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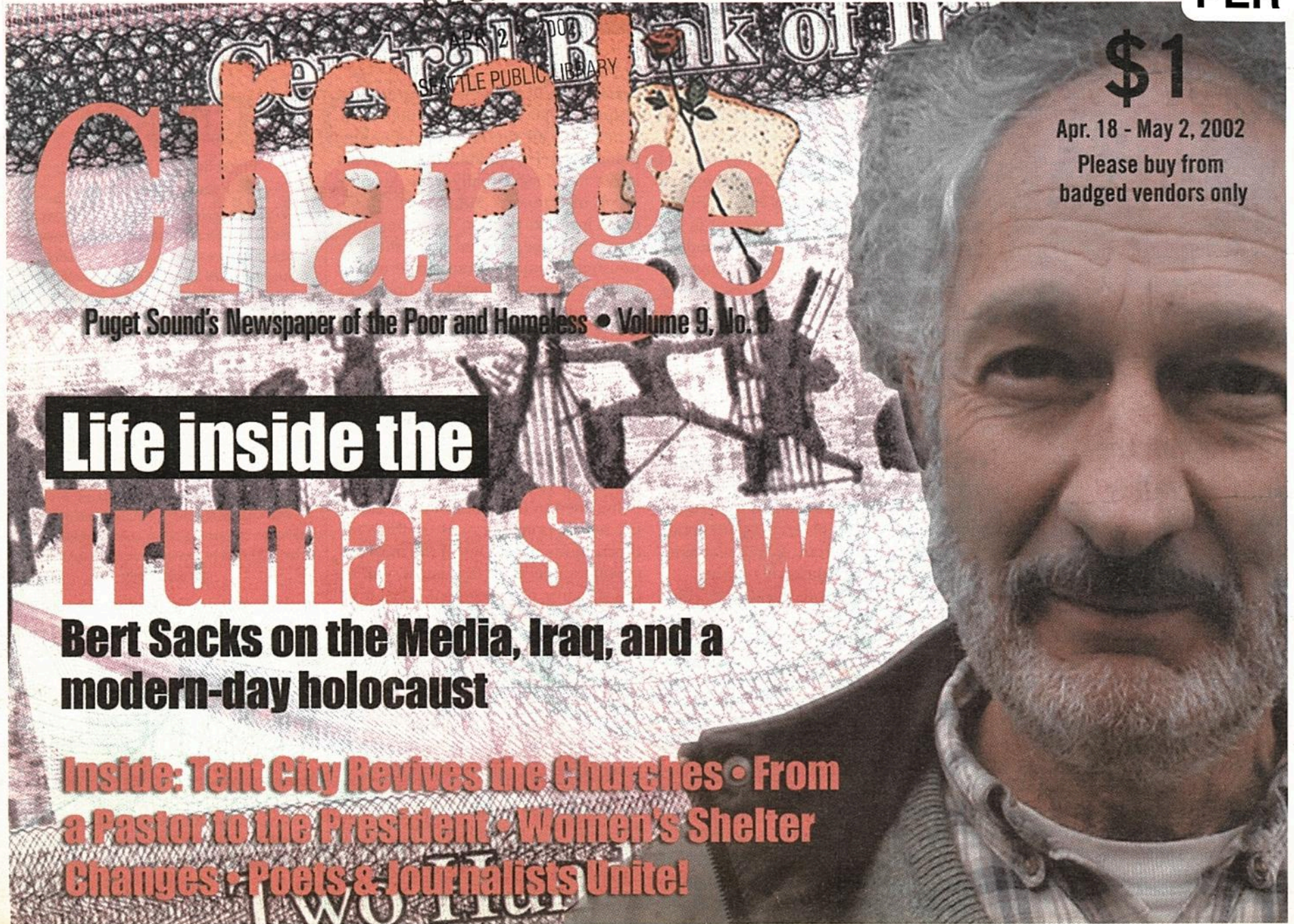


PHOTO OF BERT SACKS, BY ADAM HOLDORF.

Interview by Romie Ponce

**W**hat is the American Dream? Seattle-based activist Bert Sacks believes that the "American Dream" requires Americans to live lives ignorant of events and information that are unpleasant or difficult. Inaccurate and inconclusive reporting from the media, he says, is the main contributor to this ignorance about our communities and our world.

*Real Change* met with Bert Sacks as he organized and prepared to participate in the April 20 Mass Rally, "Wake up Washington." The rally, sponsored by Bert's group Citizens Concerned for the People of Iraq, opposes launching a wider war and supports civil liberties and funding for human needs, not more military spending. Following the rousing chorus of alarm clocks and bells, there will be music and speakers presenting information about the sanctions in Iraq.

What makes Bert Sacks such an important member of the team is his passion to get unreported facts to uninformed citizens. A single UNICEF report about the drastic increase of children's deaths (more than 5,000 a day) resulting from strategic U.S. bombing ignited his mission to get the facts and figures published. His lobbying of local newspapers has gotten results: The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* sent a reporter to Iraq and documented what it found there; The *Seattle Times* editorial board has called for an end to the sanctions. In recent weeks, Sacks has visited Seattle-area high school government classes in hopes of getting the facts about the sanctions on the table to an audience that still believes they have a right to know what they're voting for.

Since 1996, Sacks has traveled to Iraq six times, bringing medicine and supplies to sick and impoverished children. Everyone who undertakes the trip risks a \$1 million fine and a 12-year jail sentence imposed by the U.S. government.

**Real Change:** What influenced you to oppose the expansion of the war on terrorism and the use of economic sanctions?

**Bert Sacks:** Growing up Jewish, I always heard about the Holocaust, and I couldn't understand how something like that could happen. How could civilized countries allow this to happen?

After the Gulf War, I read a *Wash-*

*ington Post* article reporting a Harvard Study stating due to U.S. bombing, epidemics caused by water-borne diseases and resulting death would be enormous. They estimated 170,000 children in Iraq were going to die. My mouth fell open. What! That is more babies and infants than all the soldiers killed in the war.

And also, nobody talked about it. That was the first and the only time I ever saw those numbers in a newspa-

per. When I looked for that story in the local paper, they omitted the numbers. They left out 170,000 dead children. That is the state of our media.

I was quite upset with my own country and the way we treated the Gulf War like a football game. Even if you thought the war was necessary, you can't view the killing of so many innocent people as necessary. I just couldn't leave the issue after that. I couldn't forget about it. From the time I read those reports until now, this became and is my issue.

**RC:** What do you think this says about America's understanding of humanity? You mentioned the Holocaust, do you think the two issues can be compared?

**Sacks:** We couldn't be doing what we are doing if we knew what we are doing. Imagine that Iraqi children are different than American children. Imagine that Iraqi parents don't love their children the way we love our kids. We couldn't do it. It requires ignorance and blindness. That's what you had to cultivate to be a guard in the concentration camps.

We're losing humanity — it is what the American Dream requires of us. September 11 was a warning sign, a wake up, and a reality check. It should make us wonder why people are so angry with us that they would do this to us. And I guarantee you it isn't just the 20 men on the airplanes.

**RC:** What are the issues surrounding the Iraq sanctions that people need to know about?

**Sacks:** According to UNICEF, the bombing of and economic sanctions against Iraq have contributed to the deaths of half a million children under the age of five and continue to contribute to 'excess' deaths of 5,000 children per month. Because of pinpoint surgical bombings targeting the electrical plants, safe drinking water was eliminated, sewage leaked into rivers that people bathe and drink from, and incubators in hospitals were turned off. Epidemics and water-borne diseases resulted in huge losses of innocent life.

**RC:** How did you get started going to Iraq?

**Sacks:** The first year I went was in '96. I heard about the delegation to Iraq in '94; it took me two years to get there. In that time I did some research on the issue. At first I thought I was the only one so alarmed by this issue. I learned of this group, Voices in the Wilderness, based in Chicago. They were deciding that the action needed was to break the sanctions in Iraq.

In the spring of 1996, they went on their first trip. I thought it was a radical idea. I had never thought of doing something like this before. They went again in November and I went with

*Continued on Page 8*



## Sorting out the Rainier Valley

To the Editor:

In her recent letter to *Real Change* ("Rainier Vista Replacements," March 7, 2002), Virginia Felton doesn't tell the whole story about the Seattle Housing Authority's "replacement plan" for the Rainier Vista Redevelopment. While it's true that SHA says it intends to build more low-income units than are there now, it's also true that SHA intends to reduce by about 40 to 50 percent the number of Public Housing units serving *very-low* and *extremely-low-income* families at Rainier Vista.

Ms. Felton, SHA's Director of Communications, knows very well the details of the public debate over these so-called "replacement plans." When she

says the plan calls for "replacement of 100 percent of the units serving those with very low incomes," she knows that she's omitting this part: Only 60 percent of the 481 units of "replacement housing" will consist of Public Housing units. The other 40 percent is essentially a "name game," using funding that would have been allocated anyway, or using Section 8 subsidies to buy down the affordability of higher-income units that also would have been built anyway. It's more of a sleight-of-hand, public relations gimmick — albeit a very effective one.

It's true, as Ms. Felton says, that the City Council in the end approved the "replacement plan." But the council did so only after realizing that that was the best they could wring out of each other and SHA, which entered the negotiations wanting to cut its replacement obligation down to nearly nothing.

At the local level, the true big picture is that between 1994 and 2006, our Seattle Housing Authority wants to spend almost \$140 million dollars in scarce local funds and HUD partial matching grants "redeveloping" Holly Park, Rainier Vista, Roxbury Village, and High Point, and that SHA's intent is for these redevelopments to generate a net loss of nearly 1,000 units of Public Housing. This is a large part of what Public Housing Authorities mean when they say "Asset-Based Management."

At the national level, 110,000 units of Public Housing are planned for

demolition, to be replaced by at most about 40,000 Public Housing units. Where are all the displaced families going? Even HUD admits that it doesn't know and hasn't really been keeping much of a record. Many former residents just take Section 8 vouchers that they can't use, or that send them to housing in much worse shape and/or in more distressed neighborhoods than the Public Housing they are forced to leave. Not to mention the thousands more on the waiting lists that don't have any say, many of whom have yet to learn that they will have to spend many more years on the waiting lists as a result of HOPE VI.

Right now, HOPE VI — HUD's controversial housing-removal program being used to fund these Public Housing redevelopments — is up for reauthorization in D.C. One of the most important subjects of discussion will be the massive displacement caused by HOPE VI. There's a window of opportunity to reform the program, maybe to bring back the one-for-one replacement requirement that was removed in the mid-'90s by a conservative Congress. Those of us concerned about these issues are writing our congressional representatives to ask for significant reforms. It doesn't help our efforts — which parallel those of the National Housing Law Project and the Public Housing Residents National Organizing Campaign — nor does it help local Public Housing residents, for SHA's Communications Director to paint such an unrealistically rosy picture, however partially truthful, of a program that has such a negative impact on the poorest of the poor, especially in these times.

Sincerely,  
John McLaren  
Seattle

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# Real Change

Puget Sound's Voice of the Poor and Homeless

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

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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.

## MRC Profile Margaret Shaw

Ask Margaret Shaw about all the ways *Real Change* has impacted her life, and you'll get quite a list. She's made necklaces at StreetLife Gallery, taken computer classes at the MacWorkshop Computer Lab, and gotten feedback on her writing at StreetWrites. Since starting to sell the paper five years ago, she's used her earnings for bus fare to visit one of her sons in high school in Wenatchee and

helped another of her sons get a part-time job.

"The paper has done a lot for me," says Margaret, who last month became the first-ever female vendor representative, training new vendors and resolving disputes among vendors.

Margaret grew up in mostly rural Indiana. In 1970, around the age of 20, she literally hopped on a train and road through the mountains for her first visit to Seattle. All three of her sons were born in the area, so even after a hiatus away from the Northwest, she knew she would return to make her life here again, where she's been for the past 18 years.

In addition to selling papers, Margaret also cleans apartments in the building she's been living in for the past four years. In her spare time, she likes to do everything from playing bingo to sitting outside and looking at the moon. And she likes the way *Real Change* has helped her live the rest of her life.

"*Real Change* makes you feel wanted and cared about," says Margaret, "makes you feel at home." ■

— Molly Rhodes



MARGARET DURING A VENDOR TRAINING. PHOTO BY MOLLY RHODES.

# Fire and Brimstone

## A letter from a Pastor to the President

Dear President Bush,

When you were running for office, you stated that Jesus Christ was your favorite philosopher. You have made a point of proclaiming your Christian faith. You have put time and energy in an attempt to link the church's mission with state social security. You have, particularly since September 11, continually preached GOD BLESS AMERICA on almost every public occasion.

As a Pastor and fellow United Methodist, I need to ask you: Do you know what the values and vision of Jesus are?

I ask the question because I am baffled and confused by your behavior. You claim Christ but act like Caesar. There is blood all over your hands, with the promise of even more blood to come. You sit atop the nations like the biblical Whore of Babylon, openly fornicating with the military men of might, their corporate sponsors, their nuclear madness, and their insatiable hunger for global armament. Is this how you learned Christ?

You claim the benevolence of your Administration toward the rest of the world.

**Whose side are you on, George? Perhaps you think that God has chosen you for this hour. Perhaps God has.**

But the treaties you make, and the treaties you un-make, continue to be laced with a tightened rope around the neck of the poor. Is this how you learned to "forgive our debtors"? Is it really Christ-like to insist on cuts in life-supporting infrastructure while increasing military budgets and allowing the plunder of nations to accrue to a very small financial elite? Have you not been taught that Jesus was crucified by these same Principalities and Powers?

You practice a patriotic righteousness that visualizes never-ending war against enemies of great evil. You bombed Afghanistan,

with both guns and butter, to show the difference. But do you really think the few crumbs of bread airlifted to Afghanistan shield the reality: that you have no intention to assist in building a sustainable society there? Is this how Christ taught you to avenge the wrongs done unto you?

I am troubled by your spirit, George. You claim you are of the Sustainer of Life, but you practice the terror of Death. You are spreading the war. Afghanistan is only the beginning. Military presence crops up world-wide. You bait us with Iraq and shield what you are doing in Columbia. You lay the groundwork for disrupting Venezuela, Brazil, and Argentina. You allow the dogs of capitalism to sink their teeth into the battered body of a raped Central America. And the buck stops on your desk, George: Is this what Jesus would do?

The Spirit of Death rises, and nations tremble. We the people of the United States tremble. We discover how truly powerless we have become. Our military budget grows to obscene levels, bankrupting the social infrastructure from which our security and freedom rise. We see basic medical care costs increase, even as more and more Americans find themselves without health care. We see environmental treaties subverted, ignored, and disappeared, even as Mother Earth signals increasing distress. Labor rights are made secondary to the rights of corporations, resulting in wage reductions and growing financial insecurity. Homelessness exposes itself through tented cities. Education becomes the victim of budget knife cuts. A few benefit but the groan of the masses is growing. Whose side are you on, George?

Perhaps you think that God has chosen you for this hour. Perhaps God has. So again I ask you, Is this how you learned Christ? If God has chosen you for this hour then, in Christ's name, serve the values and vision of Jesus: Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, release the prisoners, cancel the debt, forgive your enemies, practice Jubilee. Then, through you, this nation and all nations will be blessed.

But beware: the road of the sword will bring division and much blood. Those who take it up will be devoured by it. Many people, in the name of God, have taken up the sword. And many have come to ruin. Thinking themselves capable of naming evil, they have become the very evil they name.

**Seek Christ first,  
Rev. Rich Lang, Pastor**

*Rev. Rich Lang ministers to Trinity United Methodist Church, which has hosted the homeless Tent City twice in its Ballard parking lot and is currently hosting Tent City through May 12. For more on Tent City, turn to page 5.*

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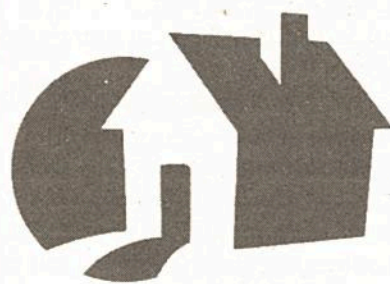
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*Notes from the Kitchen* will return in June



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## Flimsy support for rent control

After a brief, unexciting, and half-hearted resurrection, the issue of repealing the state-wide ban on rent control has been returned to the land of the dead.

When Judy Nicastro convinced the Seattle City Council in the fall of 2000 to lobby the state Legislature to change the state's ban on rent control, she pulled off a small but not insignificant coup. Rent control had been a dead issue in Seattle for more almost 20 years. Not since local landlords squashed an early 1980s citywide rent control initiative by outspending it 10 to 1, and then, immediately after the election, convinced the state Legislature to broadly ban all Washington cities from ever having rent control, had any elected official suggested that this was an issue that needed to be revisited.

Nicastro's addition to the city's lobbying agenda changed all that by explicitly asking the state to "repeal or modify RCW 35.21.830 to allow local control of rent laws."

The victory, though small and unheeded by the legislature, was short-lived. Last October, while most of the world's attention was focused elsewhere, Nicastro's language was watered down to say that the city vaguely wanted the state to "provide more flexibility and options to local jurisdictions to set landlord-tenant laws."

The resolution to change the language was introduced by Council member McIver, a longtime ally of the local landlord association. But the deciding vote, the key defection from the previous year's majority that allowed the change to occur, belonged to homeless advocate and City Council President Peter Steinbrueck.

Steinbrueck declined to comment about his change of mind to *Real Change*, but his aide Stephanie Pure claimed that "Peter's reason for allowing a change in the language is that he doesn't want stuff on the legislative agenda that people are not going to actively pursue. We only have a limited amount of political capital, and if Judy is not going to pursue the issue, why have it on the legislative agenda at all?"

Nicastro admits that her call to repeal the ban was essentially a token move. Not one state legislator, not even from liberal Seattle, is interested in taking up the issue, and Nicastro herself doesn't want the city's lobbyists to spend much time pushing it. So what's the point?

"We should say what we want," says Nicastro. "We shouldn't be cowardly. We should be proud that we want local control of rent laws." Nicastro points out that there are a whole host of issues the city puts on its lobbying agenda that it knows will be ignored in Olympia. "Why target rent control?" Nicastro asks of Steinbrueck's decision, when the city has other issues in its state legislative agenda that it doesn't lobby aggressively either.

Nicastro's reasoning may not be particularly inspiring to those who would hope that she, as the former founder of a nonprofit whose mission was to organize for the repeal the state rent control ban, would do more than make token gestures about values the state Legislature could care less about. But it was enough to persuade Nick Licata, Richard Conlin, and Margaret Pageler to continue to support the ban. Steinbrueck, often assumed to be a reliable liberal vote, reversed himself and voted for the vague, landlord-friendly language — joining McIver and Councilmembers Heidi Wills, Jim Compton, and Jan Drago.

So long, local control of rent laws. We hardly knew ye. ■

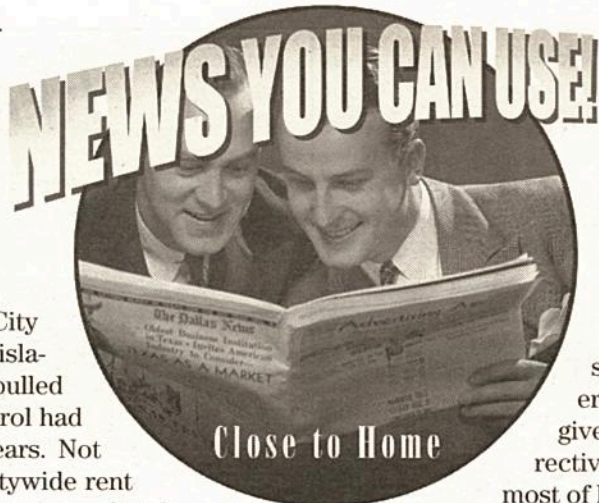
—Trevor Griffey

## Cover me

Because of the overburdened correctional system, and the overstressed housing system, Washington's sex offenders are sharing motels and hotels with families that use state-funded motel vouchers. So the state is trying to make agencies who distribute its motel vouchers liable if anything goes wrong.

A March 14 letter from the Housing Division of the state Office of Community Development (OCD) told county-based social service contractors that, "Effective immediately... you must contact the registration office of your local law enforcement agency to determine if a sex offender will be living in [a] hotel/motel in which families will be placed."

OCD staffer Tedd Kelleher says it was "a stop-gap reaction" to the consternation arising out of Olympia last session, when legislators tried to get the Department of Corrections (DOC) to notify hotel guests of convicted offenders living nearby. The bill failed, but afterward, his department and the DOC compared notes, and found that a fair number of homeless families were being sent to motels where registered sex offenders lived. "It makes sense," he says, "since these are fairly cheap motels."



OCD's new order didn't even specify that the shelter providers were to concern themselves with sex offenders previously convicted, sentenced, and freed — not with the ones who have never been caught. As one law enforcement agent remarked to a concerned social worker: "You will not find a motel anywhere in Seattle without a sex offender staying there."

Katy Warner runs the transitional shelter program for Family Services, one of the largest distributors of state-funded hotel/motel vouchers in Seattle. Her vouchers are good for one-week stays at 10 area motels; they're given to about 300 families a year. She says OCD's new directive is "totally unworkable." Warner's program purchases most of her vouchers from individual motels in advance, to get a discount. If a registered sex offender was nearby, "everyone would have to move out of their prepaid room."

Shelter providers feel that families are already taking a risk by staying in motels. Warner's organization makes voucher recipients sign a lengthy contract mandating that, among other things, they will not admit strangers into their rooms. "I would implement it if I thought this would make families safer," she says, "but I don't think this will do it."

In some situations, the only alternative to a motel is the streets. So they're better than nothing, says Carolyn Specter of the Snohomish County Human Services Department.

"There are families which are perfectly capable of looking after their kids," she says.

Specter's agency, which hands out \$250,000 in shelter assistance to homeless people in Snohomish County, says law enforcement officials told her not to worry about OCD's new rule. They said that media attention has caused every motel manager in the county to stop admitting the DOC's sex offenders.

That troubles Specter. She wonders where they've gone to.

"We've created a homeless problem for another population," she says. "Not as sympathetic a group of people as families, but nevertheless, they're human too." ■

—Adam Holdorf

## NewHolly: Mending fences by blazing paths

Good fences make good neighbors, but the Seattle Housing Authority has decided that good paths are also necessary. So SHA plans to buy a single-family home on the southwest border of its NewHolly housing redevelopment, where school kids cut through to get to Van Asselt Playfield. Residents who had bought homes bordering the playfield complained to SHA about the fence-jumpers, requesting permission to build newer, higher fences along their property.

Instead, SHA will repurchase a 15-foot right-of-way it had sold years ago to a nearby neighbor. The neighbor offered to sell his whole house instead. SHA is taking him up on it. The housing authority will cut a path through the new property, and hope fence-jumpers take the new way. SHA will pay for the home out of reserve funds, and resell it within a year.

"We should have put a path there to start with," says SHA spokesperson Virginia Felton. But she hopes that, in the future, NewHolly's homeowners solve problems without calling on SHA. "We encourage neighbors to get involved in the community center, and join the board," she says, "so that we don't have to be the mediator." ■

—Adam Holdorf

## Because the computer says so

When the U.S. Department of Agriculture barred three Somali-owned stores from accepting Food Stamps on April 10, it didn't just mark the second time in recent months that a federal agency has targeted a local East African institution. It was the first time since the disappearance of paper Food Stamps that officials have found evidence of fraud in Seattle. They did most of their sleuthing by computer.

USDA spokeswoman Anne McGuigan says the agency roots out fraud through reports sent by computer from Citibank, the contractor that runs the Food Stamp transactions. If there's anything funny-looking — say, a rapid and repetitive transaction of \$100 — the USDA looks closer. It could be evidence of trafficking: exchanging food stamps for cash. That merits a permanent suspension from the program.

The three local stores have appealed their suspension. ■

—Adam Holdorf

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

# An Open Door, an Opened Heart

## Churches say hosting Tent City gave them new life

By David C. Bloom

The most visible symbol of homelessness in the Seattle area over the past two years has been Tent City. The many stories in the media that have chronicled Tent City's journey have focused primarily on the encampment itself, its residents, its conflicts with city government, its sponsoring organization SHARE/WHEEL, and the larger issue of homelessness that it exemplifies.

But what of the churches? Since All Saints Episcopal Church in the Rainier Valley became the first congregation to welcome Tent City onto its property in April 2000, a total of 16 different congregations, reflecting a broad array of denominational backgrounds and theological perspectives, have played host — some more than once. The willingness of these congregations to host Tent City has been critical to the roving village's ability to survive.

It takes a lot of effort. It can upset the neighbors. And until a recent court decision, the City had threatened to fine the host churches for being in violation of land use codes. But churches from Tukwila to Lake City have persisted in welcoming the vagabond village to inhabit their properties for up to two months at a time. Why have they chosen to turn their parking lots into temporary campgrounds? And how has that decision affected the congregations themselves?

Rev. Rich Lang expresses a common conclusion when he says that hosting the camp was "a godsend" for his Ballard congregation. That's despite the land-use fines the city threatened, and the community meetings where neighbors condemned the decision.

"This is what we are called to do as Christians, to offer a cup of cold water in Jesus' name," says Mike Couch, pastor of North Seattle Church of the Nazarene. In reflecting on his congregation's decision to host Tent City twice, Couch says, "Reaching out into our own 'Jerusalem' was a powerful lesson for us. It's one thing to utter pious platitudes about the love of God and to send money to missionaries in Africa, but as Christians, our primary responsibility begins right here in our own city. Do people want the church to remain sanitized, living above the

fray? That's not what Jesus did. He got into the muck and mire where real people live. How can we do less?"

The sense that hosting Tent City has to do with simple acts of discipleship and Christian hospitality is repeated over and over by pastors and laypersons alike. Florence Greff, a lay member of Haller Lake United Methodist Church, which hosted Tent City over the Christmas holidays, says, "When people are in need, why would you look the other way? I had seen Tent City move from place to place and wondered why it needed to exist. It only took a few days for us to understand who they were, what their issues were, and how we could help."

St. Therese Catholic Church, in Madrona, was the first Catholic parish to host Tent City when they opened a vacant lot across from their building last summer. Lay member Bill Ptacek remembers the challenge parish member Joe Martin, who works at the Pike Market Clinic, put before the congregation on Good Friday last year, "He reminded us that we can talk all we want about supporting different needs in our community, but the people in Tent City have no place to go. We had a task force on homelessness. We already had a shelter in our building. We had stated that homeless ministry was a core mission of our church. Here was a chance to put our faith into practice."

Church leaders report that hosting Tent City placed demands on their members and on their physical resources. The experience at Crown Hill United Methodist Church is fairly typical. According to Pastor Judy Schultz, Tent City asked for use of the parking lot, an electrical connection, permission to put up porta-potties, and access to water.

But Schultz was equally clear that the benefits they received vastly outweighed any costs. One benefit was increased security. Schultz had been warned that Tent City was associated with higher crime. But she found the opposite to be true. "Tent City made the parking lot and the whole neighborhood safer by being there," she says. "I could have left the church unlocked and we'd have no problem. If a church wants a good security system, they

**"These are real people, and you can touch them and hug them and really make a difference. We should be thanking them for sharing their lives with us. What did we do? We gave them some concrete to sleep on and paid \$200 extra for electricity for two months."**

Florence Greff, Haller Lake United Methodist Church

### Churches that have hosted Tent City in its two years' existence:

All Saints Episcopal Church (Rainier Beach)  
 Church by the Side of the Road (Tukwila)  
 Crown Hill United Methodist Church  
 Dunlap Baptist Church (Rainier Valley)  
 Haller Lake United Methodist Church  
 Lake City Christian Church  
 North Seattle Church of the Nazarene  
 Northgate Baptist Church  
 Rainier Avenue Free Methodist Church  
 Riverton Park United Methodist Church (Tukwila)  
 Trinity United Methodist Church (Ballard)  
 St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral (Capitol Hill)  
 St. Therese Catholic Church (Madrona)  
 Seattle Advent Christian Church (Central District)  
 Star Bethel Missionary Baptist Church (Rainier Valley)  
 Showers of Blessings Church (Rainier Valley)

can't beat Tent City."

In the process of their neighborhood meetings, St. Therese discovered that, apart from Tent City, they did not have good relations with the whole community. "It was a revelation about other issues," according to Ptacek, "and it helped us to build better relationships with our neighbors."

"Our main concerns in taking on Tent City," says Pastor Dalene Vasbinder of Lake City Christian Church, "was our liability and the possibility of the city fining us. But after the Tent City representatives came to speak to our congregation, these concerns became secondary, and they voted overwhelming in favor. We had hoped for a 75 percent vote and got 90 percent."

"It turned out to be a positive experience overall. It gave a real face to

homelessness both for our congregation and for the neighborhood. As I drove in every day and saw the tents, I realized, 'We are doing ministry.'"

Haller Lake United Methodist developed a resource room with a volunteer nurse, job skills person, and social service advisor. They were able to help the residents negotiate the system and qualify for benefit programs, secure food stamps, and receive medical help for health problems.

Most of the congregations held dinners for Tent City residents, their members, and their neighbors on at least a weekly basis. On the first Saturday at St. Therese, following the 5 p.m. mass, a large number of worshippers walked across to meet Tent City residents. At Crown Hill, neighbors brought cookies, hot food, and drinks.

Continued on Page 9

### More Than Meets the Eye

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4/18/02

# poetry

## Face-to-Face

I am the disaster  
I am the terrorist  
I am the Evil Empire

I/am/the/Spook  
the perpetrator

the liar  
the thief  
the rapist  
the murderer

I STAND BY  
doing nothing

against the famine  
the poverty  
the wars  
the horrors  
(NOW...and to come)

Doing nothing  
Against the Night  
that will encompass/us/ALL

Are YOU the Priest?  
Are YOU the Healer?  
Are YOU the Savior?

COMFORTER/against/that endless bloodless Night?

—MARION SUE FISCHER

## The Time of Universal Brotherhood

"Hey brother, you got the time?"  
he calls as I cross the street,  
brother in the night,  
brother walking to keep warm,  
brother under the skin.  
Brotherhood evoked between  
Native Americans, bikers,  
African-American men.  
Who are the brothers  
of a white man in the night  
accosted on the avenue,  
of any man?  
I have two brothers both  
younger than me and so "little,"  
though I'm the shortest of the three.  
But it's the kinship of all  
mortal male humanity I lift  
my wrist to check,  
shaken out of orphan introspection  
by this brotherly greeting on the street.  
"Nine twenty-five," I say,  
lifting watch face to his face.  
"Thanks, brother," he says,  
and I can tell he means it.

—DAVID THORNBURGH



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

The other day I got into an argument with a vendor about whose mother was worst. From my understanding, it boiled down to the fact that her mother both looked and acted like the Wicked Witch of the West, so I should give up, cry Uncle, and admit that her mother was by far the worst.

I'm sorry, but the Wicked Witch of the West was a push-over compared to my mother. My mother would not send flying monkeys to do her dirty work. My mother would go do it herself, because she thought the hands-on approach was more fun. My mother was no ugly cackling witch, either. She was pretty and personable, so she could get away with just about anything. My mother was more along the lines of your

basic conniving, manipulating torturer — the kind that never leaves permanent marks as evidence. My mother made Joan Crawford (*Mommie Dearest*) look like Mary Poppins.

As usual, such thoughts made me think of Job. I thought what I always think when I think of my mother, that Job didn't really have it so bad. He didn't have my mom.

That brings up one of my chief complaints about the Bible. That whole Book of Job was really underdone, in my own disinterested, impartial, and objective opinion. I mean, I personally didn't write that Book, so it's no skin off MY nose if it's 30 chapters short of being done. I'm just saying that if it HAD been one of mine, I wouldn't have skimmed so much on the details, that's all.

Maybe there just wasn't enough space for the full treatment. OK, I can see that. But really, do you think that if the author had insisted on the extra space, the editors wouldn't have slashed a few reams of begats to make room? Of course they would have.

First of all, the trials and ordeals of Job are just so understated. So, big deal, his servants were killed. He should have been happy he HAD servants. So, big deal, the fire of God burned up his sheep and dead servants, and a

great wind killed his sons and daughters, and Job himself was covered head to toe with hideous sores. So what?

We all have bad days. There needed to be more detail in that part.

Maybe it should've said, "And oh yes, the Lord God sent unto Job Wes Browning's Mom, and everyone did see that his suffering was great." And sent irritable bowel syndrome. And Job should have had to endure late Sunday night TV programming, without the benefit of cable.

But the part where the Book really skimps is the part where Job and God are arguing. If I were writing it there'd be a lot more said on both sides.

Right off, I'd have God try this angle: "So Job, you think you shouldn't have things so bad 'cause you're so good. Did you ever think that was where you went wrong? Maybe I'd treat you better if you didn't think that being good automatically entitled you to it, huh?"

So then Job would go away and work on that, and then he'd come back and say, "I see your point, God, and I've mended my ways. I don't anymore believe I am entitled to good treatment for being good. So how about restoring my fortune now?"

"Good try, fleshy one! But you still expect your fortune restored, so you don't really believe what you are saying, do you? Hah! Catch 22!"

They could go back and forth like that for 20 chapters or so. Then finally Job would get smart. He'd say, "Hey! Wait a minute, underlying all this is the premise that you, God, determine the Good. But suppose the Good is independent of you. Then being good, you must treat me well if it would be unjust otherwise."

At this point I would break all the conventional rules of a Biblical Book and have my ultimate protagonist (God) say, "What do you want me to be, good and just, or do you want me to be powerful enough to restore your fortune? You can't have both in this world."

I would have God spend a few chapters badgering Job into answering this question. Finally Job would give in, and true to character, he would ask God to be good and just. I would then have God turn Job into a good liberal Democrat under an evil Republican administration. ■



## REVELATIONS

Sadness  
Runs like rain  
Upon a window  
Through which I cannot see.  
What do I do with these painted over dreams  
That ascend these mortared walls and speak of softness to me?  
Prison  
Is not conducive to intimation.  
Self disclosure ascribes to suicide  
And though we laugh and we rave and we pray and we scream  
When love interferes with its bittersweet loss we bury ourselves under blankets  
As coarse as the night, as ragged as breath,  
As thin as belief.

Rack back  
Rack back/rack back.  
Rack back the feelings, rack back the fear.  
Click-bang/click-bang/click-bang/click-bang:  
"Do it by the numbers, ladies—" There are no humans here.

"Why,"  
A friend asks,  
"Don't you want me in court?"  
That place I enter in handcuffs and leave in despair.

Visiting day...  
family shuffling in  
With that telepathic sadness in their eyes  
And I try/I try/I try. I try to love without coming undone  
For all this time I've spent alone, an island to myself and to anyone.

I  
try  
I try/I try  
I say, "I'm just fine."  
But who I want I cannot touch  
And what I need I will not have... your hand upon the dirty glass  
That I am behind.

I  
Am  
Simply #2020199  
Click-bang/click-bang/click bang:  
Doing time

—CYNTHIA LEE OZIMEK

## Cardboard Man

Cardboard Man  
See me if you can  
I'm really much more  
Than a Cardboard Man

I'm a writer. I'm a poet  
Musician, artist, too  
If you hold stiff for a minute  
I'll draw a sketch of you

Cardboard Man  
See me if you can  
I'm really much more  
Than a Cardboard Man

I take all food that comes my way  
Then cook a tasty meal  
To share with all who want some  
'Cause that's the Golden Rule

Cardboard Man  
See me if you can  
I'm really much more  
Than a Cardboard Man

Some folks see my cardboard sign  
And think I'm cardboard, too  
Sometimes I wonder if I am  
And sing the Cardboard Blues

Cardboard Man  
See me if you can  
I'm really much more  
Than a Cardboard Man

Next time you drive down the ramp  
And see me standing there  
Think of your warm bed at home  
And find a buck to spare  
Cardboard Man  
See me if you can  
I'm really much more  
Than a Cardboard Man

I thank you for your dollars  
I thank you for your dimes  
I'd rather stand with cardboard  
Than go commit some crimes

Cardboard Man  
See me if you can  
I'm really much more  
Than a Cardboard Man

—RENEENE ROBERTSON

## SACKS Continued from Page 1

them. Since then, I have gone back leading a delegation or helping prepare for a delegation. Every year except last year I have gone once or twice.

**RC:** What are the details for this upcoming trip?

**Sacks:** The trip coming up is a delegation led by Gerri Haynes. She is the president of Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility. WPSR is part of an international Nobel Peace Prize-winning organization committed to preventing nuclear war. Jim McDermott, our congressman, is also part of the organization.

Right now there are 16 delegates. We leave on May 8 and are due to return May 21. We will most likely bring chemotherapy equipment and supplies, because there is not a place to perform bone marrow transplants in all of Iraq.

Last time I was there, I met a Kurdish man with his son, who was pleading with me to take his son to the U.S. because he needed treatment. I can't imagine that his son is alive today. I felt so terrible and I am so glad Gerri decided to do this in conjunction with the doctors in Iraq that we have met on several occasions.

[Bert pulls out a photograph]

Here is a picture of me giving out pencils in Iraq in 1999. A man that went with us had a campaign to hand out pencils and school supplies to kids because they have nothing. You should have seen the kids smiling. Can you believe that these pencils were banned? The government said they were "dual use" and could be used as weapons or for a military purpose.

**RC:** How can people learn more about getting involved with aid to Iraq's children?

**Sacks:** At a local level, people should go to our website to learn of events and special speakers. We send out regular emails and mailings as well. If someone wants to go over to Iraq with us, they should start by reading a great description of the trip on the Voices in the Wilderness website, [www.nonviolence.org/vitw/](http://www.nonviolence.org/vitw/). If they are interested, they can fill out an application.

Community support is also very valued. We had a sendoff before our last trip to Iraq, and the community came out to declare that they were breaking the sanctions with us.

**RC:** How else can people get involved?



PHOTO COURTESY OF BERT SACKS.

**"Here is a picture of me giving out pencils in Iraq in 1999.... You should have seen the kids smiling. Can you believe that these pencils were banned? The government said they were 'dual use' and could be used as weapons or for a military purpose."**

— Bert Sacks, Seattle activist against sanctions against Iraq

**Sacks:** The April 20 Wake Up event (for details, see CPP on page 16) will provide a common place for people who aren't happy with the direction our country is going, and who don't believe that this endless war against terrorism is the right path. I and other citizens are worried about the recent statements that assert the U.S. is prepared to use nuclear tactical weapons against any country, even those that do not have nuclear weapons, in a preemptive strike. This dangerous policy needs to be opposed, and there are a lot of people who want to do so.

The question is, will we wake up? We have billions of dollars in defense increases while so many millions of people are out of work, looking for work, or not making ends meet. We have too many people without health care, and we are going to spend a total of \$400 billion, just officially, on our military to wage an endless war. We are creating endless conflict.

**RC:** You are also very involved with the issue of accurate media coverage of the conflict in the Middle East. What are the challenges you face promoting accurate reporting?

**Sacks:** Some issues are simply not covered. Facts are not reported, statistics, numbers are not given. And the language is so inaccurate. You are supposed to be able to turn to the news section first thing and find the facts. And they are not there. That is my basic complaint.

[Burt pulls out the Seattle Times special section "Understanding the Conflict" to show an example of "inaccurate reporting."]

A quote from the article uses the word "hardships" to describe the effects of the sanctions on Iraq. How can you call hundreds of thousands of dead children "hardships"?

Let me briefly compare this to the Holocaust. You wouldn't report the Holocaust caused hardships. The Holocaust caused deaths. Over half a million children have died and are dying as a result of American sanctions against Iraq, and the media is absolutely wrong to call this a hardship. By not accurately reporting innocent children are dying, Americans remain misinformed and ignorant.

**RC:** You have chosen to focus on local

news sources and their inaccuracies and insufficient reporting. Why local, rather than nationwide sources?

**Sacks:** I believe that we should start at the local level and will have the most influence over the two local papers. The editorial policies at the *New York Times* or *Washington Post* is a high step to start with.

There have been major success stories in recent years. Three years ago, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* sent a journalist with us to travel in Iraq. The story was printed, it won awards, and was distributed in Congress by Sen. Patty Murray and Rep. Jim McDermott. It was the first paper to cover the delegation to break the sanctions in Iraq.

By writing letters and developing a relationship with the editors, we have been successful in getting more stories dedicated to the issue.

**RC:** Where do we go now? What is your plan for educating people who have no idea of the media's inaccurate portrayal of current events in the Middle East?

**Sacks:** In my good moments, which do happen from time to time, I get a feeling that people can wake up. I have been to several Seattle area high schools to talk about media coverage of Iraq, and I use *The Truman Show* as an example because all the kids have seen it.

I say to them, in the United States we are living in the Truman show. Our Truman show is called the American Dream. Things that are real but unpleas-

Continued on Next Page

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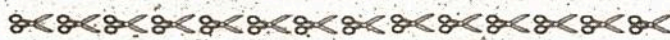
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**CHURCHES Continued from Page 5**

Judy Schultz sums up the experience of many: "We in the church are sometimes too shy about what we are willing to do. It has opened our eyes and made us bolder."

If there is a word that commonly describes the impact that Tent City has had on its hosts, it is transformational. "It was a godsend for us," says Lang, pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church. "The process of making a decision that mattered really helped our congregation. Our people reaped the blessing of taking a risk. It offered a practical approach to what the church is all about. It allowed our church spiritually to have a real encounter with hospitality."

"The experience redefined our mission," according to Dalene Vasbinder. "It was a reminder of who we are as church, that our ministry is outside our walls. Having the experience with 'the other' has lowered our fear of engaging in this kind of ministry. It has given us the confidence that this is something that we can do, even though it can be hard and challenging."

"At first our people were concerned because it would take up precious space in our parking lot or they might

get inside our building or they might mess things up or the neighbors might get upset," reports Greff. "But once we started, once we got to know the residents, our people totally changed their minds. It put a human face on homelessness. We began to understand that these were people down on their luck, or as my grandson put it, 'They didn't have any luck.' People loved it that they could do something to help, and we all felt good about ourselves. And it's real, not out in Africa somewhere. These are real people, and you can touch them and hug them and really make a difference. We should be thanking them for sharing their lives with us. What did we do? We gave them some concrete to sleep on and paid \$200 extra for electricity for two months."

"It was a defining moment" for St. Therese, says Ptacek. "We did something. We 'walked the walk,' and we took a leadership role for Catholic community. We still look back and feel proud they we were part of it, that we made the effort."

Several of the churches have indicated they are willing to have Tent City back for a return stay. But the experience is also opening up new ways for these congregations to think about their ministries. Ptacek says that at St. Therese, "We amazed ourselves that we

were able to do as much as we did. Now the challenge is to find other ways to address homelessness in our community. We have talked to other churches about working together, doing a Habitat house, for example, and being advocates for Tent City. Homelessness is getting worse. We've got to do more!"

Lake City Christian Church is considering ways it can use the vacant lot that Tent City occupied to develop permanent affordable housing.

Greff, who developed the support services at Haller Lake United Methodist, is now organizing a new charity called Paydirt, Inc., to help former Tent City residents make deposits for apartments and get the job training and services they need to get out on their own. Paydirt has already assisted 14 former Tent City residents to secure residence in five different apartments, and they want to expand.

The most dramatic example is at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, where hosting Tent City led to the creation of the Community Dialogue on Homelessness. The Dialogue brought together representatives of the city, United Way, the religious community, service providers, advocates, and homeless people to determine what they could do together to end homelessness. The most conspicuous outcome was the April 2001 "Creating the Political Will to End

Homelessness" conference at St. Mark's that drew 350 people and generated a four-step Action Plan. The first step in the plan envisions the creation of an Interfaith Task Force to coordinate the religious community's cooperative action on homelessness. That task force is now meeting, and its first major task will be to organize religious support for the 2002 Seattle Housing Levy, which goes before the voters this fall.

Tent City is unpopular with some. City government has tried to close it down. Its presence has upset some neighbors. A *Seattle Times* editorial has dismissed it as a gimmick. But through all of this the host churches have persisted. "We were trying to be faithful to Matthew 25, which says when we welcome the stranger, we welcome Jesus himself," recalls Couch. "The people of Tent City were created by God and have human dignity. To us, ministering to them meant ministering to God. This helped us to understand that we are not necessarily in step with the rest of our culture, but that we are a radical sub-culture of the Kingdom of God. Many don't want anything to do with Tent City. But we're not to be like everyone else. We are called to live out the love of God for all people." ■

*David Bloom is the Congregational Organizer for First things First.*

**SACKS Continued from Previous Page**

ant or difficult are kept out of our show. Iraqi children's deaths are kept out. The stunning fact is that if you watched television continually for two months after the release of UNICEF's report, you would not have heard a single mention of the report's discovery of half-a-million children's deaths. To compare, you are talking about the entire population of Washington state's children under the age of five—dead. If this isn't important international news, then I don't know what is.

**RC:** *How do the highschoolers react to your presentation?*

**Sacks:** They are young enough that they still want to know. They still believe that living in a democracy you have to be an informed citizen to know what you are voting for. Most of the kids listen very attentively and ask what they can do. They have a choice when they leave the classroom. They can try to forget about the facts and the reality, or they can say, I want to wake up and find out about this.

The question is, do you want to wake up? And that is our key question as human beings, especially Americans, and especially in regards to media coverage. Do we want to wake up to facts that may be unpleasant and uncomfortable?

**RC:** *I imagine this requires people to be really proactive, because they can't rely on traditional news sources. How does someone find accurate reporting?*

**Sacks:** Pick an issue, it doesn't have to be Iraq. It can be the environment, nutrition and the misinformation about food, globalization, or homelessness. And make that your issue. Educate yourself. The Internet, of course, is a great tool, but with so many people talking you really have to pay attention and learn what are trustworthy sources so you can learn the facts.

**RC:** *Is there a certain mindset or belief system that helps you focus your goals?*

**Sacks:** I am a believer in non-violence. But I think that it goes much deeper than not throwing stones. What it means is that you work to cultivate humanity within yourself. So you are able to look out and see the suffering that is happening and want to do everything you can to alleviate this suffering.

The way that we have all been trained is to become Rambo or Superman or Dick Cheney and to gather up your forces to beat up the bad guys. Non-violence requires that you are Gandhi. You must love your enemies. You have to say, how can I understand deeply enough to show kindness and understanding at the same time as I oppose their mistaken policies. ■

*To find out more about the delegation to break the sanctions in Iraq, the peaceful protest on April 20 at Westlake Center, or to increase your knowledge about current events in the Middle East, please visit the website for Citizens Concerned for the People of Iraq & Interfaith Network of Concern for the People of Iraq at [www.endiraqsanctions.org](http://www.endiraqsanctions.org).*

## In Memoriam

*Lance Barker, 49, of Seattle, passed away February 6 at the Harborview Medical Center in Seattle. Lance was born March 8, 1952, in Kansas City, MO, the son of Neal and Evalyn (Clingan) Barker. He attended Olathe High School and lived most of his life in Olathe before making his home in Seattle, where he was a freelance artist.*

### Farewell List

Lend an ear,  
Hold a hand,  
Give a hug,  
Warm a heart,  
Pat a back,  
Dry an eye,  
Ease a pain,  
Forgive a wrong,  
Light up a face,  
See the good,  
Smile...  
Give a gift,  
Phone a friend,  
Write a letter,  
Welcome a stranger,  
Mend a quarrel,  
Boost a cause,  
Pay a compliment,  
Share a story,  
Tickle a funny bone,  
Shine if the sun doesn't,  
Remember a birthday,  
Tell someone you love them,  
Tell them again, and again...

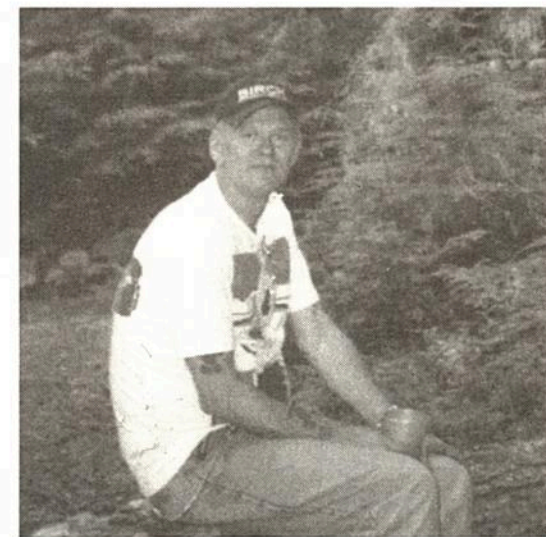


PHOTO OF LANCE BARKER,  
COURTESY OF HIS FAMILY.

—KENNETH N. TAYLOR

# A Respite Expires

## Noel House ends permanent shelter for women

By Adam Holdorf

Margaret King runs a large apartment building for low-income people in downtown Seattle. For several years in the mid-'90s, she worked in Belltown, reaching out to homeless women across the barriers of mental illness, substance abuse, and stress. Sometimes, she got women into housing, chalked up a victory — and then found them again, months later, back out to the streets. In light of her experience, she says, a new change at the Noel House shelter for homeless women is a really bad idea.

Up until now, the 40 women staying there have had their beds as long as they needed them. Now, because of a rule that Noel House management implemented April 2, the women have to meet with a caseworker and seek housing. If they don't want to, Noel House doesn't want them. That marks "a dramatic shift away from the way it was when I worked there," says Carolyn Frimpter, a former director. "It's an ideological shift."

The shelter has operated under the principle that its guests could stay as long as was necessary. Instead of the residents determining when they'd move on, that power now lies with case managers and staff. Although staff promise to make decisions on a case-by-case basis, they say the women will generally have one year. Then, when it's clear they have no interest in case management, they will be put into a different shelter.

Shelter staff and colleagues within Noel House's umbrella service, the Archdiocesan Housing Authority, say the change is a response to the ever-lengthening line of women demanding safe shelter. Since a women-only referral center was opened in 1999, they've seen that demand rise. In the last year, Noel House added a case worker with mental health expertise, and charged her with finding housing for residents. Services were in place; all they needed now was willing clients.

There's not many of those at Noel House, where over half the 40 nightly residents have been staying there for more than a year. More than 10 have been there for five years or more. A handful of women have been there since its founding in 1991. These women have been homeless for years. Many are frail and elderly. Many carry memories of years of abuse. Others are

plagued by mental illness. And none of them came to Noel House knowing they would be asked to leave again.

### The promise of housing

On the steep slopes of the American class system, even people without homes can distinguish among themselves. There's those who sleep outside, washing up in a Pike Place Market restroom. There's the people who work out arrangements with a property owner and get a cement pad under a store awning. There's the people indoors, on mats, lying cheek to jowl. As far as homeless shelters go, Noel House offers a plethora of amenities. Women staying there can stow their belongings in storage lockers during the day. There are three showers, meals, a TV room, and a smoking room.

But it's no Shangri-La. Residents speak of the dank, black mold that grows in the living room and sickens them. The staff are inexperienced and unresponsive, they say, and requests to make things better fall on deaf ears. It's not a home anyone would choose; the fact is, it's a home that some have grown into.

Now, that home-making is unac-

ceptable, says Noel House director Gillian Parke. "Having an 80-year-old woman leaving at 8:30 in the morning every day, in the rain, not knowing where she's going to go, just to come back every night at 5.... Yes, people have a choice in that, they can do that [some place], but Noel House does not want to be that place," she says.

Parke points to the burgeoning number of special so-called "supportive housing" arrangements, where formerly homeless people cohabit, perhaps with the help of an onsite manager. She says that women in Noel House can move on, with the help of the caseworker. If they don't want to, there are other shelters, without the services in place, where they can go.

"What we've found is that the waiting list for these programs is not excessively long. Admitting people, in some cases, takes only a few months," says Flo Beaumon, the women's program director at the Archdiocesan Housing Authority. "So anybody who is willing to work with their case manager, to meet the minimum requirements of these programs, should immediately be able to move in."

AHA's programs should be able to provide housing, says Katie Teague, manager of Broadway House, an eight-unit home in the Eastlake neighborhood run by AHA. "I've been shocked to go four months with a vacancy," she says. Women who submitted applications months ago have moved on; she sends them letters, and they're all returned. She sets up interviews, and the applicants don't show. "Time just burns," she says. "Next thing you know, two or three months have passed."

Despite the cumbersome application process, housing providers also see a lack of demand for the housing they have to offer. Housing management director Ginger Segel says the waiting period for a women's unit in the Low Income Housing Institute's buildings can be as short as a month, while men

wait about a year.

Why the difference? "My unschooled perspective is that the housing available does not match the needs of the women who are homeless," she says.

These vacancy problems are not shared by all. Plymouth Housing Group's waiting list is about the same for men and women, according to rental staff there.

The amount of housing for homeless women did increase over the past decade. But the demand has at least kept pace. The clearest indicator of that is the growing crowd at the women's referral center — 145 homeless women waiting for a place to go, says AHA. Some housing providers pay visits to the Referral Center, Angeline's Day Center, and other places homeless women stay, but the demand is unabated. It shows that there may be a problem more fundamental than the lack of housing: Case workers have not provided the supportive relationships that help people move out of the shelter system.

### Trust grows slowly

Julie Fisher, a Snohomish County social worker, visited Noel House and Angeline's regularly from 1993 to 1995. She was an outreach worker for the federally funded ACCESS program, which sought to reach out to women suffering from severe mental illness. Though money for the program was cut in 1998, similar work continues through local funding.

"I had a lot of people, 20 or 25, that I was keeping notes on, but only 10 or 15 would say, 'Julie's my case manager,'" she recalls. "The others were uncomfortable about thinking about us in that sort of relationship. They would have said, 'She's just someone I talk to sometimes.'"

NOEL Continued on Page 12



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# The Widening World



PEARL CAHALL, THEN 77, SPEAKS AT A 1991 RALLY THAT LED TO THE CREATION OF NOEL HOUSE, THE FIRST WOMEN-ONLY, YEAR-ROUND SHELTER. PHOTO BY ALAN BERNER/ SEATTLE TIMES.

## The story of the founding of Noel House

By Michele Marchand

"What an extraordinary household this was, after all, containing such a variety of attitudes, positions! A whole! People in any sort of communion, link, connection, make up a whole!"

—Doris Lessing, *The Four-Gated City*

The founding vision of Noel House is embodied in the accompanying photo by Alan Berner of the *Seattle Times*. It was the first great struggle of homeless women in Seattle to be visible and survive against almost insurmountable odds. It was a struggle against the system, which is often hostile to the needs of a community to organize itself, unwelcoming to the attempts of people to love each other and stay together. It is the story of a city, an agency, and many courageous women who took great risks to prove that system wrong.

### Survival

In the winter of 1990, the fledgling homeless people's organizing effort called SHARE (Seattle Housing and Resource Effort) set up its first Tent City on the mudflats south of the Kingdome.

Mayor Norm Rice, in the first year of his first term, was green enough — or empathetic enough — to offer several spaces to house the group of 180 homeless men and women, rather than using his power to shut them down. As a result, SHARE was able to start a self-managed shelter in an unused Bus Barn on lower Queen Anne and a self-managed overflow shelter at Immaculate Conception Church.

That left another space Mayor Rice had offered — an abandoned deli in the city-owned Alaska Building — available for shelter. Leaders at Catholic Community Services (CCS) and within the city bureaucracy decided to start a winter women's shelter, despite the impression even in social service circles that there weren't great numbers of homeless women. (Women were even more invisible in the early '90s. Since there weren't any women-only shelter options for them, they hid for their safety and survival.)

All three initiatives were scheduled to be four-month, winter-only shelters. All three were started with just a few days' notice. At the women's shelter, because of this quick opening, we went for many weeks without enough staff or supplies. During the blizzard of that year,

we survived for a few days without even running water or toilets. We escorted women up the street to a nearby building's bathrooms, in the snow, in our pajamas and pink bathrobes.

The CCS Winter Women's Shelter, as it was then known, filled to its capacity of 50 within three weeks, and started referring women to the Downtown Emergency Service Center for lack of space. Its filling so quickly, and, frankly, our falling in love with the women, caused us within weeks to start working on advocacy to keep the shelter open as long as it was needed. Barriers to this worthy goal included the power of the Pioneer Square Community Council, city government's fear of neighborhoods, and lack of ongoing funding.

### Rally and move

In the second month of the CCS Winter Women's Shelter, we began meeting with city councilmembers to speak to its need, to advocate for its continuance. When that didn't work, and with just two weeks to go before we were scheduled to close, we joined SHARE's rally at the Bus Barn. Twenty of us traveled up to the rally on the St. Martin de Porres Shelter bus, courtesy of our friends and mentors who worked there.

But not Pearl Cahall. Then 77 years old, Pearl made her own way up to the Bus Barn, pushing a shopping cart containing her most precious belongings. She had begun staying at the women's shelter during the blizzard; for the first month of her stay she did not speak to any of the shelter staff.

We had five minutes on the rally schedule. When our designated speaker got too nervous to continue, Pearl, who'd joined our group at the podium, surprised us by saying, "I'll speak." We helped her up the rickety pallets, and she shouted, "There's enough land in this country for all of us to live. We've got to live together!"

We were all crying, holding each other. When Pearl's photo ran on the front page of the *Sunday Seattle Times*, with an accompanying editorial advocating the continuance of all the winter shelters, we were heartened. After complicated negotiations with the mayor's office and neighborhood councils, we were able to hang on at the deli until funding was secured for us to move to the Daughters of St. Paul Building (previously a bookstore and convent) at Second and Bell, which was eventually bought with federal and city funding and renovated to house 40 beds — real beds — at Noel House, 13 units at the Rose of Lima transitional program, and the Streetlife Gallery.

We made the move to that building in July 1991. Pearl moved all her belongings in her shopping cart. Two trips.

In November of that year we finally named our shelter. By democratic vote, the residents themselves chose to name their shelter after Noel, a quiet woman in her 60s who'd stayed with us at the deli shelter. Noel showed her love of the other women by gathering items she thought they needed — books, magazines, clothing; every day she would come in with more gifts for her sisters. One day she left as quietly as she'd arrived. A few weeks later we got a call from the Medical Examiners in California: Noel had died, and had listed the CCS Winter Women's Shelter as her next of kin.

### Family

Because we didn't ask a lot of questions, make a lot of demands, or have deadlines or heavy expectations, and because we focused, from the beginning, on building community and relationship first, women came to trust us. Our approach — to meet women where they were, with a minimal screening process and no maximum length of stay — embraced a range of behaviors, backgrounds, and beliefs. We found ourselves more or less happily living as grandmothers, mothers, daughters, sisters, all together.

Statistically speaking (although we didn't speak statistically back then, we shared stories), more than half of the original community of women had been sleeping outside, isolated and alone, for many years before they came to our shelter. More than 50 percent were 45 and older — this demographic remained constant through the years.

NOEL HISTORY Cont. on Page 12

## NOEL HISTORY Cont. from Page 11

And, as we learned much later, more than 80 percent had experienced some form of physical abuse prior to or during their homelessness.

Many women had experienced the hardest loss of all: losing their children. Pearl had her two sons taken from her by Child Protective Services. We realized this was the reason she so tenaciously held onto things — *all* things, not the least of which were scraps of paper, animal figurines, moldy McDonald's wrappers, and the occasional intact cheeseburger which she would share with those she loved, including me. After a while, Pearl's bed became so laden it looked like there were three of her hiding under the covers. We would, from time to time, throw out her bags of molding things, much to Pearl's horror and furor. We would also, from time to time, feel guilty, and go out to the dumpster to retrieve as many as 17 of those bags for her.

**As a woman who has lived at Noel House for many years recently said of her experience living there, "For some of us this is the best family we've ever known."**

Another woman sneaked upstairs into the transitional program one Christmas to leave gifts for her imaginary children under the tree there. As the shelter opened each evening we would watch her cross the street, then stand and silently wave those same imaginary children across the street after her for their safety, before the light changed. Her actual children were taken from her after her first mental health breakdown.

After such enormous loss, many of the women believed they did not deserve unconditional love ever again; but of course that wasn't true. It is neither a secret nor a simple statistic that many (maybe 60 percent) of the women who lived at Noel House had mental health issues. The crucial question is why?

One night a new arrival — a 50ish woman, mostly silent — asked to use our electric typewriter and sat outside my office door, pounding away on the keyboard. Then, with a wild look in her eye, she came into the office with her poem, "Recourse for Women!" It was Marion Sue Fischer, who went on to become the poet laureate of women on the

streets, and later publicly disclosed the litany of abuses she'd withstood and her schizophrenia in her masterpiece, "My Blood." In another of her Noel House-era poems, "Seattle: Invisible Street Women," she wrote, "We are not ALL mind-loss women/of indeterminate age/conversing with unseen companions/(though we would ALL, wouldn't we, prefer a COMPANION...)"

I learned that for many women the losses they were forced to withstand — home, community, family, children — drove their mental health deterioration more than any physiological condition. And that their mental health issues did not inhibit their ability to live in community, to give and receive love. Noel House was designed to be a home for that love, to allow it to grow and flourish, to allow women to support each other and to journey together, each at her own pace.

### Gifts

We made the most of every holiday. We watched the fireworks over the Space Needle from the rooftop every Fourth of July. We took photos of ourselves, our own Santas, near the Christmas tree. One Christmas, three of us staff took two shopping carts apiece through Fred Meyers, with lists and discount coupons in hand. We had asked the women to tell us the one thing they each wanted most, and found ourselves buying underwear, books, bathrobes, and, for a newly homeless young woman, Nirvana's *Nevermind* CD.

We cooked all our holiday meals together, in the huge kitchen at Common Meals, even though we didn't always understand how to operate the commercial equipment there. That resulted, one year, in our Easter meal being much delayed. Our saving grace that year was Glenda, whose father had been a cook on Amtrak dining cars; she taught us several tricks for cooking quickly.

We also hadn't thought through some transportation issues, and ended up wheeling carts taller than ourselves down Second Avenue with all of the food. I safely got my cart to the shelter entrance, and then heard Edna's broken English, "Sheet, sheet!" screaming down Bell Street, turned the corner to find her top container had gone tumbling, a river of yellow turkey gravy rolling down Bell Street. We laughed for hours.

We gave each other gifts, all the time. I received many more gifts from the women than I ever gave them. We were able to see people's gifts first, and idiosyncrasies and weaknesses last. That was a critical part of how we were able to live

together, with all of our differences.

### The Widening World

Many years ago I was given the title of a book I hope someday still to write: *The Widening World*. As I was given the title I said to myself, "Is it the widening divide, or widening to welcome all of us?"

It is the story of my blood family and my street family — my parents and grandparents, and those I have loved and been supported by who live on the streets or in shelters. I now realize there is no difference between those families — they are part of my communion, part of my whole and myself. As a woman who has lived at Noel House for many years recently said of her experience living there, "For some of us this is the best family we've ever known."

Last year I thought I would have to leave this city, widening divide, when scores of commuters screamed at a suicidal young woman on the Ship Canal Bridge to "Jump, bitch, jump." We will never know to what extent that impatience contributed to that young woman's choice to jump. We should worry about that, as a community.

These past few weeks my mother has been heavy on my mind and my heart. Every day I worked at Noel House I saw her clearly and heartbreakingly in the women. My mother, too, has been an outsider most of her life, due to poverty and profound hearing loss. Many times, many people including myself have been impatient with her because she cannot hear; she needs people to repeat things over and sometimes over again for her to understand them.

In many ways, she has been an inspiration to me through the recent Noel House troubles, through the announcement of their new plan to term-limit women and force their participation in case management. Her first reaction, which she was unafraid to share, was "They're punishing those women for what the system doesn't provide."

When we started Noel House nearly 12 years ago, we understood, on a very visceral level, that profound loss had brought us together, that we were *all* — staff and residents — navigating brokenheartedly, rebuilding a home and community together.

With this as a starting point and continuing reality, how can it possibly be good to give the 40 wonderful women of Noel House one more loss to try to survive? ■

*Michele Marchand was the founding director of Noel House and worked there for its first three and a half years.*

## NOEL Continued from Page 10

Fisher, King, and other outreach workers have sent letters to Noel House protesting the rule change. Of all the people she worked with, says Fisher, the long-time residents "are the hardest to reach. We know, from doing this work, that building relationships with women with severe, chronic, mental illness takes a long time. Using fear to get them to have relationships with people is not a good idea."

"Imposing an arbitrary timeline doesn't make it easier for them to build independent lives," says King. "It makes it harder."

"I can think of a handful of women I know are still there, who came from the streets," Fisher continues. Many of them would say that, before Noel House, "it was too scary to stay on the inside. Noel House, for whatever reason, became their home. My hunch is that [the streets are] where they'll go back to."

These and other observers have noted that the new rule was imposed without the residents' consultation. Community meetings were formerly a place to discuss such things. And the critics wonder why AHA didn't simply choose to open a new shelter, with different rules.

Parke says Noel House would, if it could — but there's no money for that. Instead, the shelter has found itself diverting money to keep the Women's

Referral Center operating, as city funding for it slackened this year. And the women weren't consulted simply because they would not have agreed.

"We did it, instead of asking the women 'What do you think?' and then doing it anyway," Parke says. "That may sound harsh. We could have gone through the motions, and for [not including them] we have been slammed."

Lisa Cunningham Roberts, a mental health practitioner with Health Care for the Homeless, hopes that advocates, service providers, and anyone who's concerned for the women's futures have an open forum to reconcile their differences.

"It feels like we need a community-wide response to a crisis," she says. "Some kind of gathering where people can get creative about how these women are served."

And, she says, Noel House should welcome it. "That would be the compassionate, ethical, responsible thing to do." ■

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**Friday, March 22, 2 p.m., 15th Ave. E.** An officer was dispatched to investigate a theft. He arrived on the scene and met with the victim, who told him about a theft that had occurred on the previous Friday. The victim had been on 15th Ave selling *Real Change* and talking with an acquaintance. The acquaintance became angry, grabbed the victim's black satchel, and fled in an unknown direction. Victim stated he vaguely knows the suspect, and that he hangs out in the 15th Ave area. The suspect is still at large.

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**Wednesday, March 27, 8:45 p.m., 1st Presbyterian Church/Shelter, 8th Ave.** The suspect, a 34-year-old transient white male, is a frequent client at the shelter. Tonight he entered and became angry with the staff. He grew belligerent, made threats, and was asked to leave. As he left the premises, staff called 911. Police caught up with the suspect several blocks from the shelter. He was intoxicated and somewhat belligerent, but denied making threats towards the staff. He did admit that he was angry, and stated he had psychological problems, but was not on medication. The staff at the shelter did not want the suspect arrested, but requested that he be trespassed from the shelter, and that he get some mental health help. He was given a trespass admonishment, and agreed not to return to the shelter. He then volunteered to go to Harborview, and was transported there for a mental health assessment.

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**Thursday, March 28, 12:45 p.m., Deano's Grocery, E. Madison.** The suspect, a 54-year-old transient black male, was observed exiting Deano's by an officer who recognized him from a few weeks before, when he was warned for drinking in Deano's parking lot. After warning suspect on that occasion, the officer had issued a trespass admonishment card, which stated that the suspect must not return to Deano's for one year. The officer had also seen him at Deano's two weeks ago. With these incidents in mind, the officer detained the suspect for trespassing. He was transported to the precinct, but the officer was unable to locate the previous trespass admonishment card he had issued. The suspect was issued a new trespass admonishment, which he signed and stated he understood. He was then released.

**Friday, March 29, 6:09 p.m., Dick's Burgers on Broadway.** An officer responded to a report of a disturbance at Dick's. On arrival he found the suspect, a 41-year-old Native American male, standing in front of the diner. He contacted the suspect and conducted a routine radio check. The suspect was found to have an outstanding misdemeanor theft warrant, and he was arrested. He was issued a trespass admonishment barring him from Dick's, and was then transported to King County Jail. ■

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

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# Language of Pain

When poet Jeffrey Cantrell and journalism professor Roger Simpson first thought of the idea for a conference designed to explore the ways we use language to give voice to emotional injury, the two had already spent years on the subject in their individual careers. Yet this was the first time that Cantrell, director of Counterbalance Poetry, and Simpson, director of the Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma at the University of Washington, would work to bring the words and images of poets and journalists together.

After months of searching, Cantrell and Simpson gathered a group of writers and photojournalists representing a wide array of styles and subjects, from poets dealing with their own domestic violence and incarceration to journalists covering wars and capturing struggles in daily lives. Their works and ideas make up the backbone of a four-day conference taking place in April, "The Languages of Emotional Injury."

Each evening, a journalist and a poet will read from their work and talk on a given subject. The next morning, the same journalist and poet will be joined by a panel of experts who deal with the same subject — for example, a counselor for rape victims talking about the trauma after the evening reading by poet Frances Driscoll from her collection *Rape Poems* — for a chance at a community discussion.

"These writers are writing out of personal experience or as a witness to a traumatic experience," says Cantrell. "We want this to be a forum for other people who have witnessed or been through their own traumatic events to talk about them."

The writers will also be joined by two photojournalists, Pulitzer prize-winning Clarence Williams from the *Los Angeles Times* and Mike Urban, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* photographer who recently won top honors from the National Press Photographers Association for his image of a sexual assault at Seattle's Mardi Gras celebration.

While the conference was planned long before September 11, Cantrell believes the events of that day make having a conference like this one — giving the community the chance to find ways to express their fear and anger and other emotions — all the more important.

"We know these events can be tough to visit again," says Cantrell, "but they're ones that really need to be talked about. By not talking about them, nothing ever gets resolved." ■

— Molly Rhodes

All events are free and open to the public. For more information, visit [www.counterbalance.org](http://www.counterbalance.org) or [www.dartcenter.org](http://www.dartcenter.org), or call 206-616-3223 or 206-282-2677.

## Calendar of events

### Monday, April 22

3:30 p.m. Nicaraguan poet Daisy Zamora and American poet Jimmy Santiago Baca poetry reading, Walker-Ames Room, Kane Hall, University of Washington.

7:30 p.m. Keynote address "The Languages of Emotional Injury" from Daisy Zamora and *New Yorker* journalist Ted Conover, Pigott Auditorium, Seattle University.

### Tuesday, April 23

10 a.m. Daisy Zamora and Ted Conover hold a symposium on "The Languages of Emotional Injury," Pigott Aud.

3:30 p.m. Ted Conover, Bruce Shapiro, Jimmy Santiago Baca, Nina Bernstein discuss "The Journalism of Social Change and Emotional Injury." Walker-Ames Room, Kane Hall.

7:30 p.m. Jimmy Santiago Baca and *New York Times* reporter Nina Bernstein on the language of "Urban Life and Emotional Injury," Pigott Aud.

### Wednesday, April 24

10 a.m. Jimmy Santiago Baca and Nina Bernstein hold a symposium on "Urban Life and Emotional Injury," Pigott Aud.

3:30 p.m. Nina Bernstein, *Anchorage Daily News* reporter Debra McKinney, Los Angeles journalist Marc Cooper, poet Frances Driscoll, and Bosnian poet Semezdin Mehmedinovic explore the impact of language and "Intimate Violence." Walker-Ames Room, Kane Hall.

7:30 p.m. Frances Driscoll and Debra McKinney on the language of intimate violence, Pigott Aud.

### Thursday, April 25

10 a.m. Frances Driscoll and Debra McKinney hold a symposium on intimate violence, Pigott Aud.

3:30 p.m. Marc Cooper, Mark West, African poet Breyten Breytenbach, and Semezdin Mehmedinovic discuss reporting political conflict and emotional injury, Rm. 210 Kane Hall.

7:30 p.m. Breyten Breytenbach, Semezdin Mehmedinovic, and Marc Cooper on the language of "Political Conflict and Emotional Injury," Pigott Aud.

### Friday, April 26

10 a.m. Marc Cooper, Breyten Breytenbach, Semezdin Mehmedinovic hold a symposium, Pigott Aud.

11:45 a.m. Effective Arts director Jim Boggs, closing ceremony, Pigott Aud.

3:30 p.m. *Los Angeles Times* Pulitzer-winning photojournalist Clarence Williams discusses "Photography and Emotional Injury" with *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* photographer Mike Urban, Walker-Ames Room, Kane Hall.

7:30 p.m. Poetry reading by Breyten Breytenbach, 210 Kane Hall.

## CLASSICS CORNER



by Perfess'r Harris

As frequent readers of this column know, we at Classics Corner hold a rather dismal view of humanity. We are but semi-divine blobs of protoplasm, oozing about the planet with little sense of purpose and even less of the big picture. We spend our brief and aimless lives just trying to stay out of trouble and looking for the perfect diet soft drink.

This, perhaps, is why we love the stories where some clueless shmuck finally gets a glimmer of insight, is overcome with horror, and then takes some action to match the magnitude of his own evil. You'll recall that when Oedipus Rex discovers his life is a hideous sham, built upon the murder of his father and hot sex with his mother, he gouges out his eyes and spends the rest of his pathetic life in exile. Jocasta, for good measure, kills herself as well. Excessive? We don't think so. This, we believe, beats a narcotized avoidant existence consisting of polite utterances and too much television. Oedipus and Jocasta probably never felt more alive than in that moment

when they faced facts and destroyed themselves.

**When Ajax comes to his senses, he is sitting in a filthy tent, surrounded by cattle guts and offal, torturing an innocent animal.**

An even better story is that of Ajax. This, too, was written by Sophocles, who shares our preoccupation with negative self-revelation. In *Ajax*, our eponymous hero is totally cheesed because Odysseus got the armor of Achilles and not him. His resulting rage makes the wrath of Achilles look like minor premenstrual irritability. Ajax slaughters what he thinks is a good part of the Greek army, including those bastards Odysseus, Agamemnon, and Menelaus. But

what he didn't know was that Athena was messing with his head, and all he kills is a bunch of livestock and a few random Greek cowboys.

Disturbingly, Ajax carries several of the cows back to his tent, ties them up, and has his bloody way with them. When he comes to his senses, he is sitting in a filthy tent, surrounded by cattle guts and offal, torturing an innocent animal. His wife and son are avoiding him and word of his bizarre misdeeds has spread through the Greek camp.

And boy, does he feel stupid. "Here I am," he says, "The bold, the valiant, unflinching in the shock of war, a terrible threat to unsuspecting beasts. O, What a mockery I have come to! What indignity!"

We at Classics Corner love this image: The great warrior, secure in the rightness of his cause, slaughtering and torturing innocent cattle because, as humans generally do, he completely misunderstands his situation. This is how things are. We muddle through with imperfect knowledge, and then, one day, we suddenly realize we're standing in a big disgusting pile of cow intestines. Gross.

Ajax, unfortunately, goes to his death feeling sorry for himself, which strikes us as less than completely heroic. When Ajax falls on his sword, it is more out of profound embarrassment than any real sense of setting things right. This is too bad, but at least he's making an effort. It's a place for us to begin. ■

## Help Real Change Grow

Real Change is growing our Board of Directors to help us "organize, educate, build alliances, and be a voice of the poor." The commitment is for at least 10 hours a month, including monthly meeting and committee work. If you have time, energy, and commitment to our mission, please think about becoming an important part of the Real Change Team. We are especially interested in new board members with marketing or fundraising expertise and people of color.



For an application, please contact:  
Jon Gould, Real Change Board President, at 206-328-8310  
or at [jon@childrensalliance.org](mailto:jon@childrensalliance.org)

# Late April Notables

## Thursday 4/18

University of Washington Arms Control and Disarmament Class on "Arms Control and International Law," first hour of class open to the public. 5:30 - 6:30 p.m., this and subsequent Thursdays through June 6, at Kane Hall, Room 220; info Dr. Charles A. Meconis 206-543-9031.

Radical Women present a book review, "Legacy to Liberation: Politics and Culture of Revolutionary Asian Pacific America." 7:30 p.m. Dinner with vegetarian option, 6:30 p.m. for a \$6.50 donation, at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle; info 206-722-6057 or 206-722-2453.

## Friday 4/19

The Tribes Project, a non-profit, multicultural youth-based organization, performs *Standing Room Only*, an innovative approach to race education through performing arts. Sponsored by King County Housing Authority. 5:30 p.m., in the Bellevue Community College Cafeteria, free of charge; info 425-564-2270.

## Saturday 4/20

Reclaim the Streets Seattle party, be non-violent and at the same time creatively assert your rights. All free. 4 p.m. at Seattle Central Community College, Broadway & Pine Sts.; info <http://www.reclaimthestreets.net> or toll free 1-866-841-9140 x 4918.

The Anti-Capitalist Convergence will be having a Green and Yellow zoned march against the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. 6 p.m., starting at Seattle Central Community College; info [yellowblock@riseup.net](mailto:yellowblock@riseup.net) or 1-866-841-9140 x 4918.

National Anti-War Speaking Tour with presentations by David Barsamian, director of Alternative Radio, Kelly Campbell, a member of Sept 11 Families for a Peaceful Tomorrow, and others. 7 p.m., at Kane Hall, Room 120, University of Washington, \$5, UW students free; info <http://www.isreview.org/tour/tour.shtml>.

Community-Based Solutions for Environmental Health & Justice Conference with keynote

speakers Dolores Huerta, co-founder of United Farm Workers, and Diane Wiwa, Nigerian Activist and International Women's Rights Advocate. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., at UW Ethnic Cultural Center, 3931 Brooklyn Ave. NE., \$0 - \$25 sliding scale; registration or info 206-720-0285 or <http://www.ccej.org>.

## Sunday 4/21

Join the Jefferson Park Alliance 2002 Earth Day Celebration, planting trees and plants, tools and gloves provided. Also music, food, drink and free t-shirts. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., at Jefferson Park Lawn Bowling Club, 4103 Beacon Ave. S.; info <http://www.cityofseattle.net/beaconhill/jpa.htm>.

Amnesty International presents a teach-in on globalization, bringing together groups working on issues related to globalization, the environment, and human rights. 3 - 6 p.m., at Town Hall, 119 8th Ave.; info 206-622-6741.

Earth Day Conversation Café, a safe setting for talking with others and asking questions, 4 - 6 p.m., at Elliott Bay Books, 101 S. Main, Seattle; info 206-781-5700.

Seattle Chapter Fellowship of Reconciliation meeting with speaker Bill Ames on "Mending a Broken Country: The Work Of Four In Bosnia." 5 p.m. potluck, 6 p.m. program, at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N. 70th near Greenwood, Seattle; info 206-789-5565.

## Monday 4/22

Earth Day Celebration on the Waterfront with music, exhibits, and activities. Several bands will perform on the main stage and environmental organizations will be on

hand. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., at Pier 62-63, free; info <http://www.earthdayseattle.org>.

## Wednesday 4/24

Beyond the Criminal Justice System, a presentation, discussion, and strategy session sponsored by Communities Against Rape and Abuse. 6 - 9 p.m., at Seattle Central Community College, Room 1110, open to everyone; info 206-322-4856.

## Thursday 4/25

Professor Ron Takaki, guest lecturer, speaks on "Why Multiculturalism Matters in America." 7 - 8 p.m., at Kane Hall, Room 130, University of Washington. Tickets available prior to lecture at all University Bookstores; info 206-616-1825.

## Sunday 4/28

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

Seattle Local Peoples Assembly presents "Deepening Democracy: our interdependent and diverse world." Noon - 4 p.m., at Antioch University, 2326 6th Ave., \$5-\$10 suggested donation (no one turned away); info 206-721-5672.

## Ongoing

Delegates to the UN World Conference Against Racism will host a photo exhibit "Reflections from Durban, South Africa - A Visual Exploration of the UN World Conference Against Racism," through April 22, at the United to End Racism site, 719 2nd Ave. N. in lower Queen Anne; info <http://www.ncadp.org>.

Women in Black silent vigil for peace, every Thursday from 5 - 6 p.m. at Westlake Mall.

Free reading, writing, math, and ESL classes for adults at the Peoples Learning Center, 7301 Beacon Ave. Call 206-325-8308 for more information.

The Young Adult Shelter has an immediate need for caring volunteers, especially those willing to sleep overnight in the shelter. Early morning and evening shifts also available. For more info, contact Sinan Demirel at 206-979-5621. ■

### Learn about homelessness through the Real Change Speaker's Bureau and Bedless Bards

Are you involved with a church, school, or community group that would benefit from learning about homelessness from those who understand it best — homeless and formerly homeless individuals?

Our Speaker's Bureau is available for small or large group presentations about the homeless experience. Sponsoring organizations pay speakers a \$35 honorarium.



Weaving together stories from the homeless community, our homeless writer's performance group — Bedless Bards—can bring their street poet medley to your organization.

To schedule a speaker or a performance, call 441-3247 ext. 201 and speak to Rachael, or e-mail [organizer@realchangenews.org](mailto:organizer@realchangenews.org).

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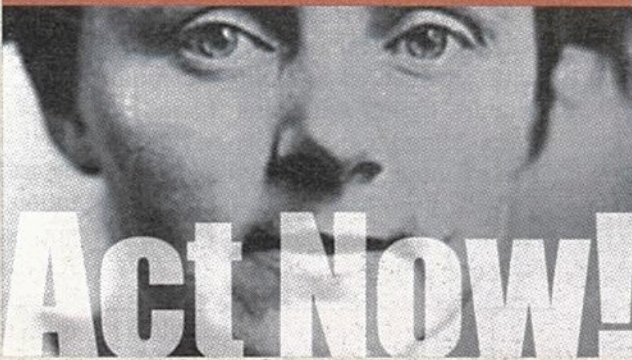
### We're Temporarily Closing the MacWorkshop Doors!

April 19 will be the last day for the computer lab before we shut it down to make room for the spiffy new remodel of the Real Change office that will include a brand new computer lab, complete with new computers! We expect the lab to be closed for at least four weeks. But when it reopens, you can expect:

- Nine terminals instead of six
- Expanded computer classes
- G4 Macintosh computers and new printers

If you want to know more about when we'll reopen and what our new lab will be like, call Real Change at 206-441-3247 and ask for Lily

citizens participation project



## Support Civil Rights at Worldwide Rally

**Issue:** On April 20, rallies and marches will be taking place around the world to defend human rights and challenge the ongoing military response to terrorism. Seattle-based religious, anti-discrimination, and peace groups are hosting their own rally.

**Background:** The need to speak out against the expanding U.S. war drive has never been greater. As the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan continues and that country lies in ruins, the Bush administration is preparing to widen its war against other countries. Many in the Bush administration would like to greatly intensify their 11-year-long war against Iraq. Eleven years of U.S.-led UN sanctions and bombing of Iraq have already left over 1.5 million Iraqis dead, and many more ill and malnourished.

Other countries being considered for attack include Somalia, Sudan, Indonesia, Yemen, North Korea, and Cuba. The U.S. is amplifying foreign aid to countries such as Colombia and the Philippines, which are attempting to suppress people's struggles. Billions of dollars in U.S. aid flows to the Israeli government and military, yet there can be no lasting peace in the Middle East until the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and a homeland is secured.

To fund their military plans, the Bush administration is calling for the Pentagon budget to be increased to a half-trillion (\$500,000,000,000) by 2007 — more than the combined military spending of all other countries on the planet. As the war abroad threatens to expand, the war at home against Arab, Muslim, South Asian, and other people continues. So-called "anti-terrorism" legislation has legitimized and legalized racial profiling as more than 5,000 young Arab men have become the targets of FBI investigation, over 1,200 people have been detained, and college administrations have been asked by the FBI to turn over names and records of Arab, Muslim, and international students.

In response to the headlong rush to war and racist attacks following the horrific events of September 11, the International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) formed, which then organized the rally in Washington, D.C., and encouraged partner rallies around the world.

Demonstrations for April 20 are now planned in Mexico, El Salvador, Chile, Argentina, Spain, Canada, Japan, and nearly 100 cities across the United States. The largest U.S. marches are planned for Washington, D.C., and San Francisco.

**Action:** Show support for the Saturday, April 20, international day of protest against war and racism by attending the Seattle area event, starting at noon at Westlake Park, at Fourth Avenue and Pine Street in downtown Seattle. Speakers include Rev. Robert Jeffrey, New Hope Baptist Church, music by Seattle Raging Grannies and the Seattle Labor Chorus. The rally, "Prevent Global Destruction, Defend Human Rights: Wake Up Washington," is in solidarity with demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and a way to oppose wider wars, support civil liberty, and support money for human needs. Bring signs, alarm clocks, and bells. Show up to demand money for jobs and education, and not war, and to stop the racist attacks, and to defend civil liberties and civil rights.

Local rally sponsors include 911 Peace Coalition, the American Friends Service Committee, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the Church Council of Greater Seattle, Citizens Concerned for the People of Iraq, the Northwest Disarmament Coalition, the Social Justice Law Center, Peace and Justice Alliance, Trinity United Methodist Church, Interfaith Network of Concern for the People of Iraq, the UW Muslim Students Association, and the Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility. For information: Fred Miller, Peace and Justice Alliance, (206)527-8050 or Dick Blakney, INOC, (206)522-4934 or [rbblakn@aol.com](mailto:rbblakn@aol.com). Information on the international demonstrations can be found at <http://www.internationalanswer.org>. ■

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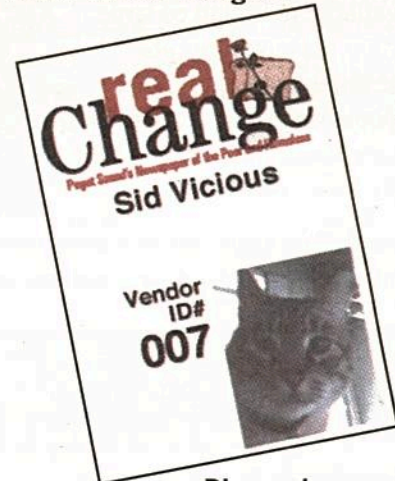
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