

JULY 22, 2004

PEF

# Real Change

Reaching Out to End Poverty • Volume 11, No. 16

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## I Wouldn't Feed That to My Dog!

### The joys and perils of free lunch in Seattle



## The Very Special Food Issue

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By David Trotter

GRAPHIC BY JONATHAN EPPERSON

Volunteerism has its many rewards. After nearly twenty years of volunteerism, from Spokane to Missoula to Taos, I've been honored to meet innumerable characters, some more characterized than I would have liked, but mostly friendly, intelligent, and motivated, whether at the ecumenical outreach, Our Place, in Spokane, in progressive politics in Missoula, or helping coordinate the Seattle and Washington campaign of a recent presidential candidate (not the angry man from Vermont).

But being a homeless editor of *Real Change* gives volunteerism a whole new meaning. Dr. Wes, and maybe Anitra, one day several weeks ago, decided that I was the one to handle the "soup line" section of this year's "cheap eats" reviews for the paper. They volunteered me, and they didn't even do so in my absence; they simply said, "You're it" or something to that effect.

Now I'd been in some of the "soup lines" of this green city, so I knew what I'd been gotten into, and it wasn't the food I minded. Though I've had far better—having at points in life actually lived rather well and also having known several excellent cooks (although my mother died and my former wife divorced me)—I've certainly had far worse food, and I had to pay for it. What concerned me was standing in line, which is one of the great expenses of homelessness. You're expected to stand in line everywhere, for meals, for showers, for housing, for medical assistance, so that you never have time to actually go look for work or even work, so that you can actually get out of homelessness. Somebody needs to design services—possibly by appropriate staffing—so they don't eat up the "served" ones' time and lock the homeless into homelessness.

Nevertheless, most people prefer to eat, even if there is a line, so the task was mine.

Most of the free feeds in this town actually serve tasty food, tend to overfeed you, and even provide some interesting, intelligent, and friendly characters behind the serving line.

That's certainly true of Recovery Cafe, at Second and Bell. This recent addition to the "soup lines" of Seattle is truly a soup line, with a couple of additions, not the least of which is finesse. Recovery Cafe is an independent Christian congregation's effort to minister to those recovering from addictions in particular, but also from problematic relationships, depression, isolation, or, in my case, homelessness. They have several programs, which can be checked out at various times through the week, but one is the open meal several evenings a week, starting around 5:00 p.m., usually in the latter half of the week. The meal is always soup, bread, salad and beverage, but the food comes from the chefs at Farestart and is always well prepared.

While the bread is a mix of light and dark, it is always hearty, as bread absolutely should be. The salad is always fresh and usually pre-dressed, which makes the dressing choice easy. The soups vary, but they too are hearty, as a proper soup should be; you might find a spicy bean (my favorite here) and a vegetable and meat of some kind or a bean with chunks of fatty bacon, and there's always enough for you to go back and refill your bowl. I do refill my bowl, and I may in fact be favorably prejudiced here, since my ideal meal is hearty soup or stew, hearty bread, hearty drink (not provided here, but the coffee and tea are better than standard), and the right woman to share it with.

I learned about Recovery Cafe from our Urban Outreach Coordinator at Seattle First United Methodist, who is a member of Recovery's sponsoring congregation, and which brings us to our second free feed: the fourth-Sunday community breakfast at Seattle First, at Fifth and Columbia at 8:00 a.m. I should recuse myself here, since this is my home congregation and I've been labeled the "coffee king" by the volunteer coordinator, my job being to prepare coffee for 300 to 500 hun-

gry poor and homeless folks once a month. I DO know coffee, and we're working on improving our source, which is good to begin with; the whole operation, in fact, runs on the coffee I make.

Beyond that, the menu is ALWAYS the same, with dry cereal in variety, scrambled eggs, sausage links, pancakes with syrup, biscuits and sausage gravy, orange juice, milk, and coffee, and unless you show up around 9:15 or 9:30, there's always plenty; in fact, if we run out of frozen pancakes, we always have backup waffles. The idea is to come in, sit down, be served, visit, take your time with no hassles, and have a pleasant meal to start your day. This breakfast interrupts my attempts to go vegetarian, but some day my will will become stronger than my old addictions. We are considering going to twice a month, if we can find

some other participants in the serving. Unfortunately, you won't hear about Union Gospel Mission (UGM) from me. I'm not willing to pay the (three dollars,

**I told the folks at UGM this, but I don't think they were pleased. My exact words, in fact, were, "This is not Christ, and you're not of Christ." They probably don't want me back.**

Continued to Page 13



## Apathetic? Not us!

Dear *Real Change*,

I appreciated the article "Young and Apathetic," (June 24) which addressed one of the issues that I am most passionate about: youth voting. I work with college students in Seattle and all over the Northwest on voter registration and get out the vote with EnviroCitizen.

I would disagree with the term "apathetic." Youth are not apathetic, but some of the most passionate about issues such as education, clean energy, globalization, hunger, and homelessness. I do agree that politicians are not addressing our issues. We need to take back the political process and make politicians address what affects us everyday. We need to demand a safer, cleaner, and more just world.

Registering to vote is important, but it's not the only thing we need to do as young people. We need to educate ourselves on issues that we care about and issues that affect our community. Then we need to make sure we put pressure on the politicians that we elect by meeting with them, calling them, holding public forums, and writing letters. That way they can't ignore us.

Crystal Leaver, age 24  
Capitol Hill

## Yesler Terrace: Defining the future

Dear *Real Change*,

In a recent Op-Ed piece ("Everyone Stays: a worthy goal for Yesler Terrace," June 24), Kate Villareal from the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice suggests that the Seattle Housing Authority wants to "uproot low-income residents from a great central location... to make way for office space and condos." This conclusion is unwarranted and unfairly characterizes SHA's intentions for Yesler Terrace. Kate also implies that SHA's development activities have reduced the number of low-income housing units in Seattle when, in fact, the opposite is true.

Over the past five years, Seattle Housing has consistently added to the number of low-income units in Seattle through creative partnerships, through use of bond financing, and through the acquisition of new units. By taking advantage of every opportunity offered by HUD, SHA has increased the number of Housing Choice Vouchers by over 60 percent in the last five years. While there may be fewer housing units in one particular program, there are *not* fewer physical units affordable to extremely low-income people in Seattle, contrary to the claims of CCEJ and the Seattle

Displacement Coalition. Go to [www.seattlehousing.org](http://www.seattlehousing.org) and click on "Development," then "Replacement Housing" to learn more and see what these units look like.

The housing at Yesler Terrace is aging. SHA has maintained it well, but it will continue to need more and more maintenance. At some point in the next year, we will begin to have conversations with Yesler Terrace residents and other community stakeholders about the future of Yesler Terrace. Residents will help to define that future, and they will *not* lose their housing in the process. Whatever happens at Yesler Terrace will also not result in an overall loss of housing affordable to extremely low-income people.

There are many questions about the future of Yesler Terrace, and many conversations for the future. The challenges of meeting the needs of low-income residents in Seattle are difficult, and we all need to contribute to the solutions. We look forward to working with all interested community members, including CCEJ, even though they have, so far, refused to sit down with us.

Virginia Felton  
Communications Director  
Seattle Housing Authority

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# Real Change

Puget Sound's Voice of the  
Poor and Homeless

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### Mission Statement:

*Real Change* exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

### 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 *StreetWrites* peer support group for homeless writers, the *Homeless Speakers Bureau*, and the *First things First* organizing project. All donations support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

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



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# Bare Necessities

## Who needs food? More than ever, the young, the old, and the working poor

By Adam Holdorf

Every Wednesday evening for years, residents of Queen Anne form a line at the basement door of Bethany Presbyterian Church. On July 21, the door swung open for the last time.

The Queen Anne Food Bank is closing, and the face of the poor and hungry will fade back into one of Seattle's most affluent neighborhoods.

Let's count the empty stomachs in this, reputed to be the most prosperous nation in the history of the world.

Nearly 35 million Americans live in households experiencing food insecurity, meaning they either don't know where their next full meal is coming from or they do not have enough to eat. In three years, from 1999 to 2002, six million people were added to the ranks of the hungry according to a federal survey. In one year, the food insecurity rates for households with elderly members jumped from 5.5 to 6.3 percent. 7.4 percent of elderly persons living alone don't have enough to eat.

About one in three hungry adults are working, according to a 2000 report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

And much of the need for food comes not from those unable to work, but those too young — children. 62 percent of all requests for emergency food aid in the mayors' cities were made by children or their parents.

Depending on where they live, poor children may be able to get free or reduced-price school breakfast or lunch. School districts can choose not to offer meals; 130 elementary schools in the state have chosen not to, even though they have poor children in their classrooms. If they get a meal during the school year, more often than not the children of the poor may be spend the summer staring at bare shelves. In a few fortunate urban areas, there are substitute feeding programs dished out in local parks; kids can go to the park and pick up a bag lunch. But the empty bellies of isolated rural children contribute to Washington's status as the second-hungriest state in the nation.

Things have brightened somewhat for people seeking food in Washington state. Last winter's Act for Hungry Families passed through Olympia, mandating that school districts where one-quarter of the kids are poor must offer meals. The act also provides more summer feeds for kids and expands Food Stamps for people in welfare-to-work programs.

And it ends a cruel policy of denying Food Stamps to people convicted of a drug-related felony. Washington is only the 12th state in the nation to lift that ban.

We can still do better. Food bank directors have said they would like to see the state take specific steps to alleviate hunger, including:

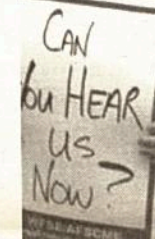
- ◆ Require all of the state's elementary schools to offer a free breakfast to poor children.
- ◆ Offer a universal free breakfast in schools in impoverished areas.
- ◆ Push the Department of Social and Health Services to eliminate the red tape and financial barriers poor families face when they apply for Food Stamps. Washington is one of just eight states barring families owning a car worth more than \$4,500 from receiving food stamps.

As a state, we have not summoned up the will to provide new public money allowing poor people to buy their own food — giving them the dignity and choice that everyone deserves. Yet the moral imperative to "feed the hungry" comes forth like flu season, every November. The state's two major food banks received five million pounds in donations in 2002. Meanwhile, cobbled together with the budgetary equivalent of baling twine, the future of the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program is in doubt (page 8). Will we soon count on only the good will of our neighbors to put food on the tables of the poor?

A receptionist at Bethany Presbyterian Church, which runs Queen Anne's food bank, says that the closure is hopefully temporary. The 90 people who visit the food bank weekly — seniors on fixed budgets, people living in subsidized housing — can go on to three other food banks downtown, in the Cascade neighborhood, or at the Labor Temple in Belltown. The closure, she says, is due to "a lack of leadership and of volunteers." One person had been trying to hold the whole food program together.

The line outside the basement door at the Queen Anne Food Bank is gone. The need, in Queen Anne and the nation, lingers on. ■

**As a state, we have not summoned up the will to provide new public money allowing poor people to buy their own food — giving them the dignity and choice that everyone deserves. Yet the moral imperative to "feed the hungry" comes forth like flu season, every November.**



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**Going Down**  
Bush takes aim at housing for poor.  
by Adam Holdorf

The Bush Administration's proposal to deep-six the Section 8 housing program.  
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## Nethercutt's undercut

Taxes are one subject of debate this election year. In his Senate campaign against Patty Murray, Republican congressman George Nethercutt of Eastern Washington is trumpeting the two-year sales tax deduction he pushed through the House of Representatives this summer as tax relief for all Washingtonians.

Nethercutt's sales tax deduction was inserted into H.R. 4520, a giant bill of corporate tax breaks. He stole the thunder of southwest Washington Representative Brian Baird, who has been working on the same issue since he was elected in 1998.

Baird, a Democrat, has been talking up a permanent sales tax deduction to benefit Washington and six other states without income taxes. Congressional representatives from those states had pressed for the idea for years. This spring, they talked to House Ways and Means Committee chair Bill Thomas about inserting the permanent deduction in a larger bill. Then Nethercutt came in with a proposal to allow a temporary, two-year sales tax deduction.

Since deductions only matter when you're in the middle class, and inordinately benefit people in higher tax brackets, a sales tax deduction is no way to end Washington state's system of regressive taxation — a system that takes 14 percent of the income of a household making less than \$20,000 a year and only 4 percent of the income of one making \$140,000.

The Texas-based Center for Public Policy Priorities says that only one-quarter of that state's taxpayers would benefit from the deduction. And they would probably be rich already. The deduction would save a family of four making \$170,000 per year about \$600 in federal taxes. And, "even if a lower-income family were to have enough deductible expenses to make it worthwhile to itemize, it would receive proportionately less benefit because of its lower federal income tax," reported the Texas center.

The Senate may take up Nethercutt's sales-tax deductibility bill in August.

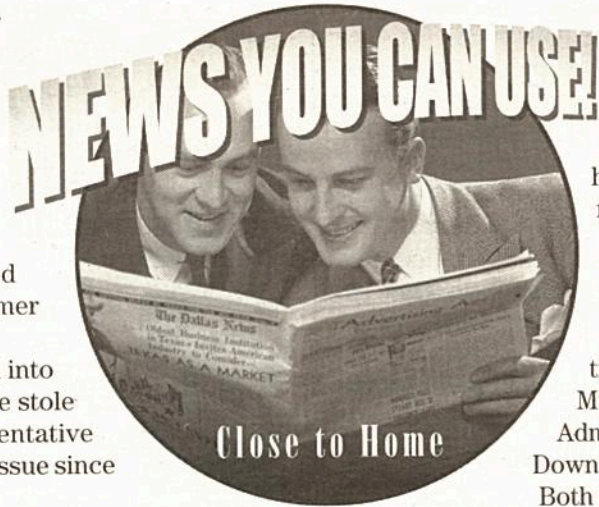
—Adam Holdorf

## Local housing agencies to feel budget cuts

Mary Monroe remembers what it was like to live on the streets. Only three years ago, she and her young son were homeless, until the federal government's Section 8 housing-voucher program allowed them to move into an apartment.

The future of the housing program that gave Monroe and her son a chance to start over is facing budget cuts and she's willing to fight. At a public forum hosted by Councilmember Tom Rasmussen in Seattle City Council chambers July 13, Monroe said that she's worried about what will happen to her son.

"I'm scared," she said during the public-comment section of the meeting. "I'm



scared of what is going to happen. Are you going to put my son on the streets again?"

The Section 8 program is designed to give low-income families and the elderly partially subsidized housing while requiring that they pay a portion of their rent. Those receiving the housing vouchers usually pay 30 percent of their income toward housing, leaving the rest to the government.

A panel of local experts such as Katie Hong, director of the City of Seattle Office of Housing, and representatives from the offices of Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray were assembled at the meeting to discuss the Bush Administration's proposed budget cut to Section 8 ["Going Down: Bush targets housing for poor," May 27].

Both Cantwell and Murray have signed letters petitioning the Department of Housing and Urban Development to reconsider their proposal. The federal government wants to make block grants to organizations, forcing local housing authorities to restructure the way they find homes for needy families.

Tom Tierney, executive director for the Seattle Housing Authority, told the panel that his organization will most likely not feel the cuts immediately because it already operates under a block-grant program.

According to Peter Ansara, executive director for the Tacoma Housing Authority, the cuts are already being felt in the southern Puget Sound region. The Tacoma Housing Authority projects a \$2.6 million annual shortfall under the proposed cuts. To compensate, the organization has stopped giving out vouchers and has notified the newest recipients of Section 8 vouchers that they will most likely be removed from the program in the coming months.

The impact of cuts on the Seattle housing market won't be felt as soon but will be just as severe, said Tierney.

The Seattle Housing Authority will feel the cuts by 2006 and will have to respond in one or both of two ways, reported Tierney. The first option would be to cut the number of people who received the subsidized grants. The second would be to implement time-limits on the people in the program.

"I've tried not to think about that because, frankly, it's too depressing," he said.

Mabel Dilley, an employee of the Washington Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, was in the audience at the public meeting and was among those who shook their heads in disbelief when the cuts were described.

Section 8 "has been a lifeline for people with disabilities," Dilley told the panelists. "As a compassion to society, we must preserve this program."

This sentiment was confirmed by panelist Karyn Kuever, a board member of the Rental Housing Association of Puget Sound and a manager of affordable multi-family housing in South Seattle and Sea-Tac.

"It is not uncommon for a family of four to come into my office and want a one-bedroom apartment," said Kuever. "You can help a lot of people with vouchers."

—Amy Rolph

*Do you have any stories we should look into? Call Adam at 441-3247 ext. 207, and just maybe we will.*



### NORTH AMERICAN NEWSBRIEFS WWW.STREETNEWSERVICE.ORG

The Salvation Army in Flatbush, New York, want to help house the homeless by building them a place to live. According to the *New York Times*, the Army wants to build a nine-story, 117-unit shelter but residents groups have been protesting the project for months. Their biggest

argument: the facility is too big for the area and fear it would unfairly tax local resources. The neighborhood is now dominated by one- and two-family houses. "There isn't a nine-story building in the community. So the largest building in our community is going to be a homeless shelter," State Senator Kevin Parker tells the *Times*. He says he has received hundreds of letters from angry residents. In June he sent a letter to Mayor Bloomberg to oppose the shelter. Alfred Peck, the Salvation Army's director, describes Flatbush as an ideal location for the shelter. "The reality is that this is a family shelter, providing services for other New Yorkers who have fallen on hard times," he says. The plan calls for the Salvation Army to occupy the shelter under a nine-year lease. Opponents are calling for a moratorium on shelter construction and a focus on low-income housing.

Police and homeless advocates are hitting the streets and back alleys of Oakland, California after a series of vicious beatings of local homeless people, one fatal. KTVU reports a 52-year-old victim died after a weekend beating. He may have been sleeping when a group of unidentified men assaulted him at a makeshift campsite. Other homeless people witnessed the attack. "It is pretty cowardly for a group of people to viciously attack an obviously defenseless person," Sgt. Bruce Brock tells KTVU. "He was a completely innocent victim." The man died from a blunt force trauma. Two weeks ago, three local teenagers were arrested for severely beating a homeless man with a board. At least two other victims have been hospitalized from recent attacks. Witnesses told police that the suspects in the most recent death were between 16 and 20 years old and did not live at the encampment.

As the city of Calgary grows, so does the number of people living on its streets. An in-depth survey of the Canadian city revealed a total of 127 people on the street. The street count was taken in May by more than 100 volunteers over 46 geographic areas. Research shows overall growth is at 49-percent (for a total of 2,597 people). Of those, 77 percent were male, 23 percent female, and there were more than 100 families. Lack of affordable housing is a problem, and so is government funding cuts, according to Alderman Bob Hawkesworth. "The fact that the province canceled housing programs in the early nineties in my view has been a contributing factor to the growth of homelessness," he tells CFCN. Homeless agencies are calling on the government to step up funding for low-cost housing, increase the assured income program, and raise Alberta's minimum wage.

Palm Beach County will open a 12-bed assessment center in October allowing homeless people in need of emergency assistance to receive care right away. The emergency assessment plan will provide them with medical care, diagnoses, and referrals to other programs for additional help. Of the estimated 4,000 homeless in Palm Beach County, close to 500 live on the streets and 263 need emergency housing. The rest have temporary housing, according to the *Palm Beach Post*. "It will provide same-day access to a bed," Sheila Smith, executive director of the Palm Beach County Homeless Coalition, tells the *Post*. "Oftentimes, it takes days to get a bed, and by that time it's too late for some people. They get lost." Members from the group presented their plan to county commissioners recently. "Once the county commission sees the success of it and the county sees the success of it, a lot of people are going to step up to the plate and we'll be able to build a facility like the one in Miami," says County Commissioner Addie Greene, who led the effort to open the center. But not everyone is convinced this will solve the homeless problem. "It's not a perfect solution," says Lisa Lickstein, a volunteer coordinator for the project. "It's a comprehensive program with broad-based support. It's a nice start." ■

# Politics vs. People

Labor, war, and social services highlighted in protest outside governors' meeting

By R.V. Murphy

The two Americas that political pundits talk about converged on downtown Seattle July 17-19. The National Governors' Association held its annual meeting at the Westin Hotel. Corporate sponsors such as Microsoft, Nextel and Armgen picked up the \$150,000 tab for the three-day event. On Friday night, interested parties could cough up \$5,000 to eat Argentine steak with six Republican governors at a Belltown restaurant.

While the weekend's meet-ups were going on, another America that included disabled and elderly people searching for better health care, political advocates, labor leaders, the homeless and the disenfranchised were meeting only a few blocks away at Westlake Park and Steinbrueck Park.

Inside the Westin, speakers included former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and Homeland Security head Tom Ridge. Those

outside could hear Democratic presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich, one of the few Congressmen to vote against the US invasion of Iraq. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees' Gerald McEntee, and John Boonstra of the Washington Association of Churches.

On Saturday morning, about 100 young people, some not even in college yet, gathered at Seattle Central Community College and marched down Capitol Hill to Westlake Park. Thirteen Seattle police escorted them on motorcycles, making a ratio of about one cop for every nine marchers.

"We heard about [this march] on the Internet," said one recent high school graduate, who didn't want to give his name. "With what's going on in Iraq, young people have to become active."

Those students joined about 2,000 other activists at Westlake Park. That group marched another half-mile, with whoops, hollers and chants as they circled behind the Westin Hotel on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The parade included dozens of AFSCME members in bright green t-shirts, anti-George Bush signs almost too numerous to count, and assorted other colorful costumes.

Some of the marchers' observations dripped with irony. There was a large sign, "Billionaires for Bush, the best president money can buy." Another young lady dressed as if she were dining at Bill Gates' private reception later that day held a sign reading, "Corpora-

tions are People Too." As she walked along she exclaimed, "I'm a corporation. Thank you for paying all my income tax."

The refrain of "Put People First" (which happened to be the event's sponsor) was often heard and pleas for a

that build the roads." Almost on cue, two people arrived wearing George Bush and Dick Cheney masks, wearing prison uniforms and a ball and chain attached to their feet. At times like this, the governors located just a few blocks away were practically forgotten.

"I came down here looking for some literature on how to get rid of Bush," said Joanne Brown, a Seattle resident. "I was looking for some literature about what's really going on. Not what the media portrays."

In 1991, when the first George Bush



HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS, DISABLED PEOPLE AND THEIR ADVOCATES, POLITICAL ACTIVISTS, AND UNION MEMBERS ALL CONVERGED ON WESTLAKE CENTER SATURDAY JULY 17 AS THE NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION MET NEARBY. PHOTO BY JACKIE PRICHARD.

governor, any governor, to come meet with the marchers went unheeded. (On Sunday, there was a breakthrough in that regard as Pennsylvania governor Edward Rendell came out to meet with members of Americans Disabled for Attendant Program Today (ADAPT) and show his support).

The NGA Convention isn't open to the public. Seattle Police blanketed the block around the Westin all weekend and all marchers moved through pre-set routes. NGA spokesperson Christine LaPaille told the Portland-based website *indymedia.org* that "NGA events are closed to the public because of security concerns and because the association is a private organization that exists to advocate policy positions." While the NGA admits other media, *Real Change* was turned down for a press pass because it is an "advocacy newspaper" in the words of NGA press secretary Jason Feuchtwanger. Organizations like *indymedia* question the influence corporate sponsors like Microsoft and Starbucks CEO Orin Smith, one of the featured speakers, have over the governors.

After the march, the scene at Westlake was reminiscent of a high school pep rally the night before the big game — though the "big game," for many, will be the November election. Delivering the mantra that the average person's voice counts, Kucinich exclaimed, "You're the state, you make it real. You make it feel. You're the people

was in office, Brown had two jobs including one as a hostess in a Smith Tower restaurant. Until recently, she'd been homeless. She has grown to be highly skeptical of those in power.

While the weekend's meet-ups were going on, another America that included disabled and elderly people searching for better health care, political advocates, labor leaders, the homeless and the disenfranchised were meeting only a few blocks away at Westlake Park and Steinbrueck Park.

"Bush said that Iraq wasn't going to be another Viet Nam," she said, holding a sign that read "Bush Must Go." "I never thought it would be until he said it." She said she plans to become more politically active.

After the Westlake affair began to wind down, about 400 members of ADAPT, many in wheelchairs, headed to Steinbrueck Park for a rally. ADAPT was lobbying for governors to sign a resolution favoring home care for the disabled and elderly rather than forced institutionalization. Some ADAPT members camped across the street from the Westin on Sunday and others blocked the street with chants for the governors to sign their resolution.

On Saturday night, the 30-odd governors who came to this year's convention attended a private reception at Bill and Melinda Gates' home, culminating in a moonlight boat ride on Lake Washington. ■

## Press Access Denied

The nation's governors come to town, and they're provided every amenity by the event's corporate sponsors. Meanwhile, a local community newspaper is barred from observing the proceedings.

In denying *Real Change* a press pass into its annual conference, Jason Feuchtwanger of the National Governors' Association provided the following policy on media access: "To obtain a NGA media credential, [members of the press] shall not engage in lobbying, advocacy, advertising, publicity or promotion work for any individual political party, corporation, or organization."

I replied that *Real Change* did not do any of the above and provided Feuchtwanger with our mission statement ("Real Change exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty"). I also attested to the conduct of reporter Ray Murphy, who has more than a decade of experience in community journalism.

Feuchtwanger replied: "I've read

your mission statement and information on your web site, including 'First things First: Our organizing project works in coalition with other advocacy groups, such as the Seattle King County Coalition for the Homeless and the Seattle Human Services Coalition, to use the reach and credibility of the newspaper to build awareness of poverty issues and build grassroots support for social change.' This is clearly advocacy. Based on our policy, we will not issue a media credential."

Building awareness and encouraging social change are not the same as requesting a tax break, praising the Democratic Party, or building the reputation of Microsoft. Besides, what else do newspapers set out to do but educate their readers and, especially on their editorial pages, influence politics?

The message the NGA provides is this: newspapers engaged in social issues are not welcome to see what goes on in our meetings. We're left asking: who's talking to whom on that moonlight cruise? ■

— Adam Holdorf

## Your Touch

As you rise to leave the bus  
You accidentally touch my hand.  
Your touch is a ticklish sensation  
That intrudes into my slumbers.  
It says, "Wake UP, Knucklehead"  
Some one is here.  
As you leave, the chance for an  
Accidental meeting leaves with you.

PAUL VON KEMPF, JR.



## And the Worms

The bride will lock herself in the bathroom  
And the worms will have their feast.  
The new born will squint against hard light and soft sounds  
And the worms will have their feast.  
Preachers will lean into pulpits pressing hard members against resisting wood  
And the worms will have their feast.  
Empires will clatter down the mountains burying villages and burning forests  
And the worms will have their feast.  
The artists will labor over their canvases capturing every soft hair on the lower back curves of their models  
And the worms will have their feast.  
The librarians will weep over the ashes of every burned book and moan the loss of antiquity's every sneeze  
And the worms will have their feast.  
The old men will sour in their beds like peach pits spit out in the orchard for the sun to dry  
And the worms will have their feast.  
The soldiers will march into the cannon mouths without question  
And the worms will have their feast.

—DAVID THORNBRUGH

## The Bike

I dreamed I bought a bike,  
fat tired, strong,  
but it had no handlebars.

From this Junk Yard:  
Joe's Iron & Metal –  
now long gone from  
gentrified Ballard.

In my dream  
I also bought a bike,  
skinny tires, in good shape,  
with handlebars,  
for somebody else.

I remember riding my bike  
with no handlebars  
around Joe's oily lot,  
through the crooked aisles,  
smelling the rusty iron,  
old aluminum,  
piles of copper and brass.

If I didn't get too fancy  
or show off  
or turn too fast  
I managed to ride  
quite easily  
through Joe's labyrinth  
of corruptible metals –  
quite easily  
on my fat tired bike  
with no handlebars.

—FRANK LANGER

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



**T**he price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Are you feeling all paid out yet?

I am. First, we had the scare of being told that if George Bush or Donald Rumsfeld, say, decided to label us an enemy combatant, we could be imprisoned without trial indefinitely, even for life, just by shipping us to Guantanamo Bay. A lot of screaming and a Supreme Court ruling finally succeeded in regaining our right to be free from indefinite imprisonment without trial.

Why should we have to fight for such a basic freedom from our own government, a government whose duty is to protect our freedoms?

Then a couple weeks ago our precious Homeland Security, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED TO DEFEND THIS COUNTRY, decided to see whether the 2004 presidential election could be postponed in the event of a terrorist attack.

Well let's see, the Constitution doesn't allow a delay, so we'd have to change that, and state constitutions don't allow delays, so we'd have to change about 50 state constitutions, and lets see, we would have four months to do that and get straight who does the delaying under what circumstances and so NO NO NO NO NO, IT'S NOT POSSIBLE, AND HOMELAND SECURITY IS RUN BY DUMBASSES!

So they said something like well, yes, we know all that, but we're just "looking into" the possibility.

To Homeland Security: Please "look into" the possibility of doing something legal for a change, like how you are going to do your duty and ensure that elections go on IN SPITE of any terrorist attacks.

Why should we have to yell and scream at Homeland Security to get them to defend our national elections? Who needs terrorists when we have defenders like these?

Then, periodically, we hear about some citizens being arrested or detained for "trespassing" at a Bush speech for either carrying anti-Bush signs, or as happened most recently, wearing anti-Bush t-shirts.

How long will it be, do you think, before our government, WHOSE JOB IS TO PROTECT OUR FREEDOM, will grant that freedom of speech is one of those freedoms they have to protect, not trample? How much yelling and screaming from the rest of us will it take? Will this require a Supreme Court ruling too?

The latest assault on freedom in this country comes from the President's own Orwellian-named New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. They are calling for mandatory mental health screening for "consumers of all ages" in this country, beginning with grade-school students who can be easily accessed through the public school system, then going on to include pre-school children and eventually adults.

Psychiatrists doing these mass screenings would use government-approved flow charts to decide who is mentally ill. The kids who test positive could then be required to take psychiatric meds, to control their illnesses and make them happy consumers.

I don't think the Constitution once refers to citizens as consumers, much less as "mental health consumers." The term is a favorite of pharmaceutical companies, which is a very big hint from me to you telling you who is behind this crap.

Just make sure that when your kids go in for compulsory psyche screening they haven't been "consumers" of any sugar-frosted cereal lately, as points will be deducted for fidgeting. Anti-authoritarian behavior will certainly be a decision point on the flow chart, so better tell them not to wear anti-Bush t-shirts.

Elder Bush motto: Don't worry, be happy. Junior Bush motto: Don't worry, take your happy pills. Or else.

To paraphrase Dick Cheney, I think Bush should go screen himself. ■

**The latest assault on freedom in this country comes from the President's own Orwellian-named New Freedom Commission on Mental Health.**

n.b.

note how  
casually he slouches  
on the chamber chair  
a pen limply held  
motionless  
(now) slowly composing  
the opening line of  
a law that serves himself  
at the expense of those who  
provide his seat

—ROGER STUKEY

## For Jose Luis Ramirez (may his rhinestones follow him to heaven)

The wounds  
Of the past run deeply.  
So deeply they've tainted the blood,  
The pallet of the mouth, the bed where rests a nation's soul.  
The mind's ability to comfort is vanquished and even the voice cannot recall the sound  
That was once its own when the spirit was strong, when the night sweats were gone,  
When time was not an enemy.

The wounds  
Of the past run deeply  
An odor of dissolution permeates the room  
And even the darkness cannot erase the pain on this mother's face  
Who watches the death of her youngest child.

Whose  
God is so calloused  
As to cast outside of grace  
These lives in dissipation, this mother who weeps for her dying son.

Whose  
God heralds death?  
Whose priests refuse to serve?  
Whose brethren deny their prayers?  
Whose children are dying alone in the name of the Lord? ...  
In the name of the Lord ... In the name of the Lord ...

In  
The name  
Of the Lord the soldiers of Christ go marching on  
And while God may forgive their ignorance not even death will forgive  
The emptiness of their souls.

The wounds  
Of the past run deeply  
Where warmth intermingles with disease  
And abandon is threaded throughout the land.

Whose  
God dares witness  
The wasted limbs, the hollowed eyes,  
The eleventh command:

And  
God bequeathed  
Upon the soldiers of Christ  
Let no one die alone, in vain ... in the name of the Lord ...  
In the name of the Lord ...  
In the name of the Lord ...

—CYNTHIA LEE OZIMEK



## Statues

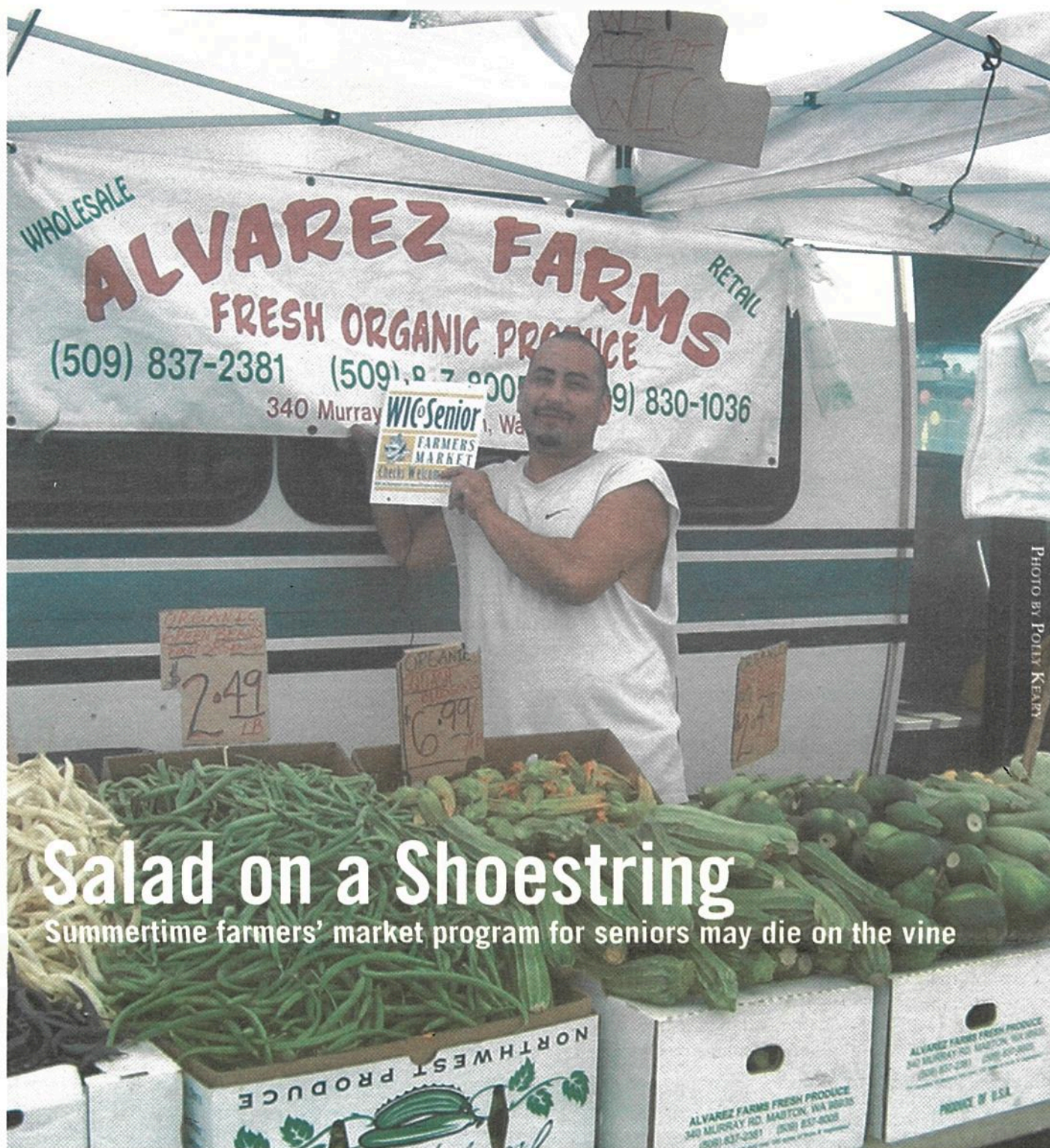
If you pull down one statue,  
why not all of them?  
The birds would miss them,  
but no one else.  
Heroic poses are hard to hold  
even for figures of bronze and brass.  
Swords grow heavy,  
rifles jam for lack of maintenance.  
Who do the remotely dead inspire?  
If we must raise statues,  
make them hollow, with blank ovals  
for faces so each new generation can  
crawl inside and occupy the role of hero,  
looking out on the world that greets a hero,  
same as any other victim.

—DAVID THORNBRUGH

## Lost and Found

Left, fled  
in a snowstorm  
sixty moons ago  
me, my car, my sweetie  
only the bare necessities:  
books, clothes, music, makeup,  
lotions and potions  
to reinvent recreate from dust  
the self I'd left behind  
first and second definitions  
editions formed without plea  
in the fold of family  
a girl married too early  
to a man not worthy  
seeks sweet sanctuary  
a five day's drive away  
among fresh scented pines,  
rain drip mornings and coffee.

—ANGIE VASQUEZ



## Salad on a Shoestring

Summertime farmers' market program for seniors may die on the vine

by Polly Keary

**A** pungent whiff of fresh basil spices the air. Onions glow like fat pearls in freshly washed bunches, tied together by their stems. Tomatoes in crates, eggplants in stacks, bins of long fuzzy green beans and heaps of yellow crookneck squash form a vivid mosaic of summer. Early shoppers stroll between the stands as vendors from across the state set up booths displaying this locally grown produce at the weekly Thursday Columbia City Farmers' Market in Rainier Valley.

As the vendors set up, many affix to a corner post or the edge of a table a brown sign announcing that vouchers from the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program are welcome there. Through this very successful program, low-income seniors receive \$40 to \$100 in "market bucks" each summer to spend at local farmers' markets.

Yet in spite of its striking success, the program that provides nutritional support to seniors while shoring up business for small farmers may run out of vital funding after 2004, its third year.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program was initially created by the Farm Bill of 2002, in which \$15 million

in federal funds were to be made available annually for the voucher system. Like many other unfunded mandates that have weakened state budgets in recent years, the Farm Bill only provided for the vouchers, not the associated administrative costs such as wages for coordinators, printing, and spreading public awareness.

The program went ahead anyway with two small pilot projects in King County, with money from the Vitamin Settlement. That \$5.7 million settlement, won by Washington state Attorney General Christine Gregoire in 2001 against six vitamin companies that were found guilty of illegal price collusion, was set aside for programs that would enhance the health of state residents. Volunteers at the Woodinville Farmers' Market and Pike Place Market applied for and won grants from the settlement

money to implement the voucher program.

"I made our market bucks at Kinko's," says Julie Davidson, a volunteer who worked on the 2002 pilot program in Woodinville.

"My husband and I cut them out in our living room. We hand-numbered them individually."

The numbered vouchers were distributed to qualifying seniors, then redeemed like checks by state-approved vendors — vendors who grew at least part of the produce they sold — at those two markets.

"It was an amazing success," says Davidson of the Woodinville pilot. "The following season, I'm pleased to say, communities

across the state began to offer these vouchers. We learned that 96 out of 100 seniors who got the vouchers participated, and of the 96, 88 percent used

their coupons in full. That is an amazing redemption rate; it really spoke to the impact the program could have and how needed in the community it was."

In 2003, the program reached 8,000 seniors in 29 counties in Washington State, including 900 seniors in King County. Statewide, seniors spent \$280,000 on 90 tons of Washington grown fruits and vegetables from 472 farms.

"I start getting calls from our seniors in January and February, asking when they can get their produce vouchers," Davidson says. "That's how important it is."

"There's an intangible benefit when seniors can benefit from the whole market experience, too. In the past seasons I'd go hang out when seniors were shopping. They'd tell me stories about childhood memories of growing up on farms; they miss having their own yards and gardens. In some cases, they miss the countries and the agricultural communities they came from. They get a wonderful sense of being welcome in a community. You can't capture that in market redemption numbers."

Another benefit of the program is that it gives seniors access to organic produce that otherwise might not be affordable. To be eligible, King County residents must be 60 or older and have an annual income less than \$17,224 (\$23,106 for two people).

"The elderly people really appreciate it," says Pat Myer, as she sets out heads of broccoli at the Stoney Plains Organic Farm booth. "They're eating better, for one thing. In the grocery stores they won't buy organic because it's too expensive. They find [organic produce] has got a lot better flavor, too."

The vitamin settlement also made money available for nutrition education. Once a month at the Columbia City Farmer's Market, nutritionists and dietitians hand out samples and recipes of nutritious foods and supply information on the dietary needs of seniors. The next two dates are August 11 and September 29.

Yet just as the program seems to be maturing and becoming a valued part of the lives of many seniors, funding may dry up.

Money for administering the voucher program, paid for by the Vitamin Settlement, "runs out this year," says Karen Kinney of the Columbia City Farmer's Market Association. "There's no more secure money for funding the administration."

The settlement money only provided for three years of administrative costs, and alternative funding may not be available. Recent budget shortages leave program supporters less than optimistic about the odds of receiving the needed funds from the state's coffers.

"We understand how tight it is in Olympia," says Davidson. "Perhaps we'll try to work a miracle on the federal level and ask them to provide the real administrative costs for this very successful program. It would absolutely break my heart if we had to lose this, and we may." ■

**Like many other unfunded mandates that have weakened state budgets in recent years, the Farm Bill only provided for the vouchers, not the associated administrative costs such as wages for coordinators, printing, and spreading public awareness.**



# An Orchestrated Campaign of Destruction

Famine brought on by ethnic cleansing is besieging western Sudan's Darfur region

Interview by Adam Holdorf

While U.S. eyes are trained anxiously on Iraq, another diplomatic crisis is brewing in the northeastern Africa, in the vast, ethnically diverse, politically tumultuous country of Sudan. It's a crisis precipitated by uncommon barbarity: light-skinned nomadic militia men are attacking villages of ethnically Black Africans.

They shoot men. They kill children. They rape women. They brand these survivors' hands or legs, leaving a visible reminder of the experience that cannot easily be hidden. And they tell their victims to bear the light-skinned child that may be created by this assault, replacing the country with their own race.

Often with the aid of the Sudanese military, the Arab militias have killed as many as 30,000 people. It's estimated that 350,000 people have fled west from the Darfur region — a vast place the size of France — into neighboring Chad. Sheltered only by trees, they sit in camps, drinking foul water and waiting for food. The chaos disrupted the planting season; now the rains have come, and with them malnutrition, malaria, and other disease.

Steve Matthews is an emergency communication coordinator for World Concern, a Federal Way-based Christian relief agency responding to humanitarian crises. Matthews, a Canadian, took a few minutes to speak with *Real Change* about what he was seeing in mid-July, as the rainy season was in its early days.

**RC:** You were in a camp today for internally displaced people in the Darfur region. What is happening there?

**Steve Matthews:** We're in Nyala, the biggest city in south Darfur. The camp we went to today, Kalma, is probably 20 or 30 kilometers from the city, and then there are a lot of camps all over Darfur.

There are a couple of rebel movements out there that have been forcing people from their homes for about the past 18 months, so we've got literally tens of thousands of these villagers who have been forced into IDP camps. Because the people are displaced, they have not been able to plant their normal crops; the planting season has already passed them. They no longer have their own food supply.

**RC:** What do you see people eating and drinking there now?

**Matthews:** Well actually, at this camp they got their first food distribution in more than a month, so people were eagerly awaiting their rations — they were getting some grains, some cooking oil, a little bit of sugar. The World Food Program and CARE were distrib-

uting today and I think they said 800 metric tons that they were going to deliver over their in the next couple of weeks. It's a meager subsistence.

**RC:** Do you know anything about how difficult it was to bring these provisions in at this point? Do you know where they came from and what that involved?

**Matthews:** The logistics are very difficult because there's not enough fuel for all the planes these days. They have to delay or reroute flights. The roads and the rail lines are cut off from Khartoum [Sudan's capital city] because of security issues. There are actually security issues all over Darfur; you can't just drive from one place to another because there are rebels and bandits and you also need permission from the government to go out to certain areas.

Kofi Anan came through here a couple of weeks ago and basically worked out a deal with the government to stop the rebel activities out here and to get the aid corridors open. Well, that still hasn't happened yet, and there was a reason that Kofi Anan came at this time, specifically because we're at a crossroads right now. If things don't happen very quickly, the ramifications

are going to be very grave for a lot of people. When we were at this camp today, we met several mothers who had lost babies or children in past day or so, or even in the past couple of weeks. I was in the Doctors Without Borders compound, and someone had died while I was in there. It's not unreasonable to say because of the situation here, people are dying, children are dying.

**RC:** Tell me more about who you met today.

**Matthews:** Oh, we met all kinds of people. We met some families that had just arrived at the camp. Remember that this camp was somewhere around 30,000 about three weeks ago, and it's up over 60,000 now. So there are new people coming in all the time.

It's a pretty amazing thing to see that most people get along in a camp, despite the hardships. I think this is what we witness over and over as aid workers as we go to these places in the world, and see generally good people who are in terrible situations. Even when they are in their worst times, there's a sense of civility and decency amongst all these people.

**RC:** Are they endangered from bandits or militia members at night?

**Matthews:** No, that's why they came to these camps; they give relative safety in numbers. A lot more security than if they were staying in their villages or living out in the countryside, because it's been an orchestrated campaign of destruction for the past year and a half.

**RC:** Is genocide unquestionably what has been going there?

**SM:** Well, I don't think you will find an aid worker or a UN person who would be willing to use the "g-word" as we call it. I know that's been floated around a little bit in the media, but that's not for me to say. All I can tell you is that there are lot of people out here who are suffering, and it is a very large humanitarian emergency, and the world needs to get involved right now. This story has not been reported widely enough. In your country specifically, you're a little too obsessed with Iraq.

**RC:** Why not use the "g-word"?

**SM:** Because when you start throwing that word around, you better have some substantive facts and figures behind it, and to tell you the truth, I don't think anybody has a solid picture of what is happening in Darfur and there are reasons for that. The reasons are that it is a large piece of land. It is geographically difficult to get around; there are obstacles which have to do with government protocols, security, fuel, and not enough capacity on the ground.

There are lot of numbers being talked about, but I've been doing this for long enough to know that in any humanitarian emergency, any numbers that are given are just sort of guesstimates at best.

**RC:** Well, beyond any formal definition of genocide and any facts behind that we have a humanitarian emergency here.

**SM:** Oh yeah. We're way late. We should have taken action here six or eight months ago. Everything's late. If you want to say genocide, you leave that up to Kofi Anan to say, that's his call. ■



A WOMAN FILLS GOAT-SKIN WATER CONTAINERS FROM A CONTAMINATED POND IN EASTERN CHAD, NEAR THE SUDANESE BORDER. THIS RAIN-FED POND IS THE MAJOR WATER POINT IN THE AREA FOR BOTH THE 28,000 REFUGEES CAMPED HERE AND LOCAL CHADIANS, WHO ARE OUTNUMBERED THREE TO ONE BY THE REFUGEES. PHOTO COURTESY WORLD VISION.

# Nighthawks at the Diner

The slow demise of Seattle's 24-hour establishments

by Shelly Martin

Once upon a time, this city worked around the clock, and so did its restaurants.

Eleven years ago, the hallowed 24-hour restaurant called the Dog House closed its doors on Seventh Avenue and Bell Street. The restaurant was justly famed for its character and style. Waitresses were sassy, the food was unpretentious (the menu boasted a hamburger titled 'the pooch' which 'spoke for itself'), and a sign over the bar read "All roads lead to the Dog House."

When it closed, owner David Gulbransen explained to a *Seattle Times* reporter for a 1993 article about the changing restaurant climate, "It used to be you'd get off work and go out and have dinner. Now you stop on the way home at a fast-food store, rent a movie, and go home."

Most Seattleites don't seem to mind the switch from the traditional diner experience to the fast, friendly service of the neighborhood franchise. Unfortunately, for those working odd hours or those who don't have a home in which to eat their take-out, the demise of the traditional all-night diner is troublesome indeed.

Thirty years ago, over 35 Seattle restaurants were open 24 hours, seven days a week. A good 25 of them were independently owned. Fifteen years ago, the city boasted around 30 24-hour restaurants, of which 15 were independently owned. Now, there remains approximately fifteen. Nine of these are chains, either Denny's or IHOPs; seven are independently owned.

An April 22 article in the *Times* examining this trend asked Joan Hitchens, communications director for the Washington Restaurant Association, for an explanation. "Independent restaurants across the state are struggling ... increases in the minimum wage and business taxes, coupled with an economic downturn, have forced many restaurants to cut back on their least-profitable shifts." Or in the case of many Seattle diners, close their doors altogether.

On the corner of Ninth Avenue and 45th Street in the University District, Stella's Trattoria was open 24/7 for 13 years. Dany Mitchell, owner of both Stella's and its older brother, Trattoria Mitchelli in Pioneer Square, explains his decision to close the graveyard shift as a factor of economics. "After 9/11, we adjusted our hours, and basically we went down to the same program that we offered at Mitchelli, which was till 4 a.m. Now it's only two days a week, until 4 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, and we eliminated breakfast in both stores and just provided brunch on Friday and Saturdays.

"It was a combo of dot.gone, earthquake, and then it was 9/11," he says. "The local economy basically dictated the hours."

Since Stella's has cut back its hours and the Denny's on University Way has

closed, the IHOP on 43rd and Brooklyn has the honor of being the only restaurant open 24 hours in the area. Mitchell Saderniha, general manager of that particular IHOP branch, says business is as-usual. "For how long this place has been here, we've seen so many places come in and out. I mean, the Denny's closed up on University Way two years ago, and we got so busy when they closed because they were the main competition." He credits restaurant consistency and an ethic of putting the employee first for the staying power his branch exemplifies.

Though they have felt the pain of the listing economy, the franchise restaurants (Denny's, IHOP, Taco Bell, Starbucks, Subway, McDonalds...the list goes on) have been hit less hard than independent restaurants. Looking through the phone books from 1974 to 2004, the changes in the restaurant listings is staggering. In 1974, the numerous chains each have a few restaurants open in Seattle. By 2004, McDonalds has 65; Starbucks has 75 in just Seattle (110 if you count the suburbs). Since fast-food chains appeal to the same blue-collar demographic as the greasy spoon, the meteoric growth of the franchise corresponds with the demise of the 24-hour diner. Walt Crowley, local historian and Executive Director of History Link ([www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org)) agrees: "Most of these places vanished in the 70s in part because of the chains coming in, like the McDonalds, and they kind of took up the traditional niche."

A few round-the-clock restaurants have weathered the years and survived the busts time and time again. Among them is Thirteen Coins, a 24-hour staple on Denny Way since 1967, between the downtown area and South Lake Union. Owner Jeanne Boyce Jones has committed 23 years to maintaining

the 24-hour concept in a consistently classy way (let's just say that Thirteen Coins is the only 24-hour restaurant whose menu is consistently printed in *The Menu Guide: menus from Puget Sound's best restaurants*).

While her restaurant is doing well, she's noticed that others have not been as fortunate. "There's been a change in people's diets, too — the way they eat," she says. "People don't eat breakfast anymore; they go to Starbucks. People are in a hurry."

Local historian and longtime Seattle resident John Severn agrees: "Most of these places catered to a specialized clientele, and now, well, there is not that large bunch of people with dead-end jobs working late at night."

Around the same time Microsoft supplanted Boeing as the city's preeminent employer, independent restaurants started chasing a higher-income demographic. The software giant only employs around eleven thousand people, but its influence is undeniable. Many of the numerous technology startups that clogged the streets of Seattle in the mid to late 1990's began with former Microsoft employees. All of these software jobs paid more than the typical manufacturing wage. Restaurants and retail began catering to the tastes of the

newly formed upper-middle class, while the franchise took over the lower-middle class. Resulting trends in the restaurant industry helped to put the diner, which didn't offer the chic dining experience but couldn't compete with the franchise, out of business.

The question now is whether or not Seattle even needs diner nightlife. For people who don't have anywhere else to go, places like the Five Point in the Denny Regrade are a haven in the early morning hours. Bottomless cups of coffee, cheap, filling food, and an accepting atmosphere make 24-hour diners the perfect place to rest and refuel for people from every demographic.

Severn agrees: "Generally, nothing much happened in these places. They were just places for people to go — people who were up because they had to be."

All-nighter restaurant owners genuinely seem to enjoy the late-night clientele. Mitchell, of Stella's Trattoria, says he might in the future restore his restaurant's hours to 24/7 because he really liked the people: "It's always been a very interesting guest that comes to us at the wee hours of the morning."

When asked whether or not the 24-hour diners are missed in Seattle today, Severn thought for a moment. "Well, the thing I miss about it most is that it was more relaxed. Nobody had high expectations."

One can just hope that the remaining 24-hour restaurants in Seattle continue to keep their doors open so that the nighthawks, students, taxi drivers, longshoremen, and anyone else who wants to can have their 2 a.m. hashbrowns and coffee in peace. ■

**"Generally, nothing much happened in these places. They were just places for people to go — people who were up because they had to be."**



# Kiss the Cooks

Steve and Margaret Bearden dish out care and fill up on thanks

by Tom Cogbill

Three Saturdays a month, those staying at Seattle's Tent City know they can look forward to a tasty, full-course meal of home-cooked victuals. A church contribution? A government handout? No, the meals are the work of two private citizens who decided that they could make a difference. For the past seven years, Margaret and Steve Bearden have taken on the responsibility of planning menus, purchasing food in bulk, and preparing it in their home kitchen, turning out 100 to 150 home-cooked meals, which they then deliver to a shelter or hot-meal program. Besides doing all the work, the Beardens bear the brunt of the cost, as well. As they see it, their efforts only help repay a debt of gratitude for their relative good fortune, a gratitude they feel passionate about.

"We used to do it every week," Margaret says one recent Saturday afternoon, "but now we give ourselves a break once a month." She is hovering over a stove full of large, steaming kettles and pots, in the midst of whipping up dinner for over a hundred people she doesn't even know. An affable, red-haired woman, Margaret works during the week as a court reporter, a job she's held for the past thirty years. After work, she takes time to visit different stores to gather supplies for her weekend cooking task. The Beardens try to stretch their buying power by getting whatever may be on sale that week, or by accepting items that are sometimes discounted or donated.

This week, it was hot dogs.

"Cash-n-Carry had them for 10 pounds for a penny." So, of course, she loaded up with 120 pounds' worth — which basically determined her entrée choice of hot dogs and barbecued beans.

The folks at the store "know what we are doing and try to help us. They

give us good deals and also stock the institution-size portions." She points to a 10-pound can on a shelf in her garage full of similar cans, large sacks, and assorted other food items. One concession the Beardens have had to make to their passion is to turn part of their garage into a food pantry to store the quantities they need to cook for such large numbers. Steve and Margaret load up a cart with ingredients and wheel it back into the kitchen for the subsequent courses. This week, there will also be macaroni and cheese, an artichoke-and-seafood cream dip, green salad, and ice cream cones for dessert. The Beardens also supply coffee and other beverages, as well as videos from their vast assortment.

Steve, 55, sports a beard and long, graying hair; his girth, gentle manner, and activist mindset evoke images of Michael Moore. He dropped out of high school to start working, later getting his

a plant care company, working his way into management. Nowadays he plays guitar in a band with his buddies and does some writing.

Steve grabs a large chef's knife and plops down to chop onions at a diner booth the Beardens have set up in lieu of an ordinary kitchen table. Cultural curiosities abound throughout the house, from restaurant-style sugar and napkin dispensers and a neon-lit clock in the kitchen to an old juke box and movie posters in other rooms. Meanwhile, at her end of the kitchen, Margaret empties a steaming cauldron of beans into a large insulated vessel and chats about the motivations behind their over-the-top generosity.

"The big value of our culture is how much you have," she says. "Like 'How big is your car? How big is your house?'

We like to live in comfort, too, like most people — you can see we are not hurting. But after a while, you have to ask yourself, how much do you need?"

Outwardly, the Beardens' material circumstances do not differ from those of their middle-class North Seattle neighbors. Their home is modest, but hardly shabby. Inside are scant signs of opulence, yet they love collecting things, as demonstrated by room after room of art and cultural objects they have accumulated over the years. In a word, it is cozy, and they seem satisfied with it and their lifestyle. Absent, though not conspicuously so, is any evidence of children. They opted not to have any. Instead, they have four adorable basset hounds.

Are any of their friends into this cooking-for-the-masses concept, too? Are they part of some kind of give-your-all charity subculture?

"No," Margaret says emphatically. They don't know anyone else who does anything quite like it.

"Lots of people characterize us as saints. There can almost be a hint of hostility in their voices,

like, 'what are you doing, are you insane?' Even people who give to charity may feel like they aren't doing enough in comparison. 'Oh, you're just

angels!' But that is not how we look at it ourselves. This is just what we do to give back because we have been so very fortunate ourselves."

"Whatever anyone can do is valid," Steve adds. "Just because we may be doing something more, other people don't need to feel guilty. They need to do whatever is comfortable for them. This, what we do, is what feels right for us."

Margaret expands on their motivation as she prepares cheese sauce. "What we are saying by taking them this food is, 'We care about you.'" The lives of the homeless are frequently so chaotic, she says, maybe it helps if they know they can at least count on a good meal once in a while.

"If I were down and out, I know I would really appreciate it if someone offered me a good, home-cooked

meal. It means someone cares for you."

Here her voice starts to crack. "I'll never forget that little Mexican guy who tried so hard to thank us in his broken English. He had nothing. He'd probably been poor his entire life."

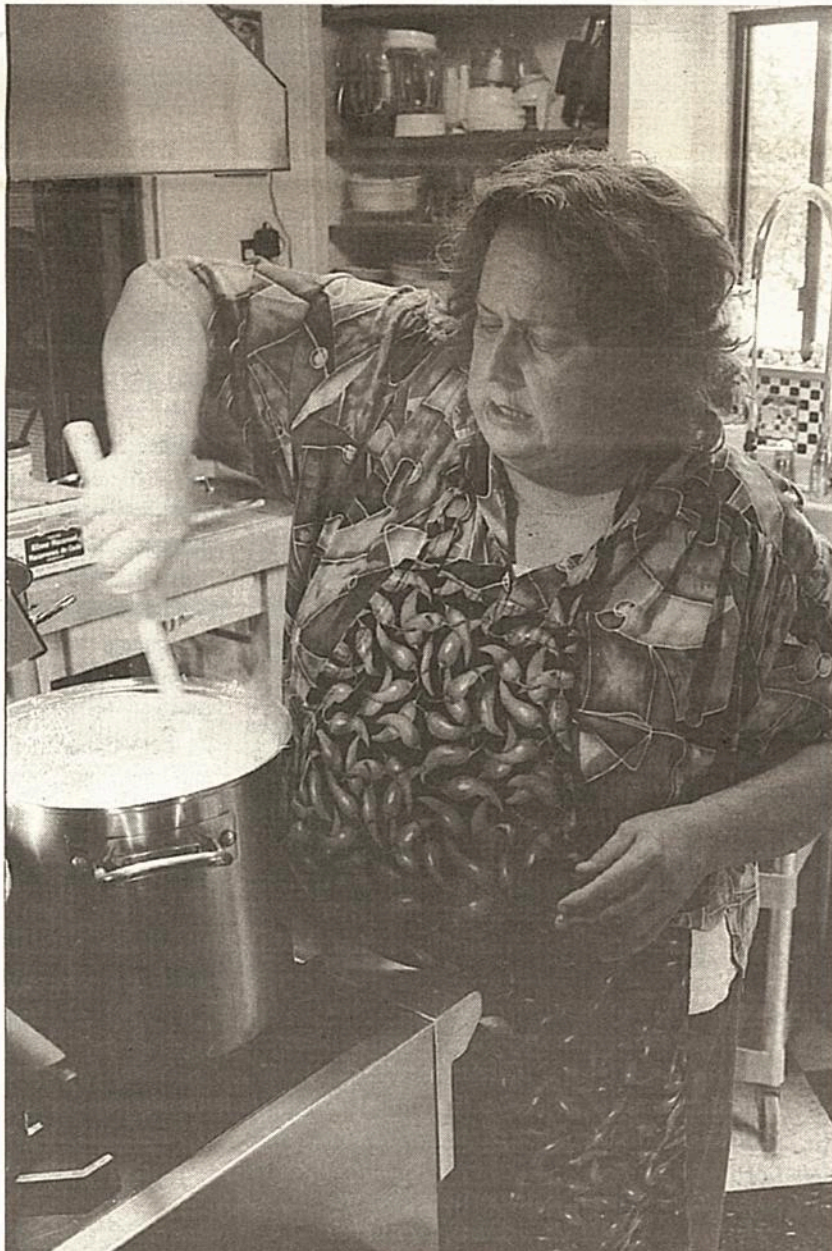
Tears well in her eyes as she recalls the gratitude and affection they have received back from people they have fed over the years. There was the immigrant who told her how the food reminded him of his mother's cooking back in his native Russia. And so many others who touched her heart with their sincere thanks only once, perhaps twice, before moving on again.

"It makes it all worthwhile," she concludes, wiping her eyes.

When all the food is ready, usually by 5 p.m., the Beardens load it into hefty, insulated containers and foil-covered trays. Steve then drives the goodies to Tent City in his aging Taurus station wagon. His arrival is eagerly anticipated.

In fact, the Beardens are the stuff of legend among the homeless. Some suspect they won the lottery or inherited wealth; others, that their charity work is a form of punishment for past misdeeds. Even in Tent City, which gets by from week to week owing to charitable contributions from many sources, such singular personal generosity can be hard to fathom. That doesn't keep anyone from gobbling up the results, though. By the following Tuesday, when Steve returns for his trays and containers (with a big cleaning job ahead of him), the chow is all consumed.

It is hard to say who gets the better part of the bargain: those who eat it, or those who make it. ■



MARGARET BEARDON STIRS THE POT. PHOTO BY TOM COGBILL.

GED, but also experiencing welfare first hand. In the '70s, he and a friend started a health-food restaurant. More recently, he finished an 18-year stint in

# Cheap n' Good

True economy in Seattle's restaurant scene

by the Real Change Editorial Committee

Every year about this time, we become obsessed with food. We become especially interested in cheap food. The cheap food is the most rare food. There is expensive food everywhere in Emerald City. But if you are motivated, if you are sufficiently income-challenged, you will be able to find the relatively cheap food.

Sometimes you find it in your travels outside of the downtown area. One of us, Stan Burriss, found a favorite cheap eats establishment near El Centro de la Raza on Beacon Hill. Take the 36 to where 15th Avenue South meets Beacon Avenue and you will find the Golden Daisy restaurant. Stan likes the sweet and sour pork. There's a buffet where they will fill your plate with any three of eight items for \$4.

Stan also likes the rugged atmosphere. He enjoys seeing the roast ducks hanging in the window, and the pigs "in the same situation" down a hall. He's been eating there regularly for 14 years. But Wes Browning warns: beware the chicken feet.

Another of Stan's favorites is Viet Chi at Third and Columbia. He always gets the chicken with fried rice for \$5.46. They also have daily specials for around \$5 and yummy Vietnamese iced coffee for about \$2.50.

Michele Marchand likes Vietnamese food too. She doesn't know the name of it, but there's a tiny Vietnamese restaurant in the Sanitary Market near the north end of the Pike Place Market where you can get a chicken or pork banh mi (Vietnamese sandwich) and a pop for \$3.50. Michele is still looking for other banh mi places downtown and she's looking forward to trying out the new Vietnamese restaurant that will be opening up where the Blimpie's used to be at Third and Pine.

On special occasions Wes Browning and Anitra Freeman like to eat lunch at Diner, on 72 South Washington Street in Pioneer Square. As a lunch choice, it's not as cheap as the places we've

mentioned so far, with a sandwich and fries running around \$7 or so, but it's a great place if you're looking for an old-fashioned American diner experience. It has all the accoutrements, including the jukebox, plus three or four TVs tuned to sports or news in every direction. But getting back to cheap, Michele tells us we could get a breakfast in there — even biscuits and gravy — for around \$5.

Speaking of atmosphere, Wes's favorite atmospheric place is the Mediterranean Mix at 205 First Avenue South. Wes doesn't know falafel from anything, he can't tell hummus from baba ghanoush or gyros from tortillas, but he loves the Med Mix feel. It's right in Pioneer Square with all the trees and

likes the bacon double cheeseburger and fries for a bit more than \$5 with tax. He likes the friendly service. A few times the manager has given him the coffee for free because it was old. The dining area is papered with interesting posters of local events, and there's an upstairs dining area if you want to get away from the street view. One drawback is the conservative talk show radio that's often on in the background, but we can take it.

For now the cheapest eats in downtown Seattle has to be at Boomtown Cafe, on Third Avenue near James. The prices are \$1.25 for breakfast, \$1.75 for lunch. On Stan's most recent visit he got some sort of hamburger type thing, he says. A lump of meat on a bun with none of the trimmings sounds a little too much like home cooking to some of us, but we suspect that Stan could've gotten condiments if he had asked. The rest of us have had good pasta dishes and salads at Boomtown in the past. We've also had great omelets for breakfast. You may have a wait in line to order, but once you order and pay you sit down for service like in any other restaurant.

Anitra recommends Mom's Teriyaki restaurant at Third and Bell. She has been able to get a nice big bowl of noodles and some sort of teriyaki dish for around \$3.50.

An outstanding dining choice for someone with only \$5 or \$6 to spend is the Food Court at Uwajimaya, at Fifth Avenue South and Weller. The dining area is comfortable in spite of the heavy foot traffic. It's possible to sit down and read a paper without being hassled. The Food Court is awesome for the number and variety of cheap options. Wes likes the Thai Place, which recently had a barbecued pork dish for \$3.50, and Chicken Satay for \$3.95. Next to them, Inay's Kitchen was serving a variety of Filipino meals for \$4.95 each. And Wes thought of Michele when he noted that further on, Saigon Bistro was offering Vietnamese sandwiches for \$2.25.

Also, a good new burger place has appeared at Uwajimaya. It's Mumu's Burgers, by the fountain at the Northwest entrance to the building, just before the stairs to the Food Court. Wes doesn't like tomatoes on his burgers because they usually aren't worth it. But Mumu's Classic Cheese, for \$4.10 after taxes, had a significantly superior tomato on it, and Wes was amazed. ■

Wes Browning, Stan Burriss, Anitra Freeman, and Michele Marchand are members of the Real Change Editorial Committee.



StreetWatch is compiled by Emma Quinn from reports of the Seattle Police Department.

**Thursday, July 8, 4:41 p.m., Denny Way Park.** Officers on patrol saw the suspects, a 34-year-old white male and a 30-year-old white female, both transients, engaged in lewd behavior together in Denny Park. Upon contact, the officers were unable to verify identities. Both were administratively arrested and transported to the Precinct. Both were positively identified by a computer and were warned and released from the Precinct.

**Thursday, July 8, 5:42 p.m., Third Avenue, Downtown Emergency Service Center.** DESC staff called 911 to report that the suspect, a 55-year-old white male, walked out on a second floor ledge and was threatening suicide. Officers found the suspect on the ledge and began a dialog with him. DESC staff repeated that the victim had imbibed both alcohol and cocaine. Further, he had a history of mental health issues and prior suicide attempts. The officers were ultimately successful in bringing him in from the ledge and he was involuntarily committed to Harborview for a mental health evaluation.

**Friday, July 9, 8:50-9:45 a.m., Broadway.** Officer was dispatched to a narcotics call on Broadway. Upon arrival, an anonymous passerby advised that a man and woman were asleep next to their baby on the steps of the Seattle University bookstore. The officer located the subjects, a 20-year-old white male, 22-year white female transients and a 2-year-old baby, asleep on the steps. The baby was in a stroller holding a bottle of milk. They immediately woke up when contacted and said they were transient and very tired, as they have not slept in several days. Both appeared to be under the influence of an unknown drug and had difficulty staying balanced and awake. The Fire Department responded to the scene and determined that no one needed medical attention and strongly encouraged them to seek help for substance abuse. At that point, their child appeared to be healthy, clothed, and had food. All parties were released on the scene. The parents were contacted an hour later by the Broadway QFC and were both asleep with the child in the stroller.

Do you have your own story to tell? Call Real Change at (206)441-3247 ext. 207, and we'll get the scoop.

The website at the end of Western Civilization  
classicscorner.org



the tourists walking by, in what is basically an open air sidewalk hole-in-the-wall restaurant that oozes Old World flavor. Four dollars gets a falafel sandwich and \$4.50 gets a gyro. There are also good deals on pizza, American-style sandwiches, and judging from the traffic, cigarettes. Anitra adds that we like their politics, too — so there.

If you like a good burger that's more than a chain-made burger, but not in the \$7 range, there's Domeburger. As the name suggests, the place has been around at least since the Kingdome, and they haven't bothered to change their name since. They're easily missed, next door to the Safeway grocery store on Occidental between Yesler and South Washington. Wes

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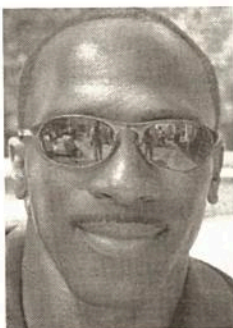
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# Street Talk: Last Meals

Photos and interviews by Jackie Prichard

The lean and hungry staff of Real Change went to the streets of Seattle with one burning question: "When was the last time you had something really good to eat, and what was it?"

Vernon, 35, a Metro employee: Last summer Vernon went to the Bahama Breeze restaurant in Tukwila and had "grilled salmon over a bed of spinach with ginger sauce."



Cloe Flaherty, age "over 40." Two nights before, Cloe had had dinner at Daniel's Broiler in Bellevue where she ate "steak, shrimp, asparagus, and salad."

George'ann Knox, 51, telemarketer: a month ago George'ann had "shrimp with oyster sauce and shrimp fried rice at P.F. Chang's China Bistro."



Kevin McKinstry, 21. Occupation: father. Last really good meal: "hamburgers at home" on Tuesday night.

Barbara who works in accounting, age 61, for lunch on Wednesday ate "a parfait yogurt that was part vanilla and part raspberry with granola in between the colors."



Lloyd Wight, 50. Occupation: Landscape Design. Tuesday evening Lloyd had a "spare rib dinner at home with broccoli and Stove-Top Stuffing Mix." Wight loves Stove-Top.



Amanda Schaeffer, 29, claims manager. Amanda says, "Two weeks ago I had Indian food on Second Avenue across from a wig store. It was all you can eat for \$8. I had butter chicken, tika masala chicken, naan bread, and mango lassi to drink."



## FREE LUNCH, Cont. from Page 1

is it?) fee they charge you for dinner if you won't go to their church service prior to eating. I have a home congregation, and it imposes on my rights and humanity to insist that only THEIR version of spirituality is valid and that is the price for receiving ministry. Every great spiritual teacher, most notably Jesus, has given the ministry, first, then asked for a particular response, but never mandated same. I told the folks at UGM this, but I don't think they were pleased. My exact words, in fact, were, "This is not Christ, and you're not of Christ." They probably don't want me back.

I avoided this same issue at Bread of Life by having the sense not to attempt the matter a second time, particularly since I hear good things about Bread of Life.

Central Lutheran Church, on Eleventh across from Cal Anderson Park on Capital Hill, does a community lunch from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays, and if overeating and enjoying it is your ilk, this is the place. Lunch is usually a hearty casserole of some kind, occasionally soup, and occasionally roasted or baked chicken or fish, and here, too, the portions flow freely. If you're not into such things, there's always, peanut butter and jelly or jam,

cookies and cookies, cake, cake, and cake, as well as plenty of coffee (not at all the best in town, but hot in winter), milk and "juice" (Kool-Aid or some such). This is the perfect example of feeding people through volunteerism, as a different Lutheran congregation provides each meal, in rotation, and the obvious overabundance of sweets reflects the belief that sugar is a primary food, particularly for the homeless, all nutrition aside. I actually have been saved by Central Lutheran's community lunch on countless occasions, when money was lacking and time for seeking stability was more important than scrounging.

Of course, there are lunch and dinner at the Wall, AKA the Public Safety Building. Lunch you can figure for a brown bag or casserole, usually with chips, and this has saved me when the food bank at Eighth and Cherry was closed. Dinner is a more filling casserole, beverage, salad, and dessert, and you won't go hungry, but the line is always long and the food is sometimes bland; I feel as if I'm being lumped in with "the elderly" at some care facility, being told I

can't handle more than a pinch of salt for seasoning.

I really would like to go "under the bridge" sometime, at Fourth and Jackson, as I have heard nothing but high praises for the food served there. Unfortunately, this is just one long line too many for me at this time. This is an evening gig, and while I may be homeless, I still am politically active, have meetings several nights per week, and have no intention of allowing homelessness to be used as an excuse to disenfranchise me or isolate me from the society in which I have fully participated in the past, and intend to until I'm well past 100. Enough is enough.

(Personally, I may be a bit cynical in such matters, but generally I try to find the most positive elements in any circumstance, and certainly the better food, and my skepticism may come simply from reading too much of Dr. Wes's column. Or maybe I just come by it naturally.) ■

David Trotter, as you now know, is a member of the Real Change Editorial Committee.

**If overeating and enjoying it is your ilk, Central Lutheran Church is the place.**

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# REAL CHANGE HERO

Misty Gilmore, Vendor #8386

**M**isty Gilmore is one of a handful of women who have been with Real Change for a long, long time. She started in 1996, when the paper was two years old, and except for a one-year hiatus she's been doing it steadily ever since. Since *Real Change* will come out with its 200th issue on August 5, it's about time we wrote about her.

Misty works 25 to 30 hours a week outside Nordstrom on Fifth Avenue and Pine Street in downtown Seattle. Selling *Real Change* is different for women, Misty will tell you. When you're angling for a good location in downtown Seattle, you get a few guys who think they can push you around. "Some of the guys will try to be bullish," she says, "they'll tell you you can't be somewhere. But I stand up for myself pretty well."

It takes patience to be successful at this job, she says; you have to put your time in out on the sidewalk in order to become a familiar face. Then, people will start warming up.

Apparently, it also helps to address each member of the public. Misty says she makes a simple pitch as people walk by: "*Real Change*, Sir? *Real Change*, Miss?"

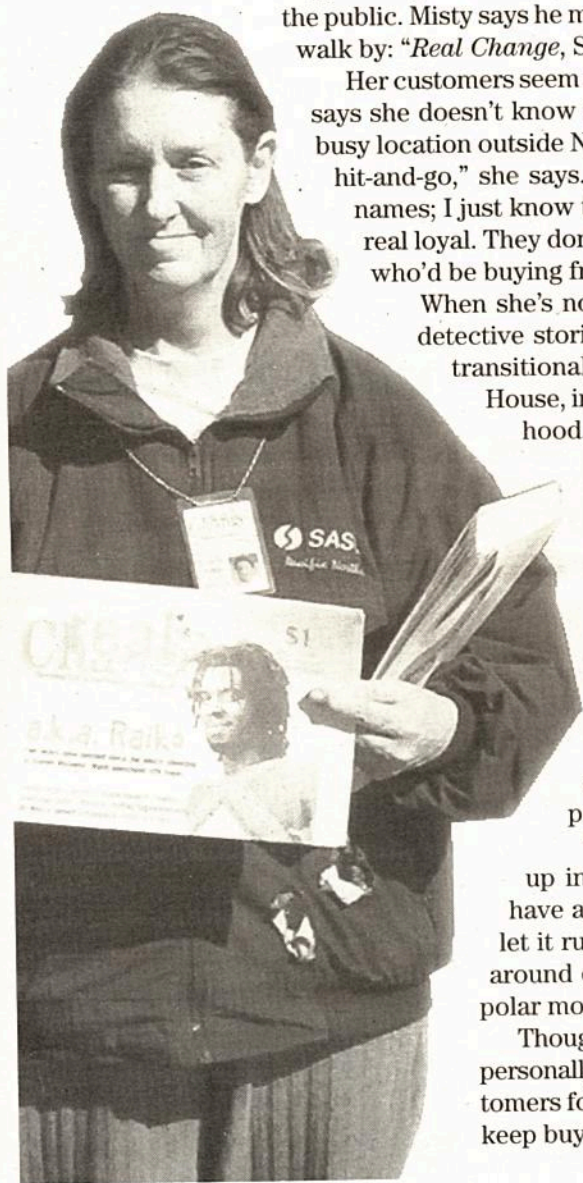
Her customers seem to appreciate the soft sell. She says she doesn't know any of them very well; at her busy location outside Nordstrom "it's just hit-and-go, hit-and-go," she says. "I don't know most of their names; I just know they're nice to me and they're real loyal. They don't look like the kind of people who'd be buying from more than one vendor."

When she's not working, she loves to read detective stories or watch television at her transitional apartment building, Harbor House, in the Denny Triangle neighborhood.

Misty has struggled with bipolar disorder for years. Luckily, she got hooked up with "a great doctor and a great case manager" at the Downtown Emergency Service Center. She's taking medication regularly, but still, episodes will flare up. She tries to be alone when she thinks that's about to happen.

"You know it when you wake up in the morning," she says. "If I have a bad day, I just stay home and let it run itself out. I don't want to be around other people when I'm in a bipolar mode."

Though she doesn't know any of them personally, she wants to thank all her customers for their support and ask them to keep buying the paper from her. ■



## CLASSICS CORNER



BY PERFESS'R HARRIS

### Perfess'r Harris Does Deuteronomy

**L**ately, we at Classics Corner have been praying for the rapture to come early for Bush. Our ostentatiously devout President is filmed in Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* with a group of rich Republicans that he calls the "haves and have-mores." "Some people call you the elite," he smirks. "I call you my base."

If G.W. has his way, the rich will inherit the Earth, tax-free and with full drilling rights.

This, of course, brings us to Deuteronomy. Like Leviticus and Numbers, it's full of weird rules — like the prohibition against wearing wool and linen fiber blends — so it's a book that few of us would actually read. But for the haves and the have-mores, Deuteronomy is the next best thing to deregulation.

Within a hundred years or so of the eighth century B.C., revolution was in the air. Amos was the first, and told the rich to take their empty ritual and stick it where God's radiance never dwells. "I hate, I despise your feast days and I take no pleasure in your solemn assemblies. ... But let justice well up as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream." The rich, said Amos, "lay upon ivory beds" and "drink wine out of bowls" while they "tread upon the poor." God is not impressed, he said.

Micah, with his "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God," wasn't far behind. And then there was Isaiah, whose God instructed us to "seek justice, relieve the oppressed. Judge the fatherless and plead for the widow."

Suddenly, God cared more for the oppressed than for proper forms of worship, and the temple priests were feeling the pinch. Nobody, after all, ever got rich sticking up for poor people. The prophets had turned the world upside down, and the priests longed for the good old days, when the rich were admired and the poor were, at best, ignored.

The priests swung into action and did what G.W. would have done. They manufactured evidence.

As the story goes, some workmen discovered a long lost scroll. About fifty years after Isaiah, the priests were in the middle of a major capital campaign and were doing a Temple remodel. The priests examined the evidence, declared it the word of Moses himself, and had "all the people, great and small" assemble for a daylong public reading. This was the ancient equivalent of a White House press release.

The scroll was Deuteronomy, and being rich, it turns out, was a sign of God's favor, and being poor, well, being poor just sucked, and then you die. "If thou harken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God ... the Lord shall command the blessing upon thee and thy storehouses, and make thee plenteous in goods. But if thou wilt not ... thou shalt serve in hunger and in thirst and in nakedness."

The poor, said Deuteronomy, will be with us always, so roast another calf and pour some wine. Maybe there'll be leftovers.

Nearly three millennia later, the chasm between the rich and poor is the central moral challenge of our time, and God hasn't issued any recent directives.

Maybe he wants us to make up our own minds. ■

The priests swung into action and did what G.W. would have done. They manufactured evidence.

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# Upcoming & Notable

## Friday 7/23

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice present Friday Night at the Meaningful Movies, featuring "Amy Goodman's **Exception To The Rulers Tour**," recorded May 7, 2004, in Seattle. This award-winning journalist offers her no-holds-barred perspective on world events and hidden motives. Free, donations appreciated. 7 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. N., north of 50th in Wallingford. Info [wfp@comcast.net](mailto:wfp@comcast.net).

## Saturday 7/24

Volunteer to increase voter registration and turnout of low-income voters. Join the **Statewide Poverty Action Network** as they register voters door-to-door in Auburn and Kent. Transportation from Seattle provided. 10:45 a.m. - 2 p.m., every Saturday through Oct. 2. Carpool from Fremont Public Association, 1501 N. 45th, at 10 a.m. Info Anne Yen 206-694-6794 ext. 4 or [anne@povertyaction.org](mailto:anne@povertyaction.org).

## Sunday 7/25

**Seattle Peace Concert** featuring No Tomorrow, Ricky Gene's Dream Machine, Big Island Shindig, Tiny Giants and more. Sound by "Dougan Sound." Noon - 6 p.m., at Magnuson Park Beach Area, Seattle. Free, please bring food bank donations for Northwest Harvest. Info 206-729-5232 or [www.seapeace.org](http://www.seapeace.org).

## Tuesday 7/27

Training session on **Media and Messaging**, explore how to use campus and community media to get the word out and develop an effective message. Learn important skills and network with other social justice minded people in the area. Sponsored by EnviroCitizen, a national non-profit organization. No need to RSVP, bring your lunch. Noon - 1 p.m., in the conference room at 2021 3rd Ave., between Lenora and Virginia in Belltown. Info 206-256-6429 or [www.envirocitizen.org](http://www.envirocitizen.org).

## Thursday 7/29

Come on out to the Karaoke-a Thon presented by the **Tenant's Union** of Washington. Win fabulous prizes for best costume, best group song, and most pledges earned! 8 p.m., at Capitol Hill Art Center, 1621 12th Ave., Seattle. To register, call 206-722-6848 ext. 102.

## Saturday 7/31

**Rolling Thunder Democracy Festival** with workshops, food, information and rabble rousing. Speakers include Jim Hightower, Tom Hayden and Velma Voloria. Music by Fruit, Po Girl, Paula Maya and many more. Tickets \$10 at Elliott Bay Books, Horizon Books, M Coy Books or online [www.seattlethunder.net](http://www.seattlethunder.net).

Noon - 8 p.m., at Magnuson Park, Sand Point, Seattle. Info 206-623-1179 or [mike55@foxinternet.net](mailto:mike55@foxinternet.net).

Celebrate the publication of **Revolutionary Integration**, an inspiring history and Marxist analysis of the Black liberation struggle. The program will feature a discussion by local activists on the book's lessons and meaning for today. Hosted by Radical Women and the Freedom Socialist Party. A reception follows, featuring an hors d'oeuvres buffet available for a \$5.50 donation. 4 p.m., at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle. Info 206-722-6057 or 722-2453.

## Sunday 8/1

**Seattle Peace Concert** featuring Crown Hillbillies, Creeping Time, The Dustmakers, Korby Lenker Trio and more. Bring your thing, join the jam. Noon - 6 p.m., at Woodland Park Shelter Area #1, Aurora Ave. N. and N. 50th, Seattle. Free, please bring food bank donations for Northwest Harvest. Info 206-729-5232 or [www.seapeace.org](http://www.seapeace.org).

## Tuesday 8/3

**Rally To Save Section 8!** The Bush Administration is perpetrating vast and devastating changes to the Housing Choice Voucher Section 8 program which provides **affordable housing** to thousands of low-income families, elderly and disabled people. Join with homeless people, tenants, elected officials and community organizations to publicly decry the Bush Administration's war on low-income people in this country. Sponsored by the Tenant's Union of Washington. Noon, at the Federal Building, 2nd and Marion, Downtown Seattle. Info Emily Paddison 206-722-6848 ext. 102 or [emily@tenantsunion.org](mailto:emily@tenantsunion.org).

Training session on **Community Organizing**. Nate Moxley and Kate Villarreal, organizers from the Community Coalition for Environmental Studies, will talk about their work addressing injustice, putting organizing skills to work and winning. Sponsored by EnviroCitizen, a national non-profit organization. No need to RSVP, bring your lunch. Noon - 1 p.m., in the conference room at 2021 3rd Ave., between Lenora and Virginia in Belltown, Seattle. Info 206-256-6429 or [www.envirocitizen.org](http://www.envirocitizen.org).

## Wednesday 8/4

**Jobs With Justice** Seattle Organizing Committee meeting. 5:30 p.m., at Labor Temple, Hall 8, 2800 1st Ave., Seattle. Info 206-441-4969.

## Friday 8/6

**Reel Resistance Film Series** continues with **Cuba Va**, about the cultural and political preoccupations of Cuban youth. Hosted by the Freedom Social-

ist Party. Tickets \$2, appetizers and desserts available (work exchange and sliding scale for low income). Doors open at 7 p.m., showtime 7:30 p.m., at New Freedom Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle. Info 206-722-2453 or [www.socialism.com](http://www.socialism.com).

## Ongoing

**Say No! to the Bush Agenda** at the Republican National Convention, August 29-September 2. More than a million people are expected to converge from all over the world to stand in opposition to the Bush agenda of war and repression. Not In Our Name is organizing to send participants from this area. Help is needed with outreach, fundraising, media, website and more. Meet every other Sunday, next meeting is July 25, 2 p.m., at 1609 19th Ave., at the corner of 19th and Pine St., Capitol Hill, Seattle. Info Not In Our Name 206-322-3813 or [seattle@notinourname.net](mailto:seattle@notinourname.net).

**Marriage Equality Now!** A new community group, Equality Now, is organizing and meets every Monday. 7 p.m., at Café Vita, 1005 E. Pike, 2nd Floor, on Capitol Hill, Seattle. Info 206-890-8526.

Calendar compiled from Jean Buskin's *Peace and Justice Events Calendar*, available in full at [www.scn.org/activism/calendar](http://www.scn.org/activism/calendar). Email calendar submissions to [calendar@realchangenews.org](mailto:calendar@realchangenews.org).

## Be a Voter Registration VOLUNTEER


Voter registration deadlines are approaching and we looking for volunteers to register homeless and low-income people at:

Federal Way Food Bank  
(Wed/Fri afternoons)  
The Women's Referral Center  
(evenings)  
Boomtown Café  
(breakfast or lunch shifts)  
Local DSHS offices  
(weekdays)

Other locations available. We'll train you and provide materials. You provide your own transportation and outgoing personality. Bi-lingual volunteers (Engl/Span and Eng/Mandarin), people of color, and Muslim volunteers especially encouraged.

Contact Rachael 441-3247 X201 or [organizer@realchangenews.org](mailto:organizer@realchangenews.org)

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citizens participation project



## Support the Religious Community's fast for Hungry and Homeless Neighbors

**Issue:** Elected officials in the City of Seattle are beginning negotiations for the 2005 and 2006 budgets. The expected shortfall — the gap between what they have available to spend and what they need to spend just to maintain the current level of services — is \$25 million. That number could increase significantly depending on the repayment schedule for City Light ratepayers related to the court decision on streetlights last year. Current services already fall far short of the need. Last October, 1,802 people were counted surviving outside in Seattle. In 2003, 13 of every 14 women seeking shelter from domestic violence were turned away for lack of space. And since city budget cuts made last March, the Tenant's Union has turned away an average of 100 households per month seeking housing counseling — many trying to avoid homelessness.

**Background:** The City of Seattle counts among its residents thousands of children, women and men who are homeless, hungry and poor day after day, night after night. In the economic downturn of the past three years, the number of poor people in our town who need shelter, food, and healthcare has grown. At the same time, the City of Seattle, a major funder of these emergency services, has cut health and human service programs and eroded our community's response to this crisis by \$4.6 million. Homeless women and children, the working poor, and new immigrants to this country are suffering more than ever in the face of these cuts.

The economic costs of neglect are apparent, in the jails full of mentally ill and chemically dependent people, in the poor people using the emergency room as their doctor when all else fails. We see the social costs in more people sleeping in greenbelts, cars, doorways, and abandoned buildings; in more people having to band together to form tent cities. The moral costs are a hardening of hearts, an acceptance of the suffering of our poorer neighbors, of leaving children to grow up homeless and rootless.

If we can build stadiums, a beautiful public library, a new opera house, and a brand-new City Hall, we can surely find the money to take care of Seattle's homeless and hungry neighbors. We call on the City to preserve funding for our most vulnerable citizens. As Mayor Greg Nickels prepares his budget for 2005-6, he must prioritize services that help those who need it most. The poor can bear no more.

**Action:** On July 19, the Seattle religious community launched a Public Fast at Mayor Greg Nickels' office. Fasters and supporters will gather in the Mayor's reception area every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to fast and sit in prayerful witness to persuade our mayor and City Council to commit and preserve funding for programs serving homeless and hungry people. Fasters are asked to fast for a period of 24 hours and sit quietly in the mayor's reception area from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on their designated fasting day.

Fasting has great spiritual power: we interrupt our normal life, deprive ourselves of our usual sustenance, and bring our consciousness closer to God. Moses, Jesus, Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., all fasted. We, too, are fasting, until the moral force that gathers opens the heart and changes the minds of our mayor and councilmembers, and they pass a city budget which preserves funding for our hungry and homeless neighbors. If you would like to participate in the fast and bear witness to the basic human rights to shelter, food, and health care, please contact (206)794-3483 or [PublicFast@ccsww.org](mailto:PublicFast@ccsww.org).



Volunteer Chore Services needs volunteers to help with housechores and yardwork to help low-income disabled adults and seniors. The program allows each volunteer to choose their time/location. Please call Heather at 425-284-2240 or 888-649-6850 for more info.

Shoreline YMCA has tons of rewarding volunteer opportunities to care for area teens & kids. Make a lasting difference today! For a complete list of "opportunities to serve" log onto our website, call us or email us directly @ [www.seattleyymca.org](http://www.seattleyymca.org) (206)364-1700 or [jmack@sh.seattleyymca.org](mailto:jmack@sh.seattleyymca.org).

Volunteer at Community Lunch on Capitol Hill! Serve hot, wholesome meals to homeless and low-income of Seattle. Volunteers needed Tuesdays and Fridays, 10am to 2pm. Contact Brian Johnson at (206)322-7500.

Block Party! Tuesday Aug. 3rd. This event is so much fun, that volunteering doesn't even feel like work! We need your help with planning, and prep, as well as help on the day of the event for setup/cleanup, food and cooking, cotton candy machines, decorations, etc! If you're interested, please email or call Myla Becker, Volunteer Coordinator, Cascade People's Center, [mbecker@lcsnw.org](mailto:mbecker@lcsnw.org) or (206)838-7275 (leave a message!).

**We want to hear from you!**



Bring story ideas, comments, suggestions, and questions to the fourth monthly open meeting of the **Real Change Editorial Committee**. Wednesday August 18, 4:30 p.m., at the *Real Change* office. Everyone welcome. For additional information about the meeting, please call Adam Holdorf, editor, at 206-441-3247, extension 207.

**Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project**  
2129 2nd Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98121

Seattle Public Library, Serials Unit  
1000 - 4th Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98104

