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Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 10, No. 5

Inside: Scary Gary • Pay Cuts for Janitors • Women with Balls at the Fringe

COVER GRAPHIC BY STEFANO GAUDIANO.

Strange Change

New "Giving Meters" will adorn the Ave. Are they friend or foe of homeless youth?

By Bess Dwyer

The Ave Revitalization Plan is in full swing. The roads are being torn up and laid back down, section by section. Sidewalks are being widened. The lease lid on UW is being lifted. Partnerships between city government and local businesses are being formed. Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels even paid a visit to the torn-up street in February, and publicly announced a new addition to the Ave's facelift: the city would install "Giving Meters" that collect selfless citizens' spare change.

Now, community groups and citizens are asking: Will the Ave's new Giving Meters be a competitor or a compatriot to the young people who spare-change there?

The idea for Giving Meters came up only six months ago, as various community groups got together to form the U-District Youth and Community Project (YCP). They were devis-

ing ways to get homeless youth involved in rebuilding the U-District — perhaps through part-time work. The original plan started with putting donation boxes in local shops, with the collected money going to those who worked on community-building projects. Somewhere along the line, the idea of installing Giving Meters came into play.

The Giving Meters are like parking meters; they'll be purchased from the same company that currently supplies the city's conventional meters. The logos and artwork that will adorn the machines were designed by homeless youth. The money collected from the meters would pay homeless youth and young adults for participating in projects approved by the YCP.

Just what is the meter project for? Depends on whom you ask.

"It's an alternative giving resource,"

says Jordan Royer, manager of the Neighborhood Action Team (NAT). NAT is a cross-agency group under the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, which helped set up the YCP.

Rick Eberhardt, coordinator of the nonprofit Partnership for Youth (P4Y), says he and his peers, who serve the U-District's homeless youth, "were looking at it as an employability thing. Many of the spare-changers are out there because they may not be getting or using the services available."

And when Nickels visited the U-District in February, the idea was put in other words: "We're going to reduce panhandling on the Ave. We're going to be installing Giving Meters — not gimme meters, but Giving Meters. That's money that will be

collected to help homeless youth and others in the community. The money

Continued on Page 15



ONE OF THE PROTOTYPE "GIVING METERS." PHOTO COURTESY JORDAN ROYER, NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION TEAM SEATTLE.



Look for the Mockingbird Times Inside!





All in our heads?

Dear *Real Change*:

Greg R's story ("Madness, Suicide, and a Bureaucratic Mess," Jan 23-Feb 5) made me wish I could cradle him in my arms and make it all go away. I can't do that, but I can do the next best thing: refer him to my doctor, John Ruhland. This man took me from suicidal depression — where I knew I was going to lose my home, my life and go on disability — to expanding my business and having hope for the future.

My energy has returned, although it has been a slow progression from the depths of hell. I found out that my depression was a longstanding nutritional deficiency, a common problem that is

rarely addressed by conventional medicine. The treatment offered to me was expensive drugs that mask the underlying problems without addressing the central issue. I spent 12 years on drugs, drugs that may lead to Parkinson's Disease — your standard anti-depressants, Prozac and then Paxil. Let me tell you: Prozac gave me these wonderful twitches called pre-Parkinsonian syndrome. The docs didn't tell me; in fact, when I asked to get off the drugs, they told me their job was to get me on drugs, not get me off them.

I do agree with the use of conventional western medicine in acute cases, but personal experience has shown that a number of so-called mental illnesses are not in your head but in your biochemistry. Our modern society exposes us to so many toxins and pollutants that our ancestors never had to deal with. Here we are, life's lab rats: poisoned by our environment and being told it's all in our heads. Well if only the pharmaceutical companies would give us a break and let us know that nutritional deficiencies really are a big issue... maybe we could all get off our drugs and be naturally high on what our bodies truly need. Thank you for your time and attention.

**A survivor,
despite western medicine,
Julia Cummings**

The answer: Soak 'em

Dear Editor,

The answer to the state funding problem is at hand. Two of the richest men in the world conduct their business in our area. They are in the category of corporate executives widely criticized for making 400 times as much as their employees.

Governor Locke plans to cut Medicaid benefits as his solution to a \$175 million deficit. Yet Bill Gates and Paul Allen are worth \$88 billion between them! You'd think that such staggering wealth would contribute to the state coffers. Why aren't they taxed sufficiently to support the state and the people who use and build their software?

The sole business tax isn't applied to sales out of state — it lets Microsoft, as well as Weyerhaeuser, Paccar, and Boeing, off the hook for most of their revenues. For goodness' sake, Microsoft earnings are expected to be \$32 billion this year. The state's entire shortfall is small change to them. Isn't it obvious the company is ripping us off?

The governor needs to let up on poor, working, and laid-off people and instead introduce tax laws that will make enormously wealthy corporations and individuals pay for the transportation, education, and social services they so abundantly use.

**Sincerely,
Henry Noble
Seattle**

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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

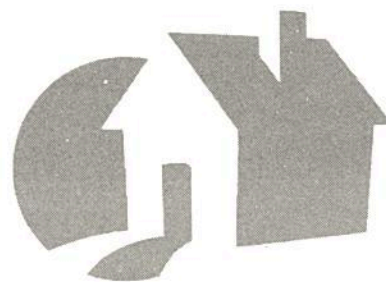
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Articles appearing in *Real Change* reflect the opinions and perspectives of the authors. We encourage the submission of journalism, opinion, fiction, poetry, and artwork, and hope to create a forum where the many perspectives on poverty and homelessness 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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Not Necessary?

Olympia sweeps health care under the rug

By Dan Olson

Here's a simple question: Which is more expensive? A trip to the doctor's office followed by a prescription, or a trip to the emergency room followed by open-heart surgery?

The answer seems simple enough — drugs and a doctor's consultation are cheaper than a sudden operation — but Governor Locke's proposed budget, with a cut of more than \$400 million from state health care programs, is a clear contradiction. By drastically cutting primary care for low-income residents, Washington taxpayers will be guaranteed increased costs in the future. Untreated medical conditions only linger on, becoming more problematic. When treatment is finally sought, it's expensive. The following are some of the proposed budget cuts:

- Medical coverage for childless adults through the state's Basic Health Plan will be cut, leaving 89,000 of the state's poorest residents on their own.
- Medicaid programs for dental, vision, and hearing services for the poor will be reduced by \$103 million. In turn, \$111 million in federal matching money will be gone.
- According to the governor's budget, \$215 million will be cut from human-services activities deemed "less necessary to meet the most immediate health and safety needs."
- The budget proposal seeks to eliminate 2,500 state workers, which comprises many of the Social and Health Services workers that maintain our current health care infrastructure.

As a community outreach specialist at a nonprofit agency, ElderHealth Northwest, I see first-hand the results of sweeping health care under the rug. Our agency is a cost-effective daytime alternative to nursing home care for many poor seniors.

Ideally, people enroll in a program like ElderHealth before going into crisis, where it would act more as a preventative measure to strokes and heart attacks than a response to them. Unfortunately, however, that's often not the case, because people either ignore their health care needs, or don't qualify for the federal Medicaid assistance that pays for their care. A crisis lands when these people are without the benefit of any medical supervision; it necessitates a trip or two to the emergency room. Then, quite often, a frail older person is placed prematurely into a nursing home costing around \$4,000 a month, and is making frequent and expensive visits to the hospital. With the numerous cuts that will be made in the health care budget, this scenario will only repeat itself more frequently.

Viewed from one perspective, this limiting of eligibility is just an attempt by the state to reduce spending in a decreasing budget. Yet what will happen in 10 years, when Washington's senior population has increased sharply, and people start appearing in emergency rooms complaining of chest pains and dizziness? Who will end up paying for their hospital bills or the medical care they will need after leaving the hospital? It will be the same taxpayers who refused to help pay for their services in the first place. The only difference will be that since we put off the problem for so long, these bills will cover open-heart surgeries rather than drug prescriptions.

One might reply, "Well, we have to cut something." No, we don't. New York's mayor, Michael Bloomberg, is facing the city's worst economic crisis in decades. Having to cut billions out of the budget, he convinced the city council to raise the property tax by 18.5 percent in order to prevent cutbacks in social services. And Bloomberg's a Republican, to boot.

In the state of Washington, while the disabled and sick are living in the streets, the state government refuses to raise taxes to sustain the social services that keep these people alive. A flat income tax of just 1 percent would bring in an additional \$1.5 billion per year. A graduated income tax could raise as much as \$4.7 billion per year, although it would take longer to implement. Income tax initiatives have failed in the past, but a 2002 poll by the Evans McDonough research groups found that 45 percent of the state's registered voters would support an income tax to maintain programs such as health care, education, and transportation. Only 25 percent of those voters preferred cuts.

I understand that raising taxes makes our stomachs groan, but I would personally rather have heartburn now than an ulcer ten years down the road. ■

Dan Olson is Community Outreach Coordinator for ElderHealth Northwest.

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National news digest February 26, 2003

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

Although it has one of the largest homeless populations in the country, New York's Department of Homeless Services has never attempted to count its entire homeless population until last month. The city already had a solid idea of the number of people staying in shelters — an all-time record high of 38,400 in January alone — yet it had never attempted to find and record the number of people staying on the streets, according to the *New York Times* (www.nytimes.com). This lack of experience was evident to anyone who showed up to observe or participate in the overnight Homeless Outreach Population Survey on the streets of Manhattan, as volunteers ill-equipped to count more than a handful of people in a single night found their job harder to do with the media all around them. Homeless advocates fear that the results will be heavily underestimated and yet will become the foundation for future city policy and funds. City officials counter that part of helping homeless people is discovering how many of them there are and where they spend the night.

Officials in Tulare and Kings counties in central California are also about to conduct their first-ever count of homeless people living in their borders, according to the *Fresno Bee* (www.fresnobee.com). This month, the Kings/Tulare Continuum of Care is sponsoring a three-day count, when volunteers will try to determine not just how many homeless people there are but also what services they need to get off the streets or out of shelters. The hope is the count will produce better numbers than the current census count that is relied on for much of the counties' federal and state funding. Local homeless advocates believe inaccurate counts deprived local agencies of \$1.5 million in funding last year alone.

Even losing a couple hundred dollars is painful enough for four low-income families in the Sacramento, California, area, who gave money to a woman who promised them permanent housing but then absconded with the money. The woman accused of the crime, Jeni Jones, took between \$400 and \$850 from the families while they were staying in the Sacramento Area Emergency Housing Center, according to Fox News 40 (fox40.trb.com). She even gave them rental agreements and took them to look at the houses she told them they'd be moving into. Jones' ex-boyfriend expressed no surprise at his former lover's behavior. "I've always told her, her intentions are very wicked," he told Fox 40, "and that her tongue is dipped in the depths of hell, and her lips are the hinges on the bottom of the door." The families are still waiting for non-shelter housing.

Nassau County social workers are applying tough legal love to homeless people they find sleeping outside in the nippy New Jersey air. A little-used state mental health law allows county workers to require homeless people to come off the streets if the weather is too cold, according to *Newsday* (www.newsday.com); similar laws have been used recently in New York and Philadelphia. The law allows workers to remove people who live on the streets and place them in a hospital or a shelter if they appear to be a danger to themselves or others, especially in cases where temperatures fall below freezing. Local homeless advocates say the plan is good in concept, although they hope the law is used as a protective measure rather than to force people off the streets. To meet these ends, the county recently set up a toll-free hotline, called Project Warm Bed, which allows homeless people to call up and be brought to a shelter for the night. On nights when the temperature dips into the teens, the hotline handles dozens of calls.

Hawaii just got its first newspaper for and by homeless people, according to *Ka Leo O Hawaii* (www.kaleo.org). The paper, put together by the service organization "Net Workers on Wheels," includes articles on individual homeless people, information about social service agencies, a free events calendar, and obituaries for homeless people. It will also include news about new laws that will affect people living in shelters or on the streets, and information about what kinds of funding and services they're eligible for. "These people need access to communication so they can defend themselves," said Eileen Joyce, the paper's founder and publisher. "There are many homeless people you would never know are homeless, and many of them go to work every day. They're just human beings trying to live." ■

— Compiled by Molly Rhodes



Here come the commodes

In July 2001, the Seattle City Council made headlines when it voted for five new state-of-the-art Automated Public Toilets in Seattle. More than a year and a half later, they've yet to materialize.

Never fear — relief is on its way, says Ron Perkewicz of Seattle Public Utilities: "We're aiming for our first flush by Labor Day."

"The toilets should be here by early spring and installed by the end of the summer," says John Taylor of the City Council Central staff. "The units were ordered at the same time an agreement was signed between Northwest Cascade, the vendor, and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)."

The toilets will be installed at Victor Steinbrueck Park next to the Pike Place Market, Hing Hay Park in the International District, Occidental Park in Pioneer Square, on the waterfront next to the Aquarium, and at Seattle Central Community College on Capitol Hill. The Capitol Hill venue was added after an agreement couldn't be reached in Ballard. The Capitol Hill, International District, and Occidental Park toilets are replacing Port-O-Lets already in place.

The commodes are constructed by German manufacturer Herring Bau. Their doors swing open 15 to 20 minutes after being locked to discourage loitering, prostitution, or drug use. However, a timer sends out a warning so that no one is caught literally with their pants down. The toilets also have a self-cleaning disinfectant mechanism.

Maintenance costs for the five toilets are approximately \$638,000 per year. Installation will cost about \$50,000 a toilet, although the installation charge on each toilet varies. The new toilet near the Aquarium, for example, had to get a special shoreline permit because it was near the water.

But why the delay? Taylor, the council's central staffer, says politics played a role. Former Mayor Paul Schell tussled with the City Council over costs and contracting for the toilets, vetoing the council's first vote of approval. When the council overrode Schell's veto, "he sat on" the new project, says Taylor. "Things started moving at the end of 2001. Then, preparing the contract took several months. It was a little tricky, because we had never done something quite like this before."

Taylor says Mayor Greg Nickels, who replaced Schell, has looked more favorably on the project.

Under contract negotiations between SPU and Northwest Cascade, Northwest Cascade will own the units and SPU will pay a lease fee for them. The contract is paid for out of SPU's wastewater rates. Out of a \$323 annual sewer bill for a single-family household, \$1.70 goes to the toilets.

These toilets are already in place in Boston and San Francisco. San Francisco operates two dozen toilets at no cost to city residents, since billboard advertising revenue offsets installation and maintenance costs. Schell had suggested adopting changes in the city's sign ordinance so that advertising on kiosks or bus shelters throughout the city would pay for these units.

"We'll probably have a special ceremony when the toilets are in place," says Perkewicz. "Maybe we'll have all five toilets flush at once. You've got to have some fun with this." ■

— R. V. Murphy

Sitting pretty

LEROY COOK SETTLES INTO HIS ROOM IN THE NEWLY OPENED PLYMOUTH PLACE, A 73-UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING FOR FORMERLY HOMELESS MEN AND WOMEN. LOCATED AT THE FOOT OF QUEEN ANNE ON THE CORNER OF FIRST AVENUE AND DENNY, THE BUILDING OPENED IN LATE FEBRUARY. ITS \$8 MILLION CONSTRUCTION BUDGET WAS PAID BY THE SEATTLE HOUSING LEVY, THE STATE'S HOUSING TRUST FUND, THE PAUL G. ALLEN CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, THE BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION, AND OTHER SOURCES. PHOTO BY ANDREA LEE.



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

Janitors Jilted:

When union work dissipates, harassment follows

By Megan Doyle

Janitors threatened with job loss and pay cuts held a protest outside the offices of Martin Selig's real estate development company on February 21 in downtown Seattle. They sought to highlight the role of Selig's company — which operates 2.2 million square feet of downtown Seattle office space — in lowering wages and eliminating health care benefits for Seattle-area janitors.

Selig switched from union to non-union janitorial contractors in 13 of his buildings within the last year. Fifty of the union janitors employed in those buildings lost their jobs, and many began working for Allied Building Services, a non-union janitorial contractor.

Citing employer practices that included spying and discrimination against those who favored a union, seven of Allied's janitorial workers walked off their jobs for one day at Plaza Center, a Bellevue office building, on February 13. They were fired the next day.

Both Selig and the owners of Plaza Center, a Chicago-based corporation named Equity Office Properties, contract out their cleaning services to Allied.

Allied has about 400 employees, and nearly all of them are Latino, says Sergio Salinas, President of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 6. At the rally, Local 6 members passed out recycled pop cans made into shakers to participants, which were shaken in time to Spanish music blaring in the background. Police officers lined the doors of the building to ensure that the rally did not interfere with regular business taking place in the building.

Adela Ruvalcaba was one of the seven janitors fired for participating in

the one-day strike. She had worked for the company for seven months, working full-time to help pay bills and take care of her ill mother. Ruvalcaba moved from Mexico to Redmond nine months ago. She says she did a bit of everything in the building, but was underpaid and treated unfairly.

From the back of a rented U-Haul truck, huddled under an umbrella to shield the rain, Adela Ruvalcaba wore a neck brace from an injury she sustained while carrying a heavy bundle of recycling while on the job on February 11. Speaking through a translator, Ruvalcaba told the crowd that she was tired of being abused and was going to stick around until she and the other janitors get respect and are able to organize in a union.

Since being fired, Ruvalcaba has been looking for a new job to help with living expenses for herself and her mother. She has found one, but it does not have any opening until sometime in March. That means she'll receive no income for at least two weeks.

Justice for Janitors, a subdivision of SEIU, also helped with the rally. The organization formed in 1985 in Denver, and won its best-known workplace victories in Los Angeles in 1990. There, police reportedly beat protestors while they demonstrated in a peaceful rally. Justice for Janitors and SEIU were successful in that case, and L.A. janitors gained union recognition.

In concert with Justice for Janitors, Local 6 helps with negotiations for about 2,300 janitors who live and work in the Puget Sound area. The goal of the union is to secure family health insurance and improve wages.

The union is in contact with repre-

Citing employer practices that included spying and discrimination against those who favored a union, seven of Allied's janitorial workers walked off their jobs for one day. They were fired the next day.



SPEAKING THROUGH A TRANSLATOR, ADELA RUVALCABA (LEFT) SAYS JANITORIAL STAFF NEED FAIR WAGES AND RESPECT FROM THEIR EMPLOYERS. SHE AND SIX OTHER JANITORS WERE FIRED FOR PARTICIPATING IN A ONE-DAY WALKOUT AT A BELLEVUE OFFICE BUILDING. PHOTO BY KEN DEAN.

sentatives of both Selig and Equity, seeking to persuade Allied's customers to take a stand on the issue.

Local 6 representatives and representatives from Selig's office, including operations manager Tom Brady, met last week. According to Salinas, the Selig representatives said they would "do the right thing." However, the company has promised that it would honor its contract with Allied Building Services.

Equity Office Properties, which subcontracts with Allied, has not been supportive of the workers' requests for Allied to resolve the dispute.

Other charges against Allied for violations of the National Labor Relations Act have been filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Legal charges against Allied include spying on union activities, surveillance of protected concerted activity, allowing workers to wear non-union insignia but not union insignia, the harsher work

conditions and discipline against a public union activist, and the unlawful firing of seven employees who walked out to protest unfair labor practices.

The NLRB is awaiting employers' response on all of these issues. "It is a bureaucratic and slow process," Salinas says about the NLRB investigation.

Speaking at the rally, King County Councilmember Larry Gossett said that the disappearance of union jobs will sustain employers' abuses and worsen a weak economy.

The difference between union and non-union pay would cost Selig and business owners like him only 1.5 cents per square foot of their buildings, says Salinas. Other rally participants noted that the actions of Equity, Selig, and Allied have put workers on a slippery slope. "The lack of fair wages leads to homelessness," according to David Meekhof, Chair of the Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness. ■

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poetry

Especially in Early March

when your life
is a broken thing you cling to
because it is all you have

when your life
promises to kill you

especially in early March
when you are at the seashore
where lines are memories of waves
that wash and wash and will wash

especially in early March
when tender shoots begin again
and everyone relaxes
even though they know it's dangerous

especially in early March
when the air is soft
as a dog's eyes

— ELIZABETH ROMERO

Porta potty to the moon

The mission
To fly
To the moon
Via the ship provided by the likes of
Vollman and Bukowski and honeybucket

To the casual observer
It's just a plastic shell
A place to dump human waste

The addicts and the cops
And probably the people who clean the porties
They know
It's a rocket ship to the moon

Listen for the click of the lighter
Watch the police pry the doors off people's dreams
Roll the honeybucket to the moon

— ERIC JARVIS



Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning

So I was thinking about my minor faults, and I thought of another one. I'm useless. I'm useless in so many ways, but one of my favorite ways of being useless is as an opinionated columnist.

An opinionated columnist is supposed to, above all, have opinions. But, oops, I hardly have any. In fact half the work of writing these things every two weeks is spending the nine or 10 hours it takes each time to force myself to have one.

I've just called it a fault, but actually I'm so un-opinionated in my un-opinionated-ness that I can't really decide whether it's a fault or not. Maybe it's a cute quirk. Or maybe it means I could be the world's greatest jury member.

"Mr. Browning, I'm sure you've read the hundreds of stories in the newspapers describing my client as a blood-thirsty murderer. What do you think of that?" "Duh, I don't know." "I have no objections to this juror, your honor."

I was reminded of all this Wednesday a week ago as I was reading *The Seattle Times*. I kept repeatedly running across stories that I felt I should have strong opinions about but I couldn't decide what they should be, just because I am so lame.

There was the story about 200 people from all over the world who have volunteered themselves to Iraq to serve as "human shields" in the event of a war. Now I have no problem figuring out what I think about Iraq's use of involuntary human shields. That's totally wrong. Iraq did that last time, they will probably do it this time, and it's wrong. But if people do it willingly, what can I say?

Sure, these people superficially resemble the suicidal bombers that we all hate for, uh, suicide bombing. They've got the suicide half down, and there's bomb-action involved. But WE'RE the ones about to be doing the bombing. How is that their fault?

Then, at the bottom of the same page, I got the privilege of reading for the

first time about our military's latest computer-military advance, the new computer program called "Bugsplat."

Did I mention that I was preparing to see a psychiatrist as I was reading this? Here I found out that our military has a computer program that analyzes the potential for "collateral damage" that any given bombing might have, so that our commanders in the field can judge what size and kind of bombs to use in an attack. The program displays the potential collateral damage graphically as images of bugsplats on a computer screen, they say. So, I thought, why was I the one seeing the psychiatrist?

OK, the real name of the program is FAST-CD (Fast Assessment Strike Tool Collateral Damage.) OK, if they're going to have a war and bomb people, I can see the benefit of having a computer program warn when a lot of civilians would be killed. I can see it on a practical, or what do you call it, logistical level. But it sickens me to think that the program has a built-in tolerance for a degree of civilian death and suffering. The idea isn't to avoid all "bugsplats" but to "minimize" them. We are building a definition of what that "minimizing" should be into a piece of software, so that our military commanders don't have to use their own consciences to make those sorts of decisions. Isn't that evil?

So then I moved on to the local news, thinking that I would be safe there. Nothing but familiar issues, issues I had long decided upon. Did I mention that I was seeing that psychiatrist to talk about child abuse that happened to me 40 years ago? So what do I read, but that there is now a move in the state Department of Social and Health Services and the state Legislature to open up child abuse hearings to the public.

Ouch. I want people to know what goes on in these hearings. I want the extent of child abuse to be known. But I want the children to be protected from exposure. They need to be protected from the public. Why can't the decision to have a hearing open or closed be made the hard way, in each individual case, by a judge or jury faced with the specific circumstances of that case? Do we have to have an opinion about everything in advance, no matter who could be hurt by it? ■



Man Overboard

Sweat dampens the pillow case,
wets the sheets. He is caught
in a bad dream, being
a gunner on a Navy ship
off the shores of Vietnam.
A little box. The only
escape is overboard.
He doesn't know how
to swim. A girlfriend
tried to teach him once
in Spain, but he was too
afraid of water.
Now, he's caught in the cracks
of the system, on Welfare;
Social Security and V.A. Pension
pending, deep depression and a desire
to drown in Puget Sound.
He surfs couches, as he calls it,
or borrows a spare bedroom.
He is tempted to take
the first \$6 an hour job
that comes along, but his art calls.

The shadow on a woman's thigh,
her dark crotch, legs spread as she lies
on the bed, her eyes a mystery
of grown children, lost lovers, dreams
and shaky hopes for an uncertain future.
Her hair graces her forehead
in wisps. He loves to paint
all this. This is it when he isn't
wandering the sidewalks, talking
to a former crack addict who sells
the homeless paper outside Starbucks.
He thinks she is a sixteen year old
runaway. She turns out to be
22, knows things. He would buy her
coffee, but his pocket only has three
pennies. He would throw these
in the fountain in front of the insurance
building on Sixth Avenue, make wishes
for some other homeless person to wade in
and pick out. He worries she has gone
back, back to her crack friends
when he doesn't see her with her pile
of papers for two weeks.

He likes looking at people:
fat bodies, skinny bodies,
sagging breasts and butts.
Firm tits, tips cold from lying
exposed on a blanket, perhaps
in an open burgundy robe...
he is dreaming. He isn't watching
the traffic. He isn't even
aware that he's crossing
the street. He doesn't care
if the cars keep coming.
He hears the bell
that rings in his ear
to let the blind know
it's safe to cross
and wonders what round it is
from his boxing days.
He has no sense
of direction, he is lost again.
He knows only that if he finds
the water he will know
where West is. If he doesn't jump
in this time, he may wind
his way home.

— CRYSTA CASEY

Thanks for the tip (found poetry)

You lie a great deal
You have a minor influence on
your friends and people resent you
for flaunting what you mistake as power
You are quick to reprimand, impatient
and scornful of advice
You have a dogged determination
and stick-to-it-iveness because
you never do anything right
the first time
People like you because you are bisexual
You always keep putting things off
Everyone thinks you are an idiot
Your nit-picking attitude is sickening
to your co-workers
If you are male you are
probably queer
You shall achieve the pinnacle of success
because of your total lack of ethics
You have a reckless tendency to rely
on luck because you have no talent
You are basically a chicken-shit

— ELIZABETH ROMERO

Hanging On

Central District nursing home's fate remains uncertain

By Betsy Power

Thousands of people have written their representatives and wrung out their pocketbooks. Hundreds of them pressed their case at the Olympia statehouse March 3. Leon Hendrix has pledged \$1 million from the foundation set up in the name of his brother, Jimi. But the Branch Villa Health Care Center — the largest African-American-owned business in the state, once the Central District's largest employer, and the home preferred by the neighborhood's elderly African Americans — may still have to shut down.

A cash flow crisis in November forced Branch Villa owner Andrew Branch to inform the state's Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) that he was unable to meet payroll. As a result, DSHS took over the facility and prepared to shutter the building. Dozens of residents were moved out. On December 9, a community coalition dubbed Proud Friends of Branch Villa won a temporary restraining order stopping the evictions and forcing the state to keep the home open until March 27, while a new owner is found ["Still Going," *RC*, Dec. 26 - Jan. 8].

On February 3, the Opportunities Industrialization Center of Yakima (OIC) submitted an application for a nursing home license, with the intention of taking over the facility. Thinking the search was over, the Proud Friends of Branch Villa breathed a sigh of relief. Yet the very next day, DSHS scheduled a hearing to reverse the temporary restraining order and resume the shutdown.

Governor Gary Locke agreed to delay the hearing until March, but insisted that a new owner needed to take over financial responsibility by February 24, because the state could no longer foot the bill. If Branch Villa remains open,

by the end of March it will have consumed an estimated \$675,000 in state contingency funds.

With this short reprieve, the coalition and OIC worked non-stop to prepare the necessary paperwork for submission. The effort has been led by OIC's executive director, Henry Beauchamp, who is also the former mayor and City Councilman of Yakima and a highly regarded African-American member of his community. He founded the OIC 30 years ago with the mission to eliminate unemployment, poverty, and illiteracy. In seven sites around the state, OIC builds affordable housing, runs a well-baby clinic and a high school for at-risk students, and provides employment and training for farmworkers.

On February 7, OIC received a letter from DSHS spelling out in 12 steps what was needed to move forward with the application. The deadline for these critical steps, February 18, came and went, and OIC was unable to meet the requirements in time.

DSHS's motion to lift the current injunction will be heard March 6. If they get their wish, they'll proceed with an orderly closure of the facility. The federal department of Housing and Urban Development has already begun foreclosure procedures.

Community volunteer Yalonda Gill says that DSHS hasn't given the ownership transfer a fair chance. "We have been really toiling with the inconsistencies," she says. "One of the unreasonable demands was for the potential new owner to step forward and take financial responsibility of the facilities on February 24. That is unheard of, since they have not yet been licensed."

On February 28, OIC submitted all of the required information, including an agreement for the transfer of the property. Peter Masundire, the commu-

nications manager for Proud Friends of Branch Villa, is hoping that the March 6 court date will pass without event. But if they need to go to court, Friends of Branch Villa are prepared.

"We have a very confident, very capable licensee" in OIC, says Nat Jackson, who volunteers as the co-chair of the group's finance and feasibility Committee. "But we do not need to have players dropping out of the game at this point. We need to have DSHS keep the operating company in there until the license has been approved."

Fortunately, DSHS has not yet cut off the flow of contingency funds. But meeting the agency's conditions is tricky when other sources are so limited. Proud Friends of Branch Villa organized a radiothon to meet the financial need for some of the first operational costs. Thus far, the members have raised \$35,000. In addition, the James Marshall Hendrix Foundation has pledged to raise up to \$1 million towards the effort to keep the home operating. Jimi Hendrix and his younger brother Leon, who has taken a personal interest in the center's fate, grew up just five blocks from Branch Villa, and many of the residents knew them as young boys.

Residents and staff of Branch Villa are understandably nervous about their future. Many staff members have been at Branch Villa for much of their adult lives. Calvin Hall, president of the Resident Council, says that "some of the employees had been here for 17 years, and they were just pushed right out the door." And those that remain "are doing double shifts." Those who have been let go are waiting it out, hoping that the facility will remain open and they can come back to work.

Many of the residents who have been moved are also looking forward to coming back home. Calvin Hall

spoke of one woman who had been at Branch Villa for 37 years. "She's been down at Washington Center, and she's been begging every day to get back. A lot of patients went down there, and they're big into getting back."

Gloria Pigg, the director of environmental services, has worked at Branch Villa for 25 years. "The government should be asking: Why is this place so special?" she says. "Why is the community fighting so hard for this?"

Former Branch Villa administrator Helen Sikov, who has returned from retirement to help save the home, answers: "There was a time when this was the only facility that accepted African Americans in the Seattle area. Over the years, it became the African-American facility of choice."

With OIC at the helm, Branch Villa would sustain its historically African-American connection. But even when it assumes ownership, OIC would still face major funding issues. The DSHS reimbursement rates to Branch Villa are lower than those of any other facility in the area. And with major cuts in nursing home funds planned — \$197 million in federal Medicare funds over a three-year period and \$70 million in state and federal Medicaid funds — making up the budget gaps will prove to be harder than ever.

The members of Proud Friends of Branch Villa are thankful for the aid of Governor Locke; Senator Maria Cantwell has also "give us access to the appropriate people," says former state legislator Dawn Mason. Yet even with all the support, Branch Villa is just barely hanging on. Members say they'll fight closure plans until the very end; another court date is just an additional obstacle. "If we went along with the dates that have been given," states Yalonda Gill, "Branch Villa would have been closed a long time ago." ■

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RC Profile: One Vendor's Success

Story, photo by Jessica McMichael Kastner

On January 24, 2002, an iron crate hit Royce Sand, 60, in the back while he was working on a fishing boat off Alaska. He was given muscle relaxants that made him hallucinate, so the recovering alcoholic (20 years clean) decided not to take any more pills. He spent the next 10 days on the boat in severe pain before returning to the mainland. A two-prop plane carried the injured man back to Seattle, where he was left, penniless and homeless.

Royce was unable to get any information from the small fishing company about Worker's Compensation from the state Department of Labor and Industries (L&I). Since his injury prohibited him from finding a new job, Royce found himself panhandling on the streets. He quickly learned from other homeless people where to sleep and eat. Royce spent the next nine months hopping from shelter to shelter.

"This is a city where you won't starve to death and you won't go cold," Royce says.

Royce did a little of what he calls "head banging" — the street term for "listening to a sermon before you can eat." He had spent years studying the Bible and came to know God when he was 40 in A.A. He thought he might benefit from the messages of these sermons, but his reaction was quite the opposite. He felt that some of the people giving these sermons "were not sincere in what they were preaching" and decided to move on to a non-religious shelter.

Several months after Royce's injury,

L&I finally began to pay for rehabilitative treatment. He went through a series of physical therapists, chiropractors and naturopaths before finally seeing and feeling results. L&I was paying only 75 to 80 percent of Royce's medical bills and did not pay for medicine, so Royce relied on his panhandling to pay the difference. He was staying at a shelter in White Center when he met Joe, a *Real Change* vendor. Joe told Royce that he would make more money selling *Real Change* than panhandling. *Real Change* would give him the first 10 papers for free, so there was nothing to lose.

"I was bullheaded at first. It wasn't until the coldest part of winter before I decided to give it a try," Royce recalls. "They [*Real Change*] gave me 10 papers for free, and lo and behold, I sold them."

Royce began selling papers downtown, but soon heard about a goldmine in the View Ridge neighborhood in northeast Seattle. The first week at his new location, Royce sold 10 to 15 papers a day. He sold 100 papers the second week, and made the 600 Club for the month, even with several restrictions from PCC. Vendors were only allowed to sell *Real Change* three days a week — Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. In addition, Royce was asked to sell the papers by the bulletin board, several feet away from the front door.

"I lost 50 or 60 percent of my sales when they made me move over by the bulletin board," Royce said. "But several of the customers noticed, and wrote in to PCC Corporate, and they lifted all of the restrictions."



ROYCE SAND OUTSIDE THE VIEW RIDGE PCC, WHERE HE NOW WORKS AS A COURTESY CLERK. PHOTO BY JESSICA MCMICHAEL KASTNER.

After months of selling *Real Change* in front of the grocery store, Royce struck up an acquaintance with several employees. He began asking them how they liked working for PCC. He heard favorable reports about wages and benefits and decided to apply for a job. Manager John Rothwell suggested he apply for the position of courtesy clerk and in October, Royce was hired.

Nine months after his injury forced him on the streets, Royce had recovered enough to work steadily. And shortly after starting his new job, he found housing, just five blocks away from work. ■

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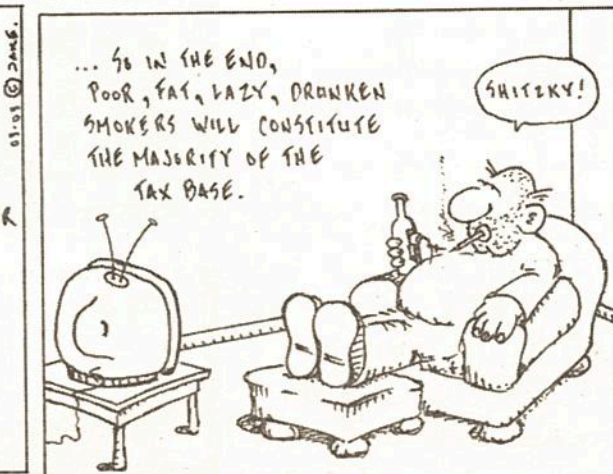
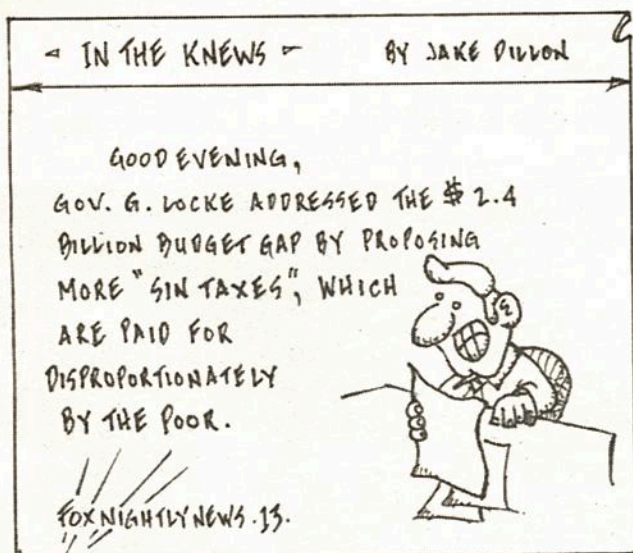
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3/06/03



Minor Threat

Emergency shelter for those age 12 to 18 closes

By Kimberly Davis

A pivotal source of help and hope for youth disappeared January 20, when the Denny Place Youth Shelter closed its doors. On March 3, a new shelter (also called Denny Place) for males ages 18-20 opened in the space that was formerly offered to minors of both sex.

In its former incarnation, Denny Place Youth Shelter provided hot meals and a place to sleep for youth as young as twelve. It was a crucial first step for many youth testing "the system," staying one night and seeing if it is safe. From there, youth could make more long-term housing commitments and find out about social service agencies. For homeless minors, the choice is often longer-term housing or the streets. Kids choose the latter because they do not trust the very system trying to help them.

Greg McCormack, social worker at the Seattle Children's Home, can cite an example of the impact. "Last week we had a 14-year-old that finally asked for help, after six months [of being on] the streets. He was too young for many of the drop-in shelters and Denny Place was the closest shelter serving that age bracket in downtown Seattle," he says. "Due to lack of available resources, a kid went back on the streets."

Maria Gardner, 20, didn't know the shelter had closed. "I used to stay there when I was 14," she says. "I didn't have any other choice. Without Denny, I don't know what path I would have gone down."

"This shelter closing sends the message that our minors are throwaway kids."

— Elaine Simons, executive director of Peace for the Streets by Kids From the Streets

Elaine Simons, executive director of Peace for the Streets by Kids From the Streets, says of the Denny closing, "We were totally devastated by the news. This shelter closing sends the message that our minors are throwaway kids. When things close it means there is no longer a need. In the case of our kids, this is simply not true."

Dave, a peer worker at Peace for the Streets, sums up Denny's closing this way, "I've seen homeless kids leave Seattle because services are being taken away. When you're on the streets, at a point you realize whether you're going to make it or not... if you've been turned away enough you have to look elsewhere."

Despite several shelter programs for youth in their late teens and twenties, supply appears limited for minors. Street youth are young and dealing with the huge challenge of homelessness. Many are on the run from unbearable situations at home, may have drug ad-

diction problems, and don't know all the sources for help. The City of Seattle estimates that up to 2,000 kids are homeless today — anywhere between 500 to 1,000 in Seattle, and up to 1,000 more in the rest of King County. And there are not enough shelter spaces to meet that demand.

Three local churches in the University District provide shelter several nights a week. University Congregational United Church of Christ hosts an overnight drop-in on Wednesday nights with the help of Street Youth Ministries, and houses up to approximately 30 youth. YouthCare provides about 86 beds in the U-District, Sand Point Way, and the Rainier Valley.

Alternative housing options exist in Bellevue and Snohomish County. But there is a difference between short-term emergency housing for homeless youth and long-term residential services. Although there are several long-term programs that offer housing in King county, the steps to secure a place are often challenging for this population. Namely, supplying your real identity, and making a commitment to treatment programs, social workers, and other housing criteria.

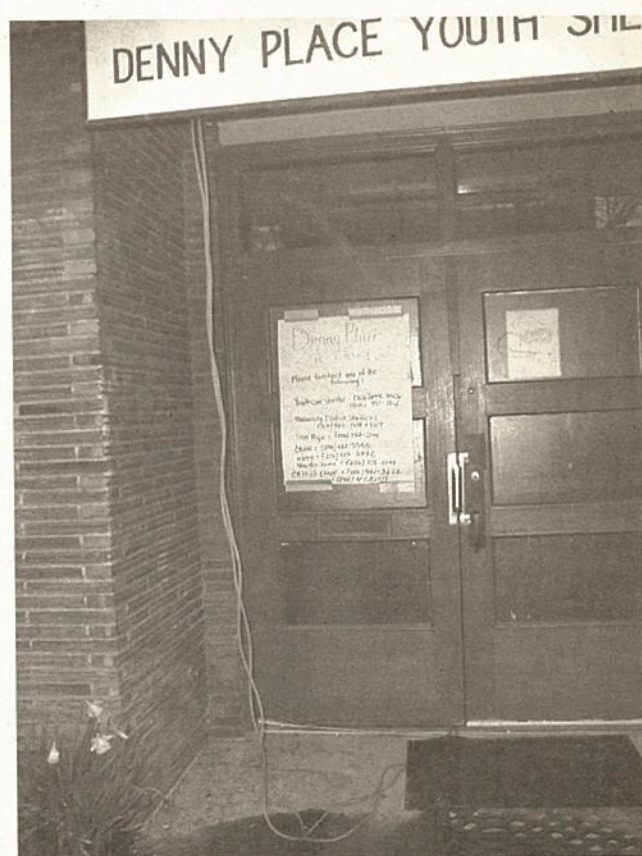
Denny Place will be re-opened as a drop-in shelter, run by a new steward: Street Youth Ministries. Street Youth Ministries program director Cami Ostman says the shelter will offer space to youth who are not ready for formal transitional housing, but want to get off

the streets.

Homeless minors looking for shelter seem to be caught in a game of musical chairs. Despite courageous efforts, the social service system is pointing them at fewer services.

Debra Boyer, associate director of Youth Care, the agency that ran the Denny Place Youth Shelter, cited financing as a key component in the shelter's closure.

"Although city, state, and federal funding came through, there were additional private funds that needed to be raised to keep the shelter open," says Boyer. "In this economic climate, it was nearly impossible to raise \$75,000 to \$100,000 to operate a shelter for minors." ■



DENNY PLACE YOUTH SHELTER CLOSED JANUARY 20. THERE IS A SIGN ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE SHELTER NOW THAT DIRECTS YOUTH TO POSSIBLE HOUSING OPTIONS. A NEW FACILITY, FOR MEN AGES 18-20, OPENED MARCH 3. PHOTO BY ANDREA LEE.



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METERS Continued from Page 1

will go to various social agencies, like Partnership for Youth, that help street youth directly. It will discourage panhandling but will make sure kids get the help they need."

This statement brought a lot of confusion to the negotiation table. First, contrary to Nickels' message, the details of the plan hadn't been completed. Second, Partnership for Youth is just one of a number of agencies involved—and most of them, like P4Y, did not intend to make the Giving Meters an anti-panhandling issue. So Nickels laid bare a tender disagreement over the meters' purpose. Third, Nickels' comments gave the impression that money would be going to a social-service agency, not the people in need. What can best be described as a misunderstanding about the project's intent was out on the table—and as a result, its future was thrown into question. "Right now, we're in fragile negotiations," says Royer.

Eberhardt both defends the meters' intent, and hopes the coalition that has promoted it will survive this tension. "It's not anti-panhandling, anti-spanging [spare-changing]. It's pro-youth, pro-employment-of-youth," says Eberhardt. "Spare-changing responds to needs not being covered by local services, or helps people who don't use the services."

"People need to get together on this. A lot of the merchants in the area have good things to say about the people who live on the street near them, and have said that they know this has to involve everyone working together."

The idea, he and others say, is to employ kids and young adults who live and hang out in the area, working at reviving their neighborhood. The money collected will go to the YCP, which employs the homeless people who choose to get involved and oversees the community-building projects. A steering team of community members and service providers will decide exactly what type of work will be done in the neighborhood.

P4Y would be the sponsoring group; employment and training would be provided through the Working Zone, a local youth employment project. The University District Chamber of Commerce would be charged with educating the public about the meters. These plans include brochures about UDYC and the alternative donations. They're

working to get merchants involved. The City of Seattle would install the meters and collect the change.

"We consider the operation costs to be negligible, but we don't really have a good idea about how much will be collected," says Royer. "It depends on the public information campaign, like brochures and signs in stores explaining the program, and the public's reaction."

Eberhardt and others are worried that the stigma associated with panhandling and the U-District will only be furthered by an anti-panhandling campaign. The Ave suffers from a dangerous image, where pedestrians are harassed by "aggressive" panhandlers, he says. Some people claim that spare-changers are causing problems for the merchants. Eberhardt points out that homeless youths and merchants are willing to live and work together on the Ave.

"When you go to Teen Feed, or somewhere where a lot of homeless youth are together in one place, the mood is respectful, not aggressive or mean-spirited. It's because they feel like they belong there. We need to do the same thing on the streets," he says. Eberhardt says he's seen that local merchants and youth are willing to work together.

Still, "It's been an uphill battle to make these meters symbolic of something not anti-spanging," he says. "To symbolize not 'get these kids off the street,' but that we value the time, skills, and energy of these kids, and we want to pay them for it."

Similar programs have been implemented in cities in the U.S. and Canada, but most of them have taken the form of anti-panhandling campaigns. In 1999, city officials in Vancouver, British Columbia, adopted a proposal for "Spare Change" Meters. The proposal states that the city wanted to add the meters to cut the impact of panhandling. The money collected during the first two years of the program was donated to United Way. This was based on a program in Kamloops, B.C., which also cited panhandling as the reason for implementation.

"We looked at Vancouver [as a model], but theirs was more of a government enterprise. We want this to be about the community," says Royer. "As of right now, a representative from the Mayor's office will be meeting with Partnership for Youth and the YCP. The city has everything ready to go. We plan to put in five meters, and if they're successful, we'll do five more." ■

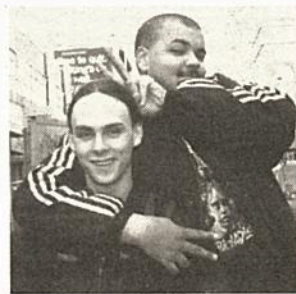
Street Talk

Photos and interviews by Signe Drake

Street Talk went to the University District to ask: How do you feel about the City of Seattle installing "giving meters" on The Ave, the commercial street running through this neighborhood? The money would be given used to pay homeless kids for working on community improvement projects.

"That would be completely awesome. Giving kids jobs would give them a lot better reason to stay off the streets. Idle hands are the devil's plaything. It would give them a little bit more pride in themselves for actually being able to work for money, instead of spare-changing on the streets. With the economy right now, it's pretty hard for normal working people to get a job, so I think it's a really good idea."

— Jessie Turner and Terry Brewster



"It's a good idea, it really is. It would allow them to work and do something good for the community. There's a park up there at University Heights Center, they could clean up garbage over there. They could go clean up Gasworks Park or mow the lawn or do gardening."

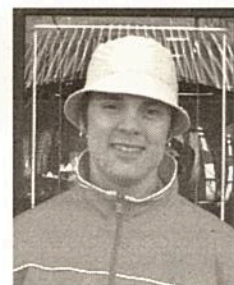
— Erika



"I don't see how it could hurt, but it seems strange. I'd much rather give change to a person, but I can see where some folks would rather put

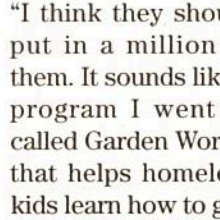
it in an anonymous drop point. The Partnership for Youth has been very helpful, and in a very responsible way too. I'm aware that there are places for youth to sleep, to store their belongings, and to gather, and I know that these young people appreciate it. The anonymity of a giving meter is a little disturbing, because it just matches this trend of disassociating from people who are right in our face. Some people are homeless by choice. A lot of these folks are proud of being right out here, because they are trying to own up to where they are at. Living outside right now, I've never spare changed—but I know how difficult it is to find pick-up work."

— Scott Schultz



"It's really pretty surprising, to be honest with you, and I think it's great. It's definitely an opportunity for them to go and get a head start so they can take their first baby steps. I was homeless for two years myself, 10 years ago. I wish I had had a helping hand at times, but I didn't. I own my own business now. I had strong, willing parents, but some of the kids out here don't have strong, willing parents. I used to work at the laundromat up there and it was sad, watching kids come by asking for spare change, and people giving them a snarl and a negative attitude—definitely not what they need. They need a paycheck to give them something to look forward to and be proud of."

— John Zachary Adams



"I think they should put in a million of them. It sounds like a program I went to called Garden Works, that helps homeless kids learn how to garden. It's out of the P-Patch and the Center for Urban Horticulture. You get job skills and are paid part-time wages while you're learning. It helps you figure out how real life goes. When I first heard about Garden Works, I was just trying to get some food money in my pocket."

— Del Taylor



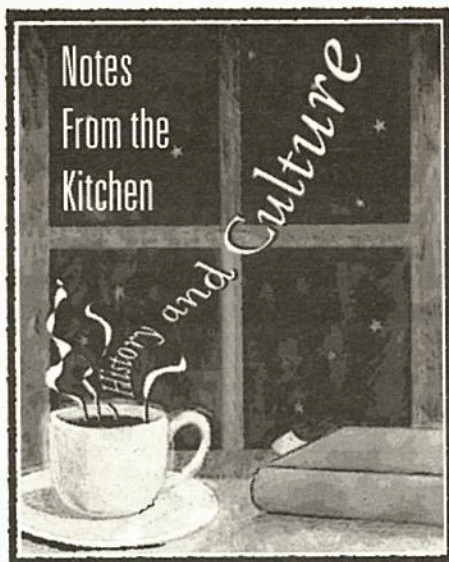
"It would be wonderful if I knew exactly where every penny of the money that I donated went to. That's the problem with the process of giving to charities. I'm all for helping youth or anyone get off the street, as long as the money is used correctly. Take 9/11: the Red Cross lied and kept the money for their own programs; it didn't go directly to the families, and that is very tragic."

— Tony

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Feeding the world, one mouth at a time

By Liz Smith

Joelle Hand, personal chef and owner of MMMagic Chef, would like to feed the world, if only it would call. A recent evening walk through Belltown and its many empty restaurants attests to the fact that the time of the year and the state of the economy signify quiet phones for lots of talented chefs.

As a little girl, Joelle lived in New Jersey. Although New Jersey is a fine place to live, it's not exactly a bastion of high cuisine; however, it is where she learned how to cook by experimenting in her mother's kitchen (picture a flour-covered child and a lopsided cake). At the age of 9, she moved with her family to Kansas City, Kansas, where she continued her career as a budding cook. It also was the year she spent in Paris and in Berançon, just north of Lake Geneva, that inspired her to a new way of approaching the art of the table.

Upon her return to Kansas City, she began her adult career as a chef, cooking for various captains of industry and for the Kansas City Royals baseball team. When she moved to Seattle two years ago, she opened her personal chef business, MMMagic Chef.

After a client contacts her, she sits down with them and plans everything out. What foods do they especially like or dislike? What foods must they avoid? Do they have any health-related dietary needs? What kind of wines do they like?

Once home, she then designs a two-week menu — that's 14 separate dinners. The meals she prepares must freeze and reheat well. They must be well-composed and have strong visual appeal. The final menu is sent, and any changes are made, depending on what the client says. While working out her menu there are a few favorite cookbooks she uses, such as *Moosewood*, *Laurels' Kitchen*, *Martha Stewart*, and *How It All Vegan*, for clients who eat no animal products.

On the day she cooks all the meals, she begins quite early in the morning. She brings all the equipment with her: the All-Clad pots and pans; her good Henckels' knives; coolers; nutritional analyses of all meals; and flow charts to keep everything straight. Produce is bought at Whole Foods and Madison Market, meat from A+J in Queen Anne, seafood from University Seafood, and poultry at the Northgate QFC.

Once at the client's home, she lugs everything into the kitchen. In one day, she'll prepare 14 dinners; if the family has five members that means 70 portions. I don't know how she does it.

The most people she has ever cooked for, by herself, was a wedding party of 100 people. She prefers being a personal chef, however, because it lets her care for people in a tangible and personal way. Sometimes while she is cooking, her clients or their children gather in the kitchen and keep her company, which she enjoys. Once her work is complete, the clients have a delicious sit-down dinner waiting for them, and a freezer full of dinners to come. The hardest part of the job is the daily or quarterly paperwork; the most amusing is when people take credit for the meals she has prepared.

In today's column, I have an easy recipe for polenta, prepared by me, and two recipes for entrée sauces, from Joelles' creative kitchen. Joelle Hand's e-mail address is MMMagic@yahoo.com. We hope you'll try our recipes; they are savory, rich, and simple to prepare.

Polenta: yields four cups cooked polenta

For this recipe you will need a good-quality heavy bottomed saucepot. If your pans are thin, cook directly over stove flame for the first five minutes, stirring constantly, then transfer to top of a double boiler and cook as directed below for same amount of time (55 minutes over medium-high flame). This recipe needs to be done four hours ahead of time.

4 cups water
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup cornmeal, any size is ok

2 tablespoons butter
2/3 cup (2 ounces) grated Parmesan OR
1/2 cup (4 ounces) Gorgonzola cheese

1. Bring water to a rapid boil and add salt.
2. Stir water in one direction and pour the cornmeal in a thin stream into the boiling water. Lower the heat somewhat and stir constantly for five minutes.
3. Lower heat so that the cornmeal mixture is just barely sputtering. Cook 55 minutes, stirring every five minutes.
4. Remove from heat, stirring in butter and one of the cheeses.
5. Pour into a six-by-twelve-inch pan or shaped foil, and smooth down the top. Chill for four hours.
6. Cut polenta into three-inch squares. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Serve with sauce.

Bolognese Sauce: yields about 3 cups

When buying your hamburger, it's best to buy it from a store that prepares its own, or failing that, you can buy a piece of chuck roast and chop it up in your food processor.

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 ounce pancetta (Italian bacon),
finely chopped
2 small carrots, finely diced
2 celery stalks, finely diced
10 ounces extra lean ground beef

1 small onion, finely diced
salt and pepper, to taste
2/3 cup dry white wine
3/4 cup chicken broth
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 1/2 cups milk
water as needed

1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-low heat. Add pancetta and sauté for eight minutes, taking care not to let it brown. Add vegetables and cook for five minutes.
2. Add ground beef and cook until browned. Add salt and pepper. Pour in wine and simmer on medium heat until evaporated. Stir in chicken broth and tomato paste. Reduce heat. Simmer for two hours, adding cold water as needed, 1/4 cup at a time. At the end of the two hours, sauce should be very thick.
3. Stir in milk and simmer 15 minutes. When serving, ladle six ounces of sauce on plate. Lay two polenta squares across sauce and serve.

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- Recruit guests

If you want to get involved
email your areas of interest
and a resume of your relevant
experience to:

rchange@realchangenews.org

Wild Mushroom Ragu: yields four 2/3 cup servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 tablespoons butter
 9 ounces white or crimini mushrooms, rinsed, cut into 1/4" slices
 2 ounces wild mushrooms — porcini, shiitake, etc., rinsed, cut into 1/8" slices (if using shiitake, remove stems)
 1 medium onion, peeled, finely chopped
 3 garlic cloves, peeled, minced
 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1 teaspoon oregano
 salt and pepper, to taste
 1/2 cup red Bordeaux or Burgundy
 1 cup dried tomatoes
 2 cups vegetable stock
 4 crimini mushrooms (these will be the garnish) rinsed and sliced in 1/8" slices; leave some of the stem attached.

1. In a large skillet, heat olive oil and butter over medium heat. Add mushrooms and sauté 10 minutes. Stir in onions, garlic, and seasonings. Cook over low heat, stirring frequently, for 15 minutes.
2. Add red wine and simmer five minutes over medium-high heat, stirring often to prevent burning. This will evaporate the alcohol and bring a mellow flavor.
3. Stir in the tomatoes and 1/2 cup of the vegetable stock and continue stirring over medium-high heat. Every five minutes add another 1/2 cup of the stock. This should take about 20 minutes.
4. While proceeding with Step 3, prepare your garnish. Simmer the sliced mushrooms in salted water for five minutes. Drain on a paper towel.
5. For each serving, spoon 2/3 cup of the sauce across plate. Lay two polenta squares on top of the sauce. Arrange mushroom slices decoratively on top of polenta and serve. ■



Thursday, January 30, 2:35 p.m., Third Avenue and Pine St. An officer contacted the suspect on the street, a 53-year-old black female transient, with prior knowledge that subject had an outstanding warrant. She was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Thursday, January 30, 3:33 p.m., 200 block Stewart St. An officer noticed the suspect, a 40-year-old white male transient, walking into an alleyway with three other people. The officer followed, and found all four suspects between two dumpsters. The suspect saw the officer approaching and put what looked like a package of crack into his mouth and swallowed. The officer contacted the Department of Corrections via radio and was advised to bring the suspect in. The man admitted swallowing the drugs and was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Saturday, February 1, 10:50 a.m., Summit Avenue and Prospect St. Officers contacted the suspect inside a van. The suspect, a 24-year-old white transient, had been contacted by police five days earlier about camping in his van and had been warned to leave the area. On first contact, it was discovered he had a warrant from Snohomish County, which is not arrestable outside that county. On second contact, the police ran his name again, and found two warrants from Seattle. He was searched prior to arrest and was found to have two stolen bankcards in his possession. He was arrested for possession of stolen property and booked into King County Jail.

Monday, February 10, 5:29 a.m., 21st Avenue and E. Madison St. Officers on patrol observed the suspect, a 47-year-old black male transient, walking into an alleyway. The alley was posted with signs that stated, "Closed to general public 6 p.m. — 6 a.m." Officer approached the man and asked him to put his hands where he could see them. He then asked him what he was doing in the alley. The suspect replied, "Just walking through." One officer asked if he lived in the area, and the man said, "I don't have a home right now." The Officer pointed out the alley closure signs and patted the man down for weapons. A crack pipe was found in his jacket pocket and the man was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Saturday, February 15, 7:58 p.m., Swedish Hospital, Cherry Street. The suspect, a 39-year old Hispanic male transient, was contacted by Swedish Hospital Security while sitting on a third floor stairwell. He had previously trespassed all Swedish Hospital properties last year. He was detained in the Security Office while the police were notified. A radio check revealed the suspect had a D.U.I. warrant out of Ocean Shores. Police contacted Ocean Shores for verification, and they declined to verify it this time. Suspect was arrested and booked in King County Jail for trespass. ■

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



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Women, Flaunt Your Balls!



WOMEN WITH BALLS CAST MEMBERS (FROM LEFT, SELENA WHITAKER-PAQUIET, DONNA RAE DAVIDSON, AND SHANA PENNINGTON) ENJOY THEMSELVES WITH HONORED WOMAN WITH BALLS AND OPENING NIGHT PERFORMER SUSAN POWER.

Review by Molly Rhodes

It's little wonder that this raucous, hair-down musical tribute to the gutsy and outrageous women of history was a hit when it premiered at the 1998 Seattle Fringe Festival. The four-women team — led by writer/choreographer Donna Rae Davidson, and ably joined by Dawn Brazel, Shana Pennington, and Selena Whitaker-Paquet — give everything they have to their performance, literally coming

ing at the audience if they have to so we can feel the passion they feel for these women they so admire.

The show runs through approximately 50 women in about an hour — including politicians, actors, singers, mothers, activists, and countless women who had no defined "job" because society at the time wouldn't let them — giving just a glimpse of some while offering the full heart-on-their-sleeve moments to others. To the performers'

credit, the show flows nicely between moments of humor to more serious reflections on how women have struggled and lost to get the point we are today, especially with the soothing, confident demeanor of Whitaker-Paquet, who embodies and reminisces on the accomplishments of several African-American women.

The transition from "fringe" atmosphere to a more traditional stage and audience doesn't always work in the show's favor — there were definitely moments when the script relies on an audience response the performers have to wait several painful seconds for in order for the punchline to work. Yet Director Joanne Klein keeps the women in constant motion around the stage, so even moments that clunk are quickly forgiven and then forgotten as we are carried on to the next. The addition of "token" male and musical director Rob Jones on the piano, and an "opening act" stand-up comedian before every show, also create an atmosphere of fun and joy that can't help but become infectious. ■

Women With Balls

By Donna Rae Davidson

At the Bathhouse Theatre

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Through March 29

Thursday-Sunday; Tickets \$12-18

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www.womenwithballsthemusical.com/

CLASSICS CORNER



by Perfess'r Harris

On February 15, more than a million and a half people took to the streets to protest war and were pointedly ignored by the usurping tyrant barricaded in the White House. 10,000 poets haven't stopped him either. Clearly, stronger measures are called for. This is why, on March 3, more than 900 performances of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* were held around the world (lysistrataproject.org). Maybe G.W. can write off the commie poet vote, but can he ignore a staple of the Western canon?

Of course he can. Much as we love the idea of Aristophanes performed as protest art, this is the sort of thing we clever people do to amuse ourselves while the world goes straight to hell. And while we at Classics Corner hate to nitpick, we have to wonder if *Lysistrata* is even the right play.

Lysistrata is, of course, one of the better-known anti-war screeds of all time. Basically, the women of Athens and Sparta, sick of a long and

pointless conflict, agree to withhold sex until the men stop fighting. After walking around for a while with enormous hard-ons, the men decide to make love not war and everyone lives happily ever after.

Euripides has the essential quality of the democratic mind: the ability to see another's humanity across boundaries of gender, class, and nationality.

Aristophanes is the P.J. O'Rourke of his day: he's pretty funny, as conservatives go, but fundamentally, he's a defender of his class. *Lysistrata*, when all is said and done, is little more than an extended dick joke.

Give us Euripides over Aristophanes any day. Aristophanes, among others, dismisses Euripides as the son of a vegetable monger, which was his way of saying his rival's background was, by Greek standards, non-elite. This might explain why Euripides consistently gives voice to the outsider: women, slaves, poor people, and foreigners all become human. His sympathy is with those who barely even exist in the other literature of the day.

This, to us, is the essential quality of the democratic mind: the ability to see another's humanity across boundaries of gender, class, and nationality. Without this seemingly inborn capacity for empathy, we as a planet are doomed.

To Euripides, nobility is a matter of the heart, not the wallet. "Inside the souls of wealthy men bleak famine exists, while minds of stature struggle trapped in starving bodies," says the Orestes of his *Electra*. "Can you not come to understand, you empty-minded opinion-stuffed people [You have to love an artist this willing to insult his audience], a man is judged by grace among his fellows, manners are nobilities' touchstone.... The wellborn sportsman, long on muscle and short on brains, is only good for a statue in the park."

For an anti-war play that speaks to the present, see Euripides' *Trojan Women*, which gets that the real victims of war are civilian. In this play, Euripides dwells upon the horror of innocent women and children decimated by war and sold into slavery. In other plays, such as *Hecuba*, Euripides criticizes the arrogance of military power. Just causes, he seems to say, are easily transformed into their opposite. When the enemy is seen as less than human, we always go too far. ■

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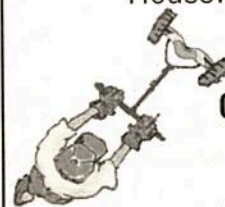
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March

Notables

Thursday 3/6

Thursday night series "Peace on Earth: How?" with a presentation by Vivien Sharples on Alternatives to Violence. Co-sponsored by the Center for Contemplation and Nonviolence and Keystone Church, free, donations invited for the presenter. 7:30 - 9 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. N. Info Eric Carlberg 206-632-6021.

Emerald City Circus presents **Excentrique**, follies of fools, magic, music, juggling, dance, and dangerous escapes. Music by local band [haoke]. Proceeds benefit Childrens' Hospital and Regional Medical Center. Tonight through Saturday, 7 p.m. UW Ethnic Cultural Center Theatre, 3940 Brooklyn Ave N.E., (206)633-1657. \$5.

Friday 3/7

FCC Hearing, **Corporate Media and War: A Chance to Be Heard**. The biggest media empires, AOL Time Warner, Viacom, Disney, and General Electric, stand to gain from expansion of U.S. overseas markets. This is your chance to be heard. 9 a.m., at the HUB Auditorium, University of Washington. Info <http://www.reclaimthemedias.org>.

Responsible Wealth will hold its national conference, **Using Our Voices for Positive Change**, Friday and Saturday, at the Westin Hotel in downtown Seattle. Responsible Wealth is a network of 750 business leaders and wealthy individuals who are concerned about the growing income gap and its effect on our democracy. Speakers will include William H. Gates, Sr., author David Korten, and economist Julianne Malveaux. For more info., visit www.responsiblewealth.org or call 617-423-2148 ext. 44.

Public conference on "Destroying the World to Save It: **Death-Denying Apocalyptic Violence** in the Wake of 9/11," with keynote speaker Robert Jay Lifton, M.D., psychiatrist and author. Fri., at 7:30 p.m.

and Sat. from 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., at University of Washington, Kane Hall, Room 220. A donation to the Ernest Becker Foundation is requested in lieu of admission fee. Info and registration 206-232-2994 or <http://www.ernestbecker.org>.

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace present Meaningful Friday Nights at the Movies. This week features the film **Doug Rokke Speaks on the Dangers of Depleted Uranium**. All showings are free and open to the public. 7 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl N.

Saturday 3/8

International Women's Day March and Rally, unite with women around the world to stop the U.S. war drive, save reproductive rights and social services, among others. Noon rally, 1 p.m. march, at Victor Steinbrueck Park. Info Margaret 206-722-6057 or rwseattle@mindspring.com.

A series of free educational forums sponsored by Antioch University Seattle Center for Creative Change on **Incubating Social Enterprises**. 1 - 4 p.m., this and subsequent 2nd Saturdays, at Antioch University Seattle, 2326 6th Ave. at Battery, Room 201-B. Info 206-268-4707 or habib@thegarden.net.

Nationally recognized Bangladeshee healthcare provider Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury gives a talk on **"How Economic Globalization Affects the Health of the Poor and the People's Health Movement"**. 7 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church, 6512 23rd N.W. For more info. contact Meredith Fort at 206-285-1840 or at mpfort@u.washington.edu.

Sunday 3/9

Celebration of **International Women's Day**, "Women Reclaim Democracy - We Will Be Heard!" with performances by women artists, discussions on race and representation, and women's voices for peace and justice. Noon - 5 p.m., at Seattle Center - Center House. Info 206-860-1400 x5 or <http://www.iwd-seattle.org>.

Wednesday 3/12

Northwest Labor Employment Law Office (LELO) sponsors a current affairs show, "Speaking for Ourselves, To Each Other." 7:30 p.m., this and subsequent 2nd Wednesdays, on SCAN TV Channel 77. Info LELO 206-860-1400.

Free screenings for children and adults with ADD, ADHD, learning disabilities, behavior challenges, and autism. Appointments are required but all services are free, with no obligation for further treatment. Development Movement and Education Center, CAPO Building, Suite 201, 12351 Lake City Way N.E. Call 206-525-8038 to reserve a screening time.

Thursday 3/13

A Perspective on the Role of Women in **Kenya's Democratic Growth and Development**, presented by Wariko Kabuga-Waita. Ms. Kabuga-Waita catalyzed innovative approaches to funding health care and increasing rural access to medical facilities. 3:30 - 5 p.m., at University of Washington, Cunningham Hall Gallery, free. Info 206-685-1090.

World Affairs Council sponsors a series of speakers on Cambodia including Carol Wagner, author of **Soul Survivors - Stories of Women and Children in Cambodia**. 4 - 7 p.m., at the Seattle Asian Art Museum, 1400 E. Prospect. Info 206-654-3100.

Friday 3/14

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace present Meaningful Friday Nights at the Movies, this week featuring the film **Paying the Price: Killing the Children of Iraq**, by John Pilger, an award-winning British journalist. 7 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. N.

Saturday 3/15

Workshop presented by the National Coalition Building Institute, devoted to **eliminating prejudice and ending oppression** of all people. Fees \$30-\$80 (sliding scale). Register at <http://www.scn.org/ncbisea/>. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., at Seattle Central Community College, Room 3115. Info NCBI Seattle office 206-323-5427.

Sunday 3/16

Seattle Chapter Fellowship of Reconciliation program with Susan Hels on **threats to civil liberties**. Potluck 5 p.m., program 6:30 p.m., at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N. 70th. Info 206-789-5565.

Monday 3/17

Meeting of the **Seattle Women's Commission**, a 20-member volunteer advisory board that advises all City of Seattle departments on matters concerning women and children. Meetings open to the public. 5:30 - 8 p.m., at Municipal Bldg, 600 4th Ave., Room 221. Info 206-684-4537.

Tuesday 3/18

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

Special preview for **Yellow Fever: the interment**, a blend of music, dance, art, and multimedia revealing the story of how we came to contract "Yellow Fever" and what we must do to heal ourselves. \$15 general admission, \$10 students and seniors; half-price preview tonight, then Wed. and Thurs. at 7:30 p.m., Fri. and Sat. at 8 p.m., and Sun. at 3 p.m. At the Little Theatre Off Broadway, 1524 Harvard, between Pike and Pine. For reservations call 206-325-6500; info at 206-287-5544.

Friday 3/21

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace present Meaningful Friday Nights at the Movies, this week featuring the film **A Force More Powerful, Part Two**. 7 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. N.

April

6-week anti-racism training to examine, confront, and undo racism; facilitated by the Coalition of anti-racist whites. Interactive and experiential. Will meet one evening per week, April 13 - May 18. Contact Liz Guy, 206-568-5428. ■

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Sign up for Classes NOW!

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Microsoft Office: Hone skills in Word, Excel, and Powerpoint. Tuesdays, 1-2 p.m.

Web Design: An advanced class to build your own website using JAVA, HTML, and other web scripting languages. Saturdays, 10-11 a.m.

All classes will be on Macintosh computers and will be held at 2129 Second Avenue, Seattle. Classes fill up, so sign up as early as you can.

For more information, contact Sal at (206) 441-3247 ext. 205, or macworkshop@realchangenews.org.



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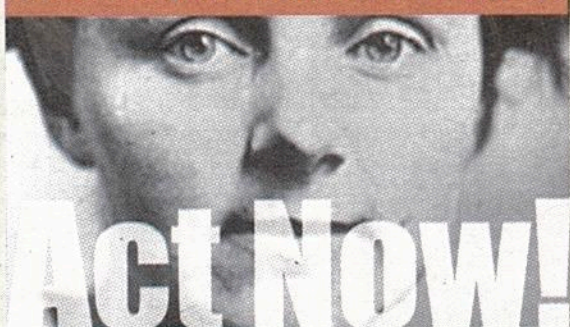


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Everyone Deserves Basic Health Insurance

Issue: A bill currently in the Washington State Senate would make the Basic Health Plan more affordable to people who work but struggle to get by. Senate Bill 5704 requires that employers share the cost of employees' health insurance.

Background: In 2002, 10.7 percent of Washington residents were without health insurance, according to a report published by the University of Washington Health Policy Analysis Program. Alarming, that's more than a two percent increase from the previous year. Our state is still below the national average, but our numbers are catching up.

Bills such as 5704 are pivotal in this regard. Currently, any person not eligible for Medicare, with a gross family income up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level, qualifies for subsidized coverage under the Basic Health Plan. Premiums are between \$10 and \$200 a month, depending primarily on income and age. This bill requires an employer to pay to a trust account an amount equal to the premium paid by an employee, prescribes penalties for employers late on payments, and provides an effective payment date.

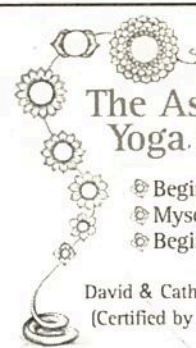
The bill comes at a time when a national survey shows that 43 percent of those polled said they believed their employer or their spouse's employer might cut back or eliminate some part of their health care coverage sometime over the next year.

Some other disturbing statistics about health insurance both locally and nationally:

- One out of every 10 Washington citizens is without health insurance. Nationally, that percentage rises to 14.6 percent, 41 million Americans. People without health insurance are sicker and die younger than those with health insurance.
- More than eight million of the uninsured are children. Eight out of 10 of the uninsured are in working families that cannot afford health insurance. Most are not eligible for public programs.
- One in five (19.5 percent) of those age 19-24 in Washington was uninsured in 2000. One in five (19.5 percent) Washingtonians with a household income below \$35,000 was uninsured in 2000.
- A total of 40 percent of low-wage workers (those earning less than \$7 per hour) are not offered insurance, and many more cannot afford the premiums. Fifty-nine percent of all uninsured workers are not offered health benefits through their own job. Only 5 percent of Americans are covered by privately purchased policies. Twenty percent of uninsured Americans have access to employer-sponsored coverage, but most cannot afford the premiums.

For anyone who has more interest in this topic, a diverse group of Washington state organizations will come together to focus attention on the plight of the uninsured. A week-long series of events will bring together business, labor, elected officials, and health care organizations to highlight the problem and to begin a public dialogue on the solutions. *Cover the Uninsured Week*, planned for March 10 through March 16, kicks off with a Town Hall discussion about the problems of an America that increasingly lacks health insurance. For more information, go to www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org.

Action: Support health insurance for the working poor by calling the legislature at 1-800-562-6000, and telling both House Representatives and Senators to support Senate Bill 5704. The bill is sponsored by Senators Keiser, Fairley, Thibaudeau, and Kohl-Welles and has been referred to the Committee on Health and Long-Term Care. ■



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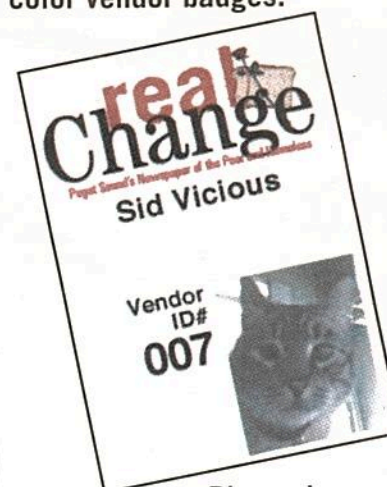
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Mockingbird Times



Building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth



MARCH 2003

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak out Across the Nation

VOLUME III, ISSUE 3

VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.MOCKINGBIRDSOCIETY.ORG

A Day to Hear Homeless Youth

SHAY DENEY



THIS WAS MY FIRST TIME going to Homeless Youth Advocacy Day. Homeless Youth Advocacy Day is a day each year when homeless youth all over the state of Washington get a chance to go to the state capitol and speak with legislators. The youth and the legislators discuss issues such as current budget cuts and different bills that could affect the youth.

This day was a great learning experience for me. The Mockingbird Society met with three legislators (Senator James Hargrove, Speaker of the House Frank Chopp, and Representative Ruth Kagi) and we also got the scoop on what some of the homeless teens had to say about Homeless Youth Advocacy Day. Midnight, a homeless teen who came to lobby with The Zine Project — a program that hires homeless teens to write their own magazine — says that the most important issue facing homeless youth today are the budget cuts. She states, "The budget cuts plan on cutting health care, drop-in centers, and transitional living programs, in effect allowing homeless youth to stay homeless." When asked why he came to Olympia to speak with legislators, a teen named Joe answers, "Because each and every day our volunteers and social workers lobby for us to get us the basic fundamentals to be productive in society. It's our chance to lobby

and show our appreciation to all of them for all the hard work they do."

Homeless Youth Advocacy Day was a great day and all in all it was pretty fun, but it had its ups and downs. It can be frustrating talking to legislators, especially if they already have their minds made up on a certain issue. It's also very hard to speak up on issues you think are arising or that are already taking place, so I was very happy to see so many homeless youth at Advocacy Day. Jennifer, a once homeless teen who is currently living in an independent housing program says, "The hardest things about being homeless is that there is not enough housing, it's really hard to get medical insurance, and it's hard to find a job wearing dirty clothes and having no permanent address." These youth have very good points and are a strong part of the community. I strongly encourage each and every one of you to get out there and learn how to lobby. You really can make a difference. 🐦



Speak for Yourself: Above, Mockingbird staff reporter Shay Deney interviews youth who took part in Homeless Youth Advocacy Day; below, Mockingbird staff reporter Kevin Griffin checks out the various information for youth on the streets. Photos by Mockingbird staff.



Check out more interviews and thoughts from Homeless Youth Advocacy Day on Page 4

Hargrove's Helpful Hints

INTERVIEW BY JESSICA GUNNING



MOCKINGBIRDTIMES staff met with Senator Hargrove on Homeless Youth Advocacy Day and asked him if he had any advice for youth who are interested in making changes in the way they are treated in the system. We think he gave some great advice that could be used in any state for any cause. So if you are trying to make things happen in your community — whether it be Foster Care, Juvenile Justice or any other system affecting young people — here are Hargrove's Helpful Hints:

- Register to Vote. Fair or not, legislators tend to listen to people who can potentially vote them out of office.
- Don't just sing to the choir. Educate people and communities that don't know anything about you. Go speak at Chamber of Commerce meetings in your neighborhood, talk to the Elk Club, any group that is organized and can become allies. Often these kinds of groups are putting pressure on elected officials and it would be great for them to have you in mind when they are lobbying.
- Go and be part of something that isn't about you and your issues. Volunteer for a different organization or community group. This way other people see that you are part of the larger community.
- Put a positive face on your issue by working with others the best way you can. Let people see that you want to be part of the solution.

The Mockingbird staff would like to thank Senator Hargrove for his time and insights. We would also love to hear from any youth out there who are involved in any kind of advocacy. Let us know your tips and strategies. Write to us at newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org. 🐦

The World is ruled by people who show up.



Photo of state Senator James Hargrove, with glasses in center, by Mockingbird staff.

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Founded in Seattle, Washington, 2001	

Letter from the Editor

NON-PROFITS PAY BIG DIVIDENDS: I have had the opportunity to attend a number of conferences lately including most recently one in Washington, D.C., for the National Network for Youth. I also receive lots of correspondence, mostly emails, from many of you from across the country. A theme that seems to surface more and more is the economic peril facing many non-profit organizations. This theme seems to emerge whether I'm talking with Executive Directors, members of the Board of Directors, direct service staff, volunteers, or individuals representing private foundations.

Certainly, the drop in the economy has been the driving force for much of this concern, which has escalated since September 11, 2001. However, there have been other factors, including scandals with some national organizations that resulted in negative fallout for local non-profits. In my talks with Executives and CEOs, it is clear that many have invested serious consideration and planning toward merging with another organization.

I would like to take a moment and remind all of us of the incredible work that goes on every single day and night in our communities because of non-profit organizations — from the 22 year old in her first social services job working the “overnight” shift in a runaway

shelter, to the veteran chemical dependency counselor who on his day off visits a client in a drug treatment center, to the mid-level manager who completes the grant on time while on vacation.

Don't misunderstand my support as blind or ignorant. After 20-plus years in this field, I am fully aware of the problems that occur within non-profit organizations. However, I suggest to you that it is the non-profit organizations that millions of American families have turned to in time of need. This is a time to realize how valuable these organizations are to the health and vitality of our communities. It is through the non-profit organizations that community members can get their first aid card, help elder's in our community receive meals, and provide foster care to abused and neglected children.

I encourage you to remember the non-profit organizations in your community and take the time to give them an encouraging word and perhaps a donation. They need you now so they can be there when you or someone you love needs them.

GET PUBLISHED, GET PAID: Another invitation to youth all across the U.S.A. to submit your poetry, essays, or art work to the *Mockingbird Times*. We will pay up to \$25 for anything we publish and you will feel really great seeing your work in the newspaper.



Jim Theofelis

jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

Letters to the Editor


I would like to share with *Mockingbird* readers the valuable lessons and experiences working with the staff of *Mockingbird Times* has given to the girls in my home. I have been a foster parent for almost 15 years. I really enjoy having children in my home long term. It gives me a chance to watch growth take place — I find that part of the parenting job very rewarding.

There are certain life lessons that I look to provide each child with. These “lessons” have to transition from within the home to the outside world in order to prepare them best to become a functional, responsible adult. Learning that hard work in school pays off seems to leave a lasting impression if it is tied to real money, pride in a job well done, and bragging rights. Even though Dawn and Paige were only 10 & 11 when they began as guest writers for the *Times* there have been several occasions in which being involved in the writing and delivery of the *Mockingbird Times* has given them some of the most valuable lessons in their young lives.

I was just remembering back to the first time the girls saw their work in print. They had taken the time to write and ask the staff if they could contribute some articles to the *Times*. The staff let them know that they were having a book review contest. The girls had both just finished book reports about Harry Potter and J.K. Rowlings, the book's author. After some slight tweaking of the reports, they decided to enter them into the contest.

When the *Times* arrived and they had won the contest I wish you could have been here. Paige's response was so touching. “I've never won anything in my entire life.” Translated in my mind as I've never

LETTER CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



“You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment if you do not trust enough.”

— Frank Crane

Meet Our Staff

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ABOUT US:

The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents in foster care. The *Mockingbird Times* is a monthly newspaper that is written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The *Mockingbird Times* has a monthly circulation of 26,500 copies being distributed across Washington and the U.S.A. Youth involvement is key to the philosophy, values and success of The Mockingbird Society and as such youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. All donations to The Mockingbird Society are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated. No part of the *Mockingbird Times* may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2003 The Mockingbird Society.

Do you have a story for the Mockingbird Times? Or a comment on a story you've seen in our paper?

Let us know!

Give us a call at (206) 323-5437 or email us at news@mockingbirdsociety.org.

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All donations are tax deductible and all donors receive the *Mockingbird Times*.

I want to support The Mockingbird Society

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

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\$250 - \$499 Organizations \$ _____	\$50 Supporter \$ _____
\$25 Foster Parent \$ _____	

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Day Phone _____ Evening Phone _____

Email _____

☐ Please bill me for the amount indicated above.

☐ My employer will match my gift, enclosed is my matching gift form.

☐ I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.

☐ Yes, you may use my name on published donor lists.

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



Positive Power: How to Obtain State ID

WILLIAM NELSON



GETTING ID for the first time or "simply" renewing one is not on my list of fun, exciting, or even simple things to get done.

With a serious security threat to the United States, whatever may have been on your list of simple things to get done might now belong on your list of hard won achievements.

Having been homeless myself, I did not observe a large amount of other homeless individuals carrying around their social security card, birth certificate, or a pre-signed affidavit stating who they are from their parents who they may no longer speak to. Many homeless youth who I was friends with did not even know what their social security number was when asked by a shelter intake worker. If you don't have any of this information and you don't have a social worker who can verify who you are, how do you get your ID?

If this is an issue for you, please call the Social Security Administration at **(800)-772-1213** and they may give you your Social Security number if you give them as much information as possible. Some sort of identification such as an old or current school ID may be required to be mailed or faxed in as verification.

The Social Security Administration may also be able to provide information on where you would need to go to order your birth certificate. The DOL (Dept. of Licensing) or DMV (Dept. of Motor Vehicles) may consider this information in order to establish your identity.

In some states, you cannot have a driver's license and an ID at the same time. If you still want a separate ID, you must surrender your driving privileges when applying because current law does not allow more than one document at a time.

To get an ID, you will need to go to your local DOL, DMV, or whatever department handles ID registration in your city. You will pay a fee, somewhere around \$15 and will also need one of the following:

- An original of valid or recently expired license
- Instruction Permit
- ID issued by another state
- Military ID
- Federal or State Employee ID
- Immigration & Naturalization Service ID card
- US passport

Call toll free directory assistance for your local DOL or DMV listing at **(800)-555-1212** for more information as guidelines may vary in your state.

If you are under the age of 18, you can have your parent or legal guardian come into the DOL or DMV along with you. They will need to sign an affidavit — available at the DOL or DMV — and provide proof of identity and or guardianship, and proof of relationship such as a birth certificate or court ordered documents containing guardian or social worker's name.

The DOL or DMV may consider other documents to establish your identity, containing your name, date of birth, address, signature, and photograph in whole or in combination. And of course, to keep things interesting, some documents may not be accepted due to issuance procedures. 🐦

And Don't Forget that Social Security Card

SHAY DENEY

TO GET AN ORIGINAL number and card, first you'll need to fill out an application for a Social Security card. There are three ways to get an application:

- Use www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.html on the Internet
- Call **1-800-772-1213**
- Or, visit your local office

A smart thing to do is to contact your local office or call **1-800-772-1213** and let them know what documents you do have; that way you won't have to make a second trip if you are missing something.

REMEMBER, This is a **FREE** service. It does not cost anything to get your Social Security card.

Here is a list of documents that you can use to prove your identity:

- Driver's license
- Employer ID card
- School ID card
- Marriage or divorce records
- Health insurance card (not a Medicare card)
- Military ID
- Adoption record
- Life insurance policy

Keep in mind that it is very important to keep your Social Security number safe and always make sure that you keep your information accurate. Here are a few suggestions:

- Keep your number and card in a safe place to prevent theft.
- Show your card to your employer voluntarily when you start a job so your records are correct. Don't rely on your memory.
- Check your name and Social Security number on your pay stub and W-2 form to make sure they are correct.
- Notify your local office if you ever change your name.

For more information, you can visit the Social Security Administration website at www.ssa.gov. You can also call **1-800-772-1213** between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on business days. There is also a 24-hour automated phone service at that same number if you cannot reach anyone during the times and days provided. If you are deaf or hard-of-hearing you can call their TTY number at **1-800-325-0078** between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on business days. 🐦

LETTER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

been a winner and now for the first time I know what it feels like to be a winner. That is a life lesson I can't give as profoundly as someone else. A lesson every parent wants their child to learn... that they are a winner. The impact is felt far deeper for children who have on so many levels been told they are losers. They have lost their biological parents, their school connections, friends, homes, and lives, as they once knew them to be. That paper was shown with such pride to everyone they knew. It was even inspiration to form some new friendships with some of the kids at school who wanted to start their own paper.

Just last month, when Paige delivered the papers on her route, she had to stop and show everyone who had time that she was a published author because one of her poems was on the back page of the *Times*. This month Dawn has been totally invested in a school project to write a book of poems. One of the reasons is because she is hoping one may be published in the *Mockingbird Times*. She has submitted several for review.

The girls have even established a small student savings account with the money they have earned. Teaching money management, responsibility, and how to budget are difficult tasks. Many of you may not understand that the children in state care do not get a lot of money of their "own" to manage. Many times, children in typical life experiences may get money as a gift from family members at birthdays and holidays to learn how to manage a saving account or budget for their use — not so for children in foster care.

Mockingbird Times has given these two girls a chance to learn these real life lessons. They have learned how to open a saving account at a bank, to keep a record of their deposits, put aside a percentage of their earning into this account, and have some to meet their young "needs." These are lessons learned really young in the home, but as our kids grow they are best established firmly with jobs outside the home. They have also learned about work ethics, the importance of making a commitment to do a job, and to do it well pays. Who would imagine a little job, with a young newspaper would make all these lessons possible. BUT IT HAS. I know if you have picked up this paper to read, it is most likely because you have some investment in the children of the world. The *Mockingbird Times* is a paper that has supported some of our most vulnerable young people. In these tough economic times, the *Mockingbird Times* has been faced with a financial crisis of it's own. Your financial support is the only thing that will save the paper from closure. My hope is that you will read the articles in this paper and consider how much you would be willing to contribute to your support of struggling young people who are learning some of life's most important lessons. They are learning that they are WINNERS.

GLENA FELKER

We are having a bathing suit contest!

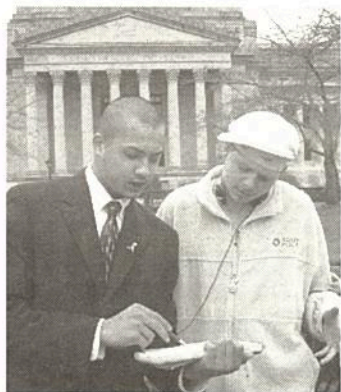
Got a bathing suit?
Got a pet?
Got a pet in a bathing suit?
We want the picture!



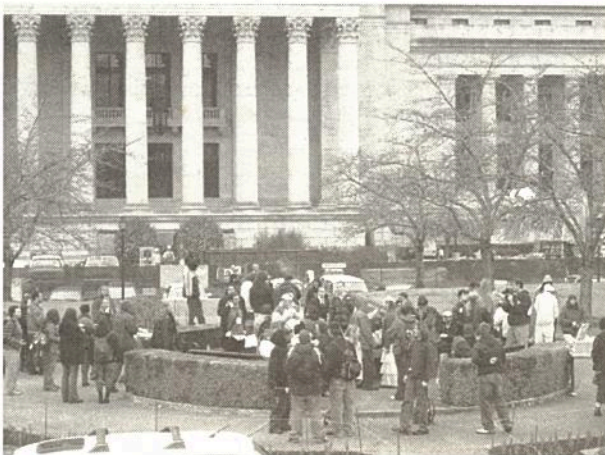
Send us a picture of your family pet in a bathing suit by April 15, 2003, and we will publish the winners in May's issue. Fabulous prizes for the top three entries.

Email newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org, or snail mail us at MB Times, 3302 Fuhrman Ave. E., Suite 107, Seattle, WA 98102.

Youth Lobby for Their Rights



Youth from all over: Above, Kevin Griffin interviews one of the youth who came to Homeless Youth Advocacy Day; Above right, House Speaker Frank Chopp meets with youth; Right, youth gathered outside to voice their thoughts. Photos by Mockingbird staff.



ON FEBRUARY 7 at 9:45am, the *Mockingbird Times* joined the Working Zone to go Homeless Youth Advocacy Day in Olympia. Youth from all over came to lobby against the budget cuts, against the age of consent bill and to change the eight-hour runaway law to 72 hours. I went there to show my support not just for me but for the younger youth in the system. Some legislators seem to think that by cutting funds to homeless support services that youth will go home. They don't realize it will put more youth on the street. Some youth don't even have a home to go home to; some of them don't have any parents because they are deceased and some parents are abusive. Some youth don't know where their parents are. One of the people I met there is Mamma Sara. She is from Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets (P.S.K.S). She went to Olympia to lobby for homeless youth rights. She wants service providers to have 72

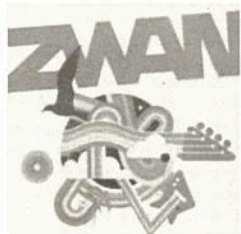
hours to report a runaway to the authorities instead of the current eight hours. She believes eight hours is not enough time for effective case management. At the end of the day I was amazed by all the youth who stood up for what they believe in. Youth from all over were bonding and telling their stories with each other. Not many people would do what I saw happen there. — KEVIN GRIFFIN

Zwan Is Here

SHAY DENEY

ZWAN MAY BE new to the music scene, but the members of Zwan are definitely not. Billy Corgan, the lead singer and lead guitarist of the band, came from a band called the Smashing Pumpkins. The Smashing Pumpkins were together for a very good 11 years and topped the music charts in their years of music making. Jimmy Chamberlin, the hardcore drummer of Zwan, also came from the Smashing Pumpkins. Matt Sweeney, formerly from a group called Chavez, is now one of Zwan's three guitarists. David Pajo, another one of Zwan's great guitar players, formerly belonged to a group called Papa M. The last member of Zwan is Paz Lenchantin from a group called A Perfect Circle. Paz is a fabulous female bassist who keeps Zwan on the edge. Zwan recently came out with their first album, *Mary Star of the Sea*, and let me tell you, it is just awesome! I've had it in my CD player for almost three weeks now and I'm still not tired of listening to it. If you're a sucker for love songs with an edge, this is the album for you! This is pure rock and roll goodness complete with the occasional guitar solo. The songs that are compiled on to this album are songs you can

Mary Star of the Sea
Zwan



listen to anywhere, at any time, in any mood, and it will still put a smile on your face. From the melodic tones of "Of a Broken Heart" to the harmonizing harmonica sounds of "Come With Me," you'll be deeply impressed and moved by this awesome musical group. Some of the songs are soft, sweet love songs like "Heartsong" and "Desire." Others are lovely with beautiful guitar rhythms and heavy drum beats like the hit song "Honestly," "Endless Summer," and "Baby, Let's Rock!". Billy Corgan, the lead man of Zwan, has always been considered a musical genius when it comes to his guitar playing and lyric writing. Lyrics like "maybe we were born to love each other/ maybe we were born to run forever/ or maybe we were born to come together or whatever" from a rock love ballad called "Declaration of Faith" and "all I wanted was you here next to me/ a little sunshine and sympathy" from the laid-back, free-willed sounds of "El Sol," a song that talks about sunshine and tea, complete the album's down-to-earth feel. Zwan features a wide variety of music, instruments, and sounds. If you like variety and music with a little edge, I strongly suggest you buy this CD. The other cool thing is *Mary Star of the Sea* also comes with a free 35 minute DVD that features a live performance, home videos, and interviews with the band. It's fun and entertaining. You can most likely find *Mary Star of the Sea* in any Tower Records. So sit back, listen, and enjoy!

Sola Plummder gives 411 on Homeless Youth Advocacy Day

KEVIN GRIFFIN



1. How long have you been planning for homeless youth advocacy day?
For one year, the Homeless Youth Taskforce decided that we would be more effective if we spent more time working on homeless youth issues that come up each legislative session.

2. How can someone get involved in homeless youth advocacy day in the future?
Anyone who would like to be part of lobby day can join us! Remember that you can contact your area representative and let them know about your concerns. They were voted into office by the people and their job is to work for the people. If we don't tell them what we are concerned about, how can we expect them to know? If you don't know who represents you, check out <http://www.leg.wa.gov/> to figure it out. Individuals can also join the taskforce or the email list if they just want to know about the issues we are going to address on lobby day.

3. How did you get in advocacy?
I started on the taskforce three years ago after my Executive Director assigned it to me. After my first meeting, I became inspired by the process of creating social change. I found it very powerful to be involved in advocating for homeless youth. Each year I have been to Olympia, I have brought youth with me. These youth have been my source of inspiration and determination to make positive changes that will help them. They constantly are amazed that the legislators listen to them and their stories. Our legislators are real people and they are open to hearing individual stories; they love to speak with the youth. The stories youth share are more powerful than anything a lobbyist can say because the legislators can see it is real that youth live in squats and on the streets.



Photo of Sola Plummder, right, by Mockingbird staff.

Poetry Corner

Good Bye Friend
You use to be my friend when I was in need,
Now I say goodbye to the weed,
Weed smells good weed is green,
Just thinking this shows me that I was a feen,
It is hard to say goodbye,
Now I want to cry,
I understand you were there when I was alone,
Now it is time for me to try a different tone,
Goodbye for now goodbye forever,
Maybe we'll meet again hopefully never,
— MATT HICKS