

Change

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 9, No. 20

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Sept. 19-Oct. 2, 2002

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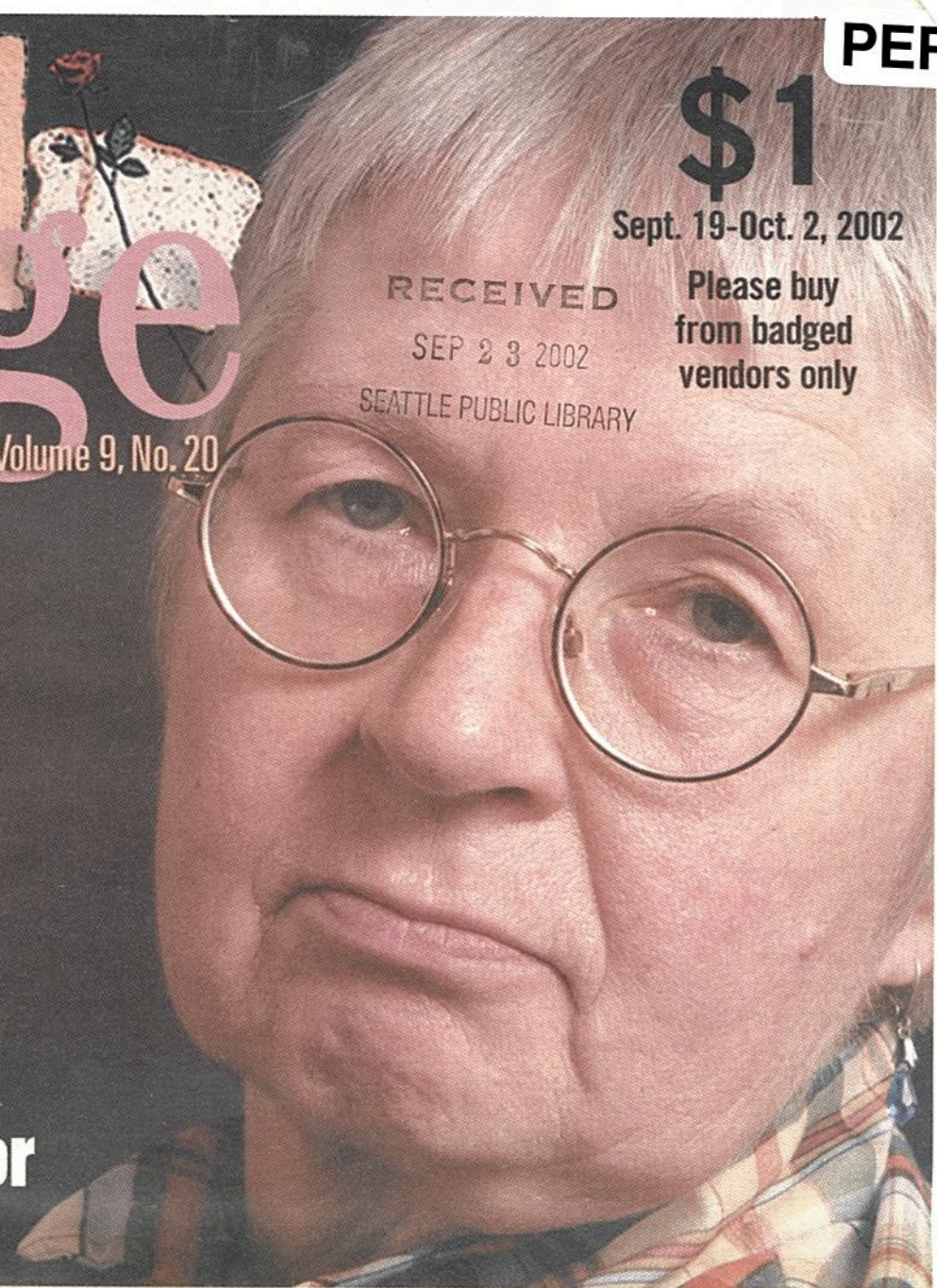


PHOTO OF DR. STUART BRAMHALL, BY CASEY KELBAUGH.

The Doctor is OUT!

Medicaid Deserts the Poor

By Adam Holdorf

Lisa Porter needed to see a psychiatrist in April, when her prescription medications weren't coping with her growing sense of mania. She was trying to raise her 3-year-old boy as best she could, but her doctor told her that if she didn't get better treatment, he'd report her to Child Protective Services. She was afraid she would lose her son.

She called the City of Seattle's help line (461-3200), and an operator looked up a list of local psychiatrists who would accept her Medicaid coupon. One name came up: Dr. Stuart Bramhall.

Five months later, Porter says she's happier and healthier: her new psychiatrist gave her medication that staves off the bipolar disorder, and her son is enrolled in a day care program. She cleans house and watches over the child. Best of all, she says, using her Medicaid coupon to get help from Dr. Bramhall has meant that she stays out of a more intensive program at a local mental health agency. She just meets her psychiatrist every other week, discusses her health, and goes back to her life.

That was the routine, anyway, until Friday, September 13, when Bramhall

gave her a three-month supply of pills and simply said, I can't see you again.

Now, Porter doesn't know where to turn. She's been through more intensive treatment before — at Harborview Mental Health, in 1995 — and doesn't want to go back. But the only private practitioner who will take her Medicaid coupons is leaving town.

Bramhall, 54, has made serving poor Medicaid recipients her priority over 19 years of local practice. About three-quarters of her 250 patients are dependent on Medicaid or Medicare to pay for doctors' visits. When they first came to her, a majority of them were homeless and looking to get the state's General Assistance — Unemployable (GA-U) benefits.

Her patients have enjoyed a niche in the mental health care system, a situation that gives people who can handle it the autonomy they want: no intensive inpatient or outpatient treatment, no overworked or overbearing caseworker. The only difference between them and insured patients is that the system they rely on is imploding because of rising costs and shrinking resources.

Dr. Bramhall is moving her practice to New Zealand in mid-October. In early September, she sat down with *Real Change* and shared her situation.

Real Change: *Why are you leaving?*

Dr. Stuart Bramhall: My income has dropped too low to cover my overhead. I was making ends meet for 10 years without health insurance, until April. And I thought that as long as I didn't have a car, I'd be all right. But my income has dropped 60 percent since July.

That's when they started cutting back on the GA-U program. Many of my patients who had GA-U in July have been cut off. They have no means to pay for

my services.

This was happening mostly to people who'd had a history of substance abuse, but they had been sober. It used to be if you could show that you weren't currently using substances, they would allow you on the program, because if you treat the mental illness you keep the person off substances. One woman was told that, since she had a history of alcoholism, she was no longer eligible. She had been sober for eight months.

I'm also not getting any new patients referred to me from the local

welfare offices. I used to have people

"My income has dropped 60 percent since July. That's when they started cutting back on the GA-U program. Many of my patients who had GA-U then have been cut off. They have no means to pay for my services."

—Dr. Stuart Bramhall

Continued on Page 10

Slouching toward Baghdad • Theatre from the Fringe • School's all right • It's getting chilly, baby; where you sleeping tonight?



Food for war thoughts

Dear Editor:

Before George W. Bush's father became President, one invulnerable submarine could destroy any country on Earth.

The Cold War ended more 10 years ago. The former Soviet Union split into 15 countries. There are about 300 million people in the U.S. For each of the past 10 years, the U.S. has been spending about \$300 billion for defense. In other words, the U.S. has been spending about \$1,000 per person per year for the last 10 years.

It would take about 250,000 Oklahoma City sized bombs to equal deaths of World War II. The Oklahoma City

bomb killed about 200 people; WWII killed about 50 million. One U.S. submarine now has more firepower than all of WWII.

According to page 201 of the 2002 *World Almanac*, the U.S. defense budget is now five times larger than the Russian budget. All western European nations are allies of the U.S.

Still, George W. Bush wants large increases non-terrorist-related defense spending.

Sandy Wilson
Seattle

What happened to women's lib?

To Mr Harris,

Regarding Agamemnon and Bush, offended on behalf of the King of Kings as I was, I was actually delighted at the article. In light of the biteback surrounding it, I'd just thought I'd pass along my praise.

And regarding Helen the self-proclaimed bitch, I've also noticed that she continually refers to herself as a slut and a bitch. But then again, Helen is the survivor of childhood abduction and rape at the hands of Theseus. Her psyche is frankly shattered. It makes perfect sense for her to be incredibly insecure about herself and her sexuality, especially since no one (except out-

side-Iliad Menelaus) ever takes the trouble to comfort or help her. She always submits to the cruel remarks of others with disturbing humility and concurrence. I cringed every time she debased herself only to have everyone agree with her! Aah, that poor girl...

Signed,
Medbh

A fan stands up

Dear Perffess'r

This is just a basic fan mail item, and I like your column best of everything in the paper. I consider it the "Savage Love" of Real Change (not for content, of course, but because I read it first and without fail).

But also, concerning some recent cranky letters to the editor (Aug. 22 - Sept. 4, 2002), isn't it great that the classics inspire such passion?

Keep up the good work.

Carmel Q. Stern

New economy, same story

Dear Perffess'r,

I have been following the slow and painful death of the "New Economy" for over a year now and foresee a dramatic rise in homelessness in our society in the near future. I hope that you and your crew continue with your good works and excellent publication.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Callahan
Fremont

God bless

Thank you so much for publishing my poem. I will do all that I can to support you guys. I am no longer homeless but have God-given sense enough to know that it doesn't have to remain my reality. God bless you guys. Please keep *Real Change* alive. I will do all that I humanly can to help in the fight.

LeChaun McCray

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Change

Puget Sound's Voice of the
Poor and Homeless

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Mission Statement:

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

Goals

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

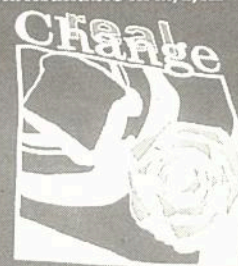
The *Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project* is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Programs include the *Real Change* newspaper, the *MacWorkshop* computer lab, *StreetLife Art Gallery*, the *StreetWrites* peer support group for homeless writers, the *Homeless Speakers Bureau*, and the *First things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

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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.

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End of an Era, Return of an Error

By Trevor Griffey

The terrorism of September 11 didn't just inspire a vague War on Terror. It also brought to a close the vast, wasted potential of the 1990s.

The 1990s should have been the time when the richest nation on the planet promoted a vision of society based on anything other than war or preparation for war. This was the battle that should have happened, but didn't. This was the challenge we never met, the golden opportunity we let pass by. And once the terrorism of September 11 hit, the chance we couldn't afford to lose was lost, and it's hard to see when it will come back again.

The 1990s really started in 1992. It was the end of the Reagan-Bush I era and the year of the first Earth Summit in Rio. Never in this nation's history was our moral leadership so in demand. We could have shepherded the planet through unprecedented problems faced around the world: a degraded environment, overpopulation, sharp divisions between rich and poor, and the astounding number of over 1 billion people (more than were even alive in 1900) living in absolute poverty. These problems were the product of centuries of human activity, and weren't likely to be solved overnight. But the pace with which they were accelerating demanded real and immediate action.

With the Cold War nightmare over, the need for a superpower-size military gone, and with the most powerful nation on the planet electing new, more public interest-oriented leadership, the early 1990s offered some reason for hope. The time had finally come — or at least the excuses for inaction had disappeared — to cash in on the fabled "peace dividend," the money that was supposed to be freed up from military spending if the Cold War ever ended.

But the U.S.'s military budget only came down a little bit (at most 15 percent). Instead of offering international leadership, the U.S. withheld its U.N. dues. Instead of sustainable economic development and international poverty reduction, we got NAFTA and the WTO. Instead of environmental leadership, the U.S. undermined and then didn't even sign the Kyoto agreement on global warming, and then systematically weakened just about every domestic environmental protection law we have. Instead of reinvesting in our communities, we slashed welfare and then watched Bush II and Gore debate how big a tax refund Americans should get from the spoils. The real leadership the planet needed never materialized.

September 11 never justified the political failures and short-sightedness of the 1990s. It simply gave some opportunists an excuse to perpetuate them well into the 21st century.

September 11 never justified the political failures and short-sightedness of the 1990s. It simply gave some opportunists an excuse to perpetuate them well into the 21st century.

Even before September 11, Bush II's administration had proposed increasing the military's budget by \$52 billion for 2002. But what might have been a contentious proposal for a president floundering in his obvious corruption became, after September 11, a slam dunk, with a few extra billion thrown in for good measure.

Now, for 2003, Bush II wants to increase military spending another \$48 billion, to a grand total of nearly \$400 billion — over half of our nation's discretionary budget, and a 39 percent increase since Bush II took office in 2000. That one-year increase alone is more than any other nation on the planet currently spends on its military.

Like the Reaganomics of the '80s, these expenses are going on the federal government's credit card, likely to be paid for later with more cuts to social services and public interest spending down the road. And even more than the Cold War, there's seemingly no end in sight to the possibility of ever-increasing war budgets.

You might expect, more than twenty years after Reagan took office, that Democrats would be hip to the fact that today's military spending will likely come out of the very programs Democrats are supposed to support. You would expect Democrats to realize that without money to back them up, all their supposed idealism about saving the environment and helping the poor is so much hot air. But aside from a few outspoken Representatives with impossibly safe seats — like Seattle's own Jim McDermott or Ohio's Dennis Kucinich — you won't hear Democrats talking about skyrocketing military budgets draining on our ability to confront the various social and environmental crises we currently face.

You can thank September 11 for that. Not the actual terrorist attacks, which can be interpreted in different ways. But the myth of September 11: the old, repackaged Cold War notion that our military needs trump our more human ones. ■

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National news digest

September 10, 2002

News from around the U.S. and Canada, provided by the Street News Service (www.streetnewsservice.org)

Another "tent city" of homeless people has popped up, now in Eugene, OR. About 45 homeless people have been camping out since the beginning of September on the plaza of Lane County Courthouse, according to reports in the *Register-Guard* (www.registerguard.com). They are protesting the city's recent sweep and confiscation of homeless people's property at several unsanctioned camps on city land. Portland, OR, and Seattle already have Tent Cities — Dignity Village and TentCity3 — that have become successful models in providing shelter with respect and making a responsible stand for homeless people's right to a place to sleep. The Eugene Tent City has already faced several warnings from police and city officials to break up their group, but no direct action has been taken against them yet.

Tent City as both political action and community gathering is nothing new to homeless veterans in the San Francisco Bay area, who came together as they do every two years for the East Bay Stand Down. The four-day event, held the beginning of September, provides veterans with a chance to shower, eat, and meet other people who have also experienced homelessness after fighting for their country, according to the *Oakland Tribune*. Not only do homeless veterans share their own stories, but they are also given the chance to air their grievances and hopes with current officers in the military, like Lt. Col. Frank Marrero. "Our country did not give them the respect welcoming them back from war, and that had some psychological effects ... They had the feeling that they were rejected and not part of the community," Marrero told the *Oakland Tribune*, adding, "I also look at them, and I think, 'That could be me.'"

Homeless people in New Haven, CT, can't even rely on city-run shelters anymore. Earlier this month, the city placed a 90-day limit on all shelter stays, according to the *Hartford Courant*. To show they meant business, the city also closed a shelter set up to house people who couldn't find a bed in any other space. Officials said they took the step after a two-year study revealed that some residents were treating the shelter as a permanent home, staying for several years and not using any of the employment training and drug treatment programs designed to help people move on to more secure housing. Now, anyone who comes to a shelter and expects to stay there more than 30 days has to set future employment and housing goals.

A Midwest survey of homeless youth paints a sobering picture of why kids become homeless and what happens to them as they become adults. Researchers in the \$3 million study interviewed 455 homeless youth in eight Midwestern cities and found that most of the youth escape abuse only to find fresh abuses on the streets, according to the *Washington Post*. Lee Whitbeck, a social professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who is leading the study, found that 54 percent of male runaways and 34 percent of females have conduct disorder, compared to about 10 percent of the general teenage population. Also, 23 percent of males and 43 percent of females showed symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. While many studies have interviewed the homeless, this is the first to track their lives over an extended period of time, Whitbeck said.

Maryland political pundits who dismissed the gubernatorial campaign of a former grocery store clerk and his formerly homeless running mate were in for a shock when the duo took 20 percent of the Democratic Primary vote. According to the *Washington Times* (www.washtimes.com), Robert Fustero and Linda K. Atkins won 105,000 votes to the 416,000 votes won by the candidate who was expected to cruise through the primary, current Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. While some explained the strong showing for Fustero and Atkins as a protest vote against some of the decisions Townsend had made, Fustero saw it a sign that voters want someone they can relate to and who relates to them. n

— Compiled by John Hubbard and Molly Rhodes

No logo: New county policy revives old debate

When King County Executive Ron Sims made an executive order late last year to standardize the county's stationery, the idea seemed like com-



mon sense. County departments give up printing and designing their own individual stationery, they use a standardized version printed in bulk to phase out their old stationery, and the county saves money during a budget crisis.

But for King County Council member Larry Gossett, the stationery policy change is an ironic reminder of his unsuccessful fight three years ago to change the county logo from a crown to a representation of the county's namesake, Martin Luther King Jr.

On January 18, 1999, in commemoration of King's birthday, roughly 3500 people marched in support of the logo change, carrying signs saying "from crown to king." Gossett's plan to change the county logo would have phased it in with a standardized stationery over five years.

"It would have been very similar to what (Sims) is doing now with the refining of the existing one," says Gossett. "That's essentially what I was talking about."

Standardizing the county stationery "has already saved us hundreds of thousands of dollars," according to Sims' spokesperson, Elaine Kraft. But Gossett's standardization plan was stopped dead, even before the county's \$50 million budget shortfall, by worries over cost.

"The original estimate from the printing office was \$3 million, so when that got tossed out, it dominated the discussion," says Gossett. "Then, when the executive estimated what it would cost to phase it in over five years, it moved to other arguments like is it legal? What about the King family? But overall, the cost was a major proposition that was put forth by those who opposed it. It was going to cost about \$70,000 over five years."

Changing the logo itself would have been somewhat different from what the county is now doing, which is using an old version of stationery it didn't have to change at all. But if the logo change were done on staff time by graphic designers employed by the county, without changing any other aspect of the pre-existing standardized stationery, it's possible that Gossett's plan also would have saved the county money.

"This shows very clearly how frivolous and specious the argument that cost was a prohibitive factor in changing the county logo was," notes Gossett. "Here's the difference though: [Sims] couldn't implement a new logo without the legislative OK. We never got that. All the Democrats at one time or another had indicated that they would support it. But I was never able to get one Republican to vote for it." With Republicans in control of the Council, they effectively stopped the legislation from ever being introduced.

"I would bet you," says Gossett, "that if we were talking about doing the exact same thing [as Sims], with the only change being taking the crown out and putting in the image of our namesake, it would have been much more controversial."

"One of the underlining issues probably would be race, but it's not something that would be brought to the surface in polite Seattle or metropolitan King County." ■

— Trevor Griffey

It's over, but we don't know what happened...

The primary elections wrapped up on the evening of September 17, as this issue of *Real Change* was getting doused in ink, so we can't report the outcome of the vote on the \$86 million Seattle Housing Levy. [Tsk tsk, if you didn't vote.] One thing that hit the levy campaign hard in the final days was the Sept. 6 *Seattle Times* op-ed saying that a higher levy would overburden homeowners and subsidize the wrong things — namely, help with home ownership.

The *Times* took issue with the levy's homebuyer assistance fund, part of

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A RALLY THREE YEARS AGO TRIED TO CHANGE THE KING COUNTY LOGO. PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

NEWSBRIEFS Continued from Page 4

which would help low- and moderate-income people get their first mortgage. Money from this portion — which amounts to \$7.8 million, or less than 10 percent — would be available to a homebuyer making up to \$38,000 a year. *The Stranger*, picking at the homeownership money, also told readers to vote against the levy. Both papers argued that renters' needs should come first.

"Yes for Homes" campaign coordinator Chris Gregorich says the *Times*' move was an unexpected blow, because for most of the campaign, most *Times* editorialists had seemed hospitable. Gregorich says that the paper's stance was a directive from the top down: *Times* owner Frank Blethen, an opponent of the federal inheritance (or "death") tax, told colleagues that too many taxes were already choking state residents. The levy would cost the average Seattle homeowner \$49 a year.

Not that healthy debate wasn't tolerated: *Times* columnist Lynne Varner put in a good word in the Sept. 12 editorial section, writing: "The day after the election, I'd like to be able to reassure those women carrying their children to shelters to be patient, it won't be much longer."

Hey, Lynne, let us know how much time we have left. ■

— Adam Holdorf

And the grannies raged



THE RAGING GRANNIES PERFORM FOR CITIZENS CALLING FOR THE WINTER RESPONSE SHELTER TO OPEN IN OCTOBER. PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

Nearly 100 citizens of King County gathered at the King County Administration Building plaza on September 13 to exercise their rights to free speech, to peaceably assemble, and to petition their government for the redress of grievances. The grievance in this case is King County Executive Ron Sims' decision to de-fund the 12-year-old County Winter Response Shelter for 50 men, traditionally scheduled to open October 1.

As people began to set up a portable sound system on the Administration Building plaza, guards arrived to politely but persistently verbally push the group back to the sidewalk. "Whatever happened to the First Amendment?" asked one of the organizers. "What, you mean free speech?" the guard asked. "No sir," said another organizer. "It also guarantees us the right to assemble." "You can assemble over there!" the guard said, pointing to the sidewalk.

At this point, seven Raging Grannies descended on the guards, their feather boas flying. We're citizens of King County, they said; this building is public, and therefore ours. We are assembling *right here!* Then the Grannies began to sing their raucous political songs, set to the music of Broadway show

Continued on Page 10

Activism at work



TEN YEARS AGO THIS SEPTEMBER, A SMALL GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS POSTED SIGNS AROUND TOWN CALLING PEOPLE TO A RALLY IN PIONEER SQUARE'S OCCIDENTAL PARK, WHERE A MAN BRANDISHING A CROWBAR CALLED PEOPLE TO MARCH. MARCH THEY DID, RIGHT UP TO FOURTH AVENUE AND MARION STREET, WHERE THEY FORCED ENTRY INTO THE BOARDED-UP PACIFIC HOTEL. THE WEEK-LONG OCCUPATION ENDED WHEN POLICE EVICTED AND JAILED HUNDREDS OF SQUATTERS, BUT A HIGHLY PUBLICIZED PRESSURE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE BUILDING'S OWNER, SEAFIRST BANK, RESULTED IN ITS SALE. THE PACIFIC RE-OPENED IN 1995 AND NOW PROVIDES 106 UNITS OF HOUSING TO VERY LOW-INCOME PEOPLE. ARCHIVE PHOTO BY DANA SCHUERHOLZ.

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

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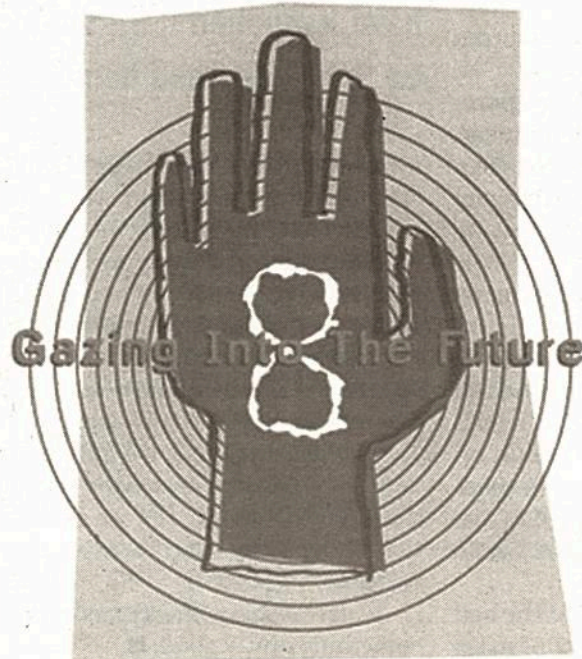
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Real Change
Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless

poetry

Our
flags waving
spreading fear as
swastikas swimmingly
fill bloodied ditches
on dry desert land
Hitler reincarnate
protected by
homeland security
guarding freedom
of speech
God
if you're there
I pray for every
mother's child
as bombs
torpedoed through
air blasting out
the last of
the human pain
filled piercing
CRIES

— PAULA

Mexican Stand-off

I knifed the Mexican as he came through the kitchen window but he took it like a man in the dentist's chair, willingly trading a little pain for long-term gain. Bandits for food lined up in staggered rows, children in rags, hollow-eyed women, old people bent like sunflowers weary of time. If we feed our enemies, will they strengthen to fight us? The fear of being robbed robs us of our eyes open to see another's needs, humanity beaten down beneath the cardboard signs, the outstretched hands accustomed to bitter bread. I can't leave the kitchen so long as there's life to be discovered, surrounding the house we crouch in, fearful of being found out, hoarding what we've been given.

— DAVID THORNBRUGH

Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning



Last year we here at *Real Change* celebrated our seventh year of putting out this rag. We did this for two reasons. One, any excuse for a party. Two, "seven" has Biblical significance. You've got seven days of creation, seven years of feast, seven years of famine, seven seals of the Book of Judgment, stuff like that. We wanted to plug in to that kind of action, 'cause the Bible is happ'nin'.

Of course, the feast/famine scenario did concern me at the time. I wondered what the next seven years could bring, given that the first seven went reasonably well. I thought, uh-oh, the second seven just likely may be reasonably rotten.

So far my fear has been realized. Seven years of *Real Change* was followed within the month by 9/11/01 and the ensuing economic downturn and social paranoia.

You'd think that as more people face poverty there would be more appreciation for those who have already been poor, but it doesn't work like that. You'd think that when someone earning, say, \$50,000 a year, has had to take a \$5,000 annual pay cut, the hardship might help her/him identify with the guy who gets next to nothing on GAU, but NO. Instead, he/she blames the guy on GAU for the missing \$5,000.

Many times this past year, lying awake at night, spinning the wheels in my brain, I have wondered what would have happened if all the victims on 9/11 had been homeless. Suppose, instead of flying planes into those towers, the same terrorists had managed to simultaneously bomb and obliterate 20 or 30 fully occupied homeless shelters all across the U.S. I hate to say it, but I don't think we would be in a recession now. Maybe I'm wrong, but I don't think we would be talking now about eliminating Saddam Hussein. I don't even think we would have attacked the Taliban or pursued Osama to the edge of the world. I think the general American public would have shrugged the whole thing off the way they shrug off famine in Somalia.

The good news: war with Iraq will probably only last a few weeks. The bad news: nothing good will be accomplished by it. Oh, some weapons of mass

destruction might get destroyed, but only by means of mass destruction. An evil dictator will lose power, but the resulting turmoil will grow new evil dictators. The American economy will not benefit from the brief war; it will only serve to raise expectations in time for the November elections. In fact, if the war doesn't happen by November, it will probably be postponed altogether until 2004.

Don't get me wrong. *Real Change* itself is doing OK in its second seven years. But our environment has taken a noticeable turn for the worse. I wouldn't call it famine yet, but I wouldn't exactly call it feast either. Knock on wood.

I have wondered what would have happened if all the victims on 9/11 had been homeless

anniversary? What anniversary? Look! Isn't that Osama bin Laden over there in the rugby shirt and jeans? (Columnist runs and hides.)"

Yes. I have been doing this for seven years, and the thought of that puts me in the mind to run away to Bora Bora. What could the next seven years be like? Will I again succumb to duck licking? Will my muse, Cindy Holly, stick with me? Will I ever write in iambic tetrameter again?

Looking back at the last seven years is hard for me, because there are so few successes. OK, so we didn't end homelessness. I don't know how, but we screwed that one up. We also didn't end poverty. I kick myself every day for that.

On the other hand, we have had our victories. Or we can pretend that we have. For instance, this is the second column in a row in which we have used the word "happ'nin." But we are most proud of convincing *The Seattle Times* that "Dilly Dally Alley" was an icky name for their comics page ("*induced retching*," *this column*, May 16, 2002.)

In seven years, the *Times'* comics page. In 14 years, who knows? Maybe something pretty good. ■



Yellowstone Bears

Yellowstone Park in the 1950s
bears waited in roadside rows
beside creeping cars
eating potato chips and sandwiches
extended from car windows
all park service-approved
scientifically sanctioned

it was like that here
in the middle of the century
the coffee was bad but strong
and plentiful women wore skirts
even in bed and the president
never cheated on his wife
or lied so you'd notice
a bear knew its place in the National Parks
beside the road begging
cutely for handouts

now the bears have been banned
to the woods kept separate from strangers
and the sides of the roads
leading into cities are lined
with shaggy sad-eyed men and women
holding signs begging for food
work money
but much less cutely
than Yellowstone bears

— DAVID THORNBRUGH

grown breathless

You do have coins
in your hand!
Not, the
others—
not

many (if, your own words
are
the
answer
given so closely to
friends...
strange, even).

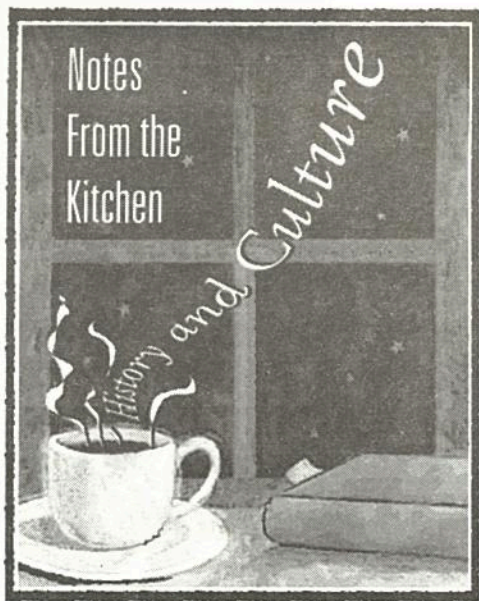
In time.

— STAN BURRIS

TENTS

Tents lines in a row
as though huddled to protect
against the visible enemy
not just the rain sleet or snow
not just the heat so hot it leaves one
breathless
the enemy they look just like you and they look just like me
wearing the guise of humanity
their Gods are their money
their safety secure behind locked doors
of judgment and criticism
their bellies full
as compassion and understanding drain with the water
from their showers and tubs
tents all in a row
huddled together as to protect
from these well dressed blinded
to the plight of the poor
in their ivory towers on self made
pedestals of power-control
built on shifting sand moving slow
we welcome you as one by one you slowly come
to the home known as tent city.

— PAULA



A School Where Everyone Belongs

By Liz Smith

In the beginning, of course, there was no school, only thickly forested woods where deer and cougars roamed. Duwamish and Suquamish and Nisqually Indians lived in those woods also, and fished for salmon in Lake Union and in the creek which later became the Lake Washington Ship Canal. After the Indian Wars, the white settlers came and named their colony Fremont. The hillsides were cleared of trees by teams of oxen, and many families moved onto the land they bought.

By 1889, there were close to 150 children living in the area, and Mr. Benjamin Franklin Day and his wife Frances were concerned about their education and welfare. They donated their property, located in the uplands of the small town. And so arose B.F. Day Elementary School. Set like a jewel in the crown of a hill, its gleaming floors, light-filled classrooms, and spacious library make it look more like a private school than a place where one in five of the students is homeless. Seattle is full of quiet treasures, and this is one of them.

Here is a part of the speech given at the school's opening, given by a Mr. Burwell on the morning of September 6, 1892: "These children are soon to take our places and yours in the active duties of life. It is eminently right and proper that we should give them the best preparation possible for that work, and that is a good education."

As you might suppose, Mr. and Mrs. Day are not around any more. They are peacefully resting in the Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Queen Anne. If they could see how wonderfully their gift has served the

children of Seattle they would be very proud indeed.

In 1991 the school was renovated, and the students returned in 1992, 100 years after that first dedication speech. As earlier stated, B.F. Day is a very beautiful school. Everything gleams and shines. But it takes more than attractive physical surroundings to make a school a going concern; it takes professional and enthusiastic staff to deliver a good quality education.

Susan McClosky has been a principal for 15 years, and has served at B.F. Day since 1998. Before coming to B.F. Day, she served as principal at Whitworth and at Lopez and Oak Harbor in the San Juan Islands. The hours she works are very long: from 7:45 a.m. to 6:00 or 6:30 p.m. during the school year, and 9 to 5 in the summer. She usually takes a break the beginning of August. The teachers are with their students from 9 in the morning to just after 3, but then they start additional work grading papers and planning lessons. They are off from the end of June until the middle of August — but much of that time is consumed with taking classes and advancing their skills. It's a lot

of work for all concerned.

When I was in elementary school, the principal was the autocrat behind the closed door. At B.F. Day, it's not like that — Ms. McClosky says she is a "hands-on" principal. She is there to welcome the students as they get off their morning bus, as they take lunch and recess, and as they leave at the end of the day. She knows every child's name, and visits every classroom during the week. It's easier now, as she mainly has to learn the new kindergartner's names. About 60-65 percent of the students attend B.F. Day all six years. One of the things she likes about being principal is watching them grow up, and

also having former students come back to visit. Very different from the old days of mean scary principals.

B.F. Day staff are very determined to help their children succeed and to get them to school each day. The daily educational routine is critical for children whose lives aren't all that stable.

Staff stress attendance; so much so that they'll give a family an alarm clock if they need one.

Enrolling your child in a Seattle public school involves a somewhat complicated process in which you list the schools you want your child to go to in order of preference. Most of the good schools have a waiting list, and B.F. Day is no different. But if a child is homeless, he or she is automatically enrolled. That's because it's one of four schools in the Seattle School District that were designated as "homeless schools" back in the 1980s. About 60 of B.F. Day's students, approximately 20 percent, are homeless. When they leave school for the

day they go to transitional shelters, or tiny motel rooms, or to a relative's house. These young children are not sleeping out in the open, but they don't have stable permanent housing.

That means that the one sure thing in their lives is their home away from home — their school, where they feel safe and cared for. The students of B.F. Day are so widely scattered, they are on 13 different bus routes. A few students not on a bus route are brought to school by cab, or are picked up by the Family Support Worker, Ms. Coraline Mills. If a family gets into permanent housing and is no longer on a bus route the child is allowed to finish out their school year, so they have that continuity which is so important. B.F. Day staff are very determined to help their children succeed and to get them to school each day. The daily educational routine is critical for children whose lives aren't all that stable. Staff stress attendance; so much so that they'll give a family an alarm clock if they need one.

Some hard-hearted critics might think this all is being overly generous, but studies show that a child's attitude toward school is pretty well set by grade five. If a child perceives that their school staff likes them and wants to have them at school, then they will be less apt to drop out of school when they are older. Ninety percent of people in prison were high-school





BELOW LEFT: THE MOSAIC WALL GREETING STUDENTS AS THEY COME TO SCHOOL; ABOVE: B.F. DAY PRINCIPAL SUSAN MCCLOSKY ENJOYING TIME WITH SOME OF HER STUDENTS; RIGHT: MCCLOSKY IN HER OFFICE. PHOTOS BY HEDVIG HJELM.

ropouts; it makes sense to make children's experiences at school happy ones.

I got a quote from Susan McClosky that goes straight to the essence of B.F. Day: There is a care that staff have for the kids that's obvious to the kids. You know, a child knows when you don't like them. They're real adept at reading that, if an adult doesn't like them, and our staff in so many ways shows kids they're really loved in this school."

Another of the ways in which B.F. Day succeeds is the reading skills of the children. Ninety percent of the second-graders are reading at or above grade level. The students get free books four times a year through the Reading Is Fundamental program. The kids also have their school library: two very large rooms full of books and comfortable chairs to sit and read in.

Children enrolled at B.F. Day find themselves in a school with a great spirit and widespread ties to the community. The school has six Americorps volunteers who run an environmental club called Starfish Corps. Elderly people from University House come in once a month for an ice cream social.

B.F. Day is known as "the family school." There is a new-parent potluck for families of kindergartners, and on the first day of school a coffee klatch, to get the weeping parents out of their "first day tears." The school puts on Family Dinner — potluck suppers, to which families and

the business community are invited. These usually have a theme, and a program of entertainment, such as when they served Somali food and featured Somali music and dancing. Some of the students just learning English are Asian, some are Hispanic, and some are from Somalia. Ms. McClosky said the children especially enjoy the mysteriousness of being in their school at night.

During "Village Day" in May, every classroom has a little business. The whole school participates and becomes a bustling marketplace. One classroom will be a garden store, one will be a candy store, another a pizza parlor, and another will sell Italian sodas. The parents and the business community come, and they are the customers. It becomes part of the math curriculum, and the kids learn how to do such things as graph which cookies sold the best, and how to write out profit and loss sheets. Pretty heady stuff for an elementary school, and it's great fun for the kids to see their school so transformed. During Village Day, the kids get to earn "B.F. Day Dollars," which they can spend at the school store that is open on Wednesdays. The store sells shirts, hats, vests, and other related items, like B.F. Day water bottles.

When the school district allocates the funds for each school, they use what is called a weighted school formula. If a child gets a free or reduced price lunch, then more funds per child are given. Similarly, more monies are disbursed for bilingual

students, special education students, and homeless students. In that way, the needier students generate more funding, which pays for needed staff members.

B.F. Day has many ties to the business community, which I believe come about due to the persuasive power of its principal. The Fremont Rotary Club, of which McClosky is a member, donates books every year and also has a store in which the children can buy presents for their families in December. The Adobe Corporation and Getty Images help with yearly grants to the school. B.F. Day also has a yearly auction, as do most schools. The funds raised in the auction pay for the salary of the art teacher and for supplies. The auction comes about because of the hard work of parent volunteers. There are so many parents volunteering that there is a coordinator to schedule everything.

Yet with all this fund-generating activity, the teachers are usually spending about \$1,000 apiece to buy classroom material. It's a sad fact — politicians are quick to spout the truism that "children are our future" when if they were honest they'd really like to shout "bombs away" while they cut the human needs budgets. Teachers pay for that kind of attitude, out of their own pockets.

During the interview with Ms. McClosky, I found myself wishing my teenager was young again so I could enroll him in B.F. Day. All in all, a truly great school led by an enthusiastic and caring principal. ■



"You know, a child knows when you don't like them. They're real adept at reading that, if an adult doesn't like them, and our staff in so many ways shows kids they're really loved in this school."

— B.F. Day Principal Susan McClosky



DR. STUART BRAMHALL LEAFS THROUGH THE FILES OF HER 250 PATIENTS, MOST OF WHOM WILL BE LEFT WITHOUT CARE WHEN SHE CLOSES UP SHOP SEPTEMBER 23. PHOTO BY CASEY KELBAUGH.

RC: And then you would continue to see them and monitor their progress.

Bramhall: Yes. Maybe a couple times a month, or four times a year. When they got stable, I'd see them less. In order to have an income, I need continual references from the welfare offices.

At the end of June, the supervisor at the West Seattle welfare office called and said, "You're rating these people as being too disabled." That's what he told me. I used to get five or 10 referrals a week from DSHS offices, and they'd pay me \$150 per evaluation. Since July, I've had three referrals.

The second reason I'm going out of business is that the state's supplemental payment to SSI [Supplemental Security Income] recipients ceased [see "Down and Out... Again," *Real Change*, August 22]. Along with that, they cut some of my patients off of Medicaid. Now they can't pay for my services. Without Medicaid, there is nothing — nothing — that will cover medication.

The third reason I'm leaving is what's on the horizon: I see things getting worse, not better. Around the state, pharmacists are not taking medical coupons. And the state is applying for a federal waiver that would allow it to charge Medicaid recipients co-payments. My patients can't pay a \$30 premium. They go in and out of the hospital when they're required to pay anything. There is no way that I can provide any continuity of care if they have to pay.

RC: Where else can people turn?

Bramhall: Nowhere. I don't have anyone to refer my patients to. I'm the only psychiatrist who accepts Medicaid, the

only one who accepts whatever the state can pay on Medicare, and the only one who uses a sliding-scale payment system.

I've tried to refer people who cannot pay for their services to community clinics — the 45th St. Clinic [in Wallingford], or Community Psychiatric Clinic — but these

places are going to get overwhelmed. The case managers at most community mental health centers are overburdened, and the job is high-stress; it's typical for a client to get a new case manager twice a year. They have the same funding problems as I do, but deeper pockets. They may be able to get money from United Way.

RC: You spent part of your time here advocating for a better health care system. Where is that now?

Bramhall: Now, I just see a lot of stakeholder groups that don't want to give anything up. Everyone would be better off if we went to a universal single-payer health care system — everyone except the insurance companies.

RC: And you're leaving to go to New Zealand, a place with a working health care system.

Bramhall: That's part of the reason I'm leaving. I'm getting older, and I have to worry about my health. I also have to worry about my employability. At my age — and age discrimination exists — I could probably get a job at someplace like Group Health or Community Psychiatric Clinic. But if things get worse and the hospital or clinic I'm employed at goes under, I'm back where I started. Getting a job here doesn't give me much security. ■

BRAMHALL Continued from Page 1

come in seeking psychiatric evaluations in order to receive GA-U. The majority of them were homeless, and were either mentally ill or had a major

emotional disorder. I would fill out the form that would qualify them for GA-U, they would start getting a check, and they would get a medical coupon. I would put them on medication to get their mental illness under control.

NEWSBRIEFS Continued from Page 5

tunes and traditional folk melodies.

There was a stellar lineup of speakers, from all walks of life—politicians, labor organizers, social service providers, and homeless and religious leaders. Councilman Nick Licata prevailed upon the City's sister government to open the shelter, saying it's only appropriate for the County to do something for homeless people, since the City pours so much of its tax revenues into the County. Reverend David Bloom of First Things First pointed out that two-thirds of the County budget goes to criminal justice, and less than two-tenths of one percent to human services. Knowing these percentages makes the \$76,000 price tag for running the Winter Shelter seem ridiculously low.

Reverend Pat Taylor, retired from her work with All Saints Episcopal

Church, began her comments by saying, "For thousands of years, civilizations were judged to be civilized or not by how they treated the least powerful...When God looks down on this, God is *not pleased!*" Reverend Pat Simpson of the Church of Mary Magdalene read from Psalm 140 and prayed for our protection and ability as a public, in a public building, to welcome the wanderers as hundreds of families, churches, synagogues, and temples already do throughout Seattle. Reverend Rick Reynolds of Operation Nightwatch held up a sign that simply said, "Ron promised."

Roberto Maestas, Executive Director of El Centro de la Raza, said, "Ron Sims has become a major political figure on our backs and our reputations." Maestas indicated that it was possible for Sims to be judged for his "dereliction of duty" should he not open the shelter.

Most movingly, two speakers asked the group to think about death. K.L. Shannon of LELO, after pointing out that our County is named after slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, "I'm thinking about 44-year-old Kelly Rhae Craft, stomped to death in Kent. I'm thinking about 27-year-old Joshua Pointer, who was run over by a train. I'm thinking about 57-year-old Gary Allan Funk, who died of hypothermia, too young." These people, she said, died as a result of their homelessness, and a later speaker, 18-year-old Sandy of WHEEL/Church of Mary Magdalene Women in Black, said that more names on the list of the dead were a sure result if King County refuses to find a way to open the shelter.

At the end of the evening, the Raging Grannies returned to the microphone to make an announcement: At 9 p.m. on October 1, they plan to return to help open the King County Citizens'

Sidewalk Winter Shelter, if necessary. They promised to serve everyone there that night milk and cookies and sing them to sleep on the sidewalk.

There is a planning meeting for the King County Citizens' Sidewalk Winter Shelter at 5:30 p.m. September 25, at the Pike Market Senior Center at 1st and Virginia. Call 721-3303 for more information. ■

— Michele Marchand

Not done yet

The battle between Paul Allen's Vulcan Incorporated and neighborhood activists rages on. The city's Department of Construction and Land Use has issued an order allowing Vulcan to tear down the 94-year old Lillian Apartments at 1258 John Street. Vulcan plans

Continued on Page 14

A Day at the Movies

Quiet Desperation and Quick Processing

One Hour Photo (R)

Directed by Mark Romanek

With Robin Williams, Michael Vartan, Connie Nielsen

Released August 21; check your local paper for venues and showtimes

Review by Curly Cohen

In *One Hour Photo*, we meet Sy Parrish (Robin Williams)—Sy “the photo guy.” He wears off-white polyester pants, sans belt, with a perfect and full crease running down them. He has short hair and glasses styled in the '80s that are just slightly larger than reasonable. He carries a sky blue travel bag to and from work—the kind made famous in the '60s travel agent posters. It's a shade lighter blue than his work vest, the kind you've seen on a thousand K- and Wal-Mart workers. And Sy's utilitarian, somewhere between beige and green work and walking shoes squeak and squeal with just enough noise to bother you as he walks down the piercingly anal aisles of Save-Mart.

Sy has been working at the photo counter for about a decade and a half. A mirror in the developing room has a

“Have you checked your smile today?” on it. Sy does, as he must every day, and it's pretty scary. Along with his perfect asshole of a store manager, it's more than enough proof of the toll that corporate cheerleading has on eight-dollar-an-hour workers.

Sy doesn't seem to have much of a life outside of work. At his apartment, the entrance to the building could have neon signs that say “the seedy and perverted stay here.” But inside looks like an extension of the Save-Mart. On one wall are almost endless Kodak moments that show the perfect Yorkin family.

Sy has taken a shining to the Yorkin's trendy, hip-yupified life. The couple has their required SUV, and their 8-year-old son, Jake, in tow. The Yorkins seem over-income and out of place at Save-Mart. Sy has caught their every perfect Kodak moment since before the Yorkins were married. Maybe Sy's active resistance to Save-Mart's polished corporate grind consists of retreating into these moments. Of course the Yorkins aren't aware that Sy has “joined the family.” In fact, they've hardly noticed Sy. And we notice just how slightly

uncomfortable the photo guy makes not just them, but everyone he meets.

Another woman comes in to develop some pictures. Sy sees from the pictures that Mr. Yorkin is having a fairly intimate Kodak moment with someone not his wife. Sy is also about to be fired because he's been sneaking copies of his fantasy family, and his logs just don't add up.

Just how dark and strange will Sy get from the indiscretion he discovered in his perfect family? And what rage will he release for being fired, since from his point of view, he was such a conscientious worker? What a great setup to show an Americana sick with overconsumption and superficiality: this seemingly invisible drone has some information to create a little havoc.

But the second half of the movie changes gear, speed, and rhythm. Just when Sy's sick psycho self is ramping up, a police action chase scene takes over—not the slow and stunning effect of Sy's sickness and insanity.

Pardon my little imagination. But I can never see why you'd want to waste a talent like Robin Williams on a police action scene. Williams is a comedian with demented humor and demonic speed. He can combine the material in such a way that he'll be some-



ROBIN WILLIAMS AS A NOT-SO-MILD-MANNERED PHOTO CLERK. PHOTO COURTESY FOX SEARCHLIGHT.

times two, three, four impersonations ahead of you, leaving you with your mouth open. His dark side gave this humor a double punch because of how powerfully true it is. In one scene, fired and on his last exit from Save-Mart, the photo guy steals a knife. It struck me as terribly odd and wrong. When you have someone as talented and dark as Williams, it's the tongue that does all the cutting. ■

Harry Gets Himself Dirty

Blood Work (R)

Directed by Clint Eastwood

With Eastwood, Angelica Huston, Wanda DeJesus

Released August 9; check your local paper for showtimes

Review by Curly Cohen

There's a moment two thirds of the way through *Blood Work*, produced and directed by Clint Eastwood. He's playing Terry McCaleb, a former hotshot FBI special agent. He's looking at himself in a mirror. A scar runs down his middle from his chest to his belly button. It's meant to be seen as ugly. There's a street-smart working class Latina, Graciela Rivers (Wanda DeJesus). She's a waitress, 30 or 35, with a body full of sensuality. She's moving toward McCaleb. It's the middle of the night, they're on his houseboat. She moves her head down his body in a very sexual manner. The next thing you become aware of is the sound of strings, as in instruments. Only instead of the scene becoming more steamy, based on the movement and direction of her head, Graciela fondles and kisses his scar. She tells him it's beautiful, not to be ashamed of it. It's an odd scene in a pretty strange movie.

McCaleb has a new heart inside his body that belonged to Graciela's sister, who was murdered while buying a

candy bar for her son at a convenience store. The murderer has not been caught. Graciela has come to McCaleb for at least justice and revenge. When the movie opens, McCaleb has been called in to investigate a grisly murder scene executed by a serial killer. The killer left a personal message to McCaleb, scrawled in blood on a mirror. The killer is also bold enough to be at the scene just behind the blood-thirsty media asking McCaleb a question. McCaleb makes chase, a very long one, and when it's over the suspect is on one side of a fence and McCaleb on the other. McCaleb is panting and showing all the signs of heart attack. When he pulls his Dirty Harry style revolver, you're not sure if he's faking. He grazes the suspect and collapses in a heap.

Flash forward two years, and McCaleb is with his doctor Angelica Huston, who is the chief surgeon overseeing his heart transplant. His life consists mainly of charting and monitoring his second chance. Then Graciela shows up at his houseboat with a photo. She asks McCaleb if he knows the woman in the picture. He doesn't. She informs him that he is walking around with this woman's heart. He agrees to look into her sister's murder but refuses to “take the case.”

Is there a connection with the serial killer and Graciela's sister's murder? That's the rough outline of

Eastwood's whodunit. But it's more like “who dumped it?”

This movie should have been chaos—it should have displayed a very emotional chaos that would have broken out the moment Graciela shows Eastwood that photo. Instead it's neither good drama nor good direction. A movie at odds with itself: being beautifully filmed and jazzily soundtracked makes it even harder to watch. What we get is a film that raises issues of medical ethics, e.g., does a heart transplant recipient have at least a moral obligation to the donor? Is a heart transplant actually owned by the medical wizardry of the technology? If so, do you become an instrument of those that did the work?

As a whodunit, Sherlock and Holmes might do a better job at deduction, because when all the clues are exhibited I didn't think the killer capable. The story aside, it's the real-life content that brings real mystery to the screen.

Eastwood is now 72, his face chiseled into our head, that droll, dry, and glib voice. He's a family member. We've been watching him rawhide. But he's not our grandpa or father. He's our strange uncle whose decisions are a mixed record. As San Francisco cop Dirty Harry, he helped create the law-and-order moment Richard Nixon had been drooling for since Jack Kennedy blindsided him in the presidential race of 1960. In the dark cowboy spaghetti westerns, he helped make and rethink our own country's western dilemma. But



CLINT EASTWOOD SHOWS HIS AGE. PHOTO COURTESY WARNER BROTHERS.

Blood Work introduces sexual identity issues—at 72, is this Clint's midlife crisis? Does that mean he's going for 144? Is that what Hollywood really offers?

In *Blood Work*, there are three women—one white, one black, and one Latina. Angelica Huston, the surgeon, is more familiar with McCaleb than a doctor-and-patient relationship would allow. On the hospital bed she puts her hand on his shoulder. While on investigation, McCaleb depends on the help of a black woman lieutenant in the L.A. sheriff's department. Their dialogue has a shadow that says that they had been an item. But McCaleb saves his dance and smell for Graciela, the youngest and most vulnerable. That leaves a slight taste of perversion to add to our odd uncle's résumé. Wouldn't a side story of a romance with a peer pack twice the punch? Faye Dunaway comes to mind. ■

Curly Cohen is the former movie reviewer for *Streetwise*, a Chicago-based street paper.

More Theatre Than You Can Handle

The Seattle Fringe Festival takes over Capitol Hill's performance spaces for the next 11 days, bringing 97 different shows from every corner of the Puget Sound and as far away as Budapest and England.

The productions cover everything you could possibly want — from naked people to Shakespeare to naked people doing Shakespeare — and a full list of all the offerings can be found through festival brochures at area coffee shops, libraries, and bookstores, as well as online at www.seattlefringe.org. The following is a taste of some of the kinds of offerings on hand. A list of venues, prices, and times can be found in the brochure or on the website.

George Bush's Nuts (or How I learned to Enjoy Real Time War Footage on LSD): Brandon Welch takes his audience on a ride through "new" patriotism, old imperialism, and all the parallels beyond the biological between George Bushes senior and junior. Come revel in the wars on drugs, terrorism, and the non-rich.

Letters to Wendy: An adaptation of Joe Wenderoth's book that chronicles one man's obsession with fast-food culture.

No Demerits for Dancing: Debra Pralle brings to life her experiences growing up in the conservative bible-belt and attending Liberty University, Jerry Falwell's infamous ultra-conservative Baptist college.

Primary Guardian: An original play by Louise Zamparutti about women and their eating habits.

Copy: An exploration of recent media stories and the expectations we form around them.

Walking Back to Brooklyn: Murray Meyer

shows us the 12-year-old Murray who encountered sex, racism, class struggle, and issues with his bar mitzma in his walk from Brooklyn to Montreal, Canada.

Mrs. Pancake America: The runner-up prize to Mrs. America glides over the ideas of perfection, secrets, insecurity, and escape, and is as smooth as a pancake on Sunday morning.

Worm-Hole: A fusion of physical theatre and dance exploring the optimistic argument for spiritual sanity.

Malika: An adaptation from Arabic folktales of a young woman who offers her life to stop the war mongering of a king, told through poetry, music, and gesture.

We Killed Kurt Cobain: The life and death of Kurt Cobain become the perfect insight into the conflicts between art

and commerce and the fallout that results from a media tragedy. We all play a part in the fate of our heroes.

Good Morning, Beijing: The true story of a 19-year-old Montrealer with his own radio show in China.

The Day They Shot John Lennon: A group of New Yorkers gather together to reflect on the state of their times and the state of themselves. This performance is dedicated to the victims of September 11.

Got Green Chiles, Makoti!: Even though Gladys suffers from being triply oppressed (a black female laborer) she never loses her sense of adventure and fun as she sells vegetables on the streets of Durban, South Africa.

Foxes in Boxes: An exploration through word, music, and movement of the



ABOVE: PRIMARY GUARDIAN, SHOW AND PHOTO BY LOUISE ZAMPARUTTI; RIGHT: MALIKA, PUT ON BY REBIRTH PRODUCTIONS, PHOTO BY MICHAEL WANDER.

other, unspoken side of the Pandora's Box Myth and what it says about the way we treat women and their "evil" thoughts and the way they treat themselves.

Church of Pie: Maria Glanz, winner of last year's best of fest, is back with another loopy show, this one "an erotic fever-dream of food, sex, and song."

Beneath Sita's Belly: A retelling of the Hindu epic *Ramayana*, using puppets, shadows, and physical theatre. ■



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Best of the past year

Mon. Oct. 8, 11:38 p.m., 14th Ave – Operation Nightwatch. Operation Nightwatch called 911 to report the following incident. At approximately 11:38 p.m., the suspect, a nearby storeowner, walked up to the front door of the shelter with a clear plastic cup in his hand. He stated, "One of your guys left this at my place – you can have it back." He poured the contents of the cup on the floor inside the doorway and walked back to his business. Operation Nightwatch told the officers that the fluid "was yellow, and smelled like urine." Officers observed a puddle on the floor, but were unable to determine what the substance was. They contacted the suspect inside his business, and he stated that he threw apple juice inside the shelter "to teach them a lesson." He stated he is tired of the transients who use Operation Nightwatch trespassing on his property — they urinate and defecate on his property, every morning he has to clean up the mess they leave behind, and he is "fed up." He was given a warning for his behavior, and was told to seek legal avenues for dealing with the situation.

Sun., Feb. 10, between 7 and 10 p.m., Freeway Park, Seneca St. Officer was flagged down on February 13 on 12th Avenue by the Jensonia Hotel by the complainant. He stated that he knew a woman who was sexually assaulted in the Freeway Park on February 10. He then stated that the suspect was well known around transient camps, and he had known the suspect for three years. He then took the officer to 8th Ave. and Spring, where the victim was camping out for the night. The victim stated that she had met the suspect at the bar he worked at near the International District, and they walked together to the Freeway Park, where he then forced her into the bushes and forced intercourse. The suspect then threatened to kill the woman if she did not comply with him. The suspect then fled the scene after the act. She stated that she felt he had done this to other women and thought he may have been involved in the Freeway Park murder but did not give any further details. She did not want an investigation but was given a case number if she changed her mind.

Fri., April 12, 5 p.m., 2900 Block Airport Way S. Complainant, a maintenance worker, stated unknown transients had gained access to an abandoned building across from where he works. They seemed to have entered by a broken window frame on the west side of the building. There is nothing inside of value to remove. He reported that transients are also using the neighboring abandoned Rainier Brewing Co. building. The damage the transients did to gain access to these buildings is unreported, as it will not be repaired. Both buildings are due to be demolished later this month. ■

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

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NEWSBRIEFS Cont. from Page 5

to get permits to tear down the building, although the firm hasn't announced a specific plan for the site.

The Coalition to Save The Lillian, made up of nearby neighbors in the Cascade area, wasn't surprised by the ruling. They plan to file an appeal with the City Hearings Examiner.

"Paul Allen will not demolish the Lillian," exclaimed John Fox of the Seattle Displacement Coalition, a housing advocacy group which supports the neighbors' efforts. "If we have the financial capabilities, we're prepared to sue."

Ironically, DCLU agreed with the Coalition on one of its main points: when Vulcan removed heating and plumbing fixtures from the building, they helped drive repair costs higher.

"A significant amount of the current substandard conditions was caused by the actions of the owners and their agents," noted DCLU hearing officer Robert Laird, in the decision. However, nothing in the city's Housing and Building Maintenance Code prevents an owner from doing so if the building's uninhabited. The DCLU determined the repair cost of \$660,700 was more than half the estimated \$1 million cost of replacement.

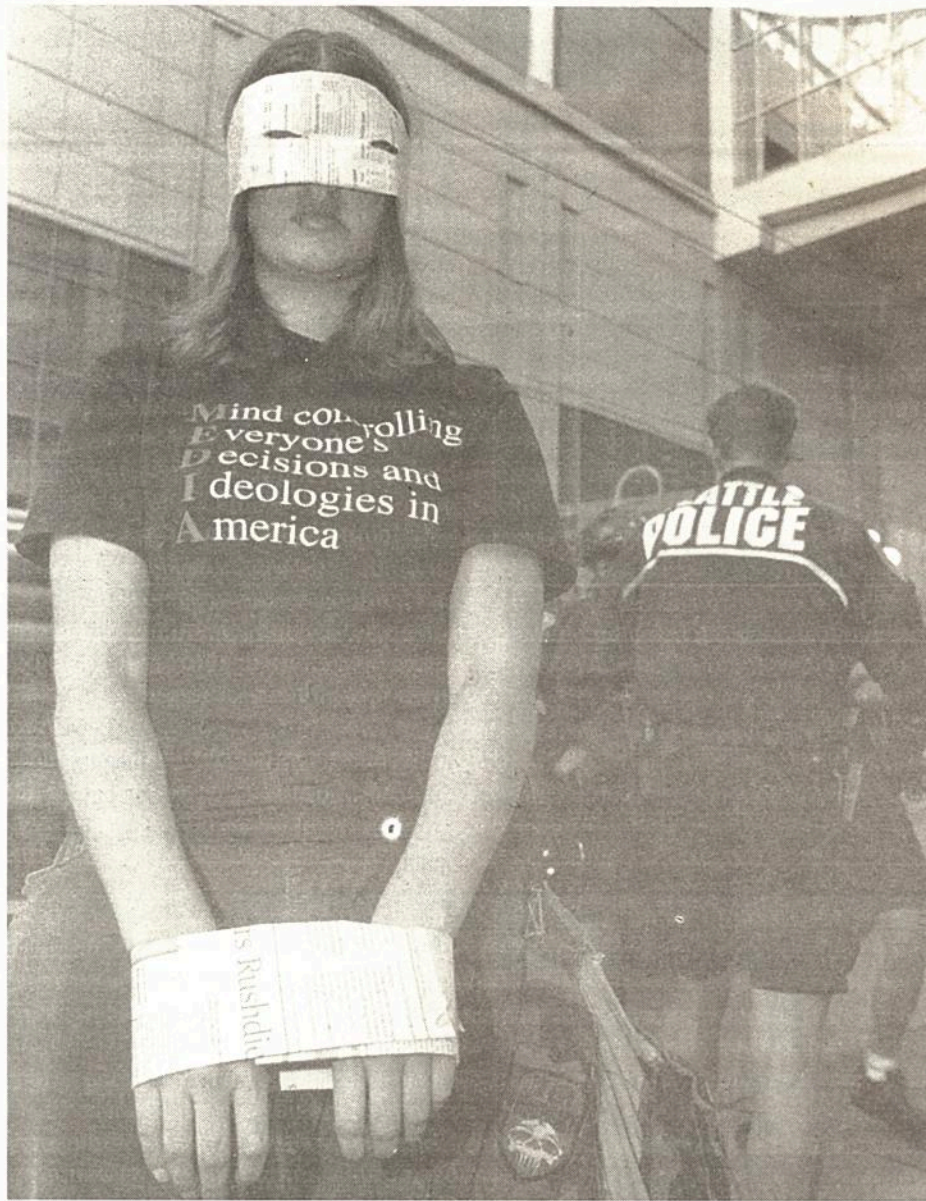
Local land use law says the city may order that a vacant building be demolished, if the estimated repair cost is more than half the cost of replacing the structure. With that, DCLU issued its order. Local architects and builders had criticized DCLU's initial findings, saying that the repair estimate was too high and the replacement cost too low. Nonetheless, DCLU's ruling responded that they could find no better numbers to go by.

Allen owns approximately 35 percent of the Cascade neighborhood, located in the north end of downtown. Through a limited partnership, he purchased the Lillian along with the adjacent New Richmond Laundry in 2000. Before the purchase, the three-story, 34-unit Lillian had served low-income tenants.

The Displacement Coalition continues to strategize around saving the Lillian. For more information, call (206)632-0668. ■

—R.V. Murphy

Media for the Masses



ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, MEDIA ACTIVISTS DESCENDED ON FREEWAY PARK TO PROTEST THE INCREASING POWERS OF LARGE MEDIA GIANTS DOMINATING THE AIRWAVES. THE RECLAIM THE MEDIA GATHERING WAS IN RESPONSE TO A SEATTLE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS, AND A CHANCE FOR PEOPLE TO LEARN ABOUT WHAT THESE COMPANIES ARE DOING TO STIFLE A VARIETY OF LOCAL AND COMMUNITY BROADCASTERS. ABOVE, A MEDIA ACTIVIST FROM THE PRAXIS ART GROUP MAKES HER FEELINGS KNOWN OUTSIDE THE CONVENTION CENTER.

PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

CLASSICS CORNER



by Perfess'r Harris

"History," says Stephen Dedalus in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, "is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake." Lately, we at Classics Corner feel ourselves a reluctant participant-observer in a big nationalist collective dream. We read the cartoonish comments of G. W. Bush in the *New York Times* and they swirl into little eddies of word salad reminiscent of Dirty Harry on an unusually inarticulate day. "This isn't real," we think to ourselves. Like most waking dreams, the drive to "get Saddam" is freighted with symbolism and emotion. We see the State Department standing to the loony right of the Pentagon and we sit straight up and scream. We awake, but the nightmare continues.

In these troubled times of surreal militarism and sound-bite foreign policy, we at Classics Corner curl into a little ball, get out our Thucydides, and bask in the humane rationalism of an illuminated mind. His account of the Sicilian Expedition seems especially relevant.

It is the summer of 415. A fragile peace has been achieved in the long-standing war between Athens and Sparta, and the young, rich, and aristocratic Alcibiades goes before the people with dreams of painless conquest. Sicily, with its generous natural resources and divided people, is portrayed as easy pickings for the invincible Athenian army. Nicias, an experienced older General, accuses Alcibiades of dragging Athens into a misguided war for reasons of personal ambition. "Do not allow such a one to maintain his private splendor at his country's risk, but remember that such persons injure the public's fortune while they squander their own."

Thucydides describes a situation where older, more experienced soldiers opposed the Sicilian adventure, but were upstaged by young hot-heads who lacked real military experience. Interestingly, that is exactly the situation now in Washington. The old guard warriors of the Pentagon — Powell, Armitage, Scowcroft, and even Schwarzkopf — oppose the invasion of Iraq. Meanwhile, those most invested in a war — Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Abrams — either avoided military service altogether or never saw combat.

Sen. Chuck Hagel, a Republican from Nebraska, perhaps put it best. "Many of those who want to rush this country into war and think it would be so quick and easy don't know anything about war. They come at it from an intellectual perspective, versus having sat in jungles or foxholes and watched their friends get their heads blown off."

Powell, as a Bush cabinet member opposed to invasion of Iraq, would do well to remember Nicias' failed stratagem. The elder general gambled that raising the stakes would scare the Athenians into reconsideration. Overwhelming resources would be needed to succeed, he said. This, says Thucydides, had the opposite of the intended effect, and made the Athenians "more eager than ever." They "fell in love with the enterprise," and thought it would be "the safest in the world." Two years later, the expedition and its reinforcements "were destroyed, as the saying is, with total destruction ... and few out of many returned home."

Maybe it's time for more of us to wake up. ■

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.

Indian Summer Notables

Thursday 9/19

Hamoui Family Support Rally, to support this immigrant family who have lived peacefully in the U.S. for 10 years, now imprisoned; call on the INS to do the right thing. 4-5:30 p.m., this and subsequent Thursdays as long as necessary in front of the Key Bank Building, 1100 2nd Ave. at Spring. Endorsed by American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)-Seattle Chapter, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and Asian Pacific Islander Coalition (APIC)-King County, among many others. Info Rita Zawaideh, Arab American Community Coalition, 206-545-7300 or <http://www.hatefreezone.org> or theacc@yahoo.com or Arab American Hotline, 206-634-9001.

Radical Women hold a discussion on "Poverty: The Only War George W. Won't Fight." Social services are being destroyed and public aid is being cut. Join in this discussion that looks at debunking the welfare myths. 7:30 p.m., at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., dinner with vegetarian option at 6:30 p.m. for a \$6.50 donation; info 206-722-6057.

Saturday 9/21

Statewide **Commercialism in Schools Conference**, sponsored by Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools, bringing together people from all over the state who want to free public schools from corporate marketers. Free and open to the public. 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., at the School of Social Work, University of Washington, space is limited, register and info, Brita Butler-Wall 206-523-4922 or bbwall@drizzle.com.

The National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) will hold a one-day public workshop, an introduction to the work of NCBI, an organization working to end the oppression and mistreatment of all people. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., at Seattle Central Community College, 1701 Broadway, Room 3115, \$30-\$80 (sliding scale); registration and info <http://www.scn.org/ncbisea/>, info Darlene Lee 206-323-5427.

Leading organizations in the Sikh, Muslim, East African, Arab American, Japanese American, South Asian, and Latino communities are coordinating "Justice for All: The Aftermath of September 11," a public hearing with elected officials, along the line of the Japanese In-

ternment enquiries of the '80s. This is an opportunity to demonstrate that the many diverse communities in the Seattle area are united against bigotry and racial and religious discrimination. 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., at Seattle Town Hall, 1119-8th Ave.; info 206-723-2203 or liza@hatefreezone.org or <http://www.hatefreezone.org>.

Sunday 9/22

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

Seattle Peace Concert — Grand Finale Flashback Concert cosponsored by Blues To Do, featuring Randy Hansen, Duffy Bishop, The Fabulous Wailers, Shades of Purple, and Raven Humphries & Empty Shoes. Noon - 6 p.m., at Gas Works Park, free, please bring food bank donations for Northwest Harvest; info 206-729-5232.

Tuesday 9/24

"Hire Experience: Age 50+ Job Fair," sponsored by A Community Partnership including more than 15 community and government organizations. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., at the Seattle Center House, 305 Harrison St., free.

Wednesday 9/25

The Health Justice Network is hosting a forum "Health Justice Network: Framing Health Disparities." Topics to be explored include causes of health disparities, access to care issues, health policy, social/institutional barriers, and discrimination in the health care setting. 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., at New Holly Community Center Gathering Hall, 7054 32nd Ave., Metro Route #106 from downtown; info Kim Moore 206-228-7506.

A World Fit For Children, a public forum featuring Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) since 1995. Sponsored by United Nations Foundation's Better World Campaign and the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies. 7 p.m., at University of Washington, Kane Hall, Room 120; info Betsy Elfers, Better World Campaign, 206-652-2454

x107 or betsy@evansmcdonough.com.

"A Citizen's View of the Sanctions and Proposed War on Iraq," with Bert Sacks, whom the government fined \$10,000 for the crime of taking medicines to Iraq in 1997. Also political songs of the Raging Grannies and opportunities to get involved in local efforts for peace; reception follows. 7:30 p.m., at St. Patrick Catholic Church, 2702 Broadway E. at Edgar; info 206-633-6667.

Thursday 9/26

"The Future of Civil/Human Rights in Seattle," a community forum sponsored by the Seattle Human Rights Commission, free and open to the public. 9 a.m., at Seattle Central Community College; info 206-684-4540.

The first of three lectures on the history of Iraq, this session on "From Eden to the Gulf War." Guest speaker will focus on the historic roots of the current crisis. 7:30 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. N. in Wallingford; info 206-632-6021.

Friday 9/27

Seattle **Habitat for Humanity** eighth annual benefit auction, "Building the Dream." 6 p.m., at Roxbury Construction Site, 24th SW & SW Roxbury in Southwest Seattle, tickets \$75; info Mary Eells 206-292-5240 x112 or meells@seattle-habitat.org or <http://www.seattle-habitat.org/auction/2002>.

Saturday 9/28

Mayor's Day of Concern for the Hungry, a massive food drive to help the Emergency Feeding Program and participating food banks. Collection points at 100 King County grocery stores including Albertson's, Larry's, QFC, Red Apple, Safeway, Thriftway, and Top Food. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sunday 9/29

Seattle Peace Concert featuring "Ought 2" Drum Jam - Bring your thing! Noon - 6 p.m., at Woodland Park Shelter Area #1, free, please bring food bank donations for Northwest Harvest; info 206-729-5232.

Tuesday 10/1

U.S. speaking tour of Nigerian activist Segun Aderemi, on the topic "From the Frontlines: The Struggle Against Poverty and Neo-Colonialism in Africa." Mr. Aderemi played a leading role in organizing resistance to the military dictatorship in

Nigeria. 1 p.m., at Seattle Central Community College, Room 1110; info Socialist Alternative local speaking tour coordinator, Greg Beiter 206-526-7185 or <http://www.socialistalternative.org/meetings.html>.

Wednesday 10/2

Jobs With Justice Seattle Organizing Committee meeting, 5:30 p.m., this and subsequent 1st Wednesdays, at Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave.; info 206-441-4969.

Thursday 10/3

The second of three lectures on the history of Iraq, this session on the impact of war and sanctions. 7:30 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. N. in Wallingford; info 206-632-6021.

Ongoing

Peace Vigil and leafleting to protest U.S. policy in Afghanistan, Palestine/Israel, and Iraq by Women in Black. Women wear black, men welcome to stand on the side or leaflet, every Thursday at Westlake Park near 4th and Pine, 5 - 6 p.m.; info 206-208-9715.

Become a volunteer **advocate for abused and neglected children in court**; learn how the legal system works for these children. Must be 21 or older with excellent references; participate in 32 hours of training prior to case assignment. To apply, contact the King County Superior Court Dependency CASA Program at 206-296-1120 or at galgroup@metrokc.gov, www.metrokc.gov/kcsc/depcasa.htm.

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Don't Let Congress Hurt the Unemployed

Issue: The Senate and House are poised to pass a joint bill making it even harder for working Americans to avoid bankruptcy.

Background: Almost 27,000 Washington state residents who have been laid off in the year since September 11, 2001, will suffer additional and potentially crippling economic hardship if Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell support bankruptcy legislation expected to be acted on by Congress.

A substantial number of the 26,559 Washington state workers who have been laid off since September 11th will be forced into bankruptcy. In a case of truly bad timing, Congress is poised to take action on a draconian measure that would make it much harder for Americans suffering job loss and other economic hardship to get a fresh start. In what many voters are likely to consider an outrage, Congress would be making life tougher for those who have lost jobs since September 11 in Washington and elsewhere in the U.S. — even though the executives who scored obscene profits at WorldCom, Global Crossing, Arthur Anderson, Enron, and other homes to corporate scandals have not been forced by Congress to pay back a penny of their ill-gotten gains.

Senators Murray and Cantwell are expected to play a key role in determining whether or not laid-off workers in Washington will be subjected to the crippling new personal bankruptcy legislation, which leaves corporate abusers untouched. Some of the severe downsides of the legislation include:

- A family that spends more than \$500 a month of credit card purchases in the three months prior to declaring bankruptcy is guilty of "fraud."
- A bankruptcy judge cannot take into account whether a debtor is blameless for his or her financial problems, such as having to pay high medical bills.
- A landlord would be able to evict a tenant who has declared bankruptcy, even if the tenant has caught up on back rent and is making current payments.
- New types of credit-card debts put banks in competition with women trying to collect child support from a former spouse after bankruptcy. Women represent the single largest group in bankruptcy, and households headed by women account for about 40 percent of all bankruptcies.
- It will be harder for a family to declare chapter 7 bankruptcy if they spend one dime on public transportation and also own a car, even if it is a household where more than one family member works.

Action: Contact Senators Murray and Cantwell and let them know they should protect individuals who are trying to make an honest start after bad financial decisions and circumstances.

Senator Maria Cantwell
 915 Second Avenue
 Suite 3206
 Seattle, WA 98174
 (206) 220-6400
 Fax: (206)-220-6404
www.cantwell.senate.gov

Senator Patty Murray
 2988 Jackson Federal Building
 915 2nd Avenue
 Seattle, Washington 98174
 (206) 553-5545
 Fax: (206) 553-0891
senator_murray@murray.senate.gov

For more information, contact Stephanie Kendall, (703)276-3254 or skendall@hastingsgroup.com. ■

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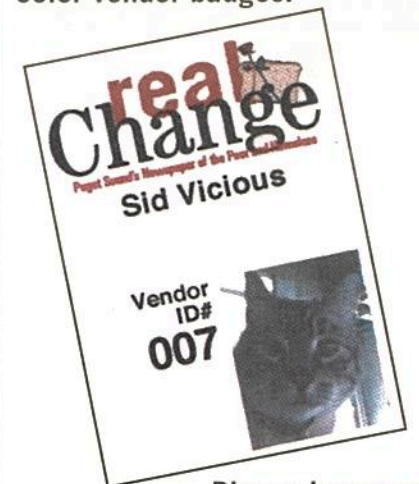
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