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Change

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 9, No. 1

A Matter of Record

Paul Schell on Why Nice Guys Finish Last

**Inside: Mamma's Hands Point
Homewards • Firsthand Homelessness •
Capitol Hill Home for the Mentally Ill Will Close**

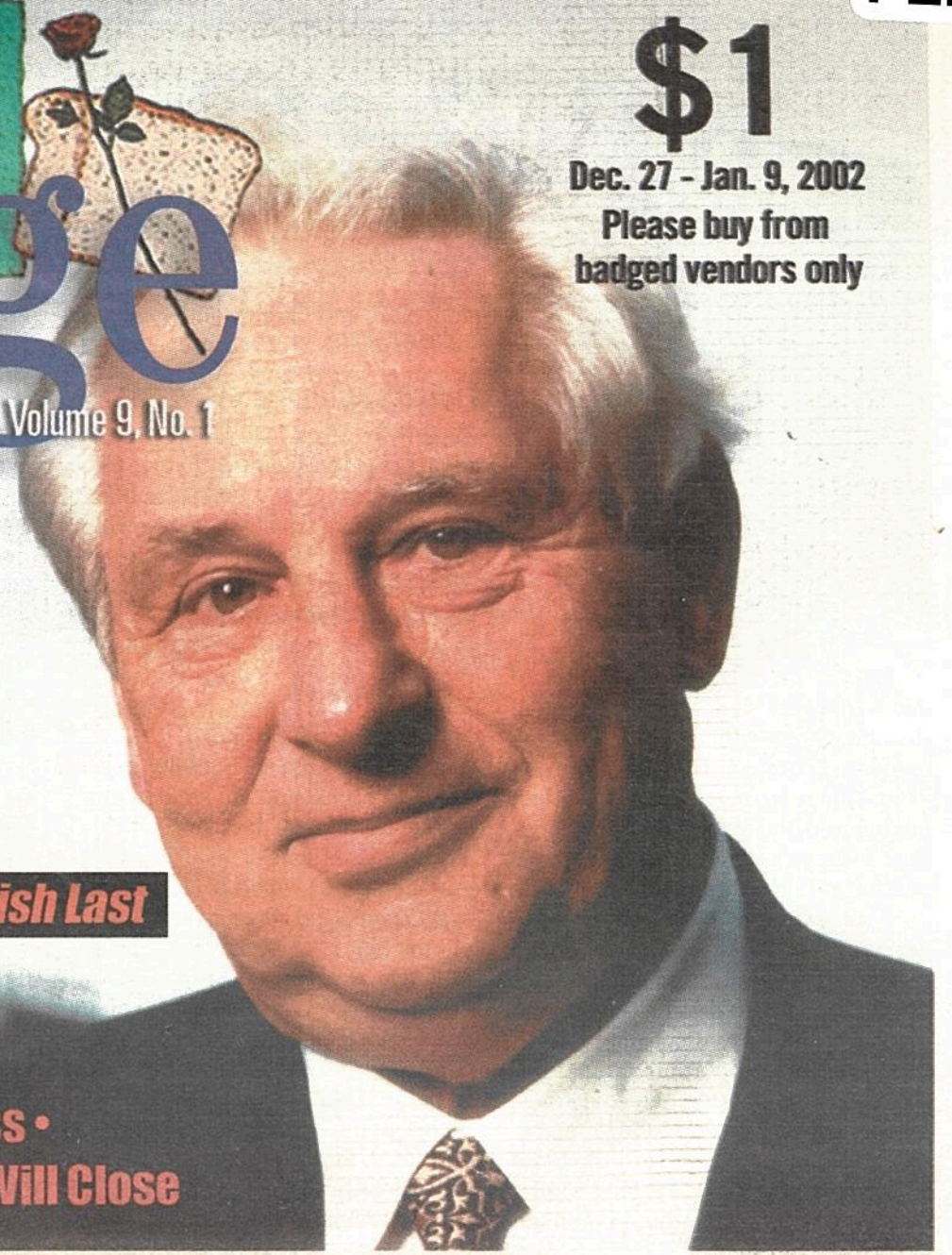


PHOTO OF PAUL SCHELL BY CASEY KELBAUGH.

Interview by Adam Holdorf
and Wes Browning

Paul Schell was the perfect mayor for the times.

A rich man, he presided over the city while a few benefited from an economy run riot. During his time, the acts of a number of wealthy people resulted in unprecedented strengthening of the charity system. The Gates Foundation devoted \$40 million to build housing for the region's homeless women and children. More people donated more money to the local chapter of United Way last year than to any other city's United Way. This was a region doing well and, meanwhile, doing good.

The mayor can't take the credit for all that largesse. True, as mayor, he often acted as the standard-bearer of Seattle's good intentions. But in order to act on the best of wishes, you need competence. That's where Schell fell down. His administration has been marked by cute-but-unrealistic promises at best, and cold intransigence at worst.

The 1998 promise to get every woman and child off the street by Christmas was all pie in the sky. As a result, a new referral center and more emergency shelter was opened. An effort to find a place for homeless people living in Tent City resulted in some good ideas that ran up against a stone wall in the Mayor's office, which demanded that the tent community disband in return for any help. No agreement was reached, and Tent City is still going. And

the number of homeless women outside has grown in spite of Schell's work.

Is it better to exude compassion without action? Or to be hard-nosed, and deliver? In a way, the voters answered those questions in the September primary, when Schell wound up with just 20 percent of the vote. The outgoing mayor still believes it's better to dream big. But, just for a moment, think back to WTO, Mardi Gras, and Boeing's big goodbye, and pity poor Paul, caught in the fallout from each of these calamities.

Here's Paul Schell in his own words.

Real Change: *One of your first actions as mayor was convening the Housing Conference in March '98, and you caught some flak for not making homelessness and shelter part of the agenda there. Do you recall how you reacted?*

Paul Schell: Well, first, it was part of the agenda. They were concerned that we were also talking about workforce housing, for people making 50 to 70 percent of the median income. I felt from the beginning that it was not an either/or, it's both, we weren't simply paying attention to the workforce housing, but there was no place for them to rent either at that time, and I worry about that; you need programs for that as well. But that wasn't in lieu of our efforts in subsidized housing.

And I think we made provision for SHARE/WHEEL to put an encampment near the conference. But I caught flak for everything I did! That's just the way it is.

Those early debates were either /or, and I didn't agree with that. I still don't agree with that, but at the same time, when it comes to homelessness, I don't think you are going to find any mayor in history that has done what we've done. And I feel good about our efforts. There's a lot more to do — we are not, clearly, where we ought to be as a civilized society on that issue. It's a far more complicated one than simply providing shelter beds. You need to find ways to help people get back on their feet. That involves a whole lot of other services that we're, as a society, lacking disgracefully.

From mental illness to the way we treat drug abuse, criminalize it as opposed to treat it, to domestic violence, to an equitable system of allocating capital, to economic opportunity, to training, to child care — all those issues are intertwined and part of the same problem.

RC: *Thinking back to your pledge in 1998 to get all the women and children off the streets by that Christmas: the money that came for that resulted in a fair amount of shelter, but the problem wasn't solved. Is that something that you learned from?*

Schell: I tend to feel that if you shoot high you are going to accomplish a lot more than if you adopt a more cynical attitude and only promise what you can do. The first is how you make real change; the second is a political strategy. You've got to be challenging people to be much more bold. It's ironic that we did take a lot of women off the streets by Christmas, but we didn't go all the way. We get reports and try to track the pattern, and it's been pretty good in the last couple of years. But by making it an issue, which I did, I got a lot more engaged in the problem than I did before.

There's an irony there: I mean, I can think of lots of examples where if you miss [your target] then the press attacks you for being a failure, whereas the safe road politically is to never challenge people, always under-promise and over-deliver — or better yet, don't promise at all. Or if there's a failure, blame somebody else. We never adopted that philosophy here.

Coming into office, I would say that I thought I was a standard Seattle liberal progressive person. Before, [the issue of homelessness] didn't grab my heart the way it did. I'll never forget the meeting I had with SHARE at my office, talking to people who were in that circumstance. Since then there's been lots

Continued On Page 14



Social insecurity

Dear Editor,

Help!!! I am caught up in a nightmare due to the very social injustice system that our elected officials would like everyone to continue to believe doesn't exist. I am referring to none other than our beloved Social Security Administration. I am numbered among the ones that have "fallen through the cracks."

It all started in 1995. That was the year that my entire body shut down, physically, mentally, and emotionally. This caused me to develop high blood pressure, major clinical depression, fibromyalgia, and chronic fatigue. After taking a lot of different medications, I went back to work on a part-time basis (I was an employee with the State of Washington, age 62, earning \$56K a year) and did the best that I could under the circumstances.

For a six-month period during 1995, I received long-term disability benefits from a private insurer. But I wanted to try to continue working for as long as I could, so I went back to work again part time in January of 1996. I had to take off quite a bit of time due to my depression, pain, and fatigue, and was therefore treated as an "ugly stepsister" by my employer.

So much for the Americans with Disabilities Act! After six months I could no longer handle the pressure to produce beyond my current capabilities and sought employment elsewhere. Even with my new employer, Boeing, my health-related problems continued to plague me, and I finally "gave up the ghost" in July of 1997 and optioned for extended medical leave. After six months of short-term disability payments, my income stopped.

I applied for Social Security Disability in early 1998 and am still waiting! I was denied after 90 days and, being in a very depressed state of mind, was so discouraged that I failed to appeal right away. Thank God someone wiser than I told me that it is "standard procedure" to deny a claimant a minimum of two times to discourage them from continuing to claim their rightly earned benefits.

So I appealed, and sure enough, I was denied again after another 90 days. At that point, I was forced to hire an attorney to appeal for a hearing before an administrative law judge. This I did in early 1999 and was told that, unlike the first two appeal processes, the So-

cial Security Administration has no time limits in which to respond with a hearing date. In March of 2000, I received a letter from my attorney advising me that the Social Security Administration offices in Washington state had a one-year backlog of appellate hearings and that they were flying in administrative law judges from other states to try to reduce the backlog. In February of 2001, I received a set of papers from the Social Security Administration office in Chicago, Illinois, asking me to update my medical condition for them. I filled out the papers and mailed them back within 48 hours from receipt. I have heard nothing since. From January 1998 until present I have earned no income.

I am a Vietnam combat veteran and am appealing to anyone with any influence whatsoever who reads this letter to intercede, not only on my behalf but on the behalf of all the other hard working claimants who have "fallen through the cracks" and are living out their own nightmares, thanks to the social injustice of the Social Security Administration.

Sincerely,
Dennis C. Tarbutton
Gig Harbor, WA

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Change

Puget Sound's Voice of the
Poor and Homeless

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Mission Statement:

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

Goals

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

The *Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project* is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Programs include the *Real Change* newspaper, the *MacWorkshop* computer lab, *StreetLife Art Gallery*, the *StreetWrites* peer support group for homeless writers, the *Homeless Speakers Bureau*, and the *First things First* organizing project. All donations support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Editorial Policy

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



Diane Walker

As a former landscaper with a love for plants, Diane Walker would rather be living somewhere greener. But all the shelter and most of the social services are downtown, so she takes solace in the few patches of natural scenery she can get to. Free-way Park, in particular, has become her refuge. There, she filters out the sound of I-5 by pretending there's a river nearby the gray-rock canyon.

Diane, 51, worked in landscape maintenance before a couple of injuries, she says, "have made me elderly prematurely." She would like to get training to go to the less physically demanding labor of landscape design; for now, she sells *Real Change* at Third and Union or Fifth and Columbia.

She first found out about the paper at the shelter where she stayed. "I had no money, and one of the vendors was staying in a shelter with me, talking about how many papers she sold. It seemed like a job with few restrictions." Diane sells about 100 papers a month—enough to buy a few small necessities. The best part of selling *Real Change* is the customers. She loves "getting an opportunity to talk to people, and finding that there's a lot who really are concerned and want to know how to help." ■

— Adam Holdorf

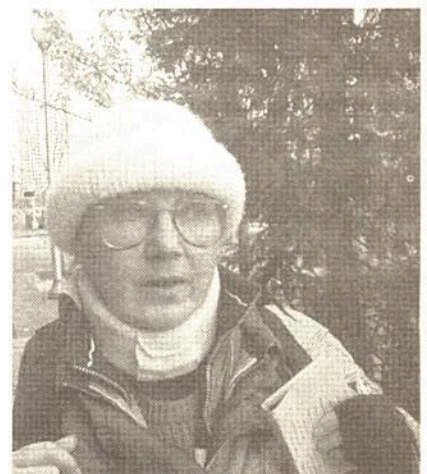


PHOTO OF DIANE WALKER
BY ADAM HOLDORF.

New Year's Resolution

Olympia needs to look beyond Tim Eyman for real tax reform

By Adam Holdorf

Along with war, strife, and starvation abroad, this season is bringing a crisis right here in Washington state. It will cut the safety net into tatters, leaving prison as the surest source of help for homeless people in need of shelter or treatment. It will close programs that turn young people away from the streets toward their education.

What to blame for \$246 million in cuts to the state Department of Social and Health Services? Beyond the 7 percent unemployment rate, the recession, and the declining amount of money going to local causes, this crisis was precipitated by a flawed state tax system.

Tax exemptions for certain businesses and property owners have eroded the financial base until city, county, and state government needs stand on the unsteady ground of sales taxes — which peak when times are good, then drop when people stop shopping. The volatility of this situation is overshadowed by its unfairness. The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy has reported that the state's lowest-paid workers pay four times more of their income in taxes than the richest 1 percent. Those figures were calculated in 1995, before Initiative 695 and Initiative 747. Tim Eyman's demagoguery has further eroded the fairer elements of the system by flattening the motor vehicle excise tax. Once a new Land Rover and a '75 Buick are assessed the same fee, we are letting the rich off easy while the poor continue to just get by.

There's some hope for fixing the most regressive tax system in the country, in the form of a nonpartisan state commission that's undertaking a year of study on the alternatives.

But there's some hope for fixing the most regressive tax system in the country, in the form of a nonpartisan state commission that's undertaking a year of study on the alternatives. Nothing is off the table — including an income tax. They could make a real difference.

The Washington State Tax Structure Study Commission, as it's called, is chaired by Bill Gates Sr., the father of the state's richest man. Its proceedings won't grab any headlines, and that's too bad. People should tune in.

The commission's obscurity means the discussion can be distorted by the interests of its 60 business and non-governmental citizen's groups that make up the advisory committee. The Commission has identified the Business & Occupation tax as a target of much of its energies, after consulting with advisors like the Washington Restaurant Association and the Western States Petroleum Association. While the tax may pose problems for small and large establishments, it still affects a comparative few of Washington's citizens.

That sort of specialization has put blinders on some of the Commission's members. At a December 14 meeting of the commission, Auburn's state representative Jack Cairnes dismissed one survey of the advisory committee by accusing it of making "loaded" statements. He was objecting to requests that asked people to agree or disagree with the statement, "Our tax system should not be regressive."

"I personally don't think the tax system is regressive," Cairnes explained after the meeting. By his logic, people who make more money spend more money. "Nobody keeps money forever," he said.

In fact, some people do keep money forever. They're called the rich.

Whatever the merits of a sales tax, everyone on the Commission can agree that easing the tax burden on the working poor will keep people from having to rely on charity. If those who missed out on the Bush rebates last summer got some \$300 checks of their own, they would spend it — because they have to. The commission should take a page from the progressive tax relief plans promoted during Congress's aborted economic-stimulus debate.

To really do its job, the Commission has got to solicit a broader array of citizen opinion. In a powerful indictment of the tax revolts, *Tax Trouble: What They Don't Tell You at the Ballot Box*, Don Hopps of the Institute for Washington's Future called for "a structured, inclusive, and interactive dialogue" on the current system, "using advanced communications and media... to stimulate public thinking, the internet to comment and debate, internet voting, and citizen panels to discern the meaning of results."

The Commission should arrive at a solution by employing Hopps' methods. When they do, lawmakers should have the stomach to vote on it. ■

Meetings of the Tax Structure Study Commission are broadcast on TVW, Washington State government's cable channel. Check local listings. For more information on the Commission, go to <http://www.dor.wa.gov/#>.

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More Than Meets the Eye

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Steinbrueck steps up

It was a good little tussle for the top-dog position on City Council, but in the end, a non-combatant won out. The nine councilmembers appoint their president by majority vote. At one point, they were in stalemate: half wanted Jim Compton, half wanted Richard Conlin; the deal-clinching vote was yet to be cast. Councilmember Heidi Wills, seeking to break the deadlock, nominated Peter Steinbrueck to fill the position. His eight colleagues voted him in unanimously.

Margaret Pageler, who will cede the president's chair, was pleased with the outcome. "He and I don't always vote the same on the issues... he's strong, he's articulate, he's balanced, and one of the things I really appreciate about him as a councilmember is that he's passionate about City Council as a place that lets the voices of citizens be heard."

The City Council's president replaces the mayor in the case of his demise, and manages the council's back-end staff of 70-some clerks and analysts — rather routine responsibilities. But he also moderates debates and sets the agenda for the weekly meetings.

"The council president position is kind of what you make it," says Steinbrueck aide Stephanie Pure. But there's a significant advantage: Steinbrueck is "in a better position to put forward his own agenda."

In his position as chair of the Council committee concerned with housing and social services, Steinbrueck has been a key supporter of homeless people's survival needs.

During budget deliberations last fall, he drafted a \$12 million "Homelessness Strategic Response" that included hundreds of units of additional shelter. About \$3.4 million ended up in the final budget for new shelters, transitional housing, and tenants at risk of losing their homes. This summer, he brokered a compromise between his Council colleagues and Citizens for Shelter with Dignity, who sponsored Initiative 71, an effort to secure 400 more shelter beds and a 20 percent increase in the city's social-service spending. The initiative's sponsors agreed to withdraw it when the Council offered \$2.75 million in new spending, a Housing Levy proposal that prioritizes the poorest citizens' needs, and a hygiene/day center downtown.

As president, Steinbrueck plans to revamp the Council's way of distributing public information and working with the media. "We keep hearing from the same 100 people every single day," says Pure. She points to the conclusion of the city's budget deliberations, a major accomplishment, that got a few paragraphs of coverage in one local daily, next to the death notices inside the local news section.

Councilmembers are in the process of reshuffling committee assignments before their new terms begin January 7. While many members are retaining their old positions, Transportation chair Richard McIver may replace Steinbrueck as head of the Housing and Human Services Committee. ■

—Adam Holdorf

Fear shuts the door

Economic downturns always hurt the poor the most and the current one is no different. With politicians from the local to national level sharpening their budget-cutting cleavers, combined with the fear generated by the September 11 terrorist attacks, finding bad news for poor people isn't too difficult these days. It comes falling faster than a monsoon.

All nine Puget Sound-area mosques decided to stop taking in homeless people for overnight stays in the immediate aftermath of September 11 — a change that will probably remain in place for the foreseeable future. What were once places for dozens of Puget Sound area homeless people to sleep in overnight are no more. This at the onset of a winter season that is seeing more homeless people being turned away by shelters in Seattle.

"Most Americans don't realize the kind of fear the reaction to the attacks of September 11 generated in the Muslim community," says Rizwan Samad of the Islamic Idriss Mosque, a.k.a. Northgate Mosque. Idriss was the target of an alleged arson on September 13, one of hundreds of attacks against Muslims and mosques reported across the nation since September 11.

"Many Americans have put September 11 behind them, but for the Muslim



PHOTO OF PETER STEINBRUECK
BY BEN EVANS.

community the fear has not subsided. And who is suffering the most because of this? Not middle- and upper-class Muslims who can afford to buy a home like me. It's the Muslim community's poorest who are being turned away when they have no place to stay overnight."

Before September 11, anybody needing a place to stay who came to Idriss and other area mosques could be accommodated. No identification was required, and no official records of who stayed were made. Mosque directors became concerned about the legal ramifications of letting people they didn't know stay overnight, Samad says. Thousands of Muslims have been detained and/or questioned since September 11, the overwhelming majority of them simply because of their status as Middle Eastern immigrants.

One Idriss member who is a friend of Samad put up a man from Los Angeles for a night as he came through Seattle on his way to Alaska in mid-November. The Idriss member was afraid to buy a plane ticket to Alaska out of fear that such a purchase would arouse police suspicion. Samad, who is the president of New Wave Travel located in the U-District, convinced his friend that there was nothing to worry about, and the plane ticket to Alaska was purchased.

As of December 19, Samad has had four homeless people living in his home for the past month. "There's only so much individual members can do for somebody in need," he says. "If there are no mosque members who can personally accommodate somebody looking for a place to stay, then we have to turn them away. Hopefully, the climate of fear will subside soon, and we can open our mosques to homeless people in need again." ■

—Rick Giombetti

Group home for the mentally ill will close

The Mercer Inn, a Capitol Hill home to women with mental illness since the 1970s, will close down on January 31. Greed and lack of resources are forcing the closure, says Chris Czala, executive director of Community House, the residential service agency that operates the Mercer and 290 more units of housing for mentally ill people in Seattle.

The landlord, who has done few repairs in the home's 30-year history, has demanded an 80 percent increase in rent. That puts the Mercer beyond what Czala's agency can afford. Community House manages to house, feed, and provide housekeeping for its residents on approximately \$30 per person per day.

"You can hardly afford to board a dog, frankly — but that's what our society is paying to house these people," says Czala. Similar services for mentally ill people in Western State Hospital, for example, cost 10 times that amount.

The 40 women currently living at the Mercer — some of whom have been there for 17 years — will be moved to other buildings owned by Community House. Czala promises that nobody will be out on the streets. But the trials aren't over, for the clients or his agency: State and county budgets have cut money for mental health services by as much as 15 percent over the next year.

Even if the money were available, opening another group home would be a nightmarish process. Czala recalls an unsuccessful attempt to establish one in the Mount Baker neighborhood last year.

One Community House employee has said that the building's owner plans to convert it into a bed-and-breakfast. ■

—Adam Holdorf

Making a list...

PAULA MORRIS AND CHRISTINE WOOD EXHIBIT THE WISH LISTS OF FAMILIES RECEIVING CHRISTMAS GIFTS THROUGH THE FREMONT PUBLIC ASSOCIATION'S ADOPT-A-FAMILY PROGRAM. MORRIS AND WOOD SHOP FOR FAMILIES, WRAP PRESENTS, AND DELIVER THEM ON BEHALF OF THE



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

Endangered

State budget imperils mental health, addiction services

By Rick Giombetti

Alcoholism and addiction programs across the state are faced with extinction if the state's proposed budget cuts are enacted next year," said Sarajane Siegfriedt of the Washington Association of Alcoholism Programs.

Siegfriedt lobbies on behalf of many of Washington state's alcoholism and addiction service providers. Her clients depend entirely on state funding to help addicts get better. This kind of work has not been covered by Medicaid since 1995. People seeking alcoholism and other substance abuse treatment, most of whom are without any financial resources, pay for these services with medical coupons distributed by the state's Medical Assistance Administration. Direct state support for addiction programs comes from the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse.

"When Governor Locke ordered all state agencies to come up with across-the-board 15 percent budget cuts early this year, elimination of both the medical coupons and alcoholism and addiction funding from DASA were proposed," said Siegfriedt. "This would leave my clients with no funding for their operations, and with patients who can't pay for the services they provide."

Siegfriedt was one of dozens of community members and activists who attended a November 27 community forum on mental health and substance abuse at the Museum of History and Industry in Montlake. All of King County's representatives in the state legislature were invited to attend or send staffers to this forum. Three Seattle-area representatives showed up; staff assistants filled in for two others.

This was the fourth such community

legislative forum on mental health and substance abuse issues put on by the King County Mental Health Board and the King County Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Administrative Board. It was also the most urgent so far, in terms of the budgetary implications for social service programs statewide. The economic forecast for Washington state is bad enough. The combination of an estimated \$1.25 billion revenue shortfall due to the recessionary economic climate, and the recent passage of Tim Eyman's property-tax-cutting I-747 ballot initiative, means the state must either obtain more revenue or make drastic across-the-board budget cuts.

So far, the cuts aren't as bad as expected. The draft budget that Governor Gary Locke released on December 18 cuts services run by the state Department of Social and Health Services by \$245 million. That's less than the 15 percent cuts outlined in an earlier draft; still, it includes a loss of significant amounts of the treatment and prevention programs that Siegfriedt and other lobbyists assembled that night were telling their legislators to preserve, even amplify. Among them: treatment services for severely disabled addicts; residential centers for runaway children; and at least 40 case managers in an already overburdened social services system.

Less costly than jail

Prevention and treatment programs for the mentally ill and drug dependent work, and it is far more costly to not fund them than it is to fund them. That was the overwhelming consensus among the 12 community members who addressed those state legislators willing to listen to their concerns at the

forum. The community panel members at the forum included the local affiliates of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), recovering alcoholics and drug abusers, Sally Kohloff, a parent whose 18-year-old son lives on the streets of Seattle, Yoon Joo Han of the Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS), and local public defender Brad Merryhew.

"The cuts will not achieve the expected savings," said NAMI Eastside president Michael A. Rynas. "The burden of mental health services will shift to higher costs in acute care in emergency rooms, hospitals, detox centers, courts, jails, and police."

"Without the treatment I got, I would still be a drug abuser and a gangbanger today," said Ritia Curry, 21, a recovered drug addict. "Please don't cut these services that helped me so much."

"My own experience is that many of our clients, both the chemically dependent and mentally ill, want treatment and are frustrated with the difficulties in accessing the system in Washington," said Merryhew, of the Society of Counsel Representing Accused Persons. "Washington state taxpayers aren't going to save money by giving me money to defend people with mental illness and substance abuse problems in the criminal justice system. I'm tired of having to tell my clients that there is nothing I can do to help them get the services they need outside of prison."

The legislative priorities for mental health and substance abuse advocates in Washington state are as follows: Fund and support community-based mental health treatment; fund and support community-based alcohol/drug abuse treatment; support alcohol/drug treatment as an alternative to incarceration; and propose legislation to reduce the cost of prescription drugs.

Cedar Hills may close

"We are going to have to learn to be more imaginative and collaborative in the coming months," said King County Executive Ron Sims in a brief pep talk before the forum began. "We must see to it that those individuals seeking treatment get it. It's the humane thing to do." Sims' remarks are the kind politicians in the past have made before they take a cleaver to social service budgets.

Sim's own government is proposing closing down an entire treatment facility, Cedar Hills in Maple Valley. The county has been running Cedar Hills at a loss for two years because the state is unable to provide it with the funds needed to keep going.

Even though the final decision won't come until May, when an advisory group reports to the County Council, Locke's budget cuts the funding for approximately 90 beds, at a \$1 million savings. Eighty-two of Cedar Hills' 130 patients get their treatment courtesy of the state program Locke wants to cut.

"Losing a treatment resource such as Cedar Hills is truly penny-wise and pound foolish," said Joan Clement of the King County Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Administrative Board. Also, the King County Health Department has more than 500 people on their wait list for methadone treatment, according to Clement. "Methadone treatment costs \$350 per month versus thousands per month for imprisoning heroin addicts," said Clement.

Outlooks for budget in the legislative session, which starts January 14, were dim. "This will be even worse than the budget cutting that happened in 1993," said Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles. When asked if there might be a chance to get income tax passed in the legislature Welles said, "When I bring that issue up to my colleagues outside of Seattle, a glazed look overtakes their eyes." ■

"I'm tired of having to tell my clients that there is nothing I can do to help them get the services they need outside of prison."

Public defender Brad Merryhew

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poetry

Placemat

None,
follow.
there is a way of seeing
this! that,
changes
life
as we live it
together...
openly.
Not
knowing
others, who live in the
space —
their
own
places!
out-
side.
There's a difference to it.
—STAN BURRISS

The Teddy Bear

Ground Zero
Down in the pit
The smell
Worse than all the sights
Until
The Teddy Bear
Once treasured friend
Held no more
By loving arms
Gone now with the child
The Teddy Bear
Still clutched by only
One small hand
—RENEENE ROBERTSON

Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning



This is Anitra "She Who No Longer Makes Wes Sleep On The Floor" Freeman. As a Christmas present to Wes, I am writing his column this issue so that he doesn't have to wake up three hours before deadline and do it.

Let me explain why I slapped two Santas last Christmas.

Most people naively regard Santa Claus as kid stuff: useful for commercials, cute pictures with the children, or being kidnapped by Tim Burton's charmingly demented hobgoblins. What they forget is that Santa Claus is an ARCHETYPE.

Archetypes are images and personifications of age-old, universal ideas — like Birth, Death, and Very Good Beer. Archetypes dwell in the basement of the Universal Unconscious (which is another archetype, embodying the idea "way down deep we're actually really intelligent, or at least very wise.") Because they live in the basement, archetypes control the plumbing and the power switches.

In 1822, Clement Moore summoned the archetype of Santa Claus in "Twas the Night Before Christmas," to cheer up a sick child. In the 1860's, Thomas Nast further fleshed out the roly-poly gift-bringer to give a boost to business in Dutch New York. Now we have Big Red everywhere, terrorizing pedestrians on streetcorners, small children in shopping malls, even innocent Martians on their home planet.

See how dangerous it is to summon an archetype?

We even have Santanarchism: a movement arising over the last few years in cities all over America, where young people dress up in Santa suits and run around the streets playing "have fun with the pedestrians" and "have fun with the bar crowd" and "have fun with the Very Good Beer." Some people

complain that they mock the holiday. Santanarchists themselves say that they are engaged in a holy crusade against people taking themselves too seriously.

Last Christmas, Copyright Dr. Wes met some Santanarchists on the street, and when they asked him if he had been naughty or nice, he gave them a Copyright Dr. Wes answer: "Naughty, of course." In the spirit of topsy-turvy, they then gave him presents and candy.

Our friend Reneene came into the office a little later and saw the fun gifts, so she skipped out into the street to find some Santas for herself. When they asked her if she'd been naughty or nice, she happily chirped, "Naughty, of course!"

Two of the Santas spanked her. Hard. Reneene has PTSD. She came back to the office in tears.

My usual archetype has been described as "kindly bespectacled teacher of StreetWrites." But I threw down my pen and charged out onto the streets, roaring up and down until I found a group of Santas. I stomped up shouting, "Which one of you thinks it's funny to spank a woman?" and when one of them laughed and said, "I do, do you want a spanking?" I slapped him. A second Santa stepped up and I am embarrassed to say that I can't remember what he said, because I slapped him too and now I'm not sure whether he deserved it.

Two of the Santas came back to talk to Reneene and explain that none of their group had spanked anyone, or would. One of the men suffered from PTSD too, and understood how traumatic such a thing would be. There is no central control of the Santanarchists, however. He could only spread the word from Reneene as best he could, that spanking strangers was neither intelligent nor wise, and hope it sank into the universal unconscious. Reneene finally got her gifts and candy.

Watch out how you summon archetypes. Santa Claus. Anarchism.
Or Woman. ■



White Washer Plant Town

When he was young
and growing up in that
white washer plant town,
he was scared
because "they" said,
"Them nuclear bombs
out there can kill ya,
so y'all better beware
and buy this here bomb shelter,
plant it in your back yard,
if'n you got one,
to protect you and yours,
from the nuclear fear fallout
from the goddamn KGB commies
before they be knocking down
the USA Corporate door with their
anti-capitalist red scare tactics,
with one touch of the button
they'll blow your house down,
you know they will."
Well, those farmers, Maytag-ers,
but not the one-armed railroaders
bought them up in a flash,
his little brown boy thought was,
"Shit, what about us?
Who'll take care of us?
We'll die out here."

—ANGIE VASQUEZ

Sleepless in Seattle / The Manic Shuffle

Morning shadows
Skirt dawn's irascible walls
As I pray to Saint Serta Seeley Posturpedic, the angel of sleep deprivation
For the privilege of packing it in.

What
Do you do
When the tea and honey's spent
And you've turned off your television in abject horror
Because you've actually found yourself sympathizing with a balding, 60-year-old
wannabe vampire appearing at three am on the "Jenny Jones" show.

What
Do you do
When your mind just won't shut down
And even the dog is hip to your karma and refuses to sleep with you
Because all of your ups and downs disturb his dreams.

Most
Often, I am a likeable person
But at bedtime I have come to abhor every lover I have ever known.
"I AM TALKING LIFE AND DEATH HERE," I have implored
to increasingly rhythmic snores.

Years spent
Watching lovers sleep
And animals move to different rooms.

It
Is an exhausting profession
Keeping watch o'er the world
But as I wearily pad by the snoring partner and the dream swept dog
To drain yet another gallon of chamomile tea I can't help but to think with a scant
Measure of satisfaction: If the sky does fall one night, some time
I will be the first to know.

— CYNTHIA OZIMEK

Getting a Grip



MAMMA'S HADS VOLUNTEERS KARL, LEFT, AND JACKIE, CENTER, PREPARE A HOTDOG FOR LITTLE BIT. PHOTO BY MIKE HAMRICK.

Mamma's Hands Gives Street Youth Another Chance

By Casey LaFran

It was the middle of a cold, wet winter, and Michael was destitute in every way. He had been drifting since he was 17, and heroin addiction in recent years had reduced him to a pitiful wreck. During his childhood, he suffered through his father's abuse, and though his mother had long since divorced and remarried, it had been months since he'd spoken with her, and years since they'd had a meaningful conversation. Every chance at cleaning himself up had failed, making things worse for him and his family. Now, 23 years old and only a week before Christmas, Michael was nearing an end, and he knew it.

"I was desperate. As a last effort to save my life, I went to [St. Vincent de Paul] and asked if they could help me get out of Seattle and back to the Midwest, where I knew there was no heroin, so that I could be free of its slavery. They told me they couldn't help me, but to go to the library on Friday and look for the "Mamma's Hands" bus, and to try them. I was willing to work or do anything within my power. ..."

That night, Michael (whose last name is withheld at his request) found the large van handing out hot food to 10 or 20 people. There, Michael met the man behind the mission, Dennis Hancock, who let him use a cell phone to call his family long distance. If Michael's family in Kansas City would assure him that he could live with them, Hancock told him, he would buy the bus ticket for him.

Michael's mother, Debi Whitson, remembers the phone call. "It just tore my heart in half every time Michael called. You don't know when they're telling you the truth. We'd just been through so much and I was at my breaking point; I couldn't go through with it again. You know they want to be loved, to have a warm place to stay, but he

would call from New York, or Seattle, saying 'I want to change this life and start over,' and within a week of moving back home he would be stealing

from me, and shooting up in the house. So I didn't know if I was actually helping him when I took him in and gave him money. No matter how hard I tried,

it had to be him.

"He sounded angry. He told me 'All you have to do is tell this man I have a place to stay!' He tried to tell me that he could stay with friends, but most of them didn't live here anymore and would just be a bad influence anyway. It was 40 degrees below zero, and I knew he'd end up staying with us.

"I told him, 'You can't stay here because I can't live with you.'"

It was the first time Whitson had told her son that he could not come home. The conversation ended when Michael, furious, screamed "I hate you!" and hung up.

Michael says, "I think [Hancock] may have heard me say that, as he was nearby. And I assure you, I was ashamed. I left in a fury, feeling hopeless and suicidal."

After returning an hour later, Michael dialed his brother in Colorado, Jefferey, and eventually talked him into vouching for his mother. Jefferey told Hancock that yes, he did have a place to go home to in Kansas City, and Michael called his mother back, telling her that he was coming home.

Whitson says, "When he told me that, I started crying. I felt like there was no more strength left in my hands, I told God that I could not bear to have Mikey here, then lose him again: I love

Continued on Page 13

A Place to Call Home

Mamma's Hands began after founder Denny Hancock had a moving experience with two people who were living on the street. They came into a small, country café in south Seattle one day while Hancock was eating there. "The first thing I thought was, I hope they don't sit down by me, but of course they did," he remembers. "At first I turned away, then thought about it, and started talking to them."

The younger one of them was blind and, while they were talking, fell down in a seizure. Later, the older of the two told Hancock, "Please don't judge us, or feel sorry for us. He's my son and his soul's in heaven, I'm just taking care of the body."

"When they left," says Hancock, "I felt the love he had for this boy, something I felt for my own family. I thought about all the people I'd ignored; suddenly the yacht and my high-paying job weren't so important."

Shortly thereafter, Hancock quit his job and, with the help of some friends at a local construction firm, converted an old delivery truck into a mobile kitchen. Hancock set out to save every homeless person in Seattle. The first night, his group took enough hotdogs, muffins, and cookies to feed 50 people. They quickly doubled it and were soon feeding, on average, 100 each night, and sometimes as many as 300 people. He does it with a brigade of young volunteers from area congregations and his own eastside Mormon church.

During one of these nights, someone asked Hancock if he could use his cell phone to call home. After letting him, Hancock suddenly had a long line of kids waiting to call long distance. Almost every one of them had family that they had not spoken to in a long time. Within weeks, sponsorship from AT&T Wireless allowed Hancock to add the "phone home" program to his arsenal. "Judging from the conversations, most of them are 'Just want you to know I'm safe,' very benign calls," says Hancock. "There's crying now and then."

For whatever reason, people living on the streets lose contact with family. Mamma's Hands would like to reopen

those doors. For those who are stranded in Seattle and have a home to go to, but no means of getting there, Mamma's Hands will even buy a bus ticket.

Hancock began to notice that for every five people who came to the truck each night, four of them would be repeat customers. To him, it spelled out the need for shelter.

With sponsorship from other corporations, including Eastside Harley-Davidson and Windermere Real Estate, Mamma's Hands built a shelter for women and children on five acres in North Bend. The House of Hope operates in ways similar to other self-managed housing projects, limiting tenants to a one-year stay, and requiring them to save 60 percent of their income. There are 10 acres of trails, gardens, and a small amphitheater. Services include life-skills training, individual and family counseling, parenting classes, a 12-step program for the addicted, opportunities for continued education and vocational training, but most importantly, a listening ear.

"However," says Hancock, "It doesn't matter if you're at a nice clean house in the country, you need to get out there and meet people. A lot of them [homeless people] need a sphere of positive influence.... They don't have any hopes or ambitions of doing anything else. But I don't believe them."

"I still feel like I can save a lot of them and help get them back home, but I think there's got to be some bigger changes." ■

— Casey La Fran



PHOTO OF DENNY HANCOCK BY MIKE HAMRICK.

Mamma's Hands opens at the corner of 4th and James every Wednesday night at 7 p.m. To help, call (206)915-2073.

HANDS Continued From Page 8

him so much but can't make him change. I called my other son and said, 'How could you do that, Jefferey?'"

Hancock remembers letting Michael call home. "He looked pretty far gone," he recalls. "I was really glad he ended up getting a ride home."

Standing and watching off to the side, he had no idea that the mother on the other end of the line was in tears.

Michael was glad to be going home, but it was going to be a long ride. The Greyhound was loud, oppressive, and gloomy. Michael remembers, "I became frustrated with thoughts of my future and afraid for my life. The rock and roll that I had been listening to gave me no comfort and just aggravated my frustration." He then remembered a CD that Hancock had given him before leaving, and dug it out. It was a collection of inspirational songs that Hancock wrote after he started Mamma's Hands.

"It truly touched my heart and gave me hope," said Michael. "Suddenly, it became clear to me that I had nothing to fear, as God was with me and would be waiting for me in Kansas City. I no longer needed to worry and wonder about exactly how and who I must go to see. I no longer fretted for what evils may destroy me.... Peace was with me throughout the ride, and joy as well. I found happiness among the strangers on the bus."

Upon arrival, Michael did not find his brother, who had agreed to meet him at the station. Instead, his younger sister, Carrie, came running from the parking lot to greet him. "I hadn't seen her in some four or five years, at least. She was now 12 years old, exciting and beautiful. Apparently, my mother had a change of heart while I was on my way to Kansas City. My stepfather and little sister had come to pick me up and bring me home. It was Christmas Eve, and my mother welcomed me with open arms. I was so happy. I was overflowing with joy, and with love for the family, and for myself."

But when Whitson saw her son, she barely recognized him. Michael was wearing several layers of clothes, a long, black, double-breasted wool coat with buttons missing, a tattered black hat, and shoes two sizes too big. Unwashed hair stuck out from underneath the hat, nearly covering his eyes, and track marks covered his skin.

"It broke my heart to see his wrecked body. He told me that he wanted to get into treatment and stay clean. I'd heard that so many times before. I wanted to believe, but wondered if I was only a fool for falling for the same line over and over again. I searched to find the Mikey that I knew long ago. When I looked into his eyes, I could see a little flicker of Mikey deep inside — just barely, but it was there."

Michael's stays at home were always a disruption to the rest of the family; the Christmas holiday would be no exception. He had brought a small bag of needles and three days worth of

heroin, and would shoot up in the bathroom. "He didn't have any veins left in his arms or legs, so he had to use his chest," says Whitson. "He was always very apologetic about it."

"He was very animated because of the heroin, he talked a lot and paced around the house like a bumblebee. We tried to tell him we loved him, but were puzzled by his behavior most of the time. It was like having an alien, but I was happy. That's all I wanted—to have my kids home together."

Michael began asking for some tapes from his childhood. His mother had recorded the kids making up stories and games, and playing together when they were four to six years old. "I kept this 20-year old tape in a drawer because I could never listen to it," says Whitson. "It was a sound of life, from the past."

After finding the tapes, Whitson watched her son rock back and forth, eyes closed, as he listened to himself from long ago. "I never thought when I made those tapes, that we would be listening to them like this."

Later, Michael told his mother the name of the organization that gave him the bus ticket and free long-distance phone calls. Whitson, a Christian, says that "When he told me that 'Mamma's Hands' sent him home, I knew that God was doing this because there had been so many times when I tried to hold Mikey, but my hands weren't strong enough. I felt like God was putting his hands under mine."

Dennis Hancock's non-profit organization, Mamma's Hands, hits the Seattle streets each week with a portable kitchen, feeding street kids and offering free cell-phone use to anyone wanting to call home. Free bus tickets are available for those who would like to be reunited with their families. Hancock asks for proof that someone is waiting for them.

Michael was soon going to counseling every day and using a methadone treatment program to get off heroin. However, he still had bad habits from street life that were hard to break.

"I would say to him, 'Why don't you take a bath, you'd feel better?' and he'd say 'You don't understand, mom, junkies don't like water.' But I wouldn't force him to do it. When my other kids complain and tell me to make him take a bath, I'd say no. When he does it, it will be because he wants to. I try to encourage the inside of him, not force the outside. And little by little, the street habits came down. The dirty clothes came off, layer by layer."

According to those around him, Michael changed more in that first month than he had the previous five years. He had cleaned himself, shaved, and was wearing clothes that fit him. He got a much-needed pair of glasses, his driver's license, a small used car, and would soon begin an apprenticeship to an electrician. No longer motivated by fear of drug addiction, the law, or himself, Michael was excited about the future for the first time in his life. Then came a hard blow.

While driving home from a counseling session, Michael was pulled over for running a yellow light. There was an outstanding warrant for his arrest from two years past, and he was taken into custody.

The charge was from 1999, when Michael was working off a 30-day community service penalty for a misdemeanor, (possession of drug paraphernalia). It was during this sentence that Michael's girlfriend died suddenly of Hepatitis B. Michael fled. The charge for escape stayed on his record.

Whitson states that her son intended to go to court once he was back on his feet and working. "We wanted to show the judge that this was a different person. We looked at the traffic stop as God's way of 'cleaning the slate' earlier than we planned."

Michael received the maximum sentence for escape, one year incarceration without bail, and now has three months to go before his release in February.

"Now it's like everything we worked for was taken away," says Whitson. "But he's handling it so well. He was even comforting me. I was crying, and he says, 'Don't worry, mom, there's got to be a reason why I'm in here.... I'll get out, I'll be all right.'"

"Michael was the most brilliant kid in school, his scores were off the charts, he was a great artist and musician. In eighth grade, his music teacher had him play in front of the whole school, and when he was finished said, 'This is what you're supposed to sound like.'"

"He started working when he was 12 years old and was such a hard worker. When he went off the cliff he went straight down. Now I'm hoping he'll find the joy in those things again."

In a letter to Hancock, Michael tells of his progress since coming home. He closed by saying, "I owe this all to God's work through you and Mamma's Hands.... My mother and whole family thank you as well, and thank God that you were there." ■



PHOTO OF MICHAEL AT AGE 3, COURTESY OF HIS MOM.

"This picture of Michael hangs in my kitchen, staring out at me every time I go through the door. It was taken when he was three. What I like most about it is his eyes. They are completely in focus, and watch you as you move. It is an awesome capture of his innocent self. These were the eyes that I looked for when he returned home to me last Christmas."

Michael's Mom, in a letter accompanying the photo lent for the story

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SCHELL Continued From Page 1

of conversations with street kids and street people. [My wife] Pam personally raised resources and money for The Compass Center, personally got involved....

RC: *So it was the stories you heard from homeless people...*

Schell: Yes. I really saw my job as helping those who were not represented, who weren't political constituents in the traditional sense. I have to say, it was a challenging group to work with, because you always got attacked, and politically it's easier to help those people who support you rather than those who attack you on a regular basis. But we never ran off. The way that the press and politics works, they want to celebrate everybody who attacks you, and that makes coverage. And those who say you're doing a good job — that isn't news. And so that game is played very well.

Part of the attack, you know, the Tent City, we were trying to be benign about that, and at the same time, there were bound to be other people who were impacted by it. But I understood it as a rolling protest — people made an issue in front of the public. We were the ones getting attacked when I was trying to help with the problem. But it didn't matter to me — I didn't do this job for the praise.

RC: *You mentioned Tent City. It's been going for 20 months now. How have your feelings changed about it since it began?*

Schell: I think the people at SHARE/WHEEL do a good job of managing that operation. We've created shelter for far more people than the Tent City has over the last four years — lots more. So I understand the goal, I understand that it's important to keep the issue in the public eye. At the same time, Tent City is not offering the services that are needed among these people. From

counseling, to job training, to sort of mentoring, a better solution would be to find safer housing for people to live in. I don't think tents are a good place for anybody to live. Church basements are better options.

Part of it is the churches: If you want to do something, use your basements, there are showers and toilets, and it's out of the rain. The membership could help them more directly. The challenge there is being good neighbors, as it happens, and not sort of putting people off.

Also, I feel very strongly that this is not Seattle's issue, it's a regional issue. Seattle is the only place to deal with it. In Kirkland, and in other parts of the region, their answer is to send them to Seattle.

RC: *You brought up some ideas for that in the last four years, especially with Tent City happening. One component of that was different kinds of housing. The barge housing proposal, the freight container housing was mentioned early on in the administration — Where are they now? Is there hope for realizing something like that?*

Schell: Looking for some longer-term strategies like those taken for farmworker housing... it would be cool if we could figure out a way to accomplish that. And I like the Bunkhouse. The single-room-occupancy housing that we used to have all over town, getting those back and into strong ownership. All those sort of initiatives I think are still possible. I believe that's what my second term would have continued to focus on, and I've been trying to find the resources.

I think I was the first and maybe still the only Democratic mayor ever to get into the Bush White House right after the earthquake, which is incredible — I got in to see Andrew Card, the Chief of Staff, and talked to him not only about the earthquake recovery but the McKinney Act [which provides money to the states for shelter and services]. We had a letter signed by 40 or so mayors pushing the idea that if you just tripled the amount of money in the

McKinney Act, you could make a huge difference. Reagan started that, so it's a Republican take on the problem.

The thing I worry about, more than anything else, is how everybody's focusing on endless resources to bombs in Afghanistan, we're going to spend billions of dollars feeding the Afghanistan people, but we ought to start at home. We've got a bigger problem at home, it's just under the rug, out of sight.

RC: *Why couldn't we fix the problem in boom times?*

Schell: We can't fix this problem. It is an ongoing service. There are always going to be people dropping through the cracks for a lot of reasons. There's not a single reason you can generalize, and that challenge is far more complicated than just providing shelter.

RC: *During the mayor's race, Mark Sidran often hammered on the city's funding for homeless services, saying too much emphasis was placed on shelters. Did your support for these services cost you the election?*

Schell: No, it was the WTO that cost me the election. And not enough people stood up for the 'rich white downtown developer' guy. People couldn't see how I would be good for human services. Ironically, the only endorsement I got was from the Human Services and Housing Now PAC. The enviros and labor went with Nickels.

I think [after WTO] there were a lot of people who were afraid. And, even WTO supporters were mad at me because we allowed the protest.

RC: *You think people were angry because you allowed the protest?*

Schell: They were mad that it happened. They were mad at images of the city being broadcast on the evening news — pictures of tear gas. I think that Sidran's strength, I don't think he would have come so close to winning, were it not for this feeling that we need to get a lot tougher.

Everybody's made up their mind about the WTO, and it probably cost me a chance to serve the next term. But I haven't changed my mind; I believe that people have the right to protest, and I believe that they need to respect each other as part of that process. The cops did the best that they could with a tough job. No [city has] done it better since, but the city seems to be content to assign blame, and I can live with that. That's the American way; it's the Seattle way.

RC: *WTO, Mardi Gras fed into rhetoric about leadership. How did you respond in your campaign to that?*

Schell: You know, ironically, the WTO didn't come up much. It did early on, and Sidran made the point that if he had been mayor he would have had a security zone at the beginning. I pointed out that yeah, that's what cities since have been doing, with half the number of protesters and three times the number of police, and it has been worse.

If you look at the campaign, the sort of civic activists were all supporters. The political activists weren't. I'm not a politician, I didn't make Democratic Party politics an important issue. I didn't spend a lot of time trying to shift guilt from myself, or polishing my own personal image, or taking credit for a lot of stuff, all of which you need to do, I guess, if you're in it to make a career in politics. I got into this job because I love the city, I wanted to get some results. And the way you get things done is, you don't take credit for anybody else's work, and you don't make decisions based on how you're going to look, but what you think is best for the city at large. And so I can leave feeling good about this, and I do.

RC: *What is one thing you hope Seattleites remember about your administration?*

Schell: I think it's been a remarkable period. I was mayor when the city went from being a small city to an important international city — faster than we

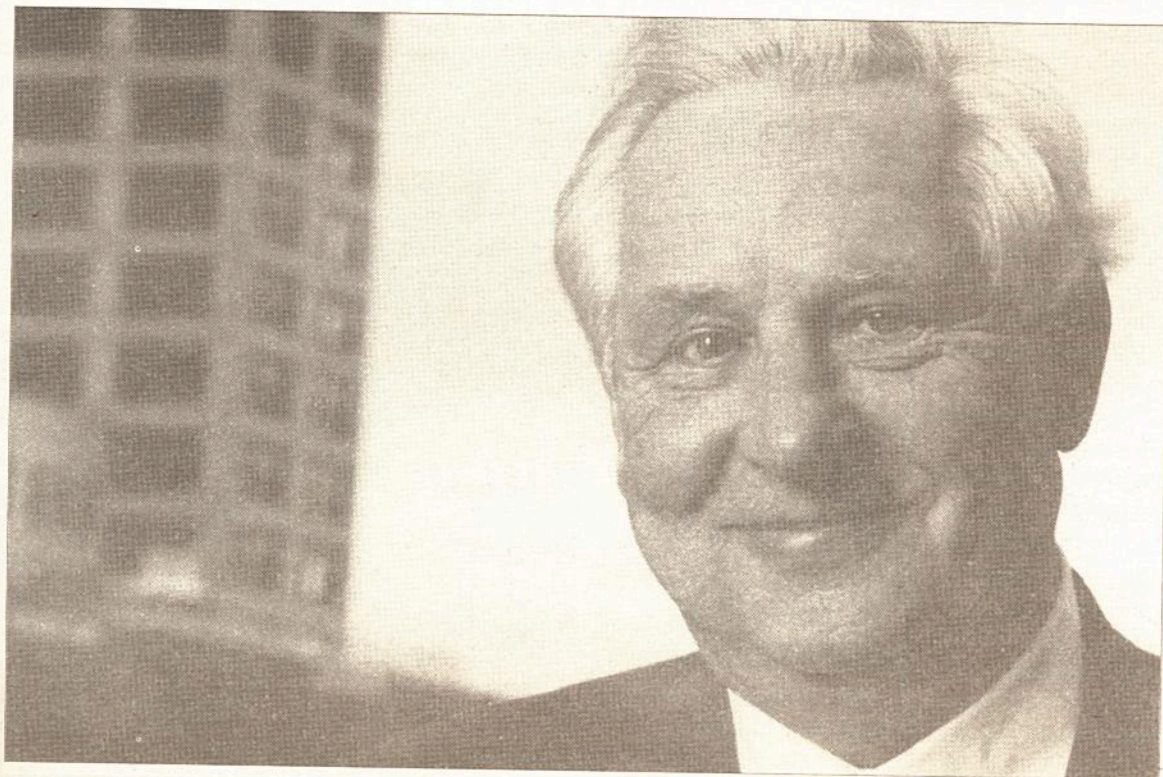


PHOTO OF PAUL SCHELL BY CASEY KELBAUGH.

"I really saw my job as helping those who were not represented, who weren't political constituents in the traditional sense. I have to say, it was a challenging group to work with, because you always got attacked, and politically it's easier to help those people who support you rather than those who attack you on a regular basis."

Outgoing Mayor Paul Schell

“I didn’t spend a lot of time trying to shift guilt from myself, or polishing my own personal image, or taking credit for a lot of stuff, all of which you need to do, I guess, if you’re in it to make a career in politics. I got into this job because I love the city, I wanted to get some results.”

Outgoing Mayor Paul Schell



PHOTO OF PAUL SCHELL BY CASEY KELBAUGH.

were comfortable with, and all the issues that come along with that, from great wealth to all the poverty and social issues that attend to that.

During that period, even though we were rocked by everything, from earthquakes to droughts to civil unrest to being the first city to have to deal with the Osama Bin Laden effort — it’s a long, long list. [Note: Schell is referring to convicted terrorist Ahmed Ressam, who was caught in Port Angeles carrying a bomb into the United States in December 1999. The arrest prompted Schell to cancel Seattle’s Millennium celebrations. Ressam attended an al-Qaida training camp in Afghanistan in 1998.] We had an emergency operations center open more times in the last four years than we did in the previous — I don’t know — 10, 20. There’s never been a period in the history of the city where we made [more] investments in our common ground: in our libraries, and our parks, and our community centers, and in our neighborhood programs, a thousand neighborhood matching funds.

While we didn’t succeed in solving homelessness, we made real progress in making a civil commitment. While we didn’t succeed in creating a system for early education and after-school programs, we made progress. We didn’t

succeed in dealing with drug abuse as something other than a crime, seeing it as something that needs to be treated differently, and more civilly.

So a lot of that work has been seeded. Whether it sprouts will depend on future generations. I feel very good about what we got done.

RC: Any one thing that you feel most proud of?

Schell: Project Lift Off. I think that’s the one that is really cooking. It’s trying to create a regional system of early education and after-school programs. We know that children learn more the first five years; in many ways their fate is set before they get to kindergarten. And they don’t choose their circumstances. And so we’re being more systematic about how we provide children a chance to learn early on, making a system out of the random acts of kindness that are out there. The same is true of after-school programming. We now have 20 partners and 100 organizations participating. We’re going to get some federal support as well. It’s outside City Hall; we’re just a partner, which is where it should reside. That is where the real change will happen.

I’m proud of our efforts in homelessness. I’m sad that we didn’t get

further along the line. This is a serious, challenging problem that’s going to take a regional response long-term. And real progress on a lot of related issues that are a mix-up. None of them have any political support, so in the political environment it is going to be hard to make progress. You can’t win. But you’ve got to try.

RC: If you could take back one thing that you did, what would it be?

Schell: I probably should have hired Roger [my public-relations chief] to find a better way to explain [my record] to the media. You know I didn’t do a very good job there.

I think politics is the name of this job. There’s the politics of how you look, and I find a lot of people worry a lot more about that than what they do. But I think you can still look good and try to do the right thing. You need to present that in a better way than I did, and I think that’s a harder challenge. I don’t have a good answer.

RC: What’s next for you?

Schell: Six months to sort of take stock and look for another challenge. I sort of look at [my term] as a chapter in what’s been a career. My career has

been the city and finding useful things to do. I may look for purpose and meaning but I’ll try to make some money, try to do some good, try to have some fun — maybe in reverse order for a while. It’s been a 24/7 job, I probably averaged 12-14 hours a day, and you’re always thinking about it, so I’ll need to sort of decompress from that.

[Note: On December 19, Schell announced that he had taken a job as an advisor to Columbia Hospitality, which manages the Bell Harbor International Conference Center and other properties in the region, including two hotels co-owned by him and his wife.]

RC: Any words of advice for the next mayor?

Schell: Get over the campaign and get on with the job. It’s a big job, you need to be as inclusive as possible. Focus on getting professional people and loyal people to help you do the job. There’s no way anybody can really be prepared for this job. The campaign mode is attack and defend rather than seek and solve. People need to give you some slack. Anybody in this job is going to make some mistakes, and you’ve got to give them some room to make some mistakes. I hope they do that. And I want him to succeed. ■

Bad Egg Greg

The day after soon-to-be Mayor Greg Nickels vowed revenge on the City Council for eliminating the money for one staffer in his new administration, you could tell that the new guy in the pool was out to make waves.

This is the mayor that *Seattle Times* columnist Nicole Brodeur recently predicted would give us a restful four years. And then, in a private meeting, according to a report in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, he tells Councilmember Jim Compton that “there will be retaliation” for the budget slash.

Nickels has been not-so-nice on other fronts: foremost is his summary canning of Jim Diers, who’s earned a brigade of fans from his 14 years as head of the Department of Neighborhoods. Supporters held a good-bye party for Diers on Monday, December 17; one symbol of the popular anger against Nickels’ decision was a “Jim Diers for Mayor” sign.

As the old folks are wheeled out, the new kids are also looking a little mean. In mid-December, Nickels named Tim Ceis as his right-hand man. As a chief deputy to King County Executive Ron Sims and advisor to Governor Gary Locke, he’s an insider with a reputation so ferocious it’s earned him the nickname “The

Shark” — a moniker he wears with verve, collecting his own sharky knick-knacks. Agency representatives who work with the county accuse Ceis of rough play.

Aside from all the bureaucratic snuffing and shuffling, there’s a more important question: What will Nickels do about human services for poor people?

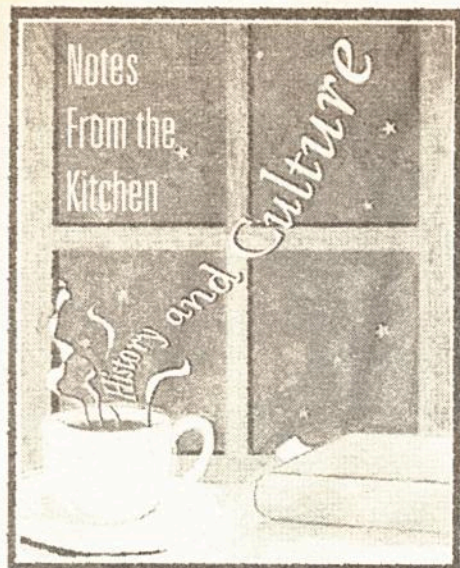
The early signs are mixed, says Julia Sterkovsky, head of the Seattle Human Services Coalition, who has heard that the new mayor’s top priorities are transportation, public safety, and neighborhoods.

“It concerns me that [social services] won’t be among those priorities,” she says.

Still, when considering Nickels’ performance on the County Council, there are some good signs. “We definitely have hope,” she continues. “When Councilmember Nickels was on the County Budget Committee, he was proactive in bringing us in to give advice on funding.”

“So far, unfortunately, the few indications we have seen are not stellar.” ■

—Adam Holdorf



New Year's Solutions

By Liz Smith

New Year's is such a great holiday. There are no cards to send or presents to buy. There are no religious overtones, and one is not obliged to do anything except go out and have some fun. It's a simple, pure holiday. If you want to sit thoughtfully and make resolutions, you can go in the other room and shut the door and think. If you have a hangover, well, so do a lot of other people. While you're chewing aspirin and sipping ginger ale, they're all staying home too. There's not much traffic and you can have some quiet for your aching head.

Besides aspirin and ginger ale, I found a few other remedies and preventatives which will ease you through your celebrating. Drink brand name good quality liquor; don't mix your liquors — in other words, no tequila shots with a peppermint schnapps chaser; don't drink on an empty stomach; drink lots of water; drink Gatorade because it has electrolytes and salts; take extra vitamin B; take some olive oil or evening primrose oil; have a coke with lemon juice or grapefruit juice in it.

Some people eat menudo, basically a soup made with tripe — cow's stomach — which has a lot of vitamin B in it. I think you would have to be feeling pretty vigorous to tackle a bowl of menudo, though, and a tiny vitamin pill would be much easier on all of your senses, not to mention a tempest-tossed digestive system.

Then there is the peculiar "Seattle Way" of celebrating, which entails staying home because the mayor is a spoilsport, and watching people on TV jumping for joy, while sipping a festive glass of skim milk. They do say virtue is its own reward. Phooey. New Year's Eve is for having a couple of drinks and some fun, and for hollering at the Space Needle with all the other happy people.

For this New Year's Day meal, I have a menu which is easy on the cook, as it can all be prepared in advance. It's supposed to bring good luck to have some sort of bean dish, so there is a lentil soup. The smoked salmon spread can be served with toast, or bread if the noise of the crunching would be too loud. The pears are really good right now. I suggest the comice, simply sliced and served with the rest of the meal.

Lentil Soup (yield: about five cups)

- 1 cup lentils, any type (start the night before)
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1/2 cup onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup carrots, cut in 1/4-inch slices
- 1/4 cup dry sherry
- 1 garlic clove, finely minced
- Salt and pepper
- 1 small potato, peeled and grated

1. Sort and rinse lentils. Soak for eight hours.
2. Melt butter in soup pot. Sauté vegetables on medium heat for five minutes. Add sherry and garlic and simmer 3–4 minutes.
3. Drain lentils, and add to soup pot with enough fresh cold water to cover. Add salt, pepper, and grated potato. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat. Simmer for about an hour. Serve in warmed bowls.

Smoked Salmon Spread (yield: about 2 cups)

- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1 Tbsp cream or milk
- 2 tsp lemon pepper
- 4 Tbsp very thinly sliced green onion or finely diced shallots
- 8 ounces smoked salmon, finely chopped

1. Mix in order given. Serve with toast or crackers.

Chocolate Ginger Truffles (yield: about 40 truffles)

- 1 pound good quality bittersweet chocolate
- 4 Tbsp butter
- 3 tsp powdered ginger
- 8 ounces cream
- 4 Tbsp sugar
- A two-inch piece of fresh ginger, cut in half-inch pieces
- 2 Tbsp Frangelico (optional)
- 1/2 cup each of cocoa and powdered sugar, mixed together



For this recipe, it's helpful to have a garlic press and a 1-Tablespoon-capacity ice cream scoop

1. Over hot, not simmering, water, melt the chocolate and the butter in the top half of a double boiler. When melted, whisk in the powdered ginger. Set aside.
2. Heat the cream with the sugar in a saucepan. Stir over medium heat until the sugar dissolves and cream comes just to the boil. Remove from heat.
3. Press the ginger until it yields 2 teaspoons of juice, and add the juice to the cream along with the Frangelico. Whisk the chocolate into the cream and stir until well blended.
4. Chill truffle paste for 20–30 minutes until fairly firm. Scoop rounds of mixture onto a tray lined with wax paper. If paste gets too hard, place over a pot of hot water for a few minutes. Whisk briefly and let cool again.
5. When all truffles are laid out, roll in cocoa-sugar mixture. Store in airtight container in refrigerator for up to one week.
6. Let sit on counter one hour before serving. ■

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Thursday, Dec. 6, 2:38 p.m. Café Septieme, Broadway. A known chronic public inebriate, a 50-year-old transient white male, entered Café Septieme and was disturbing customers. He had been drinking and was intoxicated — he had also soiled his clothes with urine. The owner of the café asked the man to leave several times, and he refused. Café employees physically removed him from the premises, and the police were called. Upon arrival, the police noticed the man out on the sidewalk yelling vulgarities and obscenities. He was arrested, and booked into King County Jail for trespass.

Thursday, Dec. 6, 11:19 p.m. Dick's Drive-In on Broadway. The officer observed a 39-year-old transient white male beneath the awning at Dick's. He has had previous dealings with the man at this location, and has trespassed him from the premises before for panhandling. The officer stopped his car, and the man noticed him and attempted to walk away. The officer ordered him to stop, and to return to the patrol car. The man said he'd been panhandling, and swore he would not trespass again. The officer has warned him on several occasions not to return to Dick's, but he always does. The man was arrested for trespassing, and was booked into King County Jail.

Friday, Dec. 7, 11:08 p.m. 1300 blk. E. Madison. Officer responded on the request of Seattle Fire Dept. regarding an assault. The victim, a 43-year-old transient Hispanic male, stated that the suspect walked up to him and punched him, knocking him out. The suspect is also a street person, and the victim did not know his name. An area check was conducted, with negative results. The victim had a split lip, and was transported to Harborview for medical attention.

Sunday, Dec. 9, 9:33 a.m. Vacant house, S. King Street. Officers met with the caretaker of the vacant property after he reported that when he showed up to the house that morning, he had found a hole in the plywood that was over the front door. Officers entered the house and found two subjects, a 32-year-old white female and a 30-year-old Asian male, sleeping in the attic. They were ID'd and told they were going to be criminally trespassed from the property. They said they had entered the house through the already existing hole in the plywood "door," and left without incident. The caretaker stated transients are continually entering the property, despite his best efforts to keep them out. There are no plans for the current owner of the house to do anything with it.

Thursday, Dec. 12, 6:48 p.m. Broadway and Harrison. Officers observed an 18-year-old homeless white female sitting on the sidewalk. She was peeling an apple and throwing the peels on the ground. The officer contacted her for a littering infraction, and for violation of the Sit/Lie ordinance. A check on her name revealed a juvenile warrant, and she was taken into custody and booked into jail. ■

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

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Life in a Barrel

Fire in the Barrel
By D.A. Dintzer
Xlibris, 2001
ISBN 1-4010-1106-3
182 pages, \$16

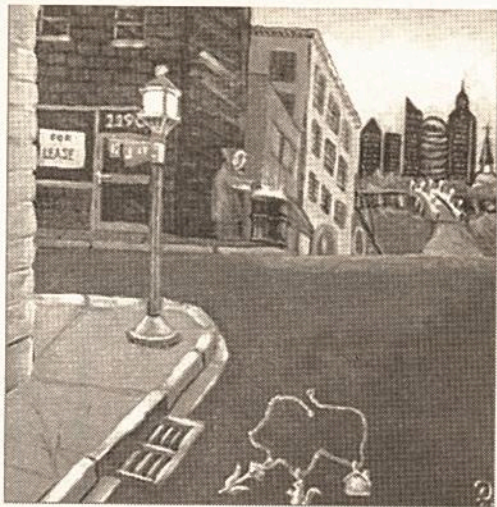
Review by Anitra Freeman

A conservative Senator is persuaded by a liberal Congressman and friend to spend one week living as a homeless person, wagering that it will change his opinions (and vote) on social programs. Unplanned events lead the Senator far deeper — and longer — into the homeless community than he had planned, with more life-changing consequences than either he or his friend had expected.

This story is written by a believer. As a Naval officer, Dintzer was himself awakened to the realities of poverty by a duty-related visit to one of the poorest neighborhoods of Detroit. He extended his awareness and empathy with two weeks living as a homeless person in one of the rougher areas of Detroit, and another two weeks in the Denny Regrade (Belltown) area of Seattle. His desire in this book is to present the humanity of people in homelessness and poverty, and so increase public empathy, compassion, and action.

I am glad that the book tacitly acknowledges that one week living in a "fleabag hotel" with \$50 in your pocket (the Senator's original planned excursion) is *not* a true experience of homelessness. He has to lose his memory, money, and lodging to really begin to "get it." Even then, he has it relatively easy: he is the guest of a working family that lives under the bridge.

There are a few unrealistic points. Dr. Wes Browning gets rather impatient with me when I fret over these logic problems in fiction plots, but I still fret. One of the central factors in the Senator's psychology is how much he loves his little girl, how much he misses her while he's away, how much he longs to be back with her. But we never hear anything about who is taking care of her while he's gone! And what happened at



home when he didn't show up on time?

The book *is* realistic in depicting the variety of homelessness, including a mentally ill poet, the alcoholic men sharing wine around a "fire in the barrel," a working wife and mother living with her children in a hand-built shack under a bridge, altruists, and predators. It is compassionate in depicting almost everyone with dignity (with the exception of the predators). Dintzer's main strength is in characterization; he's written about it for an online writer's magazine.

Books that have a mission have a certain common feel to them. If you like laughter, thrills, and general entertainment, you might be bored. If you like the *Reader's Digest*, church magazines, and general inspirational literature, you'll probably enjoy it. It has won a Clara Award, a book award judged without knowing who the author is, in the category of Mystery and Suspense.

The novel seems to be effective in fulfilling its mission, and it is certainly sincere. It may be a good Christmas gift for someone you know that you want to educate about homelessness. A portion of the proceeds goes to the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless and other initiatives toward ending homelessness in America.

When I worry about who's babysitting Jennifer, I remind myself it's just a story. But overall — with its lively characters and homeless heroes, and the commitment of the Senator in the end — I wish it weren't.

I think that's the strongest praise I can give the book. I wish it were true. ■

CLASSICS CORNER



by Permess'r Harris

Lately, we at Classics Corner have been feeling a bit out of step. Peter Jennings wouldn't be seen with us on a bet. Dan Rather would have us shot on sight. We are statistically aberrant. While 90% of the population thinks President Bush is "doing a good job" he just scares the crap out of us. Fortunately for Classics Corner, no one cares what we think. In America, we have the freedom to be irrelevant.

We're not supposed to bring this up, but millions of Afghans have been condemned to starvation. This, we are told, is the way things are. People die in wars, sometimes by the millions. That's why they call it "war." Our enemy, evil itself, will not be easy to defeat. This is why we need a permanent warfare state. Evil, it seems, plans to be around for a very long time.

The really scary thing is that most of us think we understand what's going on.

All of which leads us to Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*, a dark play written for a dark time. As the play opens, King Agamemnon has a problem. All of Greece is at his command, but, ironically, he is not in charge.

"Fortunately for Classics Corner, no one cares what we think."

For two months, the troops have assembled at Aulis, but there is no breeze to take them to Troy. Calchis the soothsayer announces that the Goddess Artemis wants the King's daughter dead. The troops, goaded into action by Odysseus, demand her blood. The most powerful man alive is forced to kill his own daughter.

True to form, Agamemnon waffles on the killing Iphigenia issue. Lured by power and seduced by the apparent inevitability of events, he consents to the sacrifice. By the time he realizes that a choice exists, the moment of decision has passed. Not even heroic Achilles can save Iphigenia from her pointless death.

In the end, the momentum of events is unstoppable and Agamemnon has no choice. "The wills of men, many and malignant," whines Agamemnon, "ruin life utterly." His wife Clytemnestra, who has more room for complaint, is more to the point: "Oh the mob — what a terror and an evil thing." This, however, is unfair. The mob just does what they're told.

In *Iphigenia*, Euripides sees through to how things really work. Base and ignoble motivations are made to look like god-ordained fate. Calchis, for example, is simply drunk on his own power. Odysseus, as usual, is playing politics. Agamemnon craves the approval of the masses. His brother Menelaus is driven by vengeful pride. Nothing is as it appears. What begins as the craven ambition of a few is transformed into inevitable fate.

This is what we do. We take our own self-interest, like revenge, power, and cheap gas for our SUVs, and define it as an unstoppable noble cause. We take our own lies, dress them up as justice, and forget we ever had a choice. ■



What's New in Computer Corner?

The Mac Workshop Coordinator!
Questions, comments, complaints, and kudos concerning the Mac Workshop can go to the new

Coordinator, Lily North.

Still keep your eyes peeled right here for computer lab updates!

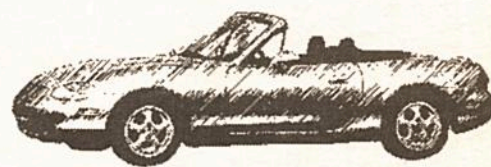
This issue, *Real Change* would like to thank all the businesses and individuals that have donated to the Mac Workshop, including:

Adobe Systems Inc. and Gifts In Kind International

If you have any questions about the computer lab or how to make donations, call *Real Change* at 206-441-3247 and ask for Lily

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New Year Notables

Thursday, 12/27

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.

Friday, 12/28

Seattle Women in Black Vigil for a just peace in Israel and Palestine, 4-6 p.m. at 4th and Pine.

Sunday, 12/30

Akiva Segan, a Seattle artist, presents slides and a gallery talk on **Holocaust Artwork**. 2 p.m. at the Frye Museum Auditorium, 704 Terry at Cherry, free; info 206-622-9250.

Humanists of Washington Fifth Sunday Salon, this and subsequent fifth Sundays. 3-8 p.m. at 16524-35th Ave NE. Bring food or drink to share, families including children welcome; info 206-527-8518.

Monday, 12/31

Radical Women present **A New Year's Eve**

Celebration for Irrepressible Optimists, featuring Latin and World Beat music and "King George's Follies", a theatrical farce on serious matters. 8:30 p.m. at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Door donation is \$5.00, buffet donation \$14.95 (sliding scale and work exchanges available for low income). For rides or childcare, call three days in advance 206-722-6057.

Peace Action of Washington's **Peace Cafe presents a celebrity Guest Barrista**. Join them for espresso, pastries, and politics, this and subsequent last Mondays, 7:30-9 p.m., at the Peace Café, 5828 Roosevelt NE.; info 206-529-8081.

Tuesday, 1/1

Vigil to **protest U.S. Bombing of Afghanistan** and to defend civil liberties in the U.S. 5-6:30 p.m. at Westlake Park, near 4th and Pine; (call to confirm date) info 911 Peace Coalition care of Fred Miller at Washington Peace Action 206-527-8050.

Wednesday, 1/2

Jobs with Justice Seattle Organizing Com-

mittee meeting, this and subsequent first Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m. at Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave., info 206-441-4969.

Thursday, 1/3

League of Women Voters' Forum, this and subsequent first Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. at Seattle First Baptist Church, Harvard and Seneca, free; info 206-329-4848.

Saturday, 1/5

Regular meeting of the Interfaith Network of Concern for the People of Iraq with major focus on joining others nationwide in **challenging the U.S. Embargo against Iraq**, 4 p.m., this and subsequent first Saturdays, at the Keystone Congregational Church, 5019 Keystone Place N., ; info 206-522-4934 or Kathleen Williamson joka@worldnet.att.net.

Monday, 1/7

Jubilee 2000 NW Coalition meeting working for debt relief for world's poorest nations, this and subsequent first Mondays, 5:30 p.m. at St. Mark's Cathedral, 1245 10th Ave E.; info Betsy Bell 206-933-1889 or Mary Margaret Pruitt 206-382-3785.

Tuesday, 1/8

Monthly meeting of Seattle Burma Roundtable working to **restore human**

rights in Burma, 7-8:45 p.m., University District Public Library, 5009 Roosevelt Ave. NE, info 206-784-5742.

Thursday, 1/10

Global Economy Working Group of the Church Council of Greater Seattle meeting, this and subsequent second Thursdays, 7 p.m., at St. Mark's Cathedral, Conference Room, 1245 10th Ave E.; info Mary Margaret Pruitt 206-382-3785.

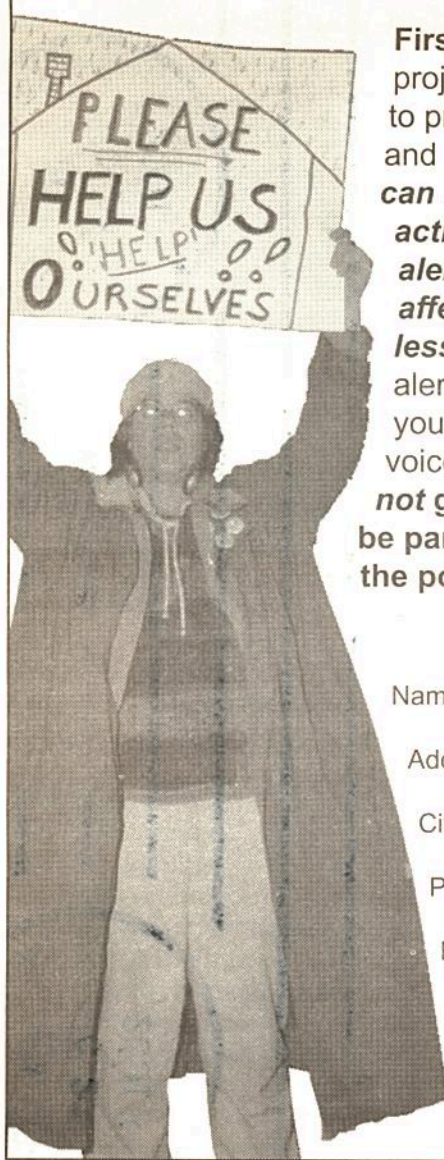
Bellevue Art Museum presents an exhibition of paintings by artist Roger Shimomura, "An American Diary and Memories of Childhood," about his family's Internment during World War II and Amnesia. Thursday and Friday, 7 p.m., at the Bellevue Art Museum, 510 Bellevue Way NE; info <http://www.bellevueart.org>.

Ongoing

Art exhibit "**Witness and Legacy: Contemporary Art about the Holocaust**," featuring 24 pieces created by Holocaust survivors. Free, through January 13 at Frye Art Museum, at Terry and Cherry, info 206-441-5747.

Exhibit by work from photographers Alan Pogue, who has been documenting conditions in Iraq and Palestine, and Phil Borges, who has **documented conditions for Afghan refugees**, through January 12 at Benham Studio, 1216 First Ave, info at 206-622-2480. ■

Do Something!



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

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

Notice of Public Meeting

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

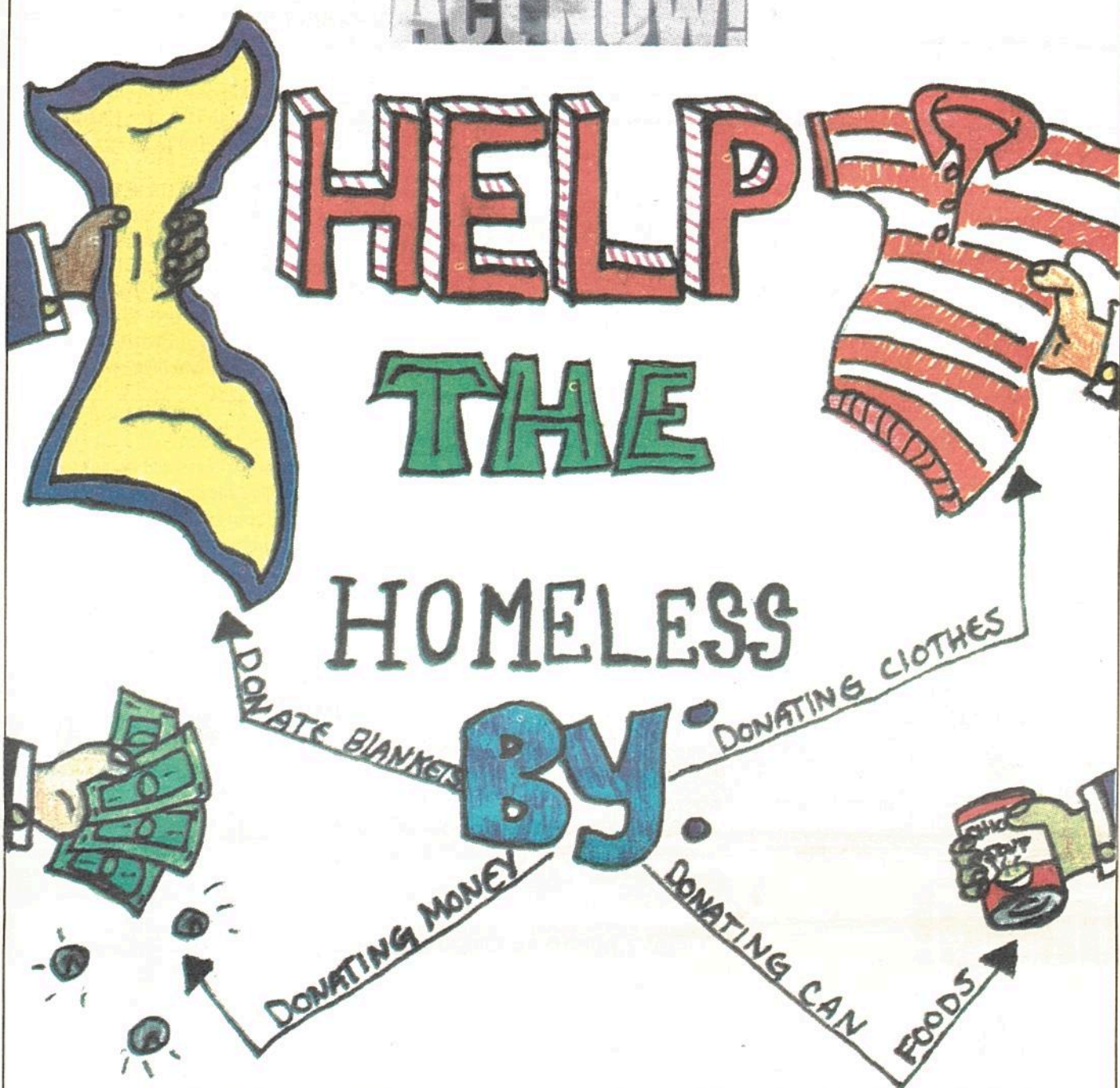
Monday, January 7, 2002
10 a.m. – 12 noon
PorchLight Housing Center
Seattle Housing Authority
907 NW Ballard Way, Suite 200, Seattle WA 98107

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.

citizens participation project



The following letter came with the above poster by Conrado Padillo, an 8th grader at Asa Mercer Middle School.

Dear Friends at Real Change,

Our 8th grade health class read a short story called "A Homeless Woman Living in Her Car." We also read a poem, "There Is the Dream of Someone Else..." by Anitra Freeman. From these pieces, our students were challenged to design a poster that communicated how we can take an active role in supporting the needs of the homeless. I felt this poster by Conrado Padillo was extraordinary. Conrado sought to keep the message clear, supported by graphics that catch the eye, and inform the reader of how to help in real and possible ways. I am proud of Conrado for his perceptive artwork and his understanding that we can make a difference. Is there any chance that this poster could be printed in your newspaper?

Sincerely, Mrs. Alice J. Ellis, 8th Grade Teacher, Room 203

Always pleased to recognize anyone willing to put their talents towards ending homelessness. Thank you, Conrado, and many happy returns in the New Year. ■

Real Change
2129 2nd Ave.
Seattle, WA 98121

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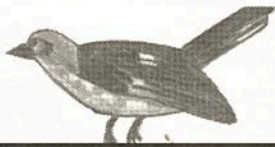




Mockingbird Times



Washington State Foster Care
and Homeless Youth Speak Out



DECEMBER 27, 2001

VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.MOCKINGBIRDSOCIETY.ORG

VOLUME I, ISSUE 6

Are you 14-22? Share your creativity and get paid! Look for details on our website

Working to Change the Foster Care System

*Former foster child
Adam Cornell looks to law
to make things better for kids*

INTERVIEW BY JULIA HIGUERA AND MOCKINGBIRD STAFF

THE MOCKINGBIRD TIMES was very excited to interview Adam Cornell, a former foster child and now a law clerk in Everett, Washington. Adam knew he what he wanted when he was in junior high. He knew he would like the laws to change, and the only way to get the law to change is to know the law.

When did you enter the foster care system?

I entered the foster care system at age 5. I was living in Bellingham, WA, where I was born and spent the early part of my life. I came into the system when my mother had been in a car accident. She was really unable to take care of us and my father had left us. Along with my mother's difficulties from having been in the accident, she had succumb to alcohol and drug addiction. I was the oldest of four siblings, and because we were such a large family and my mother was alone, she couldn't take care of us. We found our way into foster homes at that time.

How did you decide to become a lawyer?

I think that I started aspiring to be a lawyer in junior high school, because of my experiences in foster care. I saw the difference that lawyers could make in the life of a child. I also see the law as providing an opportunity for the system to change. If you want to change the law, you need to know about the law, and that is why I wanted to go to law school.

Was there any specific law you were dealing with in junior high that made you think about this?

It was more seeing the effect that the system had on other children in care at the time. I saw the injustices being done to them and I wanted to change it.

Why did you get involved in legislation?

During my last year of law school I had been working with a law firm in Portland, Oregon, and it was suggested to me that perhaps I begin to look at ways in which the foster care system in Oregon might be improved. I thought that one very important aspect of improving the lives of youth in care is to help them to have access to higher education. So I set about drafting legislation that provides full college tuition scholarships to foster children who graduate from high school or get their GED and are accepted into college in Oregon.

That legislation passed in July. I guess my real interest and passion in that legislation was based not only on my own experiences as a foster child by my work with that law firm and seeing the challenges that children in foster care face today. We know that only one percent of foster children who leave care at 18 will someday get a four-year degree. Those statistics are appalling. I thought that this legislation might help to increase the number of youth who could go to college.

What other kinds of legislation have you been involved in?

That legislation in Oregon is really the only one I've been involved in directly. I'm involved in other legislative efforts in the state of Washington. I hope to always be an advocate for children.

What is your involvement with the Mockingbird Society?

I had the pleasure of meeting Jim Theofelis about two or three months ago. We started talking about the work he has done and all the work you are doing. He invited me to speak at the fundraiser about a month ago. Up to this point my involvement has been about getting the word out about what you all are doing.

Are you involved in any other organizations?

I am currently on the strategic planning committee for the National Association for Public Interest Law and I am a member of the Child Welfare League of America's Independent Living Task Force. I am also on the National Advisory Committee for Standards of

Excellence for Independent Living Services for the Child Welfare League of America.

How does what the Mockingbird Society is doing fit with your vision of the future of the foster care system?

It fits it well. What Mockingbird does is really provides youth in care with all sorts of opportunities for growth, whether it's the *Mockingbird Times* or the policy advocacy you all do. The best way to improve the lives of youth in care is to take these challenges on from many different sides. Youth in care are multidimensional, so the solution requires a multidimensional approach. That has always been my vision, and I believe it's the Mockingbird Society's vision as well.

What are some ways you think the current foster care system should be changed?

I would like to see the public learn more about foster children. I would like to see the public learn more about the importance of qualified foster families in the lives of foster children. I think on of the most important things, and one of the first steps we should try to take, is to educate the public about who foster kids are. Once we start to do that, people will start to understand this group of young people, and that might lead to greater improvements in the system.

I think that another thing we absolutely need to do is get the state to dedicate more resources to foster children and to agencies that support them. We are facing very difficult times right now, and the resources that are often cut first are resources that go towards foster children and other vulnerable populations. Politicians and political leaders need to be mindful of the effect of those cuts. The populations that need those resources the most are going to suffer the most. The long term effect of not providing those resources will be much more severe.

What are some ways you think the foster care system has changed?

Well, one of the big changes since I was in care was federal legislation that was passed in the late '80s, called the Adoption and Safe Families Act. That law basically says that youth in care shouldn't stay in care more than 18 months. Now, there are lots of exceptions to that, but there is actually a federal law that tries to keep kids in permanent and stable placements. That didn't exist when I was a kid, and so I moved around a lot in different foster homes. I spent a lot of years in care that maybe I wouldn't have if I had been around when this legislation was passed.

What did you use for motivation to get where you are today?

I had wonderful people in my life to motivate me.

CORNELL CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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Mockingbird and nest logo by Julia Higuera
Mockingbird Times is special insert in *Real Change*

Letter from the Editor

Looking Back

THIS ISSUE marks the sixth for the *Mockingbird Times*. When we started, we had enough money to get to this point. Six months, six issues. Since then, we have been awarded a grant from the Seattle Foundation and have received private donations. Individuals and groups seem to be recognizing the incredible work these young people are accomplishing. Everywhere I go I get wonderful comments about the interesting and creative articles our writers produce. Youth from across the state continue to get involved, via both readership and submission of stories, bringing a critical voice to this critical issue.

Thank you for any support you have given to the Mockingbird Society. Please feel welcome to donate to our ongoing existence, and of course, please continue to read the *Mockingbird Times*.


Looking Ahead

THE HOLIDAY SEASON passes into the first

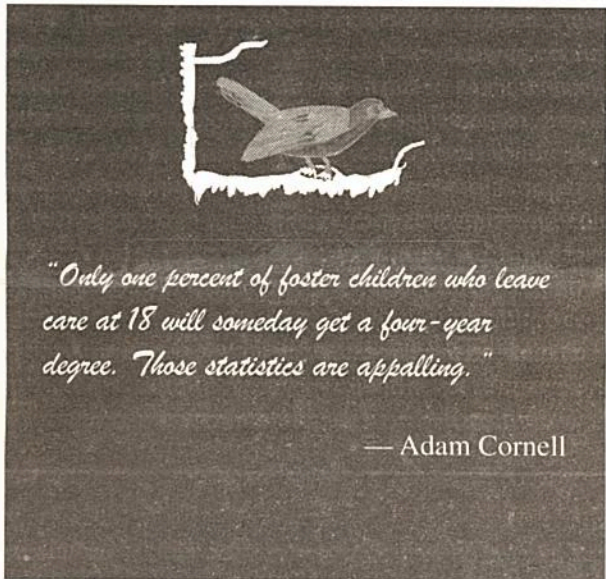
several weeks of the New Year. We at the Mockingbird Society hope that your time with family and friends was even more special this year. 2002 promises to be a very important year for children, adolescents, and families who depend on the Washington state Child Welfare System. The Governor and the Legislature must resolve a budget crisis that threatens to decimate current services to children, adolescents, and families.

Last edition of the *Mockingbird Times* we asked you to contact the Governor's office to express your concern on behalf of children and adolescents in foster care. Many of you did and it worked. Since then, the Governor has presented his proposed 2002 budget. We are pleased to share that his projected 50 percent cut to foster care was reduced to 5 percent.

I strongly encourage you to contact the Governor's office [(360) 902-4111] and thank him for his support and commitment to children in foster care. Again, if you make that call, please let us know at the Mockingbird Society, two telephone calls that will make a tremendous difference. Building a world-class foster care system in Washington state demands some effort from us all. Make the calls, please.



Jim Theofelis



Meet Our Staff

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THANK YOUS

Richard Hugo House, *Real Change*, Children's Home Society, Adam Cornell, Casey Family Program, Suzette Higuera, The Mockingbird Society Board of Directors, Billy and Soledad

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Seattle, WA 98102
(206) 323-KIDS (5437)
www.mockingbirdsociety.org

Positive Power: Life Skills



How to Obtain a Washington State ID

By JULIA HIGUERA

ONE OF THE MOST important things to have is an Identification Card. Without an Identification Card, you can't do anything. It is also against the law not to have identification on you.

To get a card if you are a minor — someone 18 years or younger — you must bring a parent or guardian with you to the state Department of Licensing. The parent or guardian must show proof of identity and proof of relationship to you. When your last names are different, additional documents (such as those listed below) that show the link between a minor and a parent can be used to get Identification Card.

Items that can be used to get a state-issued Identification Card include:

Birth certificates or registration cards

(If used as a sole document establishing your legal name or date of birth, a certified copy of the birth certificate or registration is required.)

Social security card

Certificate of marriage or divorce decrees

Voter registration certificates and titles

School transcripts and/or records

Credits or financial contracts

Bank statements with address and name

Internal revenue service documents

Photo identification cards for non-drivers cost \$4 for the first card, \$5 for each duplicate ID. You must show the same identification forms as a driver to get your ID card.

If there's an issue you want to see *Mockingbird Times* cover, we want to know about it. We are also interested in any contributions you may have: artwork, poetry, essays, photography, reviews or article ideas. If we decide to use your work, we will pay up to \$25. Please email or write us with any questions regarding submissions: Valerie@mockingbirdsociety.org or Mockingbird Times, Submissions Dept., 3302 Fuhrman Ave. E, Ste. 107, Seattle, WA 98102. We want to hearing from all over the state.



Join the Mockingbird Society: make a difference in the lives of Washington's most vulnerable youth

THE MOCKINGBIRD SOCIETY is an independent, non-profit organization that is dedicated to improving the safety, quality of life and future of the children and adolescents living in the Washington State foster care/group home system. The *Mockingbird Times* is a job-training program sponsored by the Mockingbird Society.

All members of the Mockingbird Society will receive the *Mockingbird Times* monthly.

I want to support The Mockingbird Society

Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Mockingbird Society in the amount of:

\$1,000 + Protector \$ _____ \$500 - \$999 Care Taker \$ _____
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- Please bill me for the amount indicated above.
- My employer will match my gift, enclosed is my matching gift form.
- I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.
- Please do not include my name on published donor lists.

To donate by mail: Please fill out and mail this form with a check or money order payable to The Mockingbird Society, to The Mockingbird Society, 3302 Fuhrman Ave E Ste 107, Seattle, WA 98102

The Core of Punk Rock

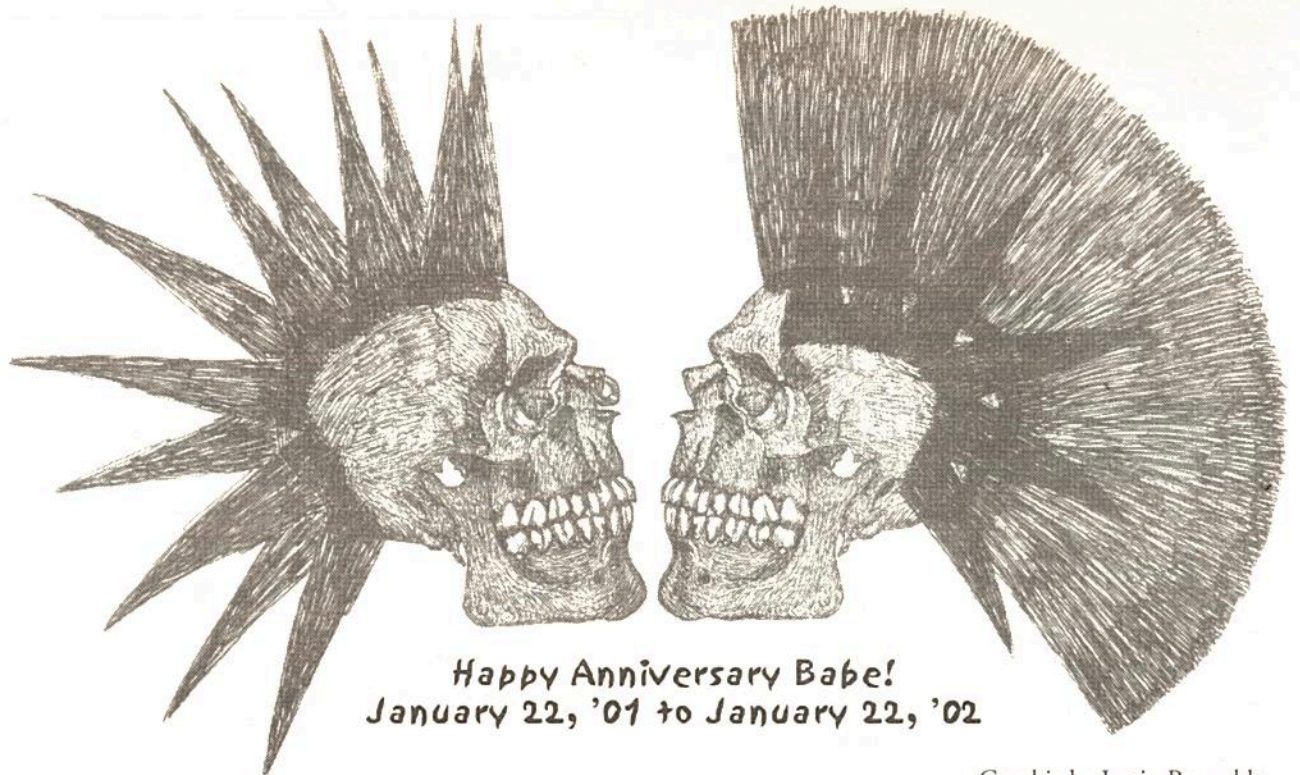
By JUSTIN REYNOLDS

DO YOU HAVE TO BE HOMELESS to be punk rock?

Well my view on it is that you don't necessarily have to be homeless to be punk rock. And by the way, what is Punk Rock? Is it that watered down, diluted, pansy crap on MTV that makes a mockery of the true underground punk scene, is it the Fashion? Is it a way of life? Does it have to come from the heart or the wallet?

Do you have to drink beer, do you have to have a Mohawk, can you do it over night or only on the weekends, do you have to hate hippies, can you live in a house, can you live with your parents? Do you have to go through hardships, be institutionalized, raped, arrested, beaten, shot, counseled, overdosed, molested, dropout, watch your parents fight, kicked out, fired, thrown into the system, taken away from your parents, broken up, lost, losing someone, no where to go, confusion, war, politics, violence? Do you have to carry a chain every where you go, surrounded by prejudice, racism, stereotypes, labels, crime, drug use, hate, police brutality, shunted on by the higher class, kicked, at the bottom of society, camaraderie, a brotherhood, squatting, spit on, conflict?

Now for my view on punk. To me it's a way of life. *It's from the heart. I couldn't live any other way.* For me it's an outlet on politics, so many things I dislike and have come to hate through the years. I can relate with everyone in the punk community. I don't do it to be cool, it's the only environment I feel comfortable



Graphic by Justin Reynolds.

with. To me you cannot do it overnight or on the weekend. Everything me and my friends have been through, and to see something on TV or on the street were someone "looks" to be "cool" makes me sick. Doing so dilutes everything we stand for, contradicts everything, from the words we say to the songs we sing.

And what do we stand for? Well from my experiences the general population, "the stupid population," would like to think that "PUNK" equals, racism, rebellion, delinquency, and the destruction of our society, that little parasite witch that needs to be eliminated. Due to being stereotyped I cannot go anywhere without being harassed. And I think to myself, Why? I'm not here to break things or use drugs. I'm here to make a positive change socially and politically through my music and the way I live, and at least 98 percent of the Seattle

"PUNK" community will say the same. Well again, What do we stand for? Well for one, me and most of my friends won't even wear clothing that was made in a country with horrible labor standards, and I can't even go into some stores because I don't believe in corporate globalization.

I grew up in a small town where we had the best little burger joints and grocery stores that had been there for 40 years, places you've come to trust and grow up with enjoying their unique little qualities. It's all been wiped out with all this standardized corporate crap. They destroy the land to make their parking lots and stores. Will it ever stop? When will the greed be quenched?

Social issues are really important to us too and I will talk about that next time when we continue our exploration of the homeless punk connection. 🐦

In Retrospect

By SOLEDAD PICON

"DIME CON QUIEN andas y te dire quien eres." That means: "Tell me who you hang out with and I will tell you who you are." My mom always told me this. I wasn't sure what that meant back then.

My first best friend, Nancy, was into gangs. I started hanging around gang members. When my mom found out, she forbade me to talk to Nancy. My mom warned

me about her. Mom said she was "bad news." Sometimes you become identified with the people you hang out with.

Running away is bad. I know this already. Nothing comes out good when young girls run away. Running away leads to drugs, sex and/or rape, stealing, problems, and sometimes death. I have been through some of these things already. I won't run away again.

When I started using drugs, I thought I would never get caught. The truth is, no matter how careful you are, sooner or later you will get caught. Drugs turned me into a violent young lady. I really wasn't being myself. I

did and said things when I was high that I now regret. Now I pray that the Lord and my mom will forgive me.

I met a guy who turned out to be controlling and abusive. He wasn't like this when we started going out. I don't know what made him act like this. Maybe it was his jealousy, or my drug habit, or our baby's death. I know he was hurting; I just wish I could have helped him.

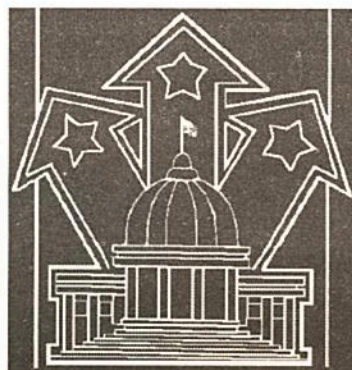
If I could go back in time, I would listen to my mom and the people who care about me. I would say "NO!" to drugs. I would apologize to the people I hurt in the past. I can't go back in time, but I can learn from my mistakes. 🐦

Insight for the Future

Use your story to change the system on Homeless Youth Lobby Day

BUDGET CUTS may eliminate some or all services for teens and young adults. The Mockingbird Society wants you to speak out about how this affects you. Send us your stories about being homeless or using services. The stories can be anonymous and short. We will pass them on to legislators to show them how cutting services hurts real people.

Or, if writing your story isn't enough, come tell legislators your story yourself on Homeless Youth Lobby Day.



On February 8 in Olympia, you can meet with your legislators to talk about what concerns you. The day begins at 9:30 a.m. in the Cherberg Building meeting rooms A, B, C with a welcome and orientation. At lunchtime, Theater of Liberation will present "Theater in the Rotunda," with homeless youth actors.

Come and be part of this fun, exciting, important work. Legislators need to hear your voice. 🐦

For more information, contact Jim Theofelis or Valerie Douglas at the Mockingbird Society, at (206) 323-5437, or on the web at www.mockingbirdsociety.org.

In Memoriam

ROBERT
AMBROSE
BLANEY

February 3, 1932 —
October 14, 2001

A friend to all children

CORNELL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

That was probably the most important thing. People who believed in me when I didn't think I could do it.

What would you say to youth in care who are experiencing difficulties in moving in a positive direction?

I think I would say that there are people out there and that there are agencies out there who care about kids, who care about youth in care. Sometimes it seems for many youth in care that they are alone, and I felt alone when I was in care for much of the time I spent there. But the reality is that there are good people and organizations that really care about kids. I would say be open to the joy that people have to share with you.

I would also say to youth in care to dream big and to know that there is unbelievable strength and unbelievable insight that come from those experiences in care. It's really difficult sometimes to understand that, because the world seems so chaotic. But if youth in care can just step away briefly and look at all of the skills and strengths they have from their experience, then they can begin to see themselves as strong and capable and resilient.

The youth in care that I have met through my life, including foster brothers and sisters and youth who helped me pass legislation in Oregon are the most capable group of people that I have ever met. I would encourage them to see their strengths, to use their experiences for good, not only in their own lives but to help others in similar situations. I think that it's incredibly important for youth in care to help each other, to use their strengths for good. 🐦

Lawsuit Update

EARLIER THIS MONTH, a jury ruled in favor of foster children and former foster children whose Bellingham lawsuit alleged that the numerous placements many foster children experience inflict psychological damage. (See "Lawsuit Demands Better Foster Care System," *Mockingbird Times*, Nov. 29, 2001.) The nature of the lawsuit also required the state Department of Social and Health Services to reform certain policies within the Washington state foster care system. Adam Cornell helped explain where the lawsuit now stands and what it could mean for the foster care system.

The lawsuit was just concluded in Whatcom County. The party who brought the case was essentially asking that the state be asked to reform, and a jury found that the state was at fault and that they would have to reform or take steps to reform DSHS in Washington state. But the case has been appealed to the Washington state Court of Appeals. What that means is that the State has said that the trial court has made an improper ruling, that the jury was wrong.

What happens now is difficult to say. It will probably be awhile before we hear from the Court of Appeals, and if they plan to decide if the jury's ruling was right or wrong. In the meantime, the judge who presided over the case in Whatcom County will have to decide whether he will start requiring the state to reform. The judge may, while the case is pending the Court of Appeals, start directing the State to do certain things to reform DSHS. The judge may also decide not to do that. [Editor's Note — Earlier this month the judge indicated he would ask DSHS and the lawsuit's lawyer to negotiate possible reforms in the foster-care system. However, DSHS is likely to appeal the jury verdict, which could stop negotiations.]

Some of the reform items that the plaintiffs were asking for were things like mandating lower case loads for case workers, and providing foster parents with full histories of the children who are in their care so that they are well aware of their challenges. Another suggested reform was that DSHS do a better job of determining what sort of families were involved with a foster child, to make certain a child was not placed in a home where they could be subjected to abuse by other siblings or adults. The reform also asked for full background checks on the families. 🐦



Poetry Corner

So You Want Your Cake?

Is there something wrong with me? Am I not good enough?
Is it that I can't provide what you are looking for or what you need?
No, it's not. There are no inadequacies in me.

You want your cake and eat it too. Well this piece of cake is no longer
One in which you can bite. I am poison. If you demand that you must have a bite, I will not
warn you. You should take that longing bite and suffer the ultimate consequences (in the end).

I am not going to be the one to suffer anymore. The pain is too great almost unbearable, you
say I should be glad you are still present, but why? Be glad I continue to make the same
mistakes. No! You're right, I should be glad for this will be the last time my heart aches.

— JULIA HIGUERA

Farewell to Love

Believe me
I want to stay clean
I love you enough
To wear long sleeves
Keeping a secret
So not to lose you
Too late now
I chose to lose my sanity
Just say goodbye
Believe me
I want to stay clean
I love you enough
To wear long sleeves
I will come back
After I lose everything
Get on my knees
Believe me
I want to stay clean
I love you enough
To wear long sleeves
I'm too weak
To fulfill your highness
Don't forget to wave
Off I go to succeed at nothing
Believe me
I want to stay clean
I love you enough
To wear long sleeves

By BILLY BERRET

Real Songs

REVIEW BY ELI WILSON

THE STROKES are an underground group that got together in New York City in 1998. They hit it big in Europe before catching on in the United States. They have a wonderful pop rock feel.

Their debut CD is called *Is This It?* I like the song "Last Night," because that song is how I feel about a lot of things, like when your so-called friend, girlfriend, or family does not care and nobody understands.

Last night she said
Oh, Baby, I feel so down
Oh, and turned me off
When I feel left out
So I, I turned around
Oh, Baby, I don't care no more
I know this for sure
I'm walking out that door

I saw the video to the song "Last Night" and they



Is This It?



The Strokes

seemed just like the band I'm putting together. They were just having fun and seemed really relaxed on stage, like it was no big deal. I can relate to how real the songs are in the lyrics and music. 🐦

Designate the Mockingbird Society as the benefactor of your United Way donation.