUNG; FOR ALL MANKIND

CAROL A. LENO

### Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning



**B**eing a member of the editorial board of this august rag, I periodically meet with other editorial board members to do editorial board stuff. For example, the other day we all sat around a table eating pizza. But right now I'm thinking of a time when we were not only eating pizza, we were thinking. We were thinking about stuff that we could put in the paper.

Usually I'm not any good at that kind of thing, because I don't know anything. So I keep quiet while other people talk. But this time I had a cool idea. I said we should write about this military tribunal business.

Then one of our editors, Michele "Process! Process! Process!" Marchand, said something positive and encouraging about my idea. I think she said, "Why don't you write about that in your column, Wes?"

Unfortunately, now that I sit down to write, I am high on Nyquil, and my brain is telling me that what Michele said was, "Why don't you stick your finger in a lamp socket, Wes?" This has triggered the following flashback.

It was just about 40 years ago, 1961. I was 12 years old. My parents had hauled my ass to Guadalajara to live in an apartment building in the suburbs next door on one side to an escaped Nazi, and on the other side to some self-exiled former American commie. We were just there to take advantage of the inexpensive low standard of living. Eggs rancheros! Two-cent bus rides! A free nacho with every martini!

But I digress. On this particular day, I was home alone, reading, when the light in the lamp burned out. So I unscrewed the bulb and got a new one. Then I thought, "Hey, I wonder what it would feel like if I stuck my finger in the socket?"

I probably wouldn't have even considered it for more than a second if I was in the U.S. I mean, we've got REAL electricity here in the U.S. of A. But I was in Mexico where the electricity was probably made by rubbing a thousand balloons on poor people's heads or something like that. So I did it.

Don't try this in your own homes, kids. I stuck my finger all the way into that lamp socket. It immediately felt like a big whomping firecracker went off in my arm, concentrated in my elbow. My whole arm jerked violently, which was probably really good, because it pulled my finger out so my finger wasn't fried. It just burned a little.

But the cool thing was that now all the lights were out in the whole apartment. So I went out to find the building manager, to get the fuse replaced. Then I found out that all the lights were out everywhere in our building. By the time I found the manager, he had replaced the burned out fuse, but it didn't get the lights on, BECAUSE ALL THE ELECTRICITY WAS OUT IN OUR WHOLE END OF GUADALAJARA. The grid was down, and it stayed down for two hours! It was so awesome! And I did it all by myself with my own little index finger!

Of course I had to tell everybody how it had happened. And then after I told everybody about my adventure with the light socket, I realized I could be in big trouble. What if the Mexican police found out an American 12-year-old was sabotaging the city electrical system? I could have experienced puberty in a Mexican prison, learning a Spanish vocabulary of a sort that would be of absolutely no use to me in a career as a botanist.

It occurs to me now, with the hindsight of 40 years, that sticking my finger in that lamp socket was a mistake. Sure, it looked good at the time, and there were some thrills associated with it, but all in all it wasn't worth the risk, now that I look back on it.

And that's what I think we'll all feel about military tribunals, in a few decades down the road. ■

**I could have experienced puberty in a Mexican prison, learning a Spanish vocabulary of a sort that would be of absolutely no use to me in a career as a botanist.**



## In the Culture of Death / There Are Those

There are those  
who will take the eye  
of the Afghan child  
for the eye  
of the American child.

There are those  
who will take the eye  
of the one true democracy  
for the eye  
of the one true religion.

There are those  
who will take the eye  
of the Palestinian child  
for the eye  
of the Israeli child.

There are those  
who will take the eye  
of the Catholic child  
for the eye  
of the Protestant child.

There are those  
who will take the eye  
of the Protestant child  
for the eye  
of the Catholic child.

There are those  
in the eye of power  
who took out the eyes  
who took out the eyes  
of the Iraqi children.

There are those  
in the eye of death  
who took out their own eyes  
who took out their own eyes  
who took out the world's eyes  
who took out the world's eyes  
who took out the eyes  
of the world.

There are those  
who took out their own eyes  
who took out their own eyes  
who took out the eyes  
of their own world.

See how the world grieves  
see how the world grieves  
see not how the world grieves  
see not how

— SELMA WALDMAN

## Midshipmen of the Heart

There was no childhood then.  
Sixteen years old, or younger, once on deck  
you ate what you got and drank  
what you could get;  
you worked, you sweat or froze,  
took the cursing, took the lash  
like any man.

There is no childhood now. Once on the street  
you're not just equal game; the guns  
prefer the younger targets.  
The lash of tongue and eye no colder,  
concrete walls  
as barren one side as the other.

Hair flying self-chosen colors,  
medals riveted  
to lip and nose, tongue and ear,  
some scars and tattoos showing,  
many not,  
choosing their own crew;

where do they sail?  
What office  
will they fill?

\*\*\*

*Charles Anthony "Jello" Kueck died at 27. He was homeless since 15, the last five years mostly in Seattle, where he helped many younger kids out on the street. This was written after Jello's memorial service at Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets, on July 21, 2001.*

—ANITRA L. FREEMAN

## Newspaper, Coffee, Cinnamon Roll

I am sitting in the Last Exit Coffeehouse  
minding my own business  
reading the newspaper,  
as another grove of redwoods fall  
from men with chainsaws in California.  
one of the largest plants on earth  
crashes to the ground.

I am sitting in the Last Exit Coffeehouse  
minding my own business  
nursing a cup of joe  
as bombs fall on Yugoslavia.  
Before I can swallow a second sip  
a block of Belgrade explodes into nothingness.

I am sitting in the Last Exit Coffeehouse  
minding my own business  
eating a cinnamon roll  
as thousands of people starve to death in Ethiopia.  
Before I can wipe my lips with a napkin  
a hundred beautiful black babies  
close their eyes for the last time.

U-DISTRICT, SEATTLE

L.E. CORNELISON



By Albert Bliss

**K**nock! Knock!  
 "Yes?"  
 "Can we come inside?"  
 "I'm not supposed to let strangers in, bro!"  
 "I'm begging you, brother!"  
 I could get into deep fucking trouble, bro!"  
 "Please, man!"  
 I let the couple in the house. They stood near the night watchman's desk. While I got the coffee percolating, they inspected the ragged furniture and cheerless bare walls. For a moment, I felt like they were undercover police officers out to nab one of the bunksters. Of course, nothing could be more ridiculous. Their poverty was too real. She had no shoes or raincoat; he was thin as a skeleton and had a black patch over one eye. They were worse off than I was. I gave the dude and his woman each a styrofoam cup of black Joe. I had no milk or sugar to offer.

"What is this place?" His toothless jaws distracted me. He chewed his words as he spoke.

"Shelter for homeless men and women. It's called the Bunkhouse."

"Who are you?"

"Just one of the bunksters."

"How many live here?"

"Nineteen of us all together, 15 guys and four gals. The good part is, we live free of charge and get bus tickets into and out of town. The bad part is, we have to do house chores like sweeping, mopping, washing blankets every week, cleaning the kitchen, and doing fire watches."

"Fire watches?"

"Yeah. Somebody's got to watch the place while the others sleep. Nobody signed up for Christmas Eve so I volunteered." I took each of their empties and poured them another cup of coffee.

"My name is José."

I extended my hand to shake his. "I'm Al."

"This is my wife, Maria. She doesn't speak any English. Would you mind if she sat down on the couch?"

"Go for it."

Maria wrapped her arm over José's shoulder, waddled to the sofa and cautiously sat down. She held her basketball-sized belly with both hands, gazing straight ahead at nothing. Her hair was Mexican black, parted crookedly down the middle, and was dripping wet. She had thick, reddish brown lips and adorable eyes. I loved it when she blinked. I had to force myself to stop staring at her. That's my second worst habit; making moves on another man's woman. My worst habit is abusing Yellow Sunshine. I love to trip.

José got her seated and comfortable. He grabbed his cup with his bony fingers and downed the coffee in one gulp.

"She will go into labor tonight and have the baby tomorrow."

"How can you be so sure?"



He made a strange face, then smiled knowingly, as if he had inside information. José's smile is what tipped me off. Right then I knew who they were.

"I guess this is it, huh, José?" We slapped skin. "I thought you were not coming."

"What?"

"Don't shit me! You know what I'm talking about."

"No, I don't, Al."

"How is this episode going to turn out?"

"What episode?"

"It doesn't matter, José; I'm hip to your game. I'll figure out the puzzle as I go along, like I did last time and the time before that. Drink up! You have to leave!"

"Listen, Al, won't you let us stay just for tonight? I promise to be out of here at daybreak."

"No can do! If somebody wakes up and finds you here, I'll get a permanent bar from this shelter. I can't afford that, bro. I'm flat broke and have nowhere to go."

"Please! Al! Help us!"

"I can't do it! Don't ask me to do what I can't do!"

"There is a nationwide all points bulletin for my arrest."

"Why? What did you do?"

"I have committed no crime. The police want my unborn baby."

"The baby?"

"The cops had me cornered in Houston. I did not know what they wanted so I freely gave myself up. I was cuffed and put in the back of an unmarked police car. The cop in charge was Chief Detective Herod, a huge fellow who wore gold wrist bracelets and diamond rings on both hands. Herod said that he wanted to interrogate Maria about her pregnancy."

"The pregnancy?"

"He said he wanted to ask her questions about the baby's father."

"But you are the father, no?"

"Yes! Of course! But Herod does not believe that."

José said something to Maria in Spanish. She answered him excitedly and then began wringing her fingers.

"I think Judas saw us enter the Bunkhouse, Al."

"Judas?"

"I don't know if that is his real name or not. I had an argument with him a long time ago, and now he won't leave me alone. Judas and Herod are tied, the way a stoolie is tied to a cop; I'm sure of it. We lost Judas in Houston but I think he's found us. Please, Al, you've got to help us."

"What's your plan?"

"We're going to Canada."

"How are you going to get there?" José did not answer. "Do you have any coin?" He looked away and said nothing. "What about passports? I thought so. Everybody that steps into this friggin' shelter is off the hook!"

I paused and looked at him, and then I looked at her.

"All right, there is a building in progress behind this one. It's called Bunkhouse II. The contractors won't be back 'til Wednesday, December 26. There is no electricity

or heat or hot water, but it's safe and dry."

I unzipped my knapsack and gave them the food that I had saved from last night's soup line, two sack lunches and two bags of potato chips. I loaned José my old navy coat and blue skullcap; he was shivering. I brought out an armful of gray woolen blankets and four black baggies from the storage closet. I cut a hole in the center of two blankets and gave each of them a poncho.

"Listen, bro, you have to find a way to tack up the plastic bags to black out the windows."

**A**fter they left I locked the door, I walked down the corridor, checking the dormitory doors but no one had stirred. Back at the night watchman's desk I put my feet on the windowsill and figured out my alibi. I had to know what I was going to say, in case José and Maria were discovered.

Knock! Knock!

"Hey, J.I."

"You got my bus tickets?"

"What's wrong with you? Can't you even say hello to me?"

"Just give me my bus tickets!"

"You know the procedure."

He wrote his initials on the sign-in sheet.

J.I. was five feet two inches, 130 pounds and 28 years old. He must have been born with a defective spine because, like the Leaning Tower of Pizza, his upper half was in front of his lower half. His brown eyes and big nose and wide mouth were stuck at the bottom of his head, where his jaw was supposed to be. He looked like a sideshow freak. The rest of his head was littered with nasty puss pimples.

I've been walking the homeless line for years. I'm not the smartest dude out here and I'm not the dumbest, either. My street sense told me that J.I. was a fucker from the word "mother." I had a very bad feeling about the dude, from the first day he was screened into Bunkhouse.

He put the bus tickets inside his wallet real slow. I caught him gazing at the night watchman's desktop, scrutinizing every detail. The position of the telephone, scraps of paper that had writing, a drawer that I had left open. Then he inspected each cigarette butt in the ashtray.

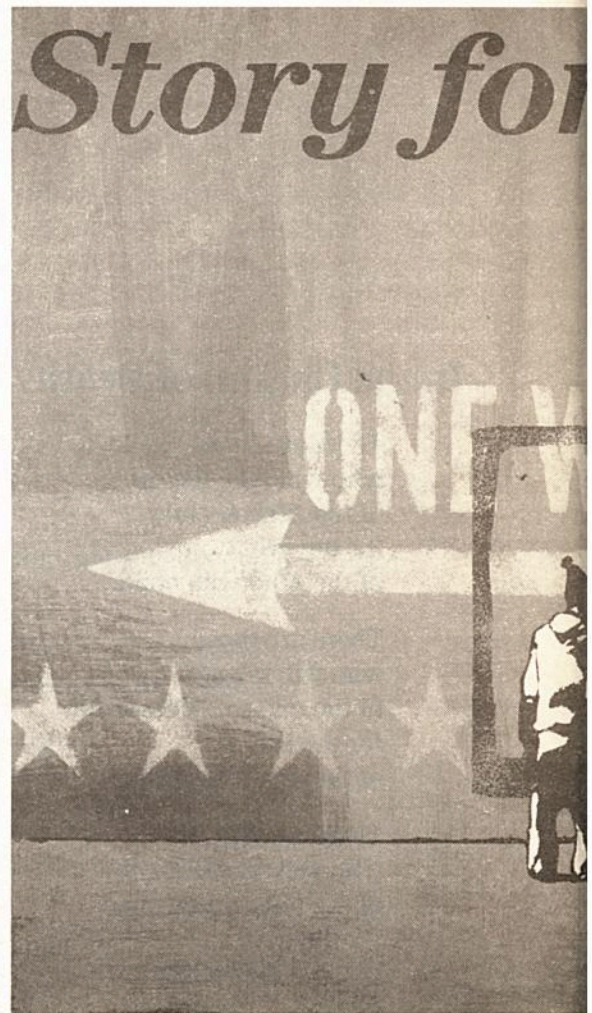
"Where are the man and the woman who were just here?"

"Where?"

"Here! Where I'm standing right now. He was with a pregnant woman, and they were talking to you. I was going to check in for the night but had to make a phone call down at the PM Store."

"Right! Make a phone call! You've been drinking, J.I. Go to bed or I'll write you up."

Twenty minutes later I heard car



wheels crunching driveway gravel. At the knock I opened the door. Three uniformed police officers entered Bunkhouse, followed by a plainclothes cop. He was six feet five inches tall and weighed 250 pounds. The detective swaggered across the living room, trench coat open, hands inside his pockets, turning his head here and now there, like he was top gun.

He nodded to the uniformed police officers. "You know what to do."

The blue shirts scattered. They obviously had a plan. One checked the kitchen and bathrooms, another poked the drop ceiling tiles with a broomstick, while the



**I opened the plywood door. I spotted Maria wheelbarrow. She**

**The baby was wrapped in my skullcap. Maria was breast-feeding. My heart stopped a beat. I heard the door open. To my complete surprise, the crowd, all except Judas.... I gawked at me and cracked a smile. The tone of voice the men snag to women hummed.**

third inspected pantry closets and opened hallway doors. I heard all three of them go out the back door and saw their flashlight beams searching the pitch-dark yard. One of the cops had trouble opening the double doors to the tool shed. He banged his billy club on the aluminum door and yelled something that I could not hear. I guess he thought that the fugitive was inside the storage house and was holding the door closed. The officer and his partner





GRAPHIC BY DANIJEL ZEZEJLJ.

ner finally got the doors ajar and went inside.

Meanwhile, Dick Tracy kept strutting back and forth, waiting for his blue shirts to return with the culprit. I sat at my desk and watched the fuzz. By the looks of his black onyx rings, flashy designer clothing, and smelly cigar, I knew he was more than a cop. I never guessed that the detective was using his lawman's position to kill a king.

He peered out the window to the yard, but his officers were busy. He stopped at the edge of my desk, pulled one of his hands out of his trench pocket, and flashed

**d door to Bunkhouse II and tip  
ers followed me and shut the  
a in a corner, next to a  
as lying on the gray blankets.  
e coat and wearing my blue  
ding Lord Jesús.... Just then my  
e knob turn and saw the door  
in walked the whole Bunkhouse  
nced at Tommy. He  
y smile. In a quiet  
ohn's beat, while the**



his identification card and gold badge. He folded the black case shut and put it back inside his trench coat pocket.

"I am chief detective Herod. Who are you?"

"Al Bliss."

"You live here?"

"Yes."

"We just got an anonymous telephone tip. A dangerous fugitive was seen entering and exiting this house. Do you know

anything about it?"

"No."

"What are you doing up so late?"

"One o'clock till four o'clock is my fire watch."

The cops returned from the yard. They roused the other Bunkhouse tenants from their slumber and were checking the dormitory rooms for the intruder. All of us homeless were now clustered in the living room.

"Is there a list of the people who live here?"

I handed him the sign-in sheet.

"I want you to read off the names, Al." Herod turned to the half-asleep bunksters. "As each of your names are called raise your hands."

"Peter, Andrew, James, Butch, Kelly, Al, John, Philip, Jude, Elizabeth, Martha, Veronica, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, Mary, James,

Simon, J.I."

The names were hauntingly familiar to me, like discolored pictures in a photo album from a long time ago. Except for Butch, Kelly, and me, I knew that the other names belonged together but how could that be? We came from all over America. Martha was from Kansas and Philip came from Ohio. Veronica came from Louisiana and Matthew was from Georgia. What was the connection?

Herod asked a simple question. "What do the initials J.I. stand for?"

John did a drum roll and the suit got angry.

"What are you doing, mister? Put the toy on the floor." John hesitated and the dick let his temper fly. "Put it down!"

When the detective Herod yelled, everybody straightened up, standing at attention. None of us wanted any more problems than we already had. I noticed the bunkhouse dog and cat stood motionless, too, head stiff and body balanced on four paws. They looked like stuffed animals, and that made me crack a laugh.

John unhooked the clothesline rope that he was using to tie the drum to his belly. He lay the instrument on the floor and the wooden sticks on top of the drum.

"Now! I'll ask one more time! What do the initials 'J.I.' stand for?"

"Judas Iscariot."

"What sort of joke is that?" Matthew exclaimed.

"Shut up!" Herod replied. "No one is talking to you."

"All right. By the looks of this roster, you were the last one inside the Bunkhouse tonight. Is that correct, Mister Iscariot? OK, come with me."

While the dick and J.I. were in the kitchen, the uniformed officers had returned to the living room/foyer area. One of them got Herod's attention and shook his head. I guessed that they did not find their suspect. A few minutes later the de-

detective returned to the fire watch desk.

"Obstruction of the law is a felony, Al. If you are hiding the man we seek, you will be charged as an accessory. The crime carries a minimum three-year jail sentence."

Later that morning, I pulled Tommy aside and told him the truth.

"You should'a told the cops, Al. You are goin' to jail, man! What are you goin' to do?"

"You got any bread, Tommy?"

"About 70 bucks, why?"

"Give it to me. When I get home tonight, I'll give it to them and get rid of them once and for all."

"Why are you helping these people, man?"

"He says his name is José and his wife's name is Maria. She's going to have her baby tomorrow, on Christmas Day."

"Yeah!"

"They are going to call their child Jesús."

"So?"

"Don't you get it?"

"Get what?"

"It's Joseph and Mary Christ! She's giving birth to our Savior."

"You're tripping, Al. What are you doing, Window Pane or Blotter Acid?"

"It's not like that, man."

"You're spaced out. I can tell. Your eyes are dilated. They're as big as dimes!"

"You gotta believe me! It's them! José tried to play it off, but I know it's them!"

Tommy twisted his face into a sour grimace and threw his hands down.

"I don't believe that crap anymore."

"Don't flake out on me, man! I'm telling you the truth! She's going to give birth to Jesus Christ!"

"Where's the proof?"

"Every year, right around Christmas time, the characters from the New Testament return to earth."

"What?"

"Last year I met John the Baptist, Barabbas, Mary Magdalene, and Jesus Himself. I don't know why they reveal themselves to me, a fourth-rate nobody. What I don't get is why they showed up so late this year." Then, half to myself and half to Tommy, I said, "I wonder what role I'm playing this time around?"

"Oh, man, cut the shit!"

"I know it sounds ridiculous, but you gotta believe me!"

"Well, I don't!"

"I need you, Tommy. Please! Give me the money!"

"No way! I can't get involved. I'm on parole."

Right then I felt like punching Tommy in his face. I hate him bad when he questions me like that. I imagined myself pushing his fat body to the floor, pounding on his freckled face till his whole head was a bloody tomato, then pulling his curly red hair out by the fucking roots.

"What about getting the cash from Kelly and Butch?"

"They're stone broke."

Later that night, everybody had

signed-in and was watching holiday specials on our 12-inch black and white. I sneaked out, hid down the ravine in a clump of bushes. Butch and Kelly joined me when they could break away, one by one.

It was a cold, dark silent night. Good thing the Northern Star was shining bright. We walked down the slope, trying not to fall, trying not to make a sound. I didn't want the other bunksters to know what we were doing. It was bad enough that I got Butch and Kelly involved. I opened the plywood door to Bunkhouse II and tiptoed inside. The others followed me and shut the door. I spotted Maria in a corner, next to a wheelbarrow. She was lying on the gray blankets. The baby was wrapped in my p-coat and wearing my blue skullcap. Maria was breast-feeding Lord Jesús. Butch and Kelly and I kneeled on the hem of the holy rugs and took turns kissing the infant's forehead. Just then my heart stopped a beat. I heard the knob turn and saw the door open. To my complete surprise, in walked the whole Bunkhouse crowd, all except Judas. They gathered in a half circle, at the foot of the makeshift bed. John stepped to the front and, like a Black maestro, softly tapped his drumsticks on the drum's canvas. I glanced at Tommy. He winked at me and cracked a big smile. In a quiet tone of voice the men sang to John's beat, while the women hummed.

"There He is, pa-rum pum pum pum.

A newborn King to see, pa-rum pum pum pum.

Our finest gifts we bring pa-rum pum pum pum.

To lay before the King pa-rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum.

So to honor Him pa-rum pum pum pum. When we sing, to John's drum.

Mary nodded pa-rum pum pum pum.

Our dog and cat kept time pa-rum pum pum pum.

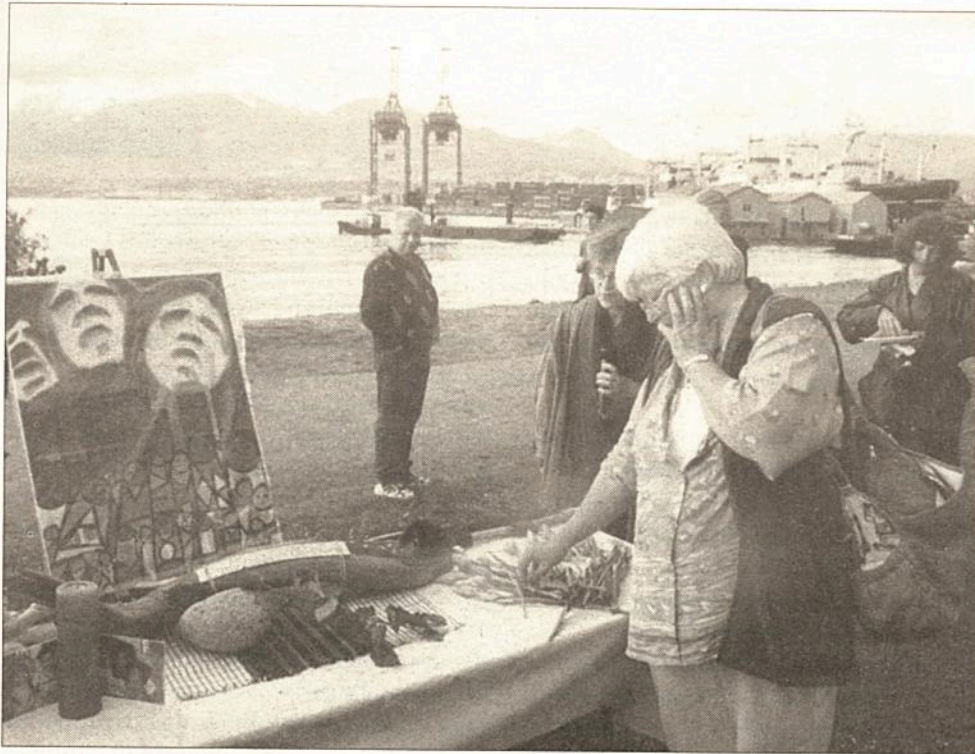
John played his drum for Him pa-rum pum pum pum.

I sang my best for Him pa-rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum.

*Then he smiled at me pa-rum pum pum pum. Me and my song. John and his drum.*

It was time for Butch and Kelly and I to offer our gifts of love and joy and wonder. Butch lay a bag of groceries at Mary's feet. He reached inside his coat pocket and pulled out a dozen bottles of Gerber's baby food and lay them near child Jesús. Kelly lit three sticks of incense and then lay a big suitcase at Maria's side. He clicked open the case and raised the hood. It was filled with baby clothes for Blessed Jesús. As for me, I stole a gallon jug of red wine from Shop Rite and four loaves of French Bread. José broke the bread while I poured the wine into Dixie Cups. We bunksters stayed with Jesús, Maria, and José till the wee hours, till the first bus arrived that whisked them out of Seattle. ■





IN MAY 1999 AT A MARCH AND VIGIL IN VANCOUVER'S CRAB PARK, FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF VICTIMS IN VANCOUVER'S DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE PAID THEIR RESPECTS AND DEMANDED MORE BE DONE TO CATCH THE WOMEN'S KILLERS. PHOTOS COURTESY OF WWW.MISSINGPEOPLE.NET.

## MEMORIAL Continued from Page 1

Often, the point of these memorials and vigils is this: It could have been one of our own. It *was* one of our own, or dozens of our own women murdered or disappeared from Pacific Highway South in 1982-84, 45 women currently missing from the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, B.C., and dozens more unsolved cases throughout the Pacific Northwest. Homeless women over the past two decades have gone missing or been murdered in numbers beyond our wildest imaginings, if only we paid attention.

During research for a 1998 *Real Change* article that broke the news of a serial killer preying on homeless women in Seattle and leaving their bodies in a mile-wide stretch in or near the Jungle, I spoke to many women who knew the victims:

"We're easy to find. Easy prey. I don't get in nobody's car. I wonder who else is gonna be next; I hope it won't be me," said Karen, whom I still see in the shelters. She was friends with Crystal, whose body was found in early 1998 at Lavizzo Park, at 22nd and Fir. (Crystal's murder was not linked to that of the three attributed to serial killer DeWayne Lee Harris. To my knowledge, her murder has never been solved.)

It's hard to remember the presumption of innocence when you desperately want the killings, the disappearances to stop. If Gary Ridgway is the Green River Killer, and if in fact he did not stop killing in late 1984 but rather changed his venue, the number of victims could be beyond our most horrifying imaginings.

The list of dead and missing women up and down the Pacific coast, just from the past two decades, is unbelievable:

- 49 murders are now attributed to the Green River Killer, including 4 women who disappeared from Seattle whose bodies were found in and around Portland, from July 1982 through March 1984.

- 45 women are missing in Vancouver. Disappearances date back to 1984 but accelerated in the 1990s. Women have

gone missing as recently as August 2001.

- 3 women were found dead, strangled, in 1995. Their bodies were found near Agassiz, B.C., which is about 50 miles north of Vancouver.

- 5 women were found dead, and 1 disappeared from Victoria, from 1986-2001.

- 3 women were found dead, strangled, in Forest Park in Portland, 1999.

- 40 women were found dead in San Diego, from 1985 to 1991. Gary Ridgway's son was stationed in San Diego during those years.

In addition, anywhere from 38 to 80 more unsolved cases of "female homicides," predominantly women in the sex trade in Washington state, have been reopened since Ridgway's arrest. Murders of homeless women in the sex trade often go unsolved; a survey of murders of Vancouver sex trade workers over the past two decades shows that fewer than half of the 80 murders have been solved.

Whether the many open cases can be linked is questionable. Sergeant Don Adam of the B.C. Missing Women Task Force says, "There are so many guys capable of this it's mind-boggling. It's not like we're lacking suspects." This raises the equally horrifying prospect that there are multiple killers preying on vulnerable women.

### A bungled case

The day after Ridgway was arrested, I asked Wayne Leng, a friend of one of the missing women in Vancouver, how folks up there were reacting, whether the RCMP and Missing Women Task Force were talking already of investigating a link. "We are all shocked to hear about Ridgway," he said. "But we are also hoping that finally we will have answers to what has happened to our loved ones. It seems a likely case, since the Green River killings stopped in 1984, and the Vancouver disappearances started the same year. None of us knew until a few days ago that the disappearances in Vancouver started way back in 1984."

The Vancouver missing women case is an object lesson in how crimes against poor people are treated. It has been called "an international embarrassment" by Raven Bowen of Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education (PACE). "This is how our weakest citizens are treated." A Joint Task Force (of the Vancouver Police Department and RCMP) was not even established to investigate the missing women until April of this year; a list of missing women was not publicized until 1999, and family members and friends report not even getting return phone calls from investigators.

This autumn, PACE released a scathing report, prepared by current and former sex trade workers. This September, *The Vancouver Sun* ran a seven-article series on egregious errors on the part of the Vancouver Police Department. Details include:

- Too few officers were assigned to the investigation, and most were assigned

only part-time. The Vancouver Police Department is desperately short-staffed.

- The Police Department is rife with infighting; investigators withheld information from the rest of the team.

- Investigators were largely untrained, especially in managing such an enormous and complex case.

- Data-entry problems with the computer system used to track the investigation caused the system to crash; investigators believe they retrieved all the data but are not sure.

It is hard not to make assumptions about why this case has been treated so carelessly. The 10-block stretch of Hastings Street, where the 45 women have disappeared, is known as the Lower Track. It is a surreal terrain: Canada's poorest postal code, an area with the highest intravenous drug use in the world, and

*Continued on Page 14*

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# WOMEN

## Women

Photographs by Annie Leibovitz  
Seattle Art Museum  
September 20, 2001 - January 6, 2002  
100 University St.

Admission: \$10 adults, \$7 children and seniors;  
Free on the first Thursday of every month.

"The camera shows us many worlds, and the point is that all the images are valid... This celebration of variety, of individuality, of individuality as style, saps the authority of gender stereotypes, and has become an inexorable counterforce to the bigotry that still denies women more than token access to many occupations and experiences...."

—"A Photograph Is Not an Opinion. Or Is it?"  
(Essay by Susan Sontag in *Women*)

By Cynthia Lee Ozimek

When asked by the editorial committee of *Real Change* to critique Annie Leibovitz's photographic exhibition, I felt a bit like a fish out of water. Truth be told, I am not a dilettante of fine art. I remain convinced, for example, that Picasso had a predilection for LSD. I think the world would have been much better off if Andy Warhol had never seen a can of Campbell's soup. And, much to my lover's aesthetic horror, the last time I vacationed in D.C., I chose to go to the Smithsonian, not because of any particular art exhibit, but because I wanted to see the piano that Edith Bunker used on *All in the Family*.

Thus, having painfully acknowledged my lack of artistic insight, I was delighted to discover, upon review of Ms. Leibovitz's photographic essays, that the "Women" exhibition speaks very passionately and in very concrete terms to women everywhere. If there is a singular message woven into Ms. Leibovitz's collection of photographs, it is that the beauty of women is no longer inexplicably intertwined to the traditional presentation of physical attractiveness. Rather, the beauty inherent to the modern woman is a celebration of her physical, economic, and cultural diversity. In this sense, Annie's photos of coal miners, her surreal, apocalyptic presentation of AIDS activists, and her bleak portrait of domestic violence victims resonate with beauty defined not by the physical realm, but by the strength and the diversity of their lives' history and purpose.

Born in 1945, Annie Leibovitz has spent the last 25 years creating powerful, passionate, and often controversial portraits of American culture. Initially, she was most interested in painting, but switched over to a camera because she felt it afforded her more opportunities to do things she might not ordinarily do. In addition to working as a photojour-

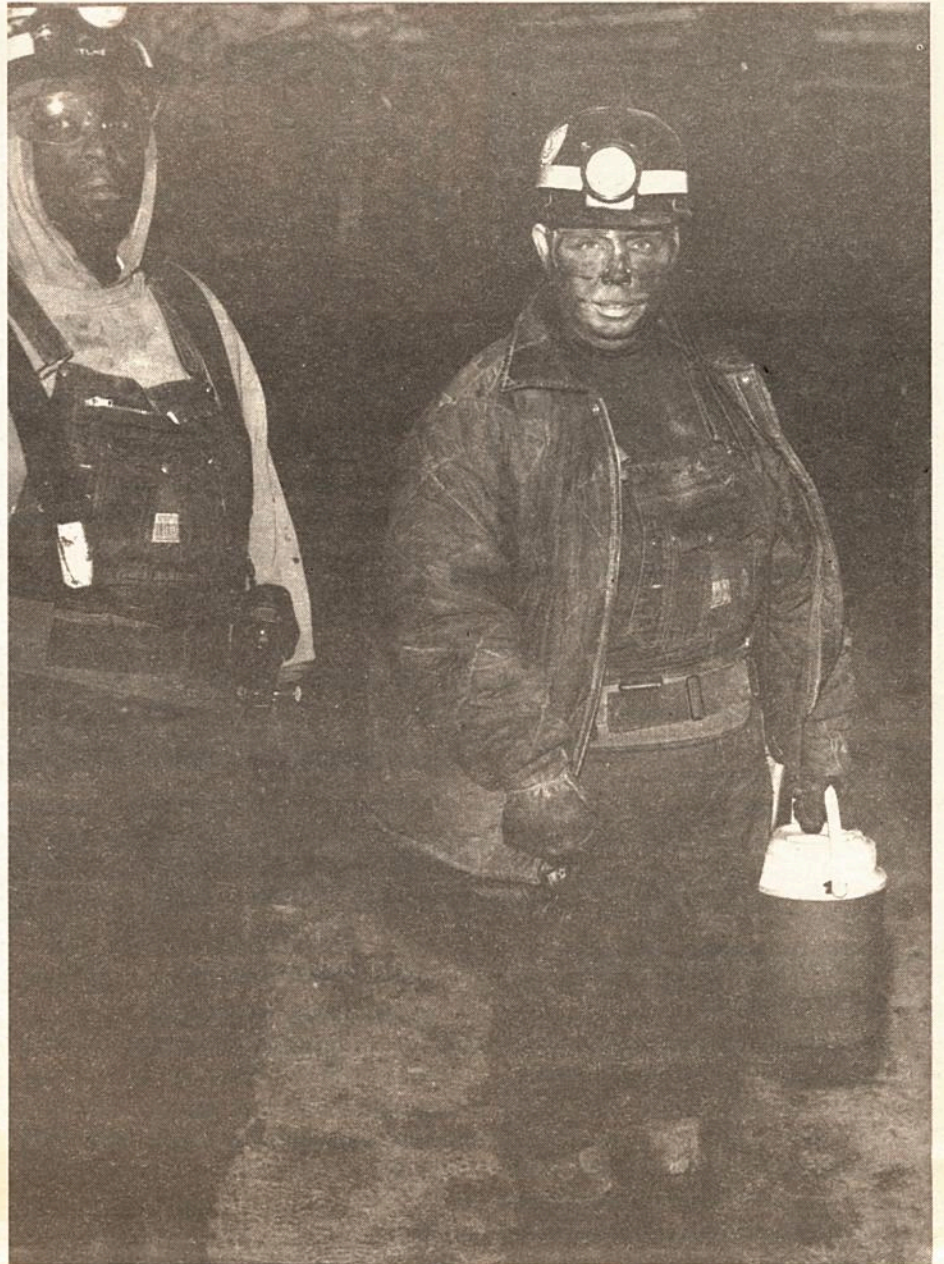
nalist for *Rolling Stone* and *Vanity Fair*, she was also the creative force behind advertising campaigns for American Express, the Gap, and the Got Milk? campaign. In the latter, celebrities ranging from Joan Rivers to Serena and Venus Williams can be found in whimsical possession of celebratory milky-white mustaches. One of her greatest creative strengths is her ability to capture the essence of celebrity outside of its native element. Martina Navrátilová, for instance, is immortalized in a silent, all-consuming battle of will with a huge mechanical wheel. There is also a picture of Jerry Hall breastfeeding her daughter Gabriel, a portrait that is oddly sterile, bereft of nurture. In Annie's pictures, the image presented and the resulting mood are often disimilar in an oddly disturbing fashion.

In the "Woman" exhibition, Ms. Leibovitz presents us with a mixture of faces and life portraits as diverse and as divisive as woman herself. Blended in with traditional photo essays of well-known female politicians (New York Senator Hilary Clinton, former Texas Governor Ann Richards), Annie discovers the darker, more exotic truth of a Muslim woman whose poignantly passive eyes peer out from a chocolate colored burka.

How does one read desperation on a blank face? How is hunger made to resemble an outstretched hand or a tumultuous sky? How is rage found palatable within the sullen stare of a missing eye? This is the magic Leibovitz creates as she reaches for the emotion, the flavor, the greater truth that lies just beneath the surface of her subjects. Her camera finds hope in the hopeless.

My personal favorite of the exhibition is a photograph of what appears to be a poor sharecropper wearily sitting on a front porch that seems seconds away from collapse. This portrait, with its pale, hopeless sky and paint-worn, dilapidated house, called to me from across the room. As I slowly walked from across the exhibition hall and added detail to devastating detail, I felt a sadness as blistered and as bleak as the sharecropper's eyes. Only when I was standing in front of the photograph did I realize the sharecropper was, in fact, Oprah Winfrey, and that every ounce of celebrity had been peeled away to reveal a subtle, austere vision of both power and poverty.

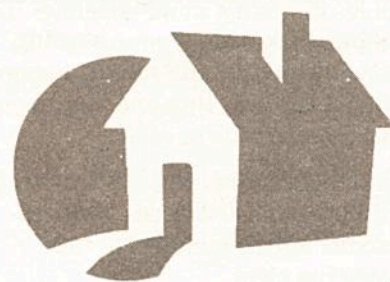
Very few of Ms. Leibovitz's photographs are sensual by traditional, physical definition. Rap artist Lil' Kim waxes sensuality with her red crepe see-through shirt and decadent lips, but one is drawn to the flagrant, unapologetic intensity of her eyes as opposed to the more obvious physical overtures of bumps and curves.



COALMINERS SHIRLEY HYCHE AND JEAN MCCRARY IN JIM WALTER NO. 5 MINE IN BROOKWOOD, ALABAMA, PART OF THE PHOTO "COALMINERS" BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

Women, in general, are fortunate to have someone like Annie Leibovitz help to record and to define their continuing personal and political evolution. Her celebration of feminine power and diversity challenges us to redefine our rather limited perception of physical beauty. Her portraits lead us upon a journey that reminds us to look past the obviously sensual to a deeper, more

compelling truth. The truth that women are a work in progress, that they defy the limitations of traditional definition. Ms. Leibovitz tells women that they are strong, prolific, and beautiful in all their complexities. Her "Women" exhibition is a must-see for any woman, including those of us who, like myself, consider themselves "artistically challenged." ■



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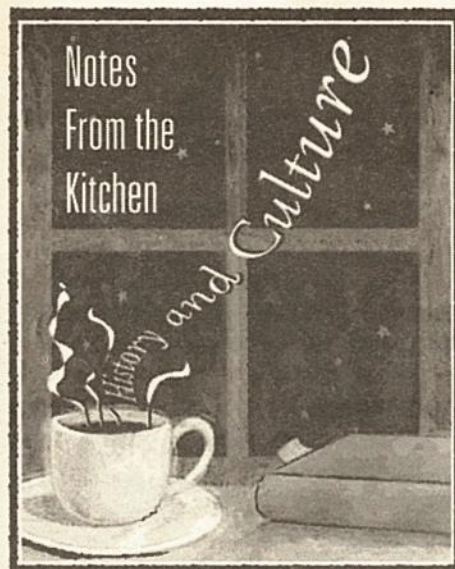
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# Wonderful Merry Christmas Dinner

By Liz Smith

**D**ecember 21 is the darkest night of this, our darkest year in many years. Many will not have much heart to celebrate this season. We have suffered some hard tragedies this year. Some of our women and men are in faraway countries, in military service, in dangerous situations.

Several thousands of our citizens are without jobs or homes. Yet, there is always a reason to have hope, because of a little baby born over 2,000 years ago, and the message he brought to the world.

Unselfish love for others is all around, if you look closely enough. It's at the Friday night meal for 200 served at the Methodist church in the University District. The volunteers give food and time to feed the hungry, week after week. This unselfish giving occurs all over town, in churches large and small. The volunteers don't ask for glory. They just want to feed the weak and the skinny and ragged.

Last year I was on Pike Street during the Christmas season. The crowds were rushing by, well-dressed and loaded with packages. Suddenly, there was a woman, destitute, asking people for money to buy food. A father, his little daughter on his shoulders, gave her 20 dollars. Then he walked on. I ran up to him and said, "That was a real nice thing you did, mister." He looked a little embarrassed at my words. He wasn't puffed up with pride. He was simply being kind, in the modest way that kind people have.

And I'll never forget the kindness and love I saw years ago when I was a cook at a children's home. The staff was excited: "Today's the day the motorcycle club brings the presents for the kids!" We heard them before we saw them. They were on Hondas, on Nortons, on Yamahas, on Harleys — a long line of men bearing gifts, turning into our driveway. The children were jumping up and down, laughing. The biggest, burliest guy — wallet chained to his pants, ZZ Top beard — had an enormous teddy bear tucked under his arm. These guys were keeping their date with tradition, without a fuss, to make these forgotten children happy. Love and kindness, modestly given.

On a quiet street in Ballard sits another kind of gift. In a stretch of a few blocks, there are some houses lit up so gloriously you probably could see them from Mars. The cynic in me wonders why these people spend so much money just to make strangers happy. The naive kid in me revels in the beauty. To see this eighth wonder of the world, hop on a #317 bus going north up 32nd Avenue West. Tell the driver you want the radiance stop.

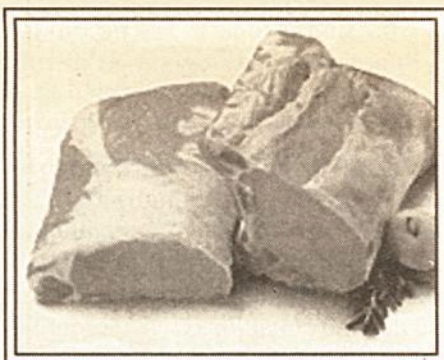
Merry Christmas and have a wonderful dinner!

## Herb-stuffed Pork Roast

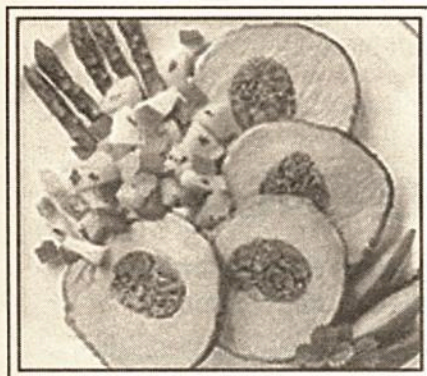
(serves 2-3 people)

When you buy your roast, ask the butcher to butterfly it, or you can do it yourself. This is a simple lengthwise cut that opens the roast up like a book, leaving it together on one end. As for the breadcrumbs, you can toast leftover bread in a 200-degree oven and pulverize it with a baseball bat. Clean the parsley by dunking in several changes of cold water. Dry leftover minced parsley on a paper towel and store in a jar. Chop the onion and parsley the night before, and you can get your roast in the oven in 15 minutes.

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup onion, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon fresh sage, minced  
(or 1/2 teaspoon dried)
- 1/2 cup dry breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup Italian parsley, finely minced
- 1 pound center cut pork loin
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 or 3 toothpicks



1. Turn oven to 450 degrees. Melt 3 tablespoons butter in pan; sauté onions on medium high heat for five minutes. Stir in salt and pepper. Remove from heat.
2. Stir in sage, breadcrumbs and parsley.
3. Lay out pork roast. Spoon stuffing along the middle and roll up. Secure with toothpicks. Rub one tablespoon butter on outside of roast.
4. Put in baking dish and place in oven. Turn heat to 350 degrees. Bake approximately 50 minutes, or until juices run clear.



## Josh and Amy's Favorite Clafouti

This is a homey, friendly dessert, similar to a pineapple upside-down cake but without all that gooey sugar. Use a 9-inch by 2-inch round pan or souffle dish.

- 2 teaspoons butter (for the pan)
- 1 tablespoon sugar (for the pan)
- 2 ripe Bosc or d'Anjou pears
- 2-1/2 teaspoons ginger
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 3-1/2 ounces almond paste, cut in pieces
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup toasted chopped almonds
- 1/4 cup milk

1. Turn oven to 350 degrees. Butter pan and sprinkle the bottom with sugar. Stir the flour, baking powder, and spices together and set aside.
2. Cream the butter until fluffy, add sugar, then almond paste, mashing lumps with spatula until incorporated. Blend in eggs and milk.
3. Peel, halve, and core pears. Place cut side down in baking pan.
4. By hand, stir in flour mixture to the batter. Pour batter into middle of baking pan. Sprinkle with chopped almonds.
5. Bake about 55 minutes. Center will still be a little fudgy. This is best served warm. Reheat any leftovers at 300 degrees for 10 minutes. ■

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**Friday, Nov. 23, 2:45 p.m., Sixth Ave. S. and S. Holgate St.** Officers responded to a 911 call from concerned friends of a woman who was living in a recreational vehicle at the above location. The address is the parking lot of an AM/PM convenience store, and upon arrival they contacted the caller, and received the following information. The subject, a white female in her 40s, has been living inside the vehicle for several months. They have not seen or heard from her in a week or two, and have tried unsuccessfully to contact her inside the vehicle. She has severe alcohol issues, and the friends were concerned that the woman was sick or hurt, and unable to respond when hailed. They explained that she always communicated with them regularly, and it was uncommon not to hear from her. Her friends were certain she was hurt inside the van, and referenced the strong odor coming from the interior of the vehicle as further evidence for concern. The officer was unable to get any response from the occupant, and so made entry into the vehicle by breaking a side window. The van was unoccupied. The grateful friends departed the scene, and the officer left an SPD card inside the van, and secured the vehicle.

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**Friday, Nov. 23, 10:38 p.m., Western Ave. and Virginia St.** Victor Steinbrueck Park. Police were on routine bike patrol in Victor Steinbrueck Park when they observed a homeless white male, age 22, holding an open, half-empty 40-oz bottle of Mickey's. The man saw the police approaching, and put the bottle at his feet. He was contacted for an open container violation, and a routine computer check revealed an outstanding warrant. He was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

**Friday, Nov. 23, 10:39 p.m., Elliot Ave. and Blanchard St., under viaduct.** While on routine patrol in the area, police observed two individuals under the viaduct. This area is DOT property, and is clearly posted "No Trespassing." The men were contacted on trespass violations, and identified. One man, a transient black male aged 35, was found to have an outstanding warrant, and he was arrested and booked into King County Jail. The other man was issued an oral warning and released.

**Saturday, Nov. 24, 10:42 p.m., 2300 blk Fourth Ave.** Subject, a white male transient in his 30s, called 911 from the payphone on the corner of Fourth Ave. and Bell St. He stated during the call that he wanted to commit suicide by jumping off the Aurora bridge. Police contacted the man, who was still on the line with 911, and he repeated that he wanted to kill himself. He asked to go to the hospital to talk to someone, and was transported to Harborview Medical Center for a mental evaluation. ■

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

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**MEMORIAL Continued from Page 10**

an area where 80 percent of drug users engage in prostitution to support their drug addictions. But, as a minister who works the Lower Track says, "Prostitution shouldn't be a death sentence."

In light of the unsuccessful investigation, tenacious friends and family of the missing women, social service providers, and advocates have carried the twofold torch of memory and demand for justice. Friends and family of the missing women in Vancouver developed and maintain an amazingly comprehensive website: [www.missingpeople.net](http://www.missingpeople.net).

At press time, Vancouver Task Force members are already backpedaling and dismissing potential links to the Ridgway case, despite reports from Ridgway's neighbors and coworkers that he traveled regularly to B.C. and Portland by car and motor home, and despite B.C. prostitutes identifying his photograph. Constable David Dickson, who circulates a "Bad Date" list to sex workers in the Lower Track, says dismissively, "I'm sure some of them think they saw the guy, but I don't put much stock in that."

**Do you see what I see?**

At this year's December 5 Homeless Women's Forum: *Memorials*, Joey Glass, one of the Forum speakers, spoke of her childhood, growing up in "your typical middle-class dysfunctional family." She then said, "I stand before you today as a formerly homeless woman. A woman in recovery. A former sex-industry worker."

As painful as that revelation was, it was a healing form of courage. Joey went on to describe her journey, given hope at the hands of a social service provider who "saw something in me I didn't even see myself."

Seven speakers shared their own stories and memories or thoughts on women (and men) we've lost from the homeless community. Each of them pleaded with the 200 attendees to remember those lost could be any one of us: your mother, sister, son, self.

For friends, family, and the homeless community itself, the longest night has three faces: The crime against their loved ones. Reductive media coverage.

And then, often, lack of investigative energy poured into solving the crime. Lack of knowledge for closure is often the most difficult part.

On an hour-long KOMO news special, broadcast the day of Ridgway's arrest, the brother of one of the Green River victims spoke of his desire for justice. He started to cry. For him, justice would not be the death penalty, but rather a deal, any deal, to get information for closure for the hundreds of friends and family members for the missing and dead. (King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng has vowed that he will not offer a deal to Ridgway for a guilty plea or for information about other cases.)

**My face, your face**

Down at the Pioneer Square Clinic, there is a nurse named Mary Larson, who in her spare time paints portraits of her low-income and homeless patients. They light up the clinic with their warmth. A display of these portraits, at the University Village Starbucks, lists the portraits for sale for such things as "400 pairs of socks. 500 McDonald's certificates." Community response to this, according to staff at the clinic, has been amazing. A woman from Enumclaw is knitting hats for Seattle's homeless people because of Mary's portraits.

What do we see? Why do we mobilize? Do we mobilize from mug shots, or from portraits, like Mary Larson's, where poor people are glowing, golden, burnished, at their best?

Here in Seattle, the homeless women of WHEEL and the Church of Mary Magdalene mobilize their silent witnessing vigil, Women in Black, every time a homeless person is found dead outside, often the victim of murder. Many are still-unsolved cases. Often, we mobilize for women and men we did not even know.

None of these cases would have received the attention they did without mobilization. And the vigils and memorials all are driven by our knowledge, borne of visions and helpful empathy, that it is my face, your face. ■

For more information on the web:  
[www.missingpeople.net](http://www.missingpeople.net) (for the Vancouver Missing Women story) and  
[www.marylarsonart.com](http://www.marylarsonart.com).

**CLASSICS CORNER**

by Perfess'r Harris

Richard O'Leary of Brooklyn, NY, writes to tell us that when he came upon Classics Corner while in Seattle last summer we made such an impression that he now seeks our advice on all things classical! "Does Xenophon fall into your bailiwick? I'm curious, because I have heard that the '70s movie *The Warriors* was based on *The Anabasis*. I know, I know... I could just go to the bookstore or library and track something down and read. Just looking for a little guidance in this direction, if there's any to be had."

We at Classics Corner would like to take this opportunity to say, "Thank God for the Internet," which allows freaks like Richard to avoid anything resembling effort by emailing freaks like us, who may or may not provide accurate information.

Being one of the few people in the world who have both read Xenophon's *Anabasis* and seen Walter Hill's 1979 thriller on more than one occasion, we are uniquely qualified to answer Richard's very important question.

*The Warriors* concerns a Coney Island-based gang who fights their way across New York after getting stranded deep in enemy turf. While under a general truce, they travel more than 100 miles to hear Cyrus, the leader of New York's biggest gang, call for unity against the police, which the gangs collectively outnumber. Cyrus' dream, however, is cut short when Luther, a young sociopath who looks like Roger Daltry gone to seed, shoots him in the chest and blames the Warriors. Their leader, Cleon, is wrongly killed by an angry mob while the Warriors narrowly escape. The truce is off, and the Warriors, now hunted by every gang in New York, confront one '70s fashion casualty after another as they fight their way home.

As the Warriors square off with the Baseball Furies, who effectively combine KISS make-up, bad hair, and baseball uniforms to inspire sheer terror, their leader, Swan, delivers one of the best lines in cinematic history: "I'm gonna shove that bat up your ass and turn you into a popsicle."

While Xenophon's *Anabasis* lacks the depth, realism, and artistic quality of Hill's cult classic, it does depict 10,000 Greek mercenaries who are led deep into Persia to overthrow King Artaxerxes. Their leader, Cyrus, dies when a lance comes in contact with his eye. When the other officers are killed at a dinner party gone bad, the now leaderless mercenaries must fight their way home. In the tradition of armies ever since, the Greeks travel to exotic new lands, meet strange new people, and kill them.

While these similarities provide *The Warriors* an indisputable classical pedigree, other likenesses bear mention as well. Both tales depend upon large numbers of young men with nothing better to do. Both stories also feature random acts of violence, and use the declaration of war to sanction outright theft. As one Warrior says, "Cyrus was right about one thing. It's all out there. All we gotta figure out is how to steal it."

Colin Powell couldn't have said it better himself. ■

**Help Fulfill Our MacWorkshop Wish List!**

The *Real Change* MacWorkshop is sorely in need of the following items:

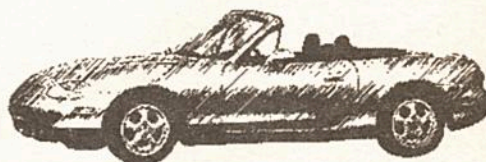
- A new lab computer. Our current lab computer, an HP IIIsi, is old bordering on non-functioning
- A new lab printer
- Size 1/2 AA, 3.6-volt batteries
- Gift certificates to Office Max to help us pay for any of the above items
- Committed lab monitors with good people skills. Extensive computer knowledge is nice, but definitely not needed. This is an exciting opportunity to help someone write a resume, find a job, or better their lives.

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# Holiday

# Notables

## Thursday 12/13

**Women in Black** are sponsoring a Peace Vigil and leafleting to stop the war on Afghanistan, this and subsequent Thursdays, 5-6 p.m. at Westlake Park arch at 4th and Pine.

Ken Mochizuki will discuss his children's picture book, *Passage to Freedom: The Sugihara Story*, which tells the true story of Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat stationed in Lithuania, who, with his family's encouragement, saved thousands of Jewish refugees from the Holocaust. Ken Mochizuki wrote several children's books and the script for "Within the Silence," a multimedia educational performance piece about the incarceration of Americans of Japanese descent during World War II. 7 p.m. at the Frye Art Museum, free, more info Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center, 441-5747.

## Saturday 12/15

**Alternatives to War: Confrontation or Cooperation**, Retired Rear Admiral Eugene Carroll, USN, is the speaker. 2 p.m. at Washington State History Museum,

1911 Pacific Ave, Tacoma. Free.

INOC, the Interfaith Network of Concern for the People of Iraq, Veterans for Peace, and Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility are sponsoring an exhibit of humanitarian photography by Alan Pogue, showing conditions in Iraq and in Palestine. Also, Phil Borges showing work from a trip to Pakistan to document conditions for Afghan Refugees. 3-5 p.m. at Benham Studio, 1216 First Ave, one block south of Seattle Art Museum; info 206-622-2480.

**Citizens Concerned for the People of Iraq** meeting, working to end the U.S./U.N. Sanctions Against Iraq. 3 p.m. this and subsequent 3rd Saturdays, at University Baptist Church, 4554 12th Ave. NE. info Fellowship of Reconciliation 206-789-5565.

**Kick the Can!**, Nationwide day of action against Folgers to protest the exploitation of millions of coffee farmers around the world. Info at the Global Exchange, (415) 255-7296, ext. 245.

## Sunday 12/16

**Seattle Fellowship of Reconciliation Holiday Party**; includes potluck, dinner, mu-

sic, and socializing. 5-8 p.m., at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N. 70th near Greenwood; info 206-789-5565.

## Monday 12/17

A Radical Women study group will explore the multi-faceted realities of women in the Arab world as presented in the writings of Egyptian feminist Nawal El Saadawi. 7-8:30 p.m., University of Washington, Ethnic Cultural Center, 3931 Brooklyn Ave. NE. Free. Everyone welcome; info 206-722-6057.

## Tuesday 12/18

**Interfaith Vigil for Peace in the Middle East**, pray for the end of the violence; 8 a.m.-8 p.m. in Thomsen Chapel, this and subsequent 18th of each month at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, 1245 10th Ave. E.; info 206-270-9170 or 425-641-9247.

*Civil Society in Everyday Life* series with guest Holt Ruffin, Director of Civil Society International speaking on elements of change in the former Soviet Union. 8-9:30 a.m. at Seattle University, near 12th Ave. and Columbia, room 1891, off the lobby of Bellarmine Residence Hall; info <http://www.tess.org> or Put Barber 206-329-5640.

People's Coalition for Justice presents a "Night with the Elders," come learn

and dialogue with three of our community's long-time activists. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Seattle Central Community College, room 1110, Broadway just north of Pine; info Katie Wepplo 206-632-0500, ext 12.

## Saturday 12/22

**Vigil to protest U.S. Bombing of Afghanistan**. Noon, at Victor Steinbrueck Park, north end of Pike Place Market; info Peace Action 206-527-8050.

The first Peoples Web Winter Solstice Celebration. Connect with the People Web, where human beings come together for community, celebration, and inspiration. Tentative schedule 3 p.m. welcome, 7 p.m. mystery speaker, 8:30 p.m. music and dancing; info <http://www.thepeopleweb.org>.

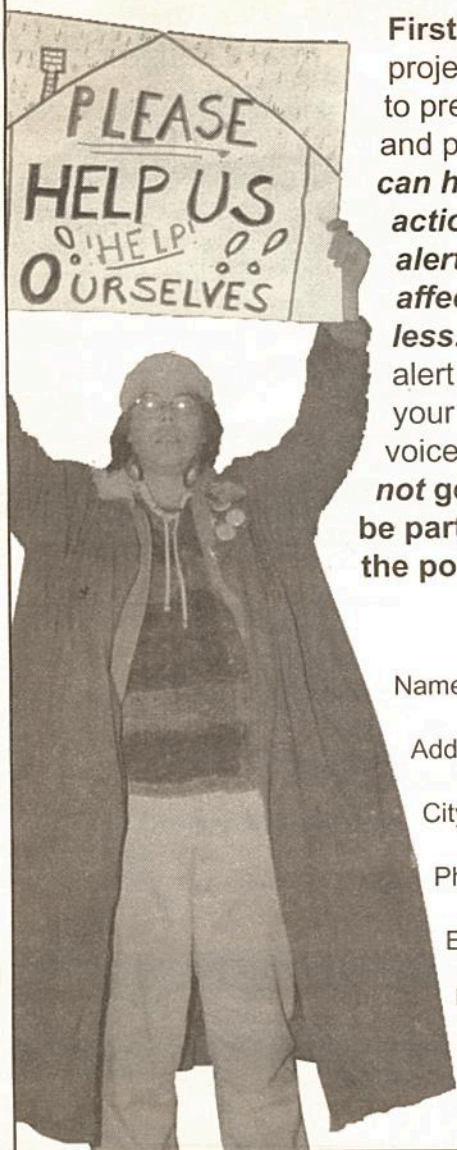
## Sunday 12/23

Northwest Labor and Employment Law Office (LELO) monthly radio program, "Speaking for Ourselves, To Each Other," with Bev Sims, host, this and subsequent 4th Sundays, 8:30 a.m., on KEXP Radio, 90.3 FM.

## Tuesday 12/25

"Room at the Inn" Christmas Meal. Everyone is invited to Seattle First United Methodist Church. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. at 811 5th Ave., Drury Hall. ■

## 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.

To take public comment on proposed changes to policies establishing priority for admissions to the Seattle Housing Authority's Low Income Public Housing program and Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program.



**PorchLight**

**Monday, January 7, 2002**

**10 a.m. - 12 noon**

**PorchLight Housing Center  
Seattle Housing Authority**

**907 NW Ballard Way, Suite 200, Seattle WA 98107**

The Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) proposes to modify its current system of admissions preferences as follows:

- To give formerly homeless current residents of SHA-financed SRO Mod-Rehab and Section 8 project-based housing, and formerly homeless current participants in the federal Shelter Plus Care program, first priority consideration for admission to Low Income Public Housing, along with applicants who are currently homeless or displaced;
- To give formerly homeless current participants in the federal Shelter Plus Care program first priority consideration for admission to SHA's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, along with applicants who are homeless, displaced, or rent burdened.

For more information, contact Ana Woo at the PorchLight Housing Center, 206-239-1523, or email her at [awoo@sea-pha.org](mailto:awoo@sea-pha.org).

citizens participation project



## Call for Increased Food Stamp Funding, Immigrant Benefits

**Issue:** Legislation making significant increases in food stamp funding and benefit restorations to immigrants has made great progress in the Senate as part of the Farm Bill, Senate Bill 1628 (now known as Senate Bill 1731). The bill is expected to come to a full vote before the holiday recess.

**Background:** Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) plans to offer an amendment to the Farm Bill's nutrition title, which includes the Food Stamp and other federal nutrition programs. This amendment would double the funding for the Food Stamp program over 10 years to \$12 billion, twice as much as the \$6.2 billion contained in the Democratic version to be debated on the Senate floor.

When Congress passed welfare reform in 1996, they cut off assistance to all legal immigrants, regardless of need. This policy has not only harmed low-income immigrant adults, but their citizen children as well. Since 1994, 75 percent of otherwise eligible children of legal immigrants left the Food Stamp program because of fear and confusion over who is and who is not eligible. Eligibility for food stamps must be based on need, not citizenship status. Both the Republican and Democratic bills improve upon the status quo, but they do not go far enough. Only a categorical restoration of eligibility to legal immigrants will do away with the confusion and fear among our nation's most vulnerable families.

As our nation slides deeper into a recession, it is now more important than ever to ensure that low-income families have access to adequate levels of food stamp benefits. Food stamps provide a vital support for low-income families struggling to make ends meet. Senator Lugar's plan allows for a number of savings, higher levels of infrequent income, and higher resources limits for disabled families. Lugar's plan also allows for every family to own a vehicle when determining eligibility for food stamps, which is critical for low-income families in rural America.

Restrictive eligibility rules, long applications, confusing requirements, and senseless bureaucratic barriers prevent families in need from accessing food stamps. We need to ensure that all families in need have access to the food stamp program by simplifying the application process.

**Action:** Call your Senators through the Capitol Switchboard (202)224-3121 and deliver the following message:

"I'm calling to urge you to support Senator Richard Lugar's plan to significantly improve the Food Stamp Program, Senate Bill 1731. Senator Lugar's plan would provide \$12 billion to improve access, restore benefits to some legal immigrants, and increase food stamp benefit levels over the next 10 years. Hungry families should be our nation's first priority, not partisan grandstanding."

For more information, contact Jose Quinonez, National Campaign for Jobs and Income Support, at 202-338-1209 ext.107 or [quinonezj@nationalcampaign.org](mailto:quinonezj@nationalcampaign.org). ■



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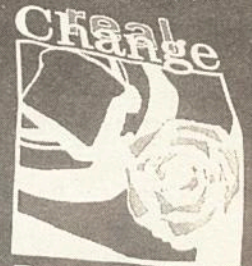


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# Christmas Story for Homeless No



GRAPHIC BY DANIJEL ZEZEJ.

hen smiled or heat or hot water, but it's information. safe and dry." I unzipped my knapsack and gave then the food that I had saved from last night's soup line, two sack lunches and two bags of potato chips. I loaned José my old navy coat and blue skullcap; he was shivering. I brought out an armful of gray woolen blankets and four black baggies from the storage closet. I cut a hole in the center of two blankets and gave each of them a poncho. "Listen, bro, you have to find a way to tack up the plastic bags to black out the windows."

After they left I locked the door, I walked down the corridor, checking the dormitory doors but no one had stirred. Back at the night watchman's desk I put my feet on the windowsill and figured out my alibi. I had to know what I was going to say, in case José and Maria were discovered.

Knock! Knock! "Hey, J.I." "You got my bus tickets?" "What's wrong with you? Can't you even say hello to me?" "Just give me my bus tickets!" "You know the procedure."

He wrote his initials on the sign-in sheet. J.I. was five feet two inches, 130 pounds and 28 years old. He must have been born with a defective spine because, like the Leaning Tower of Pizza, his upper half was in front of his lower half. His brown eyes and big nose and wide mouth were stuck at the bottom of his head, where his jaw was supposed to be. He looked like a sideshow freak. The rest of his head was littered with nasty puss pimples.

I've been walking the homeless line for years. I'm not the smartest dude out here and I'm not the dumbest, either. My street sense told me that J.I. was a fucker from the word "mother." I had a very bad feeling about the dude, from the first day he was screened into Bunkhouse.

He put the bus tickets inside his wallet real slow. I caught him gazing at the night watchman's desktop, scrutinizing every detail. The position of the telephone, scraps of paper that had writing, a drawer that I had left open. Then he inspected each cigarette butt in the ashtray.

"Where are the man and the woman who were just here?" "Where?" "Here! Where I'm standing right now. He was with a pregnant woman, and they were talking to you. I was going to check in for the night but had to make a phone call down at the PM Store."

"Right! Make a phone call! You've been drinking, J.I. Go to bed or I'll write you up." Twenty minutes later I heard car

wheels crunching driveway gravel. At the knock I opened the door. Three uniformed police officers entered Bunkhouse, followed by a plainclothes cop. He was six feet five inches tall and weighed 250 pounds. The detective swaggered across the living room, trench coat open, hands inside his pockets, turning his head here, now there, like he was top gun.

He nodded to the uniformed police officers. "You know what to do."

The blue shirts scattered. They obviously had a plan. One checked the kitchen and bathrooms, another poked the drop ceiling tiles with a broomstick, while the

ner finally got the doors ajar and went inside.

Meanwhile, Dick Tracy kept strutting back and forth, waiting for his blue shirts to return with the culprit. I sat at my desk and watched the fuzz. By the looks of his black onyx rings, flashy designer clothing, and smelly cigar, I knew he was more than a cop. I never guessed that the detective was using his lawman's position to kill a king.

He peered out the window to the yard, but his officers were busy. He stopped at the edge of my desk, pulled one of his hands out of his trench pocket, and flashed



**I opened the plywood door to Bunkhouse II and tipped inside. The others followed me and shut the door. I spotted Maria in a corner, next to a wheelbarrow. She was lying on the gray blankets.**

**The baby was wrapped in my pee coat and wearing my blue skullcap. Maria was breast-feeding Lord Jesús.... Just then my heart stopped a beat. I heard the knob turn and saw the door open. To my complete surprise, I walked the whole Bunkhouse crowd, all except Judas.... I glanced at Tommy. He winked at me and cracked a big smile. In a quiet tone of voice the men snag to John's beat, while the women hummed.**



third inspected pantry closets and opened hallway doors. I heard all three of them go out the back door and saw their flashlights searching the pitch-dark yard. One of the cops had trouble opening the double doors to the tool shed. He banged his billy club on the aluminum door and yelled something that I could not hear. I guess he thought that the fugitive was inside the storage house and was holding the door closed. The officer and his part-

ner finally got the doors ajar and went inside. He folded the black case shut and put it back inside his trench coat pocket.

"I am chief detective Herod. Who are you?"

"Al Bliss." "You live here?" "Yes."

"We just got an anonymous telephone tip. A dangerous fugitive was seen entering and exiting this house. Do you know

anything about it?" "No."

"What are you doing late?"

"One o'clock till o'clock is my fire watch."

The cops returned from the yard. They roused the Bunkhouse tenants from slumber and were checking dormitory rooms for intruders. All of us homeless now clustered in the room.

"Is there a list of the who live here?"

I handed him the sheet.

"I want you to read names, Al." Herod turned half-asleep bunksters. "All of your names are called your hands."

"Peter, Andrew, John, Butch, Kelly, Al, John, Jude, Elizabeth, M. Veronica, Bartholomew, mas, Matthew, Mary, J. Simon, J.I."

The names were hauntingly familiar, like discolored pictures in a photo album from a long time ago. Except Butch, Kelly, and me, I knew that the names belonged together but how that be? We came from all over America. Martha was from Kansas and Philip from Ohio. Veronica came from Louisiana and Matthew was from Georgia. What the connection?

Herod asked a simple question. "Do the initials J.I. stand for?"

John did a drum roll and the su angry.

"What are you doing, mister? Put toy on the floor." John hesitated and dick let his temper fly. "Put it down!"

When the detective Herod yelled everybody straightened up, standing at attention. None of us wanted any more problems than we already had. I noticed the bunkhouse dog and cat stood motionless, head stiff and body balanced on paws. They looked like stuffed animals and that made me crack a laugh.

John unhooked the clothesline that he was using to tie the drum to his belly. He lay the instrument on the floor and the wooden sticks on top of the drum.

"Now! I'll ask one more time! What the initials 'J.I.' stand for?"

"Judas Iscariot."

"What sort of joke is that?" Matt exclaimed.

"Shut up!" Herod replied. "No on talking to you."

"All right. By the looks of this room you were the last one inside the Bunkhouse tonight. Is that correct, Miss Iscariot? OK, come with me."

While the dick and J.I. were in the kitchen, the uniformed officers had turned to the living room/foyer area. One of them got Herod's attention and shook his head. I guessed that they did not find their suspect. A few minutes later the