

Real Change

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 10, No. 7

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Time

Cynthia Ozimek on
solitude, bad food, and
kicking the habit

Also: Olympia's Courage Cris •
South African Streetpaper • Democracy
and Media • Timeless Astrology



GRAPHIC BY ROBIN LINDLEY.

Equine Eyman

Initiative 831 declares the anti-tax campaigner a "horse's ass." Is it just desserts or just juvenile?

Interview by Adam Holdorf

David Goldstein wants Washington's citizens to weigh in: is the man who purports to be the taxpayers' savior actually, in truth, just a blustering fool?

A fool? Well, maybe; but he's also a faux-populist who has stripped luxury taxes from the backs of the well-to-do. He's a campaign director who diverted hundreds of thousands of dollars in political contributions for his own use. He's a man whose initiatives typically fail — not for voters' lack of support, but because they don't go by the state's constitutional rules that guide the process. And he's a man who uses these failures as fodder for a cycle of voter resentment against high taxes and unresponsive politicians. A fool? Looking

at his crusade closely, Goldberg says, you realize that Tim Eyman could be more precisely described as a horse's ass.

That is why this January, Goldstein sent the Secretary of State the text of a resolution that has become Initiative 831. In response, Eyman supporters have e-mailed computer viruses and angry, sometimes anti-Semitic messages. Humorless lawyers at the state Attorney General's office have blocked the initiative for being a bill of attainder — a law-making effort that targets only one person with "a verbal whoopie cushion." Goldstein swears he'll appeal. Meanwhile, a crew of volunteer signature gatherers must dredge up 250,000 signatures before July 3.

Goldstein met with *Real Change* and talked about the serious side of what is, at heart, a very funny campaign.

Real Change: When did you decide to do this?

David Goldstein: It started as a joke, really. I was at a dinner party and we were joking about what a bold political move it is to run an initiative that cuts taxes. I think promising to cut taxes is always such a pandering thing to do. Anytime you ask people to vote to put money

back in their pockets, there's a good chance they're going to do it — especially if they're not confronted with the consequences of it.

So the initial joke was we would do a Free Beer Initiative. Every Friday, every registered voter of legal drinking age would receive one free beer, from Washington state of course, because we want to support local industry. We would pay for this with a tax on the sale of fraternity logo novelty watches — Tim Eyman's business.

It was a funny way to finance it, of course, because it would end up being \$65,000 per watch sale. It was obviously not meant as a reasonable tax — it was meant as a joke. We had joked that we could go gather signatures at bars. It would be a fun thing to do.

I wrote that up, and in it the language was something to the effect of

"One free beer for every registered voter of legal drinking age, except for Tim Eyman, because he's a horse's ass." Everybody thought that was funny, and it occurred to me that really that's the

initiative we should file, the horse's ass initiative. Free beer was too convoluted; this was straight to the point.

One reporter said our kickoff press conference was the most entertaining press conference he'd ever been to. We're trying to have fun with this.

"The initial joke was we would do a Free Beer Initiative. Every Friday, every registered voter of legal drinking age would receive one free beer. We would pay for this with a tax on the sale of fraternity logo novelty watches — Tim Eyman's business."

I-831 sponsor David Goldstein

RC: What made it so entertaining?

Goldstein: We started off by crowning Miss Horse's Ass — we had a woman in an evening gown, with a tiara, and I put the sash that said "Miss Horse's Ass" on her. And we played some music.

Continued on Page 10

Tell us

a thing or two.

What
do readers
want?

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Minor errors

Dear *Real Change*,

I was happy to see so much attention given to homeless youth in the last issue (Kimberly Davis, "Minor Threat," Mar. 6-19). As you obviously know, the system that supports youth is changing, and not always for the better. Programs are closing left and right, and the Governor's proposed budget is likely to make things even worse.

I do want to clarify one thing: Davis describes what shelters are left with the closure of Denny Place. She describes services in the University District, but didn't get it quite right.

To be fair, the system is complicated — imagine being a scared homeless teenager and having to figure it out. Here's what is offered in the U District. University Youth Shelter offers 20-25 beds four nights per week to youth ages 13 to 20 at four different churches. Shalom Zone offers 25-30 beds three nights per week for youth ages 18 to 25 at one site. And in collaboration with both these programs, the University Family YMCA has responded to cold winter weather by opening an overflow shelter to last through March for five to 10 youth ages 21-25 on the nights that that age group isn't covered.

So, if you're homeless in the University District and are 18-20, you can probably find shelter every night (unless programs fill up, which does happen). If you're 21-25, you have shelter every night through March, then you can find shelter only three nights each week. And if you're 13-17, you are covered four nights a week. Four churches plus the YMCA provide space for this effort, which is staffed primarily with congregation members and UW student volunteers. Youth have to sleep in rotating locations, so it can be a little difficult to keep straight, but somehow, most do. And by the way, that's what happens when critical survival services are under-funded and the task of sheltering children and youth is left to vol-

unteers and churches. We do the best we can with limited resources.

Sincerely,
Shannon Barello
Program Coordinator,
University Youth Shelter

DSHS: untrustworthy

Dear *Real Change*,

Thank you for your fair and balanced reporting of the Branch Villa story ("Hanging On: Fate of Central District nursing home remains uncertain," March 6-19). We are in a time of great challenges for all populations, and it is refreshing to see a newspaper who cares enough to report the impacts on the elderly poor. When the money-grabbers show up, they trample the elderly, the poor, and the frail.

The state Department of Social and Health Services' continued threats to close Branch Villa are against the wishes of Governor Locke, 37th District state Legislators Adam Kline, Sharon Tomiko Santos, and Eric Pettigrew, and Speaker of the House Frank Chopp. They recognize that Branch Villa is a culturally relevant facility in the Central District. As a large and power-wielding agency, DSHS has clearly isolated itself from everyone.

Following the licensing of Branch Villa under new ownership, there should be very close public and procedural scrutiny of DSHS' oversight of the facility. How can there be fair and unbiased regulation from those who tried so hard to close this facility, against the wishes of so many?

Saving Branch Villa is a testimony to a collaborative effort in making democracy work for the less powerful.

Sincerely,
Dawn Mason
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

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

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

Editorial Policy

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



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Crisis in Courage

Olympia needs to find money — now

By Rachael Myers

As state lawmakers wrestle, negotiate, and flat-out horse trade for their favorite budget items, the rest of us are doing our best to remind them of the human effects. We're not begging; don't let anyone tell you different. We are reminding them that we expect leadership. When we stand up for people who don't have much power in the process, legislators often look sad and say things like "everyone has to feel the pain, it's terrible, just terrible." But they have choices. They can make painful cuts, or they can take a risk — and some leadership — and find new revenue.

The Governor made his choice. His budget eliminates GA-U, a sure way to increase homelessness among mentally and physically disabled people. It cuts 60,000 people from Basic Health, ignoring the will of the people who voted two-to-one to expand the program. (When the Legislature does that, it's considered "veto-proof.") It cuts foster care and street youth funds, leaving children in crisis with few options but the streets. And the list goes on.

Let's be clear: if the Governor gets his way, people will die. People die from living on the streets, people die without health care, children die when troubled families are left to fend for themselves.

There are ways to solve this crisis. In fact, when you look at all the options, you start to wonder if we're really in a budget crisis after all. Maybe it's just a crisis of courage.

The Legislature could enact a "millionaire's tax." A 5 percent income tax on households earning over a million dollars a year would raise more than one and a half billion dollars. Our state has 6,000 millionaires, and even if they all vote — rich people tend to — they won't control the outcome of the next election. Besides, most millionaires got where they are partly because they're smart and talented, but mostly because they have lots of lower-income workers helping them make money. They'll benefit from their workforce being better off. Oh, and they can afford it. It doesn't seem like a hard sell.

They could extend the sales tax to business and professional services. This would expand the tax base (think of it as sharing the responsibility) and could bring in \$1.4 billion, even if combined with a one-half percent decrease in the overall sales tax. This would generate new revenue for local governments too, which we know is necessary, based on the last round of City and County budget fights.

They could tax luxury vehicles and bring in \$46 million. People are used to paying it. Until last December the feds collected this tax, so wealthy people have a short window to buy fancy cars without paying the tax, instead of getting a break forever. Again, they can afford it.

They could increase the B&O tax on hazardous substances, extend the watercraft tax to motor homes and trailers, and add 5 percent to liquor, raising a total of \$338 million. They could enhance the estate tax and raise up to \$230 million. A temporary increase in the sales tax hits poor people the hardest, but might be the lesser of evils and could raise over a billion dollars.

It's not our job to come up with the details of the best package. It's complex, and the Legislature has plenty of experts at their disposal. They can decide to pass one big tax, or lots of small dedicated ones. They can decide if it's time to create a more fair tax structure for our state, or just declare an emergency. What they can't do is allow this deficit to take the hardest toll on those the least able to take care of themselves. That's just not acceptable.

Let's be clear: If the Governor gets his way, people will die. People die from living on the streets, people die without health care, children die when troubled families are left to fend for themselves. But it won't be all his fault. The Legislature will get plenty of credit for being too scared to raise taxes, for putting politics before people in need. It's tempting to offer up big business and wealthy people to share the blame, because we're used to doing that, and because they do pay less than their fair share. But to spread the responsibility everywhere it's deserved, we have to look further than the usual bad guys. Actually, we have to look closer. What have you done to make your voice heard? The more you stand up for human need, the more ignoring those needs becomes a political risk. Turn to the back page for more information on how you can help legislators find the courage to solve this crisis. ■

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3/20/03

DCLU's Sugimura: passing the buck

The Seattle City Council unanimously appointed Diane Sugimura as Director of the City's Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use last week, but while there was no dissent among the council, Sugimura's appointment may not be good news for supporters of low-income housing.

On February 19, approximately 30 citizens registered their assessments of Sugimura before city councilmember Judy Nicastro's Land Use Committee; half spoke against Sugimura's confirmation as DCLU head. (Only Nicastro heard the citizens' point of view, as the rest of the council was away in Olympia that day.) A confirmation hearing was held on March 4, and the following Monday the council officially appointed Sugimura to the job she's had, on an interim basis, for over a year.

Sugimura has served as acting director of DCLU for the past 13 months and at one time didn't want to be named director. Those who spoke in favor of Sugimura at the public hearing (many of whom were lawyers who had worked with her or the department) cited her plans to tackle the unwieldy Land Use Code book, which is currently 1,500 pages long.

Some of the most emotional testimony against Sugimura came from residents of the Cascade neighborhood for her role in Vulcan Associates' tearing down the Lillian Apartment complex, one of the few non-subsidized low-income housing complexes left in the city. The Save the Lillian group noted they weren't informed when Vulcan won an appeal with DCLU, and didn't have time to stop the destruction of the building.

"I found Diane to be unprepared to address the policy issues and enforcement challenges presented by Vulcan's efforts to demolish the Lillian," says Sharon Lee, executive director of the Low Income Housing Institute. "Vulcan stripped the building first and then had DCLU declare it uninhabitable. Diane, in her leadership position, should not have allowed this to occur."

"We weren't given the opportunity to be heard because Paul Allen had more money," says Candi Wilvang, a nearby resident.

Neighborhood activists from Delridge and Magnolia also spoke against Sugimura's appointment that day.

Sugimura responded in writing to 23 questions from the Council before her confirmation meeting. When asked how DCLU can prevent the demolition of low-income housing, she pretty much passed the buck. "Providing low-income housing is an important goal of the city but is primarily in the hands of the Office of Housing, the Federal government, the developers, and the citizens of Seattle." ■

— R.V. Murphy

Casualty of winter

In an attempt to keep warm, a homeless man died in a fire inside a Renton storage shed on Tuesday, March 4.

Fifty-one year old Steven Lundstedt had had several encounters with local law enforcement in more than a decade, says Renton Police Department spokeswoman Penny Bartley. Lundstedt was arrested on assault charges in 1992, cited for criminal trespass and disorderly conduct, and was the victim of assault only one week before his death, Bartley reports. "He was well known to the police here," she says.

The storage shed sits on property owned by the Catholic Archbishop of Seattle; it was being used by a nearby church. It had been boarded up to keep squatters out, but Bartley suspects that Lundstedt broke in.

"He was trying to stay warm, and must have lit a candle or a campfire," says Bartley. ■

— Adam Holdorf

Out on the street

Last week's cold weather and horizontal rains provided for some uncomfortable moments for hundreds of low-income and homeless people who use the Lazarus Center in Pioneer Square. The facility is now closed Wednesdays and Thursdays, for the foreseeable future. The reason? Money.



According to Bob Goetchius, manager of both the Lazarus and the St. Martin de Porres men's shelter, funding just hasn't been available. Donations are down dramatically. Corporations and individuals have tightened wallets like never before, and the direct result is many non-profit operations are cutting back on various services. What would it take to reopen those two days a week? Easy: \$35,000.

"If we could come up with \$35,000, it would take care of things through the end of July," says Goetchius. "I have volunteers, but I also have to meet a weekly payroll for both facilities."

The Lazarus is the daytime haven for more than 150 elderly men who reside at St. Martins nightly. Each evening, three bus runs carry the men to the Alaskan Way building, where they get a warm meal, a night's sleep, and morning coffee. The men leave at 7 a.m. the following day. Some residents have lived in the shelter for more than a decade.

On March 12, the first day of the Lazarus' closure, men lined up in the weather as the rain hit hard, waiting in line for the five-minute bus ride. The line stretched from 2nd Avenue to Yesler and almost to 3rd Avenue. The men had lots of comments, some printable, some not. "This sucks," said one. "They could have waited till the weather changed before closing two days a week. As cold and wet as we are, some guys are going to get sick."

Most of the men found cover during the day by taking Metro buses, selecting routes that last an hour or more. Aurora Avenue's 358 route and Sea-Tac Airport's 174 were among the favorites. The temporary library downtown was also a big hit — it will probably remain so on Wednesdays and Thursdays through July, unless funding is found to reopen the Lazarus.

Some good news for people sleeping in shelters did come through. Al Poole, manager of survival services for the City of Seattle, says the 50 men currently sleeping in the lobby of the city's Municipal building will get an unexpected extension. Originally due to close April 1, the shelter will now remain open until May or later. Whether or not the nightly meal across the street will continue at what is known as The Wall remains up in the air.

There's more need than ever before to keep shelters like the Municipal Building open, according to the Seattle / King County Coalition for the Homeless. On March 19, the coalition released details of last October's One Night Count, which found that the number of homeless people in the county had grown 23 percent since October 2001. Nearly one in three of the area's 7,980 homeless are children. ■

— Ed Cain

Defending their lives



GINA PETRY, ANN YZKANIN, AND LARA DAVIS (FROM LEFT) CARRY THE LEAD BANNER FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ON SATURDAY, MARCH 8. RADICAL WOMEN, SISTAH 2 SISTAH, AND THE NO WAR AGAINST IRAQ COALITION ORGANIZED THE EVENT. ANNE SLATER OF RADICAL WOMEN ESTIMATES THAT SEVERAL HUNDRED PEOPLE CAME OUT FOR THE DOWNTOWN MARCH.

PHOTO BY KEN DEAN.

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



NORTH AMERICAN NEWSBRIEFS
WWW.STREETNEWSERVICE.ORG

Dwight Henson is poised to make Denver history as the first homeless person to run for mayor in the city. The 41-year-old former rancher and cab driver has been introducing himself to as many Mile High City residents as possible, including a get-out-the-vote event for area high school students. He surprised some students by announcing that, if elected, he would actually reduce money for homeless programs because these programs contribute to homelessness rather than help end it. Yet most students were thrilled to open the debate to someone who had experienced a different side of life. "He may not win, but he'll open a lot of people's eyes to the homelessness in Denver," Michael Schaus, a senior at Denver School of the Arts, told the *Denver Post* (www.denverpost.com). "He shows anyone who is willing can run for mayor."

To look on the bright side, it's encouraging that people wanted to give money to help the homeless. Of course, no homeless people will ever benefit from the money collected by two women who instead pocketed it all for themselves. No one at the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless in Cleveland is sure just how much money was swindled, though it's believed the women have been soliciting false donations for the past six years, according to the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (www.cleveland.com). Most recently, the two are believed to have duped people mere blocks from the Coalition's headquarters. The two women used to sell the Coalition's homeless street newspaper, the *Homeless Grapevine*, but switched to asking for charity donations — and kept those donations — when they realized how much more money they could make for themselves. "People who donate to these women will be hesitant to donate again," the Coalition's executive director, Brian Davis, told the *Plain Dealer*. "Certainly,

this harms all homeless organizations."

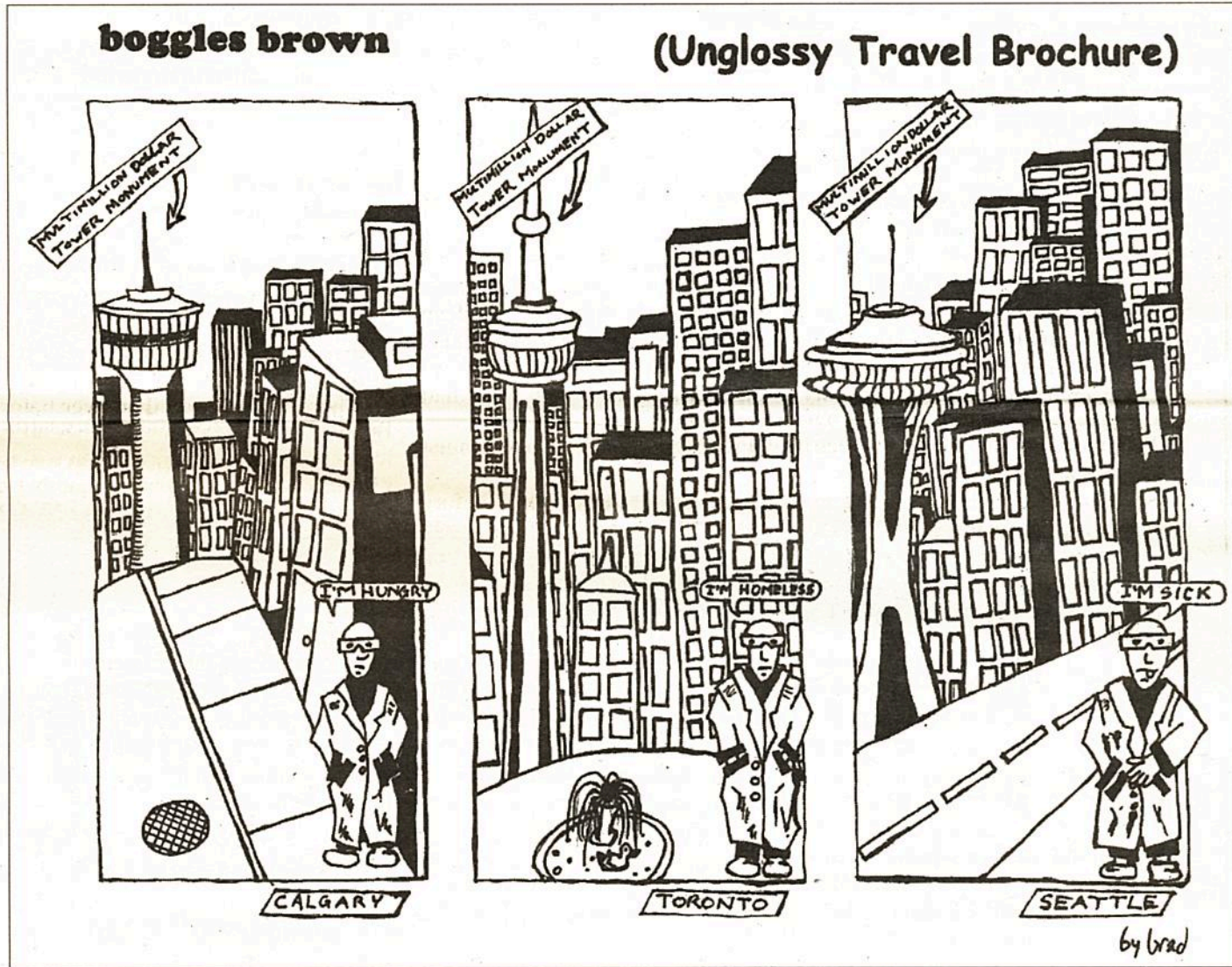
After three years of federal funds reforming and supporting hundreds of homeless shelters and related projects across the country, the Canadian government has now placed its focus — and \$405 million Canadian dollars — on the next layer of the struggle to get out of homelessness: transitional housing. What's more, provinces like British Columbia have decided to match the money with their own funds, according to the *Vancouver Sun*

(www.canada.com/vancouver). The Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative has already helped 216 projects in British Columbia and the Yukon with \$52 million in funding for creating new shelter beds, renovating crumbling shelters, and improving support services like food banks and soup kitchens. The announcement about money for transitional housing comes as housing advocates have been gearing up for a big battle over Vancouver's bid for the 2010 Winter Olympics. The advocates fear a repeat of the scene during the 1986 Expo, when low-income, long-term tenants were booted out of single-room-occupancy hotels to make room for short-term tourists.

Wary that the stereotypical image of homelessness is a single male, the Salvation Army launched a new campaign in Tuscon, Ariz., to highlight the

plight of homeless children. Posters with pictures of local homeless children and ways for the local community to get involved can be found on everything from buses to businesses. The Salvation Army estimates more than one-third of the approximately 5,500 homeless people in Tuscon — or 2,000 people — are children, according to the *Tuscon Citizen* (www.tusconcitizen.com). The campaign is not just to raise awareness but also money for housing for homeless families with children. The charity is currently looking at sites located near services and public transportation, but is already facing opposition in the greater community. The charity hopes educating the public on who really suffers from homelessness will alleviate concerns about helping them in their own backyard. ■

— Compiled by Molly Rhodes



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poetry

Apologies to Country Joe

Well it's one two three
What're we fightin for?

Next stop is in Iraq
You know that's near Iran
We're doin it cuz we can
The limit is the sky
Better kiss your ass goodbye

Somebody's got the bomb
Doesn't really matter whom
We're all gonna go kaboom
Or at the risk of being vague
We're all gonna get the plague

Yeah three cheers for this great nation
Have you had your vaccination?

Hey that Dubya he's dressed to kill
If his economy don't get ya
His nuclear war will!

— ELIZABETH ROMERO

Psychotherapy?????

This morning
I think I am close-to-unraveling
have a CHANCE-to-unravel

The ABSURD, CRUEL nightmare
That/is/my/life

It is beginning to peek
Thru-the-cracks
—the chinks in my armor
—the gaps in my white ruffled curtains

But, ACTUALLY,
I KNOW

It will be a
Long, painful process

— MARION SUE FISCHER



Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning

As I write this it is the morning of March 17, the day George Bush has set as the last day for Saddam Hussein to do I know not what before bombing the hell out of the Iraqis and invading and conquering them. There are people looking forward to this, praying that Saddam doesn't do anything that even remotely resembles disarming for fear that a glorious opportunity to dominate with sheer violence will be missed.

It's times like this that writing an alleged humor column is like making balloon animals for a kid whose dog just got run over.

No, it's worse than that. It's like, I'm the kid whose dog just got run over, and here are these balloons, and I'm supposed to make animals out of them to cheer everyone else up.

It doesn't help that we're on a cusp and I have no idea what will have happened by the time you are reading this. All I can say is that if it isn't spring yet, it will be by tomorrow. The network news says the day and time to attack has already been set but only the generals know, of course.

What's a guy supposed to make fun of in a situation like this? How 'bout those Dixie Chicks?

I'm so slow when it comes to popular culture that I constantly find myself wanting to call them the Chicksie Dix. As a result I have difficulty retaining in my mind an accurate image of them. I forget whether they are a country-western girl group or some female punk group ridiculing and taunting sexually insecure males. I wish they were the latter but I'm afraid not.

The reason for bringing them up at this juncture is of course that one of them, Natalie Maines, said at a March 10th London show, "Just so you know, we're ashamed the President of the United States is from Texas." Subsequently radio stations all over the place have been boycotting their music and fans have been throwing out their CDs.

Since I don't have any Dixie Chick CDs to throw away I can view this whole situation with remote amusement. Our glorious leader is about to com-

mit our country to the commission of what could very well be declared by an international war tribunal down the road as a war crime, and the Dixie Chicks are worried that people might think less well of Texas.

Come to think of it, didn't the Bushes originate from Maine? What do Maineites think of that? What kind of name is Maines? Why isn't Maines from Maine? My head hurts.

A president is a president, not a king, and he's not owed any more respect than he earns. There I said it.

That should endear her to all her conservative fans, every last Clinton-bashing one of them.

I don't know about the rest of you, but I simply cannot regard William McKinley with the utmost respect, to name just one. I'm ashamed that McKinley came from my planet. I know, she means the current office-holder. But a president is a president, not a king, and he's not owed any more respect than he earns. There, I said it.

While I'm here there's something else I want to say. I believe that justice happens. Justice happens eventually whether people speak for it or not. But if you don't speak for it you will be justly swept away when the universe finally rights itself. And I believe the people who speak for justice, wherever they are, are the ones who really deserve respect, not office-holders, certainly not office-thieves.

I respect Rachel Corrie. ■

But there's more! To make matters worse, just four days later Maines apologized. She now says her remark was disrespectful to the office of the presidency. So in other words, she's evidently still ashamed that Bush is from Texas, but now in addition to that she's also ashamed of having said so. Maines goes on to say that she thinks whoever holds the office of presidency should be treated with the utmost respect.



When Africa Cries

When darkness falls over Africa
And the baby of a woman in a faraway village
Sucks at his mother's empty breasts for a sip of milk,
Africa cries

And when the undernourished mother
Nevertheless gives the child her teat,
The baby gives a sigh of contentment.
But only a waterish substance coloured with streaks of pink
Trickles into its mouth,
Africa cries

When more than half a million of her children
Are being slaughtered with pangas, knives
And the staccato of semi-automatic guns,
Africa cries

When a lion roars to heaven in its agony of a slow death
Caused by a misplaced bullet
From an amateur's telescopic-sighted rifle,
And the millionaire sits in his posh cabana
Smoking his favourite cigar and sipping champagne
Boasting about his latest trophy,
Africa cries

It is then when the buffalo lowers its head in shame.
And the elephant trumpets its rage to the skies,
And the snake hisses in anger,
And the crocodile silently sinks to the bottom of the river
Too overcome to witness the rape of Africa,
It is then when Africa cries.

— WILFRED PLAATJIES

(reprinted from Big Issue South Africa)

Re-occurring Dream

I dreamt of the earth today
High above the sea
Thunder rained in my ears
Higher I sailed, floating
The clouds cold on my skin

So these dreams continue
Sometimes swimming in the sky
Sometimes drowning in seams
Eternally sailing, unable to land
This is where I realize the dream

If only I can hit the ground running
But I can't land, can't get back down
Panicking, all I want is down
Higher yet I sail,
I awaken in a cold sweat

— GALAXIE S. STARLINER

so hunched with time

how are we so
hunched with old age
like reconstituted fruit
wrinkles smooth away
like two-weeks-worn socks
like old farmers
old soldiers
they stand by themselves
why are we
so hunched with time
like the boy
his finger stuck in the dike
holding back an ocean
sure to flood
the little gingerbread village
chock-full of wooden shoes

— R. UNGRICH

The Women of

Days and nights in

By Cynthia

When you are incarcerated in the King County Correctional Facility, your cell is referred to as a "house"; I don't know why. At six by eight feet, it is not exactly a grave, but neither does it resemble any house that I have ever lived in. When you leave your individual cell, you are not exiting your "house"; rather, you are "racking forward." Conversely, when you return to your cell, you are not being locked in — you are—"racking back." All this talk of racking in and racking out reminds me of some bizarre sadomasochistic sidewalk sale held every year at Halloween on the sidewalk outside the "Bon Marc-Che."

Tonight, in cell block B on the ninth floor of the King County Jail, no one can sleep. This is because an addict in Four House is withdrawing from methadone. I don't know if it is really true, but I am told that methadone is one of the most debilitating narcotics to withdraw from without the benefit of medical intervention. Over time, methadone eats away at the user's bone marrow. Thus, in addition to the constant retching, diarrhea, and muscular cramping the methadone addict experiences, she also — quite literally — aches in the innermost core of what seems to be her soul.

In addition to the vomiting and the incessant flushing of the stainless steel jail-house toilet, the addict in question is kicking at her cell door and begging for someone, anyone, to help her. In jail, we refer to the answer of an unmedicated addict's pleas for help as "divine intervention." This is because sympathetic and/or comprehensive medical intervention arrives for the "kicking" addict about as often as the second coming of Christ. Finally, at 3 a.m., three decidedly unsympathetic guards arrive at the cell door of four house with mace, handcuffs, and baby-blue latex gloves. The addict withdrawing from methadone has threatened to hang herself; the three correctional officers place her in restraints and escort her to the seventh floor.

The seventh floor of the King County Correctional Facility is reserved for the jail's psychiatric services. "Psychiatric services" is basically interchangeable with "administrative segregation," or the "hole" (used to punish unruly inmates)

except that in lockdown, you are allowed to have your towel, your blanket, and your underwear. None of this is allowed on the "rubber ward."

I have only been incarcerated on the seventh floor one time, for about three days, but I can still vividly recall my feelings of dissolution: confined to my cell for 23 hours each day with nothing to read, to write, without being able to communicate with anyone. Every now and then, a King County public health psychiatric nurse would appear in the small paint-chipped hole in my door and ask me if I was "hearing any voices." I replied that no, thank you, I was not hearing voices, but after being in isolation for 72 hours I would have welcomed a voice of any kind — even if it was a voice I could hear only in my mind.

As if conditions on the seventh floor could get any worse, female psychiatric inmates are now often "housed" outside of their cells on synthetically wrapped mats, without blankets, in full view of the correctional officers. This is to ensure they are not harming themselves or anybody else. Consequently, female psychiatric inmates are also now in full view of their male psychiatric counterparts confined in the adjoining tank. Elaine, an inmate at the jail who is diagnosed with both drug addiction and bipolar disorder, told me that, in the context of being treated for her mental illness on the seventh floor, she had never seen nor been flashed by so many penises in all of her adult life.

On a more personal note, I am currently incarcerated in the county jail for possession of \$40 worth of crack cocaine in the Belltown section of Seattle. While

Seattle's West Precinct undercover vice officers gave chase to the individual who had sold me my narcotics, I slipped serenely unaware around the corner of Lenora and First Avenue. I would have gotten away, if I hadn't stopped to pet a very cute puppy in front of Tully's. Talk about feeling like one of America's dumbest criminals.

Like Elaine, I am dually diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder and drug addiction. To this end, my public "pretender" (indigent counsel) and the state's prosecutor are involved in a legal argument over whether I am a criminally disposed addict

I hate the metallic clicking sound a pair of handcuffs makes as they are placed firmly around my wrists by various members of the SPD. And I detest the dirty, disowning glances I am given by the average Seattle citizens who have seen me with those handcuffs upon my wrists....

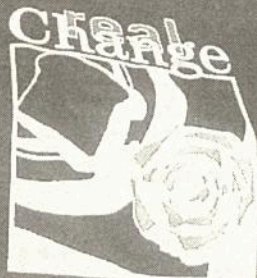


GRAPHIC BY ROBIN LINDLEY.

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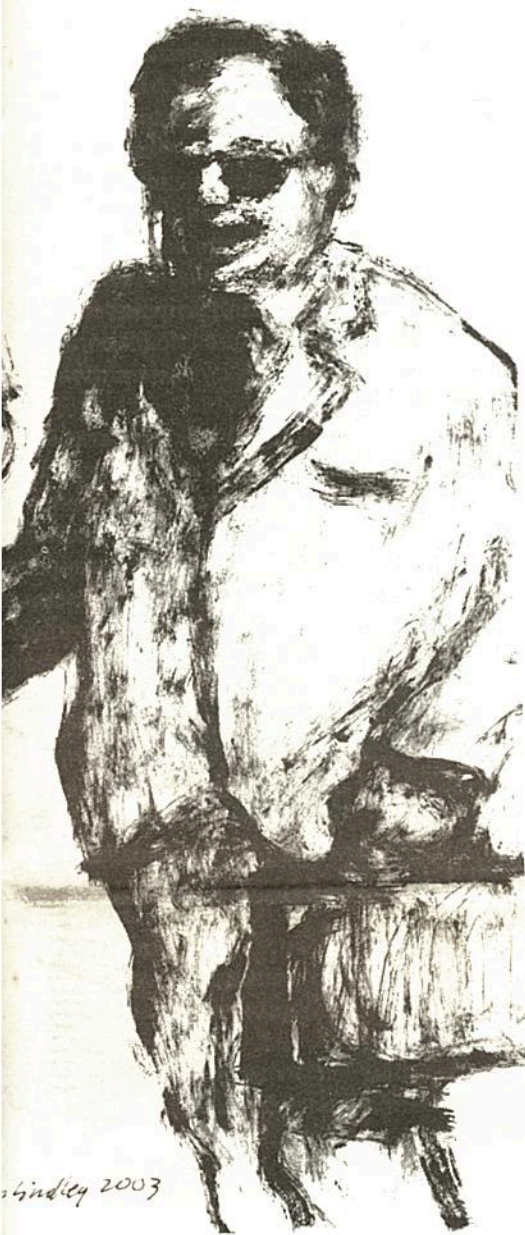
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Cell Block B

King County Jail

Ozimek



or simply attempting to medicate the symptoms of my mental illness. This reminds me of the age-old discussion over which came first, the chicken or the egg. In any case, the end result is the same. I have again been incarcerated on a charge of Violation of the Uniform Controlled Substance Act, and I must again write to my editor at *Real Change* and advise him that my next article will not be submitted in a timely manner.

On the subject of narcotics, I have never met an addict who, through the usage of drugs, was attempting to better get in touch with herself. In this sense, in my attempt to escape the ramifications of my poverty, my mental illness, and my homelessness, I am no different than any other addict incarcerated in the K.C.J. Despite the often positive outcome, I hate 12-step groups. I think their sayings are stupid ("easy does it," or "one day at a time"), and I do not trust their dogmatic emphasis upon a male Christian God. I don't want to pray to "our Father." Exactly whose father is "our Father" anyway? He's not my father. My father, in the last years of his alcoholic life, was not a very nice man. I don't want to pray to him. And, finally, when those individual 12-steppers gush on and on about how much they love me, I don't believe them. For most of my childhood years social workers and foster parents and court-appointed advocates told me how much they loved me and then used the trust inherent to that love to annihilate me.

Having acknowledged my aversion to recovery groups, however, I must also acknowledge that there are "things" in life I hate far more than 12-steppers. For instance, I hate the metallic clicking sound a pair of handcuffs makes as they are placed firmly around my wrists by various members of the SPD. And I detest the dirty, disowning glances I am given by the average Seattle citizens who have seen me with those handcuffs upon my wrists. And I really despise the carrion-like fragrance a jail holding tank takes on upon holding hostage the lives of 20 or 30 unwashed, un-deodorized male inmates. This said, upon my release, I will go to whatever "12

step" or "rational recovery group" or "voodoo narcotic's withdrawal fest" the State of Washington deems necessary to my rehabilitation.

It is dinnertime at the K.C.C.F. According to the correctional institution's web site, exactly 63 cents is spent per day to feed each inmate. This fact is evident in this evening's meal, which is commonly referred to by the county's prisoners as "bicycle parts." We call it bicycle parts because it tastes like rubber and looks like tiny metal bolts. This evening's bicycle parts are accompanied by seven sodden green beans, two pear pieces canned sometime prior to the First World War, and three slices of fake "enriched" wheat bread designed to fill the belly and psych the stomach into believing it has eaten something it can actually identify.

After dinner, I am called outside the northern ninth floor wing of the jail for medical "triage," a process that typically involves an overburdened, ill-tempered public health nurse, a closet-like examination room, and an abundance of Maalox or Metamucil. The same nurse who is now ready to see me has just treated a case of suspected lice, taken a blood pressure reading, and changed the dressing of an infected abscess with the same unwashed and ungloved hands. I decline to be treated and the guard who oversees the safety of the nurse threatens to "infract" me (write me up), a gesture which may or may not send me to the hole for punishment.

Finally, it is 9:45 p.m. and we are racked back for the night. Despite the fact that it is about 70 degrees outside, in the King County Jail the air conditioner seems to be permanently on overdrive. We deal with the arctic climate in three essential ways. One, we wear both sets of our prison-issued clothes. Two, we poke holes in the feet of our extra sweat socks and

...And I really despise the carrion-like fragrance a jail holding tank takes on upon holding hostage the lives of 20 or 30 unwashed, un-deodorized male inmates.

Continued on Page 10



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The Women of Cell B1

Days and nights in the King County Jail

By Cynthia Lee Ozimek



GRAPHIC BY ROBIN LINDLEY.

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EYMAN Continued from page 1

Tim Eyman had publicly stated for a couple weeks that he wanted to be the first to sign the petition. So we invited him and made an announcement. If he had showed up — I won't tell you what we were going to do, but it would've been a great little photo. Instead, I had a backup: I announce that "Here comes Tim Eyman," and this other guy, who is clearly not Tim Eyman, walks in. He corrects me, saying actually it's not Tim, it's Jim. I'm a little miffed, and I try to keep my composure going with Jim Eyman. He says, "Well, actually it's not Eyman, it's Chymen" [like the Yiddish "chutzpah"]. And then he tries to get me to pronounce the "ch" sound. Finally, he made some comment to the effect of, David's obviously a reformed Jew.

We did the Jewish stuff because the vast majority of my hate mail at that time had been anti-Semitic — I figured you might as well rub it in. The crowd loved it, the reporters were laughing.

RC: You got hundreds of pieces of anti-Semitic hate mail?

Goldstein: No, I don't get that much hate mail. There was a string there for awhile where it seemed that maybe half of the negative e-mails would mention my ethnicity in one way or another. For the most part now, they send me viruses and sign me up for subscriptions. Very illegal stuff they're doing. Plus, I think it's poor sportsmanship.

RC: What serious criticisms have you

received?

Goldstein: People say that voters need a check on our legislators. I'm just talking about making the initiative process more rational. All we're saying is, when the voters pass an initiative, they should know that it will become law. Recent history has shown that you can't trust the sponsor to write a constitutional initiative. Courts should review the initiative after it gets enough signatures for the ballot, but before voters weigh in. That way, the inevitable court challenge will come [when it's qualified] in July instead of December.

RC: Who supports you in this?

Goldstein: I don't have any official support from the Democratic Party, or from labor. People disagree with my tactics and my strategy. A lot of people say, "You should have done a serious initiative if you wanted to make an impact." Well, first of all, it's mostly not possible,

because you need to amend the Constitution in order to change the initiative process. Constitutional amendments need a vote of two-thirds of the Legislature and the majority of the people.

Second of all, I would have been ignored like any of the handful of serious initiatives filed at the same time. It took being outrageous, like Tim Eyman, to get the attention. That's the media's fault, not mine. I'm taking this from the Tim Eyman playbook: you need to draw attention to your cause by any means. And if that's calling Tim Eyman a horse's ass — well, that's just my job. I'm just doing what he says I should do;

Continued on Page 13



GRAPHIC BY TOM DOUGLASS

CELL BLOCK Continued from Page 9

turn them into REI-like detachable sleeves. Three, we stealthily collect extra blankets from departing prisoners. Feeling fortunate to be in possession of all three of these things, I quickly snuggle under my linens and settle down for the remaining night. It is usually about then that the dreaded "vent people" come out to play.

The vent people make themselves known during the periods when we are confined to our individual houses. They are male and female inmates who speak to one another by way of the institution's ventilation ducts. For some inmates returning from various prisons across Washington State, the ventilation ducts are most often utilized to ascertain who is or who is not also incarcerated in the King County Jail.

Typically, it begins like this: I, an inmate with a life, am trying, despite the cold, to go to sleep. All of a sudden, as if on a loudspeaker, an anonymous male voice shouts out: "Hey...pick up the phone!" What this actually means is for you to climb out of your bunk, step up carefully upon the rim of your seatless toilet, lean into the air duct, and yell back: "Yo, this is (insert your name here). I just got two days in the hole for telling (insert guard's name here) to go fuck himself. But it's a'ight, you can't keep a good (insert man/woman/bitch/bro/sister/native) down." I really would like to tell you that the conversations get more creative than this, but, typically, they do not. Usually at some point in the conversation an inmate like myself will scream at her fellow inmates to be quiet or the guards on each of several floors will intervene and simply "disconnect" the "party line."

About this time, you, the citizenry of Seattle who are reading these words, are probably saying to yourself, "Why should I give a damn what happens to a junkie or a criminal dimwit in the King County Jail? What does it matter to me if they spend the rest of their lives locked out of my civilization?"

Well, foremost, you should care about the addicts and the mentally ill imprisoned in the KCCF because it is far more cost-effective and less burdensome to the county's and the state's judicial systems to rehabilitate addicts, and to provide the mentally ill with proper psychiatric treatment, than to simply and to continually jail them for minimal offenses. Also, decriminalization of narcotics possession in the state of Washington and alternative sentencing programs that emphasize recovery and proper mental health would free up judicial resources. This would allow the judiciary to focus their attention on more violent offenders: those individuals accused of rape, or robbery, or theft of an individual's identity.

On a more personal note, what do the women of the ninth floor, cell block B, minimum-security unit of the King County Jail want you to know about us? We want you to know that, beyond anything else, we take care of our own while in jail. When a junkie imprisoned in our tank is sick from narcotic withdrawal, it is we who will minister to her most basic needs, who will help her to shower, who will talk to her when she screams, who will stealthily supply her with medications prescribed to us for sleep or for pain or for nausea. And when an unmedicated schizophrenic is sent into our midst, it is we who will act as her quasi-social worker or nurse or emergency medical paramedic.

We, the women of cellblock B, want you to know that we are innovative in our problem solving. Two plastic spoons, when inserted into an air vent, become a clothesline upon which to hang our underclothes. The plastic dispenser of a tampon when inserted atop a 4-inch jail house pencil extends its life two fold. And for those women in the county jail who must have their feminine side addressed, cherry Kool Aid becomes both lipstick and blush upon visiting day. But as innovative as the women of the KCCF are, we cannot simply create tricyclic antidepressants or mood stabilizers, nor can we access treatment centers and mental health facilities that do not already exist.

The women housed upon the ninth floor of the King County Jail want you to know that we feel deeply the disdain heaped upon us by the police, the citizenry of Seattle, and society at large, and we are drowning in the wells of absolution by which society wipes its collective hands of us. But until the issues of drug addiction, mental illness, and dual diagnosis are addressed by the judiciary of King County, until the state of Washington revises its criminal laws to emphasize treatment of the addict and the mentally impaired, until jail cells are replaced with treatment beds and comprehensive care for the mentally ill, you citizens of Seattle will continue to lose and your tax dollars, like crack cocaine, will continue to go up in a useless cloud of smoke. ■

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For Sunnier Skies

Unemployed find work and hope at South Africa's street newspaper

By Erin Anderson

Bongani Mhlawuli came to *The Big Issue South Africa* in July 2001. Like so many others in Cape Town, he had been unemployed for a long time. Prior to becoming a *Big Issue* vendor he did not have any permanent work, managing to find odd jobs here and there for one or two days a week at most. Now, through selling *Big Issue* magazines, he is able to support himself and his family.

"There are some better months and better days, but I am able to take care of myself and the people around me," Bongani says. In the Xhosa culture, this is very important. Despite the violence and crime in South Africa, Bongani and his people, the Xhosa, continue to live by an ancient philosophy of *ubuntu*. While nearly impossible to translate into English, the word means roughly: A person is a person through other people. Taking care of one another is paramount.

Bongani lives in a township called Nyanga, one of the many sprawling informal settlements in the Cape Flats surrounding the city of Cape Town. He wakes at 7:00 each morning, prepares himself coffee, and goes to catch a Kombi to the *BI* depot. Kombis, overcrowded taxi-buses, are one of the main staples of public transportation in Cape Town.

He arrives at the depot to buy his magazines at 8:30 — quite a daily commute. Walking to the Cape Town Kombi station, Bongani catches yet another ride to Sea Point along the waterfront. From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. he works diligently, selling magazines. He takes pride in his many regular customers: "I know my own customers won't buy the magazine from anyone else."

Bongani says that his customers buy the magazine to help support the vendors, but also because they genuinely enjoy reading it. "Some of the magazine is entertaining, some is constructive, some just tells what's going on around South Africa," he says. Because it is not just a sympathy sell, the vendors are able to sell the magazine with pride and dignity.

After four hours of standing in the

scorching Cape Town sun, Bongani is ready for a break. He takes his lunch and walks to the beach to eat and watch the people. He's back to work an hour later, and at the end of the day, around 5:30, he catches another series of Kombis back to Nyanga.

Every workday, Monday through Saturday in his case, Bongani spends 16 South African Rand (about \$2 U.S.) on transportation alone. He must sell at least four magazines to make that money back. His life is a daily challenge for survival. "I have no choice but to be here. It is the way I am able to put bread on the table."

Bongani is grateful for the opportunities he is given at *The Big Issue*, but does not see this as a permanent career. "This is not my dream, but I still have dreams to fight for. Right now I am happy just to have food."

There is no shortage of this amazing sense of hope and endurance in South Africa today. Of *The Big Issue*, Bongani says, "To me, this place is where I'm doing things to return myself back to the mainstream of life." But he has other plans for his future, including a dream to start his own computer business.

Aside from providing him with employment, *The Big Issue* has worked to help Bongani accomplish such goals. With their assistance, he has recently completed a computer class at a local college, getting his certificate with top marks. He has also tried his hand at photography — contributing pictures to the annual photographic issue. Such skills training and empowerment is an important aspect of the *BI* ethos.

Fun also has its place. Bongani is one of the two captains of *The Big Issue* soccer team. They are currently practicing for the Homeless World Cup Championships, organized by the International Network of Street Papers (INSP). Teams from 20 different countries will be participating in this 10-day event in Graz, Austria. It will be the first time Bongani has been out of South Africa.

While Bongani's extensive involvement may set him apart from the ma-

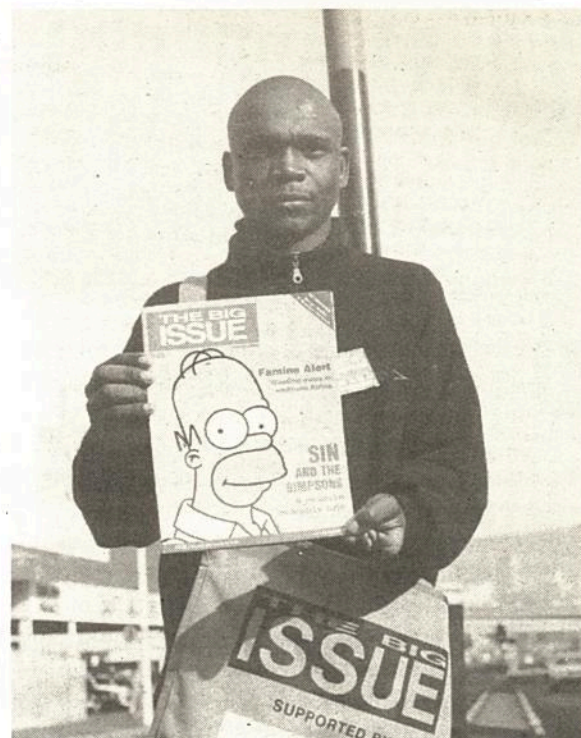
jority of *Big Issue* vendors, his story, and daily struggle for survival, is a common one. South Africa does not have a welfare system as we know it in the United States. Forty percent of the population is currently unemployed. These disadvantaged people are crowded into small areas without localized business or employment opportunities. Townships, an enduring legacy of Apartheid, can be found outside of every urban area in South Africa. They are Tent City taken to an unimaginable extreme.

This poverty inevitably translates into disease. The Western Cape of South Africa has the highest rate of tuberculosis in the world, and the only thing spreading faster than HIV is Coca-Cola. It is estimated that by 2010, South Africa will be home to more than 5 million AIDS orphans, and it does not have the infrastructure to handle such a crisis.

These were some of the challenges facing *The Big Issue South Africa* at its inception six years ago. Glenda Nevill, editor of *The Big Issue*, admits that "We are just a tiny cog in a very big wheel. We are forced to deal only with the small picture, because the big picture is so intimidating."

The Big Issue started out by soliciting big advertisers (Shell, BP, etc.) for a double spread. Its staff told them that they wanted to start a magazine for the homeless, and printed their ads around the center of the sheet. They continued to print these sheets and sell them on the street to earn enough for the next one. They also made a deal with the printer.

Now, *The Big Issue* gets money from three sources: advertising, magazine sales, and donations or charitable grants. The enterprise is considered a non-profit collective — any earned revenue goes back into the organization. They receive the majority of their funds from international donors (Irish Aid, Levi-Strauss Foundation) and they have a government grant from the Depart-



BONGANI MHLAWULI SELLS PAPERS AT A BEACHFRONT BOULEVARD IN CAPE TOWN, COMMUTING DAILY FROM HIS HOME IN A SHANTYTOWN ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY. PHOTO BY JAMES GARNER.

ment of Social Services in the Western Cape. Ultimately, *The Big Issue* hopes to become self-sustaining, but in a country like South Africa, with so much need, there will always be a need to solicit outside funds to support the vendors. Project director Shane Halpin says the organization can strike a balance between charity and earned income.

The Big Issue South Africa started out in a similar fashion to *Real Change*, with the majority of its vendors coming from off the streets. It then expanded to help remedy the more widespread unemployment problem. Nevill says that the magazine is now "less about homelessness than about job creation." Much of its vendor base is comprised of the disadvantaged people who are struggling to recover from the tradition of racism, displacement, discrimination, and violence that was the Apartheid regime.

With the huge proportion of have-nots in present day South Africa, the task of bringing these people up to an acceptable level as economic and social equals is daunting. *The Big Issue* is a small but important step toward this goal.

Nevill says, "There is a huge need for a *Big Issue* in every city in the country." In March 2001, *The Big Issue* expanded its reach northward from Cape Town to Johannesburg. In the future, through partnerships with existing organizations that work for social and economic development, Nevill hopes to see this process taken to the next level.

Though it is easy to look at the overwhelming problems facing South Africa as beyond repair, the extraordinary spirit of hope amongst its people and the perseverance of such organizations as *The Big Issue* are, without a doubt, leading the "Rainbow Nation" to sunnier skies. ■

Erin Anderson is a Comparative History of Ideas major at the University of Washington who interned at both *Real Change* and *The Big Issue South Africa*.

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Pulse Check

FCC gets public feedback on media consolidation

By Bess Dwyer

Does big media stifle the public dialogue necessary for a healthy democracy?

That is the question before the Federal Communications Commission as it considers rolling back limits on how many television, radio, and newspaper outlets one company can own.

On Friday, March 7, FCC Commissioners Michael Copps and Jonathan Adelstein heard the public's response to lifting ownership restrictions at a field hearing on the University of Washington campus. Vowing to solicit feedback from "the other Washington," they said the two other commissioners didn't feel this issue was worth a transcontinental trip.

"We can't afford not to go out and talk to people about what this means to them, and what they think we ought to do," said Adelstein.

The town hall meeting comes at a time of growing criticism of mass media's ability to tailor its news and music programming to local audiences. Some say that journalists and radio hosts are serving their employers' interests, not their audiences'. After a full day of testimony from local media owners, employees, experts, and the public, the FCC had heard that the one-size-fits-all programming of big media companies makes Americans feel — in the words of *Seattle Times* publisher Frank Blethen — "disconnected and under-informed."

"Today, five giant companies dominate our country's electronic media," Blethen told the FCC commissioners. "Today, a small group of corporations control all cable access to our homes. For the most part, these media corporations are driven by a class of professional financial managers, concerned only with short-term stock prices. Not journalism, not public trust, and not democracy. How quickly America's newsrooms have been transformed from democracy's watchdog into corporate lapdogs."

Three panels were heard before turning to the public for their comments. The first panel discussed the impact of media

consolidation on news. Panelists repeated two statistics: since the passing of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, 34 percent fewer companies control the nation's radio stations; and 90 percent of the cable industry is owned by 10 outlets.

David Lougee of Belo-TV, which owns Seattle stations KING TV (an NBC affiliate), KONG TV, and 17 other stations nationwide, was the only one on the panel to speak in favor of media concentration. He argued that large media companies encourage diversity in programming: while one local station broadcast the 2000 Presidential debates, the other showed a Mariners playoff game.

An employee of a local station owned by radio conglomerate Infinity Broadcasting, Becky Brenner, also said radio audiences were unconcerned by her station's chain ownership. In response to comments about media conglomerates not adequately covering news, she said that, "We interrupted music programming for coverage of the 2001 Seattle earthquake. We also covered 9/11 very effectively. Recent Arbitron studies, published only in the past six to eight weeks, found that radio listeners are very pleased with the programming."

Aside from news journalism, another concern was bigger radio stations' unwillingness to play less widely known local artists. Music promoter David Meinert said he doubts that there are less talented musicians making music in Seattle than there was before the beginning of deregulation.

"I'm here only because the musicians that we asked to testify were afraid to testify, because of fear of retaliation. So I have a bunch of letters

from local musicians that I want to give to you," said Meinert, offering the letters to the Commissioners. "They are afraid for their career."

The FCC has asked critics of consolidation to provide empirical evidence of its negative impact. Davey D, a journalist, activist, and former radio DJ, offered the FCC a report compiled in San Francisco. It details the dearth of local artists on big radio stations in the Bay Area. Davey D affirmed that many artists won't come out against deregulation publicly, in fear of losing airtime.

Consolidation "becomes even worse with the urban community, because you have a scenario where you have maybe one or two formats. You have the Hip Hop format and the adult urban contemporary format. And that's that," he told the commissioners.

When some chain-radio stations are playing, "You can close your eyes, and not know what city you're in."

Davey D was one of the first speakers, and the commentary from the public echoed what he said: unleashing the corporate media's power to merge scares people. Some suggested mandating media coverage for specific issues, some people spoke of ways to incorporate non-commercial media into the system, and others just voiced their distaste for deregulation.

"Localism and diversity have become huge casualties," said Ed Evans, a pastor at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Vancouver, Washington.

"Freedom of expression and diversity of voices are products of a marketplace of ideas, and not a supposedly free market," said Ted Coopman, a media democracy advocate and PhD student in Communications at UW.

Coopman continued, "The ability to engage in a marketplace of ideas in a meaningful way; commercial media will never be able to do this and in fact, it is unreasonable for us to demand that they fulfill that function. Rather than try and pretend that commercial media can meet our democratic need for expression and debate, our time and resources would be

better spent making a place at the table for true community access, non-commercial media on par with their commercial and broadcasting counterparts."

Community member David Voss expressed his hope that the FCC would listen to the public.

"I'm really disturbed by the trend that I see now," said Voss. I've pretty much given up on the mainstream media and I get my information in any other way that I can: On the Internet or we have a small community radio station that I find myself huddled around, listening through the static to get some real news. I think that after last night, the so-called press conference of President Bush, everyone can see we've reached a low point. I just want to encourage you to do everything you can to represent people, just regular people."

Later that evening, at an event called Future Of The Media held at Experience Music Project, longtime social activist and rapper Chuck D performed with his new group Fine Arts Militia. Many of the speakers from the hearing came to speak again. Among them was Congressman Jim McDermott (D-Seattle), who is working on a House inquiry into the effects of media mergers.

"What do those two guys got in common?" asked McDermott, referring to himself and Davey D. "We got a lot in common. What we have in common is the need for the right of free expression in this country. Not controlled by five or six companies, whether it's music, or politics, or anything else."

"We are within four or five days, in my view, of going to war. We're about to unleash the most awful thing that this country has ever done, in the form of the Bush factor on Iraq. Have you seen any debate in the newspapers?"

The crowd of approximately 200 answered with a resounding "No!" McDermott went on to ask the same question about TV and radio, and got the same answer each time.

"You're getting the same thing, no matter where you are," he said. "The danger of that, to you and to me, is that if [the owners of the media] get behind the government, you're only going to hear what the government wants."

The FCC decision is expected in May. ■

For more information on the FCC's review of ownership rules, go to www.fcc.gov or www.reclaimthemedial.org.

"These media corporations are driven by... professional financial managers, concerned only with short-term stock prices. Not journalism, not public trust, and not democracy."

Seattle Times publisher
Frank Blethen

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EYMAN Continued from Page 10

I'm following his advice. My tactics are defensible simply because they work.

RC: *You've said that Eyman creates a cycle of voter frustration by writing initiatives that violate the state constitution's prohibition against bills that ask voters to weigh in on more than one issue. He gathers signatures, it passes, then the courts throw it out. Then he blames "the politicians."*

Goldstein: It would be convenient to say that he does it intentionally, but I don't want to imply anything that Machiavellian, because I don't necessarily believe he's that smart. But that's how it works anyway. He has no incentive to write an initiative that's constitutional, because he makes money sponsoring initiatives. He made \$200,000 last year. Not counting the \$50,000 he raised for his legal defense fund, because he was fined and banned for life from serving as a campaign treasurer. He's the highest-paid politician in the state. He makes more than the governor.

RC: *Why do you call him a horse's ass? Not a sow's ear or a monkey's uncle?*

Goldstein: I wanted something outrageous; something that did not cross the line of vulgarity — aside from what the Attorney General might say, it's not obscene or profane. "Ass" on its own is widely used. And no matter what the judge might say, I'm not calling him any piece of a horse's anatomy; I'm calling him a fool. That's what horse's ass means. It's something your grandparents might say. It had to be funny, it had to outrage,

and it couldn't be vulgar. Horse's ass seemed to work.

RC: *If you make it to the ballot, what will happen this November?*

Goldstein: Well, it's a boring election; there's nothing going on. The largest election in the state is Snohomish County Executive.

There's no statewide race. It's possible that 807 would be the only thing on the ballot, if we don't make it.

All you're hearing from labor and the Democratic Party is "Don't worry, I-807 is unconstitutional like I-722 and I-695; it'll be thrown out." That's no way to rile up the voters and ensure turnout. Whereas I give everyone who isn't an Eyman supporter something to vote on. ■

For more information: www.horsesass.org.

**Thursday, Feb. 27, 12:41 p.m., 27th Avenue.**

Officer responded to a reported suicide attempt. Upon arrival, Seattle Fire Department was on the scene, and had already bandaged the victim's arm. The witness, who wanted to remain anonymous, stated the subject, a transient black female age 26, was sitting on some steps with a knife in her hand. When the witness asked who had cut her, she replied she had done it herself. She was taken to Harborview, and told the staff that she had been doing crack and drinking all night, and that she needed help. The reporting officer requested a 72-hour involuntary commitment.

Thursday, Feb. 27, 5:21 a.m., NVC Memorial Hall, 1200 block S. King Street.

An officer drove by the NVC Memorial Hall, and noticed a possible subject underneath a sleeping bag on the entry landing of the building. The NVC Hall has signed a trespass contract with the City of Seattle. The officer approached the subject and lifted the sleeping bag enough to see that underneath it was a person known to him. The subject, a homeless Vietnamese male age 30, had been trespassed from this building before, and he was arrested without incident. After being read his rights, the man apologized and stated, "I won't come back here again." He was transported to the East precinct where it was found he had three previous trespass cards for that location. He was arrested and

booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

Friday, Feb. 28, 1:31 a.m., Third Avenue & Bell St. bus stop. Officers observed the suspect, a black male age 43, standing in the bus stop located on the 3rd Ave. side of Regrade Park. He was talking to a female, who was drinking a beer in the shelter. The officer had contacted the subject in the past, and knew that he had a current trespass admonishment card filled out for this location. Subject stated he was just waiting for the bus with his girlfriend. Officer ran his name on the radio, and verified that the trespass admonishment was still current. Subject was taken into custody and transported to the West precinct, where a new trespass card was filled out. He was then transported to King County Jail for criminal trespass.

The same officers then saw another subject, a transient Native American male age 25, sleeping in the bus shelter. They attempted to wake him, and he awoke and became very hostile, yelling profanities and refusing to leave. The officers identified themselves as SPD, and asked the suspect if he was waiting for a bus. He said, "No, I'm sleeping." He was told he needed to leave the shelter and Regrade Park. He refused. Officers attempted to remove him, and he began to fight. After a short struggle, he was taken into custody and transported to King County Jail, charged with criminal trespass and assault. ■

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

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Review by Michele Marchand

In 1854, Charles Dickens was emotionally wracked by the death of his youngest daughter and concerned about a protracted mill strike in Lancashire. These two things were much on his mind when he sat down to write *Hard Times* — a book both bleak and optimistic, sounding themes of industrialization, the proper education of rich and poor children, and the power of imagination during oppressive times. Book-It Repertory Theatre's three-hour production of Dickens's book (by Julie Beckman) is a fine and faithful adaptation.

Set in heavily industrialized Coketown, *Hard Times* begins with strict schoolteacher Mr. Gradgrind's attempt to teach the town children facts by rote memorization. He's the man who "put the 'Fact' in 'Factory'"; he believes that only intellectual analysis is redeeming. He is therefore horrified to discover the town children mesmerized by the fantasies and vagaries of a visiting, travelling circus. But when a young circus girl, Cecilia Jupe, is orphaned, Mr Gradgrind reluctantly allows her to join his school and household, where she cares for his ailing wife and befriends his two children, Louisa and Thomas.

The owner of the mill, Josiah Bounderby, is the town's richest man, Mr. Gradgrind's best friend, and a patient suitor of Louisa Gradgrind. When

offered Bounderby's hand in marriage, Louisa bloodlessly accepts, although she does not love him. She is, after all, a good product of her father's teaching.

Contemptuous of and patriarchal to the town's poor factory workers, Bounderby repeatedly cries, "They want to be fed turtle soup and venison with a gold spoon!" One of his workers, Stephen Blackpool, is unhappily married, and in love with a fellow worker named Rachel. A good man, he struggles to find a place for human relationship in the factory.

When a mysterious stranger named Harthouse arrives from London, all hell breaks loose in Coketown. (A minor point: it isn't made clear why Harthouse has come up from London.)

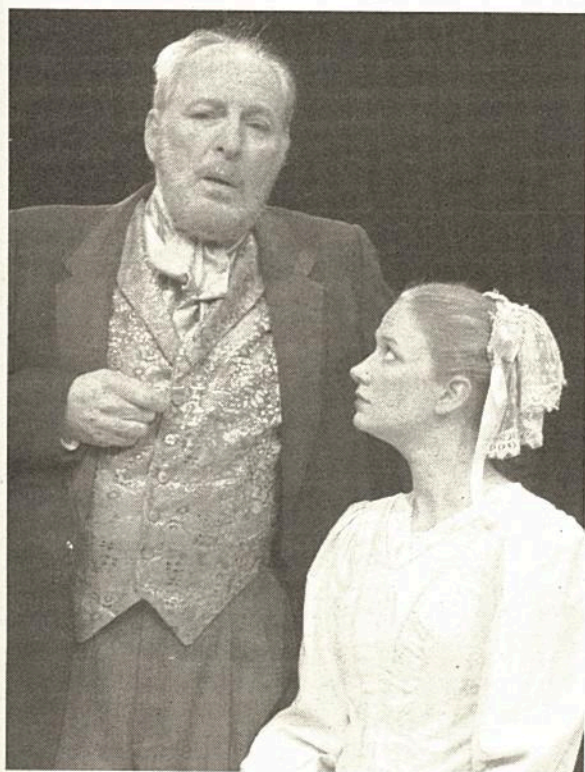
Several wordless scenes portray the arduousness and monotony of factory work. And there are also several fun scenes of the circus, notably a dextrous gymnastic performances on a hanging ring. The parallel stories rather seamlessly intertwine, and by the end, after various calamities and tragedies (no simple, happy endings in this Dickens novel), it is clear that in Coketown, not just facts, but stories (and faith, hope, and charity) will redeem this factory town.

The performances are uniformly excellent, which is remarkable, considering almost every actor plays two roles. Particularly fine is Charles Leggett as blustery Josiah Bounderby, who can burp on demand, and Marty Mukhalian as Mrs. Sparsit, Bounderby's widowed housekeeper.

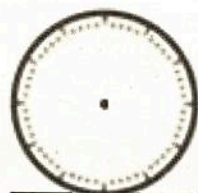
The mission of Book-It is "to transform great literature into great theatre through simple and sensitive production and to inspire our audiences to read." An interesting and well-executed device of this particular company is its use of the literal literary word. Characters read descriptive accounts — straight from the book — in order to put forward the narrative; some scenes and interior monologues are told, not shown. Rather than being a distraction, this device actually allows more of the book to be given to us in a more faithful way.

When I was a senior in college I was assigned to write a paper on *Hard Times*. I didn't read the book. The night before the paper was due, I had my best friend sit up late into the night with me and tell me the story. I was transfixed; got an A on the paper.

Book-It's production of this Dickens tale is equally transfixing; it makes the book come alive like good storytelling. ■



BRIAN THOMPSON, LEFT, AS MR. THOMAS GRADGRIND, AND HEATHER GUILLES, AS HIS DAUGHTER, LOUISA, KNOW HOW TO GET A GOOD STORY ACROSS. PHOTO COURTESY OF BOOK-IT.



Timeless Astrology

by R.W. Reid

March 20 - April 20

As spring nears, and Aries kindles red flames on the cigar-brown stems of the frozen roses of winter, we begin searching for dry twigs to spread the conflagration. Aries is the first spark, the match that lights creation — from the biggest sumo wrestler to the small rosy tips of a baby's toes. Whether we turn from the campfire of life, complacently warming our backsides, or face it to roast the marshmallows of drama to a golden brown, we can easily forget our debt to original cosmic fire. But in the end, since everything is combustible — even sorrow, pain, and weariness — it's easy to eventually give thanks for the heat and agree with Will Rodgers that "the best way to make fire with two sticks is to make sure one of them is a match."



Aries: At March's end, you reach into your pocket to find damp matches, and you can't seem to remember what (or whom), you wanted to fire up. Come April, your spark is back to the benefit of the usual suspects who frequent your life. Take a moment to peruse that old matchbook cover to catch a glimpse of the words of hope you wrote there. They are the secret to lighting your own fire.



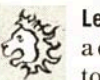
Taurus: March comes in with a work-related bang that sends pieces of other people's expectations spinning around your eyebrows. As the twirling stops a golden coin, serenity on one side and right endeavor on the other, hovers before you. You sit, unalarmed and radiant, a charismatic Buddha intent on observing the slow but inevitable rotation of your own true internal wealth.



Gemini: April's beginning is a boring but ultimately nourishing frustration sandwich: a flummoxed top slice, a bland subservience filling, and a whole-wheat resignation bottom slice. At month's end your metabolism finally demands you ditch the current meal and find sustenance in a delicious concoction without layers, made simply by fulfilling your own tastes and knowing your own needs.



Cancer: Slightly despondent at March's end, you dream one night of a chocolate cupcake with a goofy smile and Betty Boop legs. She whispers seductively that you need to stop super-sizing your problems. The big picture is too large to be eaten in one gulp. Feel big but think small. Let your heart show you where there is an M&M hidden nearby. It's within your grasp, small, and appropriately tasty.



Leo: Your mental state plunges into a dark lost-sock-of-the-soul journey toward March's end. This prompts a searching and sorting mode that ultimately turns your argyles and knee-highs inside out with joy. It wasn't the socks, but your feet, that were lost. Re-socked and found, they will soon lead your brain to a well-lit and happier home.



Virgo: Some cats have a silent meow. They open their pink jaws wide, all their desires tensed in every paw and

furry sinew, and out comes — a tinny squeak. The bigger the desire, the smaller the squeak. Once you relax your stingy emotional feline nature, at April's end you will surprise the crowd with your magnificent roar.



Libra: Harmony is scarce toward March's end, as — while on a temporary vacation from reality — you trusted your emotional plate-twirling act to your klutzy aunt Ethel. Something is going to fall. Let it go in April — right through the floor and down to China. Ethel's fumble is just the cosmic trap door you were waiting for.



Scorpio: As April looms, you barge your way to the front of the line, garnering some sour looks. You need attentiveness, not rank, to catch the whisper of a friend's confidence. Holding their secret safe, you find a mirror and see that your place in line was an illusion; you step out of the circle of the story of who is first or last.



Sagittarius: The realistic mental art project you start in April soon begins to morph strangely into a cubist blend of apples and oranges. This is a good thing, because running around after perfectly round fruit was wearing you out. As you slow down at month's end, the world comes to your feet and begs to paint *you* for a change.



Capricorn: April brings that electric connection buzzing around your heart to your fingers, which begin to itch with pleasure as the object of your desire comes into view. As your fingers close, you awake to find the alarm clock ringing in front of your nose. The vibration clears your mind enough to look down to see the treasure hidden in your own palm.



Aquarius: Too many choices in late March and early April send you on a bout of purging — emotional and physical. Be gentle with the process. It's one thing to give your cat to a friend, quite another to drop it off a bridge reasoning that that's OK because your friend lives on a houseboat below. Review your intentions: Cats don't fly, not even to carry away something you need to leave by the road with care.



Pisces: The green sap of spring turns into a jealous whirlpool when your loved ones seem to be leaving you on the shore alone. As you contemplate their fate, reconsider doing that voodoo thing that causes their private parts to fall off. It will be inconvenient for everyone later in April, when the spinning stops and love and sanity return. ■

© RW Reid 2003. Have a comment or question for *Timeless Astrology*? Send it to editor@realchangenews.org, with "astrology" in the subject line.

Spring Break Notables

Thursday 3/20

A showing of the new Noam Chomsky documentary, *Power and Terror*. At the Little Theatre through March 23rd, 608 19th E. on Capitol Hill, call for ticket prices and times 206-675-2055. Info <http://www.firstrunfeatures.com/th/Noam%20Chomsky/thplaydates.html>.

Song and Social Movements: a Participatory Experience, led by Janet Stecher and Susan Lewis of the duo Rebel Voices. Co-sponsored by the Center for Contemplation and Nonviolence and Keystone Church. 7:30 - 9 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. N. Info Eric Carlberg 206-632-6021.

Yellow Fever: the interment, a blend of music, dance, art, and multi-media. \$15 general admission, \$10 students and seniors. Though March 23, at the Little Theatre Off Broadway, 1524 Harvard. For reservations call 206-325-6500; info at 206-287-5544.

Poetry reading from the **Poets Table Anthology**, followed by an open mic reading. Free, 7 p.m., open mic sign-up at 6:45 p.m., at Lottie Motts Coffee Shop at 4900 Rainier Avenue in Columbia City.

Friday 3/21

Eastside Fellowship of Reconciliation and the ACLU present "Knowing Your Civil Rights in the Brave New World." 7 p.m., at the Eastshore Unitarian Church, 12700 SE 32nd St. Info Michael Tivana 425-454-4865.

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace present Meaningful Friday Nights at the Movies. Join neighbors for films and documentaries about the situation in Iraq and successful nonviolent movements for social change. This evening featuring *A Force More Powerful, Part Two*, which highlights 4 different countries where nonviolent action has created positive political changes without war. 7 p.m.,

at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone N.

Saturday 3/22

Come taste free food samples from more than 75 companies, see cooking demonstrations by chefs from all over the country, and hear the latest information on nutrition from our speakers at **Vegfest**. Seattle Center Fisher Pavilion, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. \$5 for adults, kids 12 and under are free. For more info, visit www.VEGFEST2003.org or call 206 706 2635.

Tuesday 3/25

Press conference and rally at Starbucks' Shareholders meeting. If you support fair wages and working conditions for workers, then join the Organic Consumers Association and pressure Starbucks, the largest coffee shop chain in the world. 8:30 a.m., at Benaroya Hall, on 3rd Ave. between Union and University in downtown Seattle. Info 206-329-0206 or ange@organicconsumers.org.

Environmental Hoedown and Benefit for Biodiversity NW, **protecting and restoring forest ecosystems** in the Pacific Northwest. Admission by donation, \$8-\$20 requested. 7:30 p.m., at The Tractor Tavern, 5213 Ballard Ave. NW. Info 206-789-3599 or <http://biodiversitynw.org/actevent.htm#032503>.

Wednesday 3/26

Seattle Independent Media Center sponsors a public affairs show, **Indymedia Newswatch**. 7:30 p.m., on SCAN TV basic cable channel 77/29.

Thursday 3/27

The **Undoing Racism Workshop**, offered by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond. Registration is \$300. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Thursday and Friday, at Freedom Church of Seattle, 7551 35th Ave SW, Seattle. Info and registration 206-938-1023 or pinwseattle@yahoo.com.

Friday 3/28

Sisters project **annual spring bazaar**, arts and crafts made by the women of Sisters and the Dorothy Day House 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Dorothy Day House, 106 Bell.

Saturday 3/29

The Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI) invites you to a 10th anniversary event, "Five Voices Calling: A Participatory Workshop for our Sustainable Future." To register send \$10 to NWEI, PO Box 15524, Seattle, WA 98115. Registration is \$15 at the door. 9:30 a.m. - noon, at Phinney Ridge Community Center, 6532 Phinney Ave. N. Info Ann 206-553-2589 or <http://www.ecologyoftheheart.org/5voices.htm>.

Sunday 3/30

TentCity3's 3rd anniversary BBQ, potluck, 1 p.m., El Centro de la Raza, 2524-116th Ave S., call 206-448-7889 for info.

Tuesday 4/1

The Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition (ERIC) Quarterly Forum will highlight organizations that are working toward making their workplaces more accessible to a diverse staff and clientele. 2:30 - 4 p.m., at the Crossroads Community Center, 16000 NE 10th St., Bellevue. Info Elaine Cummins 206-296-9756 or elaine.cummins@metrokc.gov.

The new Community Justice Center (CJC) will give an educational presentation on juvenile issues and provide an opportunity to make an appointment to see an attorney on April 8. The CJC is designed to provide *free legal information and advice* to people who may not

otherwise have access to it. 4:30 - 6:30 p.m., at Crossroads Community Center, 16000 NE 10th St., Bellevue. There is also an educational presentation on health law at the Central District CJC, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m., the Randolph Carter Family Center, 100 23rd Ave S. Info 206-398-4099.

Thursday 4/3

Nonprofit Leadership Conference with the theme, "Mission and Leadership: Staying the Course in Difficult Times." Cost is \$140, registration and information is available at <http://evansforum.org/nonprofit>. 8:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m., at the Seattle Center.

The new Community Justice Center (CJC) will give an educational presentation on small business law and start-up issues and provide an opportunity to make an appointment to see an attorney on April 10. 5 - 7 p.m., Salvation Army Senior Center, 9002 16th Ave SW. Info 206-398-4099.

April

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

Ongoing

The provocative exhibit, "Can We Talk Now?" Simon Norfolk, Didier Ben Loulou, and Gabriel Valansi use photography to **question the validity of war** and aggressive military action as the means of solving conflict. Tues - Sat through April 12, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., at the Benham Gallery, 1216 1st. Info 206-622-2480 or Marita.marita@benhamgallery.com. ■

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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. No sign up; classes fill up on a first come, first serve basis.

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citizens participation project



Tell Olympia to protect the poor

Issue: Tell your legislators that they must raise taxes in order to prevent unconscionable cuts in life-saving services to children, the elderly, and the poor.

Background: The state is facing a \$2.4 billion budget deficit. That's the amount we're short to cover just the same things we paid for last year, not add anything new. They can do it with cuts alone, or can increase taxes to prevent cuts.

The Governor's proposal, released earlier this year, balanced the budget with cuts alone — deep cuts in health care and human services, the things people need even more desperately during a recession.

Some legislators think that voting for a tax increase is a death sentence for their political careers. They will take that tough vote only if people in their district stand behind them.

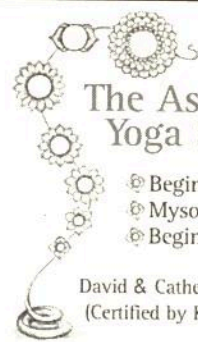
Advocates also report that Olympia is too quiet; those of us who would rather pay a little more to protect people in need haven't been making our voices heard as forcefully as we should.

You don't have to be an expert to have an opinion — you probably know how the proposed cuts will affect your community. You don't have to understand everything about tax reform to know that raising money to pay for needed services is better than kicking poor people off life-saving programs. The Legislature can figure out the details. Since we elected them, we have every right to tell them what we want.

Most of our readers are from Seattle. They wonder how they can help, since their legislators say that they already agree, and that the real problem is the people who live outside the area, who don't. Seattleites shouldn't sell themselves short. They make up almost one-tenth of the state's population, and their representatives fill many of the legislature's most powerful positions. The Speaker of the House and Chair of Appropriations are from Seattle. The Ranking minority member of the Senate Ways and Means Committee is from Shoreline. These people won't lose their seats by voting for taxes. They owe it to their districts, and to low-income people all over the state, to do everything they can to find new revenue. The more they hear from us, the more forcefully they can argue for our point of view.

The corporations that benefit from tax breaks have options we don't. They protect their interests with busloads of lobbyists. They guarantee access to lawmakers with campaign contributions. But besides the knowledge that we're doing the right thing, we have the people power that could make a difference. In the end, a poor person's vote counts just the same as a rich person's. We have to make it clear that our votes are what's on the line.

Action: Call your legislators with a simple message, and then ask friends, family, and co-workers to follow suit. People all over the state will call their legislators on Friday, March 21, asking them to protect human services. If you can call on that day, please do. If not, you can still make your voice heard anytime — but sooner is better. Call your legislators' offices or the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-562-6000 with this simple message. "I am a voter in your district. I am concerned about the proposed cuts to health and human services. I am willing to pay more taxes to preserve these important programs." ■



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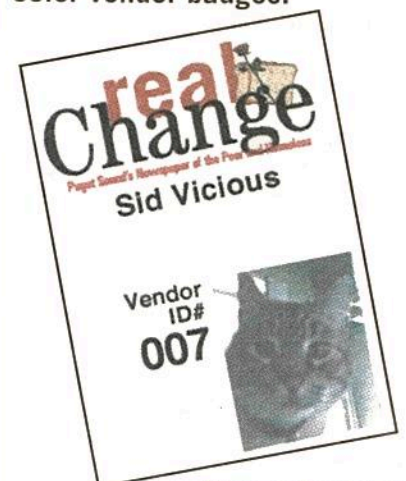
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