



# REAL CHANGE

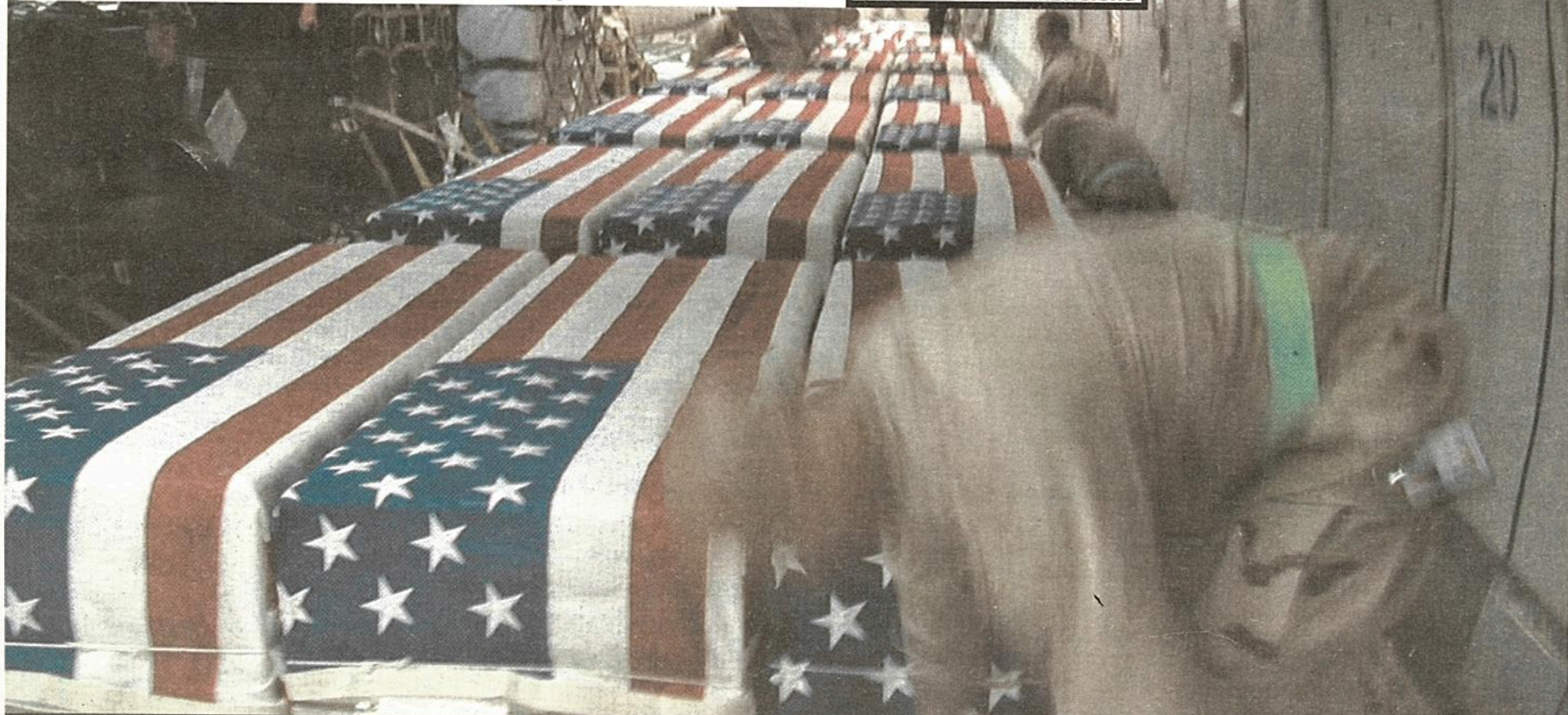
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**Lefty Radio 4**

**City Budget: Death by Papercut**

**5**

**Dr. Wes: Running with Metaphors**

**6**

**Our Town 11**

## The Reality Had to Get Out

Tami Silicio on the photograph that cost her her job

Interview by Joan Pliego

Tami Silicio is a strong, petite, and warmly charismatic 50-year-old woman with auburn hair and large, deep, dark-brown eyes. She laughs often, but she's dead serious when it comes to the war in Iraq. And when she talks about it, she looks you right in the eye. She opened the eyes and hearts of the nation with her jaw-dropping overnight digital image of respect and despair.

Tami wrote home in a quick and tired email about her night watching 20 more sent home — 20 American soldiers' flag-draped caskets in a 747 cargo plane making a nightly flight from Kuwait. To that email, Tami attached a JPEG file of a photo she took that night. Tami's now-infamous photo and her work as a contractor in Kuwait were featured on the cover of *The Seattle Times* on Sunday, April 18.

The photo quickly blazed a path across the Internet and the world. It made local, national, and international news, riled the Pentagon, stirred comment from the Bush administration and support from Senator John Kerry, be-

came the topic of term papers at many prestigious schools including West Point, and there's talk that it may be in the running for a Pulitzer Prize. Publication of Tami's photo opened the floodgates. In the following week, dozens of newspapers ran front-page photographs of military coffins — some reprints of Tami's photo, others newly released photos from Dover Air Force Base. None of this was intended. She was just writing home.

**Tami Silicio:** When you look at the photo, you fill with compassion. You can feel the grief. That's how I was feeling in my heart when I took the picture. I was thinking about the overwhelming sadness of those irreplaceable lives lost, the true cost of this war. It's about the dignity and respect and care that they are given going home.

**Real Change:** That was your pure intent, and then it just blew up.

**Silicio:** Well, I had no intent. I took the photo to share with my family and my

friends. A lot of nights I would journal home about the day.

**RC:** Your friend Amy Katz was on the list that you sent the photo to and she sent it to the Times.

**Silicio:** Yes. I think it was meant to be. I think God had a hand in me taking it. It seems like it was directed to have an impact. It showed the true devastation through the deaths. Not only American lives, but Iraqis' lives as well. We are all God's children.

**RC:** When I read about your employer, Maytag Aircraft, they claimed it was against company regulation to take the photo.

**Silicio:** It wasn't against company regulation. You cannot photograph classified information. But it wasn't classified because it was on the plane and you couldn't see the names on the coffins. I had no idea that Pentagon policy banned pictures like this from public view until I was told by *The Seattle Times* that I could get into trouble for publishing the picture. Maytag just reprimanded me for it going in the paper. Then two days later it came down from the Pentagon to fire me and my hus-

band, who I am now separated from.

I worked very hard. I loved my position and what I was doing. I regret my husband losing his job over this because he had nothing to do with the photo being taken or published. When he found out, it was too late and he tried to stop it. He felt publishing it was wrong. And I felt it was right. I felt that if families knew how well their loved ones were being treated on the way home, it would help comfort them.

**RC:** Do you wish you could go back to a time before you took the photo and have your life just the way it was before?

**Silicio:** I think that even if I went back to the day before, I would be put in that position to take the photo again. I think it was one of those things that just had to be. The reality had to get out.

A lot of parents are angry. They want their kids out of there. Not only that but there's a shortage on flak vests, or there was then. Parents were sending armor plates to their kids. The Humvees weren't bulletproof. They needed to supply them and protect them better.

*Continued to page 13*



Look for the Mockingbird Times Inside!







## Coronation 2004

Dear *Real Change*,

I disagree with your "no" recommendation on Initiative 872. (RC Oct. 14). I-872 isn't the best fix to our flawed voting system: proportional representation or approval voting would be far better. However, I-872 will let minor party candidates run and win campaigns without fear of "spoiling" the general election and it will give minor party voters the chance to have a real effect on the final outcome in this state's many one-party districts.

You say that I-872 will "turn the November elections into boring fait accomplis," but that's what most local partisan elections already are! As you point out "True-Blue" Seattle and "Blood Red" districts in eastern Washington don't have seriously contested partisan races — they have coronations of whoever survives the dominant party's primary. We might as well let all voters — not just those in the dominant party — help choose which candidate from that party wins.

Yours,  
Daniel Keshet  
Wallingford

## Bushwashed

Dear ©Dr. Wes Browning,

I want to tell you how I enjoyed reading your article. [RC April 29, in which Wes recounts how Maytag Aircraft "...let Silicio and her husband go, and they would have fired her little dog too, if she had one and it was in range."] Very funny; my favorite part is about the little dog, too. Thanks alot for the support. It is great to know that there are so many of us on track about the truth.

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Yesterday I was standing on the corner in Everett with a bunch of Kerry sign holders opposite Bush sign holders, and this one guy comes across the street and proceeds to call me ignorant and tells me why, like he is trying to recruit me or something.

I did not even attempt to argue with him because these people are so Bushwashed (I don't know if I made that word up just now or saw it somewhere and remembered it in my subconscious).

Anyway, he's trying to get me to read this paper in his hand and I said no thanks, I have my opinions and you have yours and that's what freedom of speech is about, and he said my opinions were wrong and that our country will be overrun by terrorists if Kerry gets in and some other stuff was said.

I told him I wasn't going to argue because it's like arguing with a brick wall and turned and talked to my friends and he stood there talking at others. We believe that he has the right to stand there and do that. But he wouldn't listen to the others that tried to talk and that is the difference between Republicans and Democrats, or one of them.

Anyway, thank you again,  
Tami Silicio

## Something is Rancid in the Kingdom of Wallingford

Dear Editor,

Rather than spending their money telling the state how to educate children [by advocating for charter schools, which has resulted in Referendum 55], those Dick's Drive-In heirs might want to invest in a little new oil in their french fry cooker. Our entire neighborhood reeks.

Henry Gordon  
Wallingford

## Corrections

President George W. Bush won the electoral vote in 2000 with 277 votes in the Electoral College to Gore's 266 votes. Our story on the Electoral College ("Winner Take All," RC Oct. 28) misstated the number.

The Mayor's proposed budget does not seek to expand buy-bust operations occurring throughout select neighborhoods throughout the city ("Prejudice Undercover," RC Sept. 30). Instead, he wants to pair more police officers with personnel from the Department of Corrections in an effort to make sure released offenders are meeting the requirements of their probation.

## Real Change is hiring: Editorial Staff

Join our growing newspaper as we prepare to begin weekly publication. *Real Change* seeks an **Associate Editor** to help write and edit, develop story ideas, manage volunteer help, and do page layout. Qualified candidates will be highly organized and have previous editorial experience. We

also seek a **Reporter** with a demonstrated commitment to fairness, balance, courage, and compassion to write news and feature stories. One year's newspaper experience required. These positions are part-time at 18 hrs/wk. at \$13.50/hr., and will end after six months. Possibility exists of transitioning to full-time hire. **Application deadline is November 10.** For detailed job descriptions, please see [www.realchangenews.org](http://www.realchangenews.org).

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# Real Change

## Reaching Out to End Poverty

*Real Change* is published every other Thursday and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Annual subscriptions are available for \$35. All material is copyrighted to the authors.

Submissions should be mailed to "Real Change," 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 441-3247; fax. (206) 374-2455.

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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.

Editorial Policy:

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

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# A War with No Winners

## City's approach to illegal drugs is unfair, expensive

By D'Adre Cunningham

The City of Seattle's response to the problem of drugs is both unjust and unnecessarily costly. In particular, the city should de-prioritize the arrest of low-level, non-violent drug offenders and encourage the funding and development of more cost-effective methods of protecting public safety and reducing drug abuse.

The current approach to drug abuse emphasizes the arrest of many drug users for possession or "low-level" delivery. It is commonplace for drug users to deliver or facilitate delivery of small amounts of drugs and both are arrested on delivery charges. Either the buyer or the deliverer gives facilitators, who are often called "clucks" or "go-betweens," drugs or a small amount of cash for their assistance. These go-betweens and deliverers are overwhelmingly nonviolent, drug-addicted offenders.

At the same time, an estimated 130,000 persons in King County need, but cannot obtain, substance abuse treatment. The city neither currently provides nor proposes to provide treatment vouchers to people addicted to non-opiates. The emphasis solely on law enforcement does not reduce harms associated with illicit drug use and is extremely costly. While the city incurs the policing costs associated with this strategy (nearly \$2.9 million next year, including personnel costs), county taxpayers pay to process, prosecute, defend, and jail those arrested. Unless the city's approach to drug abuse changes, King County's entire general fund will be spent on the criminal justice system by the year 2008.

The current response also disproportionately targets the most vulnerable: the poor, homeless, and drug-addicted. People of color within these categories are especially vulnerable to arrest under the city's current policies. Arresting large numbers of the city's most vulnerable residents does nothing to address the underlying social problems of drug addiction, poverty, and despair.

Four aspects of the city's approach to drug abuse must change in order to promote public safety and reduce drug abuse in the long term.

### Stop routinely using patrol officers in undercover "buy-bust" operations aimed at low-level dealers

Buy-bust operations (in which undercover officers solicit drugs from suspected dealers) in recent years consumed approximately 800 officer hours a month, even though on average a buy-bust yielded less than one gram — equivalent to one packet of sweetener — of narcotics.

### Fund drug treatment and harm reduction programs

Research consistently demonstrates treatment and prevention programs are a far more cost-effective means of dealing with drug abuse than the criminal justice system. A study found that drug treatment is seven times more cost-effective than drug law enforcement in reducing drug abuse, and that every dollar spent on treatment saves \$7.48 on reduced crime and regained productivity.

### Stop targeting vulnerable people for arrest

The current focus on low-level offenders disparately impacts the poor in general and poor addicts of color in particular. Under the most conservative estimate of available 2002 Seattle-King County public health data, less than 50 percent of Seattle's recent cocaine users were persons of color. Yet, approximately 97.1 percent of those convicted of dealing less than half of one gram of cocaine in 2002 were Black, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander or Native American.

### Make the prevention, detection, investigation, and arrest of violent and property crimes in Seattle the highest law enforcement priority

Rapes, robberies, violent assaults, burglaries, and serious property crimes go unsolved in Seattle at a higher rate than the national average for cities of comparable size. Detection and investigation of violent and property crimes begins with prompt 911 responses and thorough police reports. These should be the department's top priority.

A coalition of racial and social justice organizations, representatives of communities of color, religious leaders, labor activists, public health and human services providers, academics, and other concerned citizens have developed the "Budget for Justice" campaign in order to transform the city's drug enforcement policies. Community members concerned about this issue should come to the Seattle City Council's last public hearing on this year's proposed budget, Thursday, November 4, and make their voices heard. ■

D'Adre Cunningham is staff attorney of the Defender Association's Racial Disparity Project. For more information about the Budget For Justice Coalition's campaign, call K.L. Shannon at (206)447-3900, ext. 759.

**Arresting large numbers of the city's most vulnerable residents does nothing to address the underlying social problems**



## Inside:

### Opinion

The City's War on drugs has too many unintended victims  
by D'Adre Cunningham ..... 3

### Features

The Reality Had to Get Out: Interview with photographer Tami Silicio  
by Joan Pilego ..... 1

Adventures in Poetry: Don't run with metaphors. You could poke out your eye.  
with ©Dr. Wes Browning ..... 6

An American Story: Intiman does *Our Town*, saves democracy  
by Emma Quinn ..... 11

Street Watch  
by Emma Quinn ..... 12

Street Talk: Choose Your Vice  
by Meghan Peters ..... 12

Calendar  
compiled by Sandra Enger ..... 15

### News

News You Can Use: Lefty Radio 1090 AM, Peace statue stays, Mourning Rachael Corrie, Lifetime SHA ban goes down.  
by Adam Hyla, Tom Shea, Shelly Martin ..... 4

Death: by Papercut: Mayors budget defunds organizing  
by R.V. Murphy and Adam Hyla ..... 5

North American Newsbriefs  
Compiled by Patty Lane ..... 14

### Poetry

Insights and surprises from W. Lake and Stacy Torian ..... 6

### Activism

Citizens Participation Project ..... 16



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**This week's online action...**

**Ask the Seattle City Council to build a downtown homeless services center.**



## The Rush antidote

Johnny Cash is out, Janeane Garofalo is in. The liberal talk radio network Air America came to the Seattle-Tacoma-Everett airwaves on Monday, October 25. Infinity Broadcasting Co. replaced old-time country station KYCW-AM 1090 with KPTK, which will feature the voices of Garafalo, comedian Al Franken, and other hosts which take the radio dial in a decidedly leftward direction.

Infinity Radio Seattle senior vice president Dave McDonald said that the change predictably upset a number of country music fans. KYCW offered "a unique body of music that you don't hear anymore" yet it "was no longer commercially viable."

KPTK-AM 1090 will pick and choose from among the programming offered by Air America; McDonald says he plans to add some local content in coming months. Right now, the station mixes Air America's talk show hosts with a daily dose of Ed Schultz, the cantankerous conservative turncoat billed as "a 21st Century Teddy Roosevelt."

Infinity Broadcasting's airing of Air America will be reviewed in coming months. Its future depends on the new format's commercial success. "Conventional wisdom among radio people is that liberal talk won't work — that it sounds too moderate, and you need something radical to get people's attention," says McDonald. He hopes KPTK bucks that old belief.

—Adam Hyla

## Back to Peace Park

The Seattle Parks Department has decided to return the life-size bronze statue of 12-year old Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese girl who died of leukemia following the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, to the University District's Peace Park.

The statue, which was dedicated to the small park created by internationally renowned local Quaker peace activist Dr. Floyd Schmoie, was vandalized last year: its arm was sawed off and one of its legs was damaged. Community groups and citizens joined with the city in raising money for its repair. A debate then ensued about whether to relocate it to Green Lake, where some felt it would receive more visitors and be less likely to be vandalized again.

While the World Peace Project for Children and the artist who created the statue (both instrumental in its repair) felt the statue should be moved, members of Schmoie's organization, the University Friends, which is located just across the street from Peace Park, felt that it should remain.

After a series of meetings were held, Seattle Parks Department spokeswoman Dewey Potter says that opinions about the fate of the statue were evenly divided, but people were respectful of each other's views. "It was one of the more civil processes we've had lately," said Potter. "People weren't angry and shouting. They were actually listening to each other."

Potter says that many people who initially supported the move changed their minds after hearing the story of Dr. Schmoie and Peace Park. Schmoie, a four-time Nobel Prize nominee who tried to prevent the internment of Japanese Americans and helped build homes for Hiroshima survivors, was awarded the \$5,000 Hiroshima Peace Prize in 1988. He used the money to clear a small plot of land near the University campus. Fratelli's Ice Cream paid for the statue



of Sadako holding a paper crane, a symbol of hope in her battle with leukemia. Since its dedication in 1990, thousands of children and adults have visited the statue and adorned it with paper cranes. Schmoie died at the age of 105 in 2001.

In a press release last week, Seattle Parks Department Director Ken Bounds said that he had taken the park's history into account and "it is clear to me that Sadako and the Thousand Cranes is the central feature and focus of Peace Park. Although it is tempting to move this wonderful sculpture to a park where it is more visible, moving the sculpture would take away something very important and meaningful from Peace Park and its neighbors."

Potter said no special measures will be taken to prevent further vandalism, but that they hope it was an isolated incident. The statue will be returned to its spot at the north end of the University Bridge in mid-January.

—Tom Shea

## The choice

Cindy and Craig Corrie suffered an incalculable loss when their daughter, Rachel, was run over by an Israeli bulldozer while trying to protect the homes of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip in March 2003.

Since then, they have managed to follow in their daughter's footsteps: going to Gaza, meeting people their daughter had stayed with, and meeting other families who have lost loved ones in the Israel-Palestine conflict in an effort to build alliances for peace. The Corries will come to Seattle to speak on the subject of reconciliation on Thursday, November 7.

Reconciliation is not an easy thing to imagine for the people of the Occupied Territories. Craig Corrie references South African bishop Desmond Tutu's writing on the matter. Tutu wrote that, first, you need a full recounting of the facts. "There is no agreement on the facts in Israel-Palestine," says Craig.

What would they say to others who are mourning the deaths of loved ones? "I hope that they can see their own path of dealing with their loss," says Cindy Corrie. "In our case, there has been a lot of work to do; people have called on us to talk about our situation and so forth, and that work has been really healing, but I'm also aware of the fact that the work can get in the way of actually feeling what has happened to me."

"With any loss, you need to find some constructive response. I go back to Desmond Tutu, who says that you have a choice about whether tragedy in your life is going to embitter you or ennoble you. We're trying to not be embittered by this — to do the work that has been given to us to do."

—Adam Hyla



RACHEL CORRIE

The Corries will speak at St. Mark's Cathedral on Thursday, November 7 at 6 p.m. Another Side of Peace, a new documentary chronicling the development of The Parents' Circle, a group of Palestinian and Israeli parents who have lost children to the conflict, will also be shown. For more information contact Rev. Devin McLachlan at (206)323-0300 ext. 217.

## No Lifetime Bar

In July, the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) proposed a lifetime ban on applicants with past criminal convictions for rape, arson, kidnapping, or homicide. Under these tough guidelines, anyone with "habitual criminal activity" (defined as someone with frequent and/or habitual arrests) would be barred for life from public housing assistance.

Such a change in SHA regulations would have barred many of Seattle's poor, whose minor convictions lie far in the past, from finding the affordable housing they need to get off the streets.

"From the beginning, the reason we proposed the ban was because we were backing off on the requirements for bona fide rental history," says Dennis Hall, admissions manager at SHA. "We've found there is a fundamental absurdity in requiring housing history from the homeless community."

However, after receiving feedback from stakeholders such as the Seattle King County Coalition for the Homeless (SKCCH), SHA recently decided to

Continued to page 14

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



# Death by Paper Cut

## City faces hard choices on human services

By R.V. Murphy and Adam Hyla

While Mayor Greg Nickels told the Seattle City Council and members of the media that no direct services would be cut from the 2005 city budget, a handful of smaller, indirect services are getting the hatchet, unless the council takes action. The mayor is proposing cuts of \$317,885, which will affect 15 different human service organizations.

Some will have a domino effect on other funding, such as the end of an annual grant that improves child welfare in low-income families. The Mayor has proposed dropping the city's participation in the SOAR Opportunity Fund, a joint public-private effort that has direct funding to assorted non-profits that improve the lives of poor children, many of whom are immigrants.

Over the past four years, the city's \$125,000 contribution to SOAR has opened the eyes of private foundations "to invest in areas that we all agreed are strategic," says Kathleen Pierce, managing trustee of the Kirkpatrick Family Foundation. She cites a grant her foundation made to train low-in-

come women for childcare careers. "My money was encouraged to go there because of the city's investment. I knew it was the kind of grant that they would get some extra money for."

By ending contributions to the city-county-private party initiative, "the city is sending a message that these partnerships are not important," she says. "The city is unilaterally deciding to cut it. That's not what an equal partner does."

Patricia McInturff, directory of the city's Human Services Department, says cutting SOAR was "a hard choice we had to make." Overall, she says, the September passage of the Families and Education Levy and the mayor's budget decisions mean that human services are taking less of a hit than other city departments.

A number of fee increases intended to narrow the budget deficit are getting their own controversy. Pre-eminent among them is the pay-to-park proposal at city attractions like Green Lake and Seward Park. "It gets to the issue of 'Are parks for everybody? When do you

charge fees and when do you not?" says Elma Borbe, legislative aide for Councilmember David Della.

Soccer, rugby, and softball enthusiasts have raised a ruckus over the mayor's proposal to raise usage fees for playing fields. The fees would increase from \$25 to \$40 per team. Borbe says that's not such a difficult decision: "The thinking is, they're more likely to pay."

Playfields and community centers are rapidly becoming more and more costly as new facilities open to the public. "We're coming to a problem with paying for operating and maintenance to keep up with the capital improvements," says Borbe.

To reach the \$317,885 goal, the mayor proposes to cut all of the administrative operations of the Non-Profit Assistance Center and Shalom Zone. Slated for 50 percent reduction from policy advocacy are the Children's Alliance, FPA-SPAN, Neighborhood House, the Urban League, and Low Income Housing Alliance. Receiving 25 percent access to services are American Friends Service Committee,



SOCCKER PLAYERS HAVE SQUAWKED OVER HIGHER FEES FOR SPORTSFIELDS. PHOTO BY KEN DEAN.

Crisis Clinic, Teen Link, FPA-Legal Advocacy, ID Emergency Center, King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, LGBT Community Center, the Urban League, and the Welfare Rights

*Continued on page 14*

## Real Change Tenth Anniversary Breakfast

Keynote Speaker: Sherman Alexie  
Music by: The Total Experience Gospel Choir

Celebrate the past  
Prepare for the future

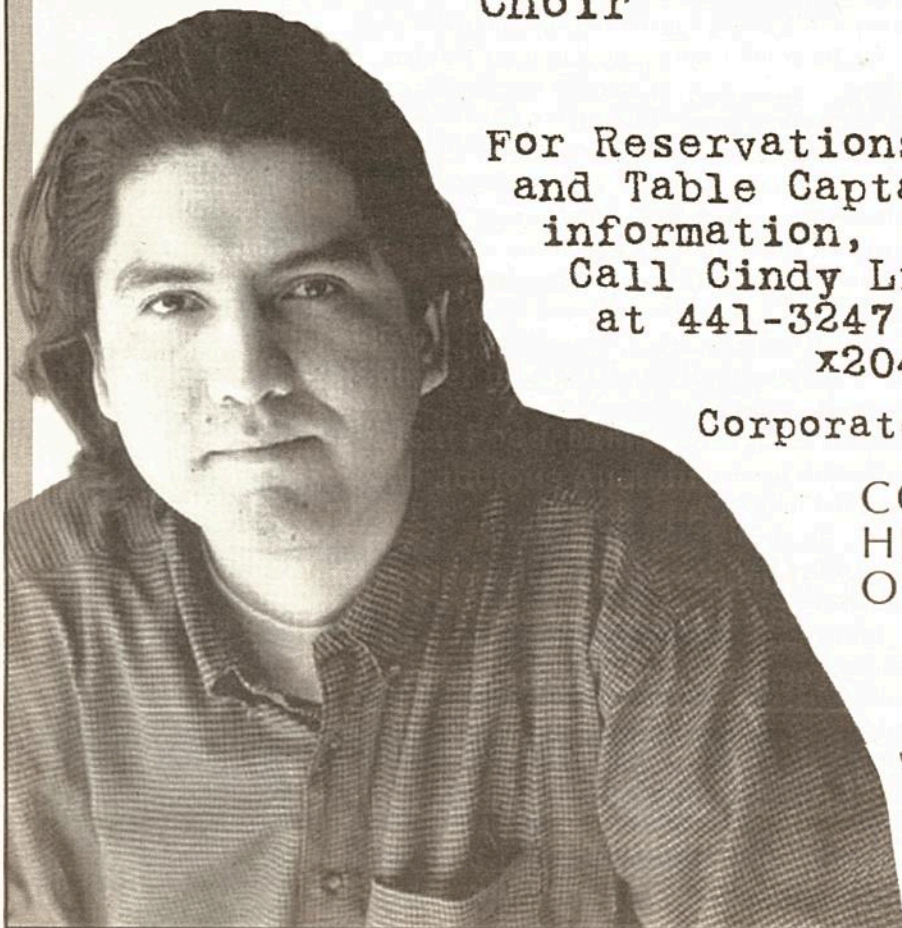
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For Reservations and Table Captain information, Call Cindy Lin at 441-3247 x204

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# poetry

## Untitled

Ouais... Collision and  
Collusions... No, conclusion  
What is Art Anyway  
How Much Sabotage  
Can a Culture take  
Are we losing  
our Vision

-W. LAKE

## Untitled

And the liar  
Hurts Society  
As Black And  
White Papers  
Pass From Hand  
To the Gutter

—W. LAKE

## My Sisters Cry Brown Tears

my sisters cry brown tears  
for the crack addict  
the hustler  
the gangbanger  
the tender-eyed prostitute

for measly welfare checks  
that still don't pay the rent  
and barely buy food  
for crusty-mouthed babies

my sisters cry brown tears  
for corn-blistered feet  
brought on by too tight shoes  
and too much walking

for no-good promises  
and wounded pride  
cast aside by  
rude, unfeeling lovers

my sisters cry brown tears  
for the self-inflicted torture  
of scalp-burning treatments  
and rusty, oven-heated hot combs

for the cruel, jealous taunts  
of hard-hearted sisters  
and the bleak, pain-fisted cries  
of sisters in need

for the torn vaginas and anuses  
of sexually molested innocents  
my sisters cry brown tears for  
pregnant babies.

my sisters cry brown tears  
for the mothers who scraped  
and fell before them  
and who died trying to give them  
A Better Life

my sisters cry brown tears  
for sisters  
young and old  
black brown and white

my sisters cry  
yell  
kick  
shout  
scream

my sisters cry  
but do not  
die

—STACY TORIAN

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



This is my last chance to yap about the 2004 presidential election before it happens. Also, I have no idea as of this writing how the World Series has developed, either. So let's talk about a metaphor!

The metaphor I have in mind has to do with the fact that I learned at an early age to dislike sports. I have told a part of this tragedy before. How I wore glasses in grade school. How, when it came time for us kids to play baseball for gym class, my teacher realized the threat that my glasses posed if I were hit in the face with a baseball. As she herself put it, my glasses would break into deadly razor sharp shards and pierce my eyes on their way to my brain, where doctors would be helpless to remove them, and I would either die in violent throes of agony, or I would be a vegetable for the rest of my life.

Therefore she made me go out and play right-field blind. Therefore I was hit on the head with a ball which I could not see coming. Therefore I did not die or become a vegetable, thank you teacher. Instead, I became traumatized for life.

Actually, I had already been traumatized for life three years earlier. That was when my father took me to a Red Sox game. I was six, and I had never seen a baseball game before. At the time we lived at Fort Devens, an army base about 35 or 40 miles from Fenway Park, so seeing the Red Sox was well within reach. It's also relevant that we were living on a street named after a Civil War battle, Chancellorsville St. It has since been renamed Elm St. — this is absolutely true — to make it easier to spell.

You see, when I went to that Red Sox game, I thought the idea was to watch a baseball game, yell on behalf of the good guys, eat some hot dogs, see them win, and go home happy. My father had neglected to tell me that the good guys don't always win.

All he had to do to prepare me was to explain to me what our street name was about. Namely, what did transpire at Chancellorsville, VA, in early May 1863, when they had the aforementioned battle? He could have said, "Son, we

live on Chancellorsville Street. Have I ever told you what happened in the Battle of Chancellorsville?" And I could have said, "No, Dad, you suck. You're always watching Lawrence Welk. You never tell me anything." And he could have smacked me.

Or, he could have told me that when the Battle of Chancellorsville was over, Gen. Robert E. Lee was generally considered the winner, since he had got the higher score. And this would have taught me that our side (we, my father and I, being Northerners) sometimes loses.

Or, he could have really bored me to tears. He could have told me that, actually, Gen. Lee went into the battle with only about half as many men as his opponent Gen. Hooker, so the higher casualties on Hooker's side in fact represented a smaller percentage of losses for his total forces, and he was moreover left with the larger force at the end, so you could very well say that the Union side won after all, so there.

Or, my father could have said that it was exactly during the Battle of Chancellorsville that Stonewall Jackson was fatally shot. Who knows, but maybe that particular casualty by itself cost the Confederates the whole War.

Or, he could have said, go read about it in a book, I'm too busy watching Lawrence Welk to talk to you now.

In any case, I could have learned that winning and losing isn't always what it looks like. I could have learned that the Red Sox could lose that game in 1955 but might still have a chance to win the World Series in 2004, or 2005, or someday after I'm dead. I could have been prepared for the 2000 presidential election, when the guy with the best score lost.

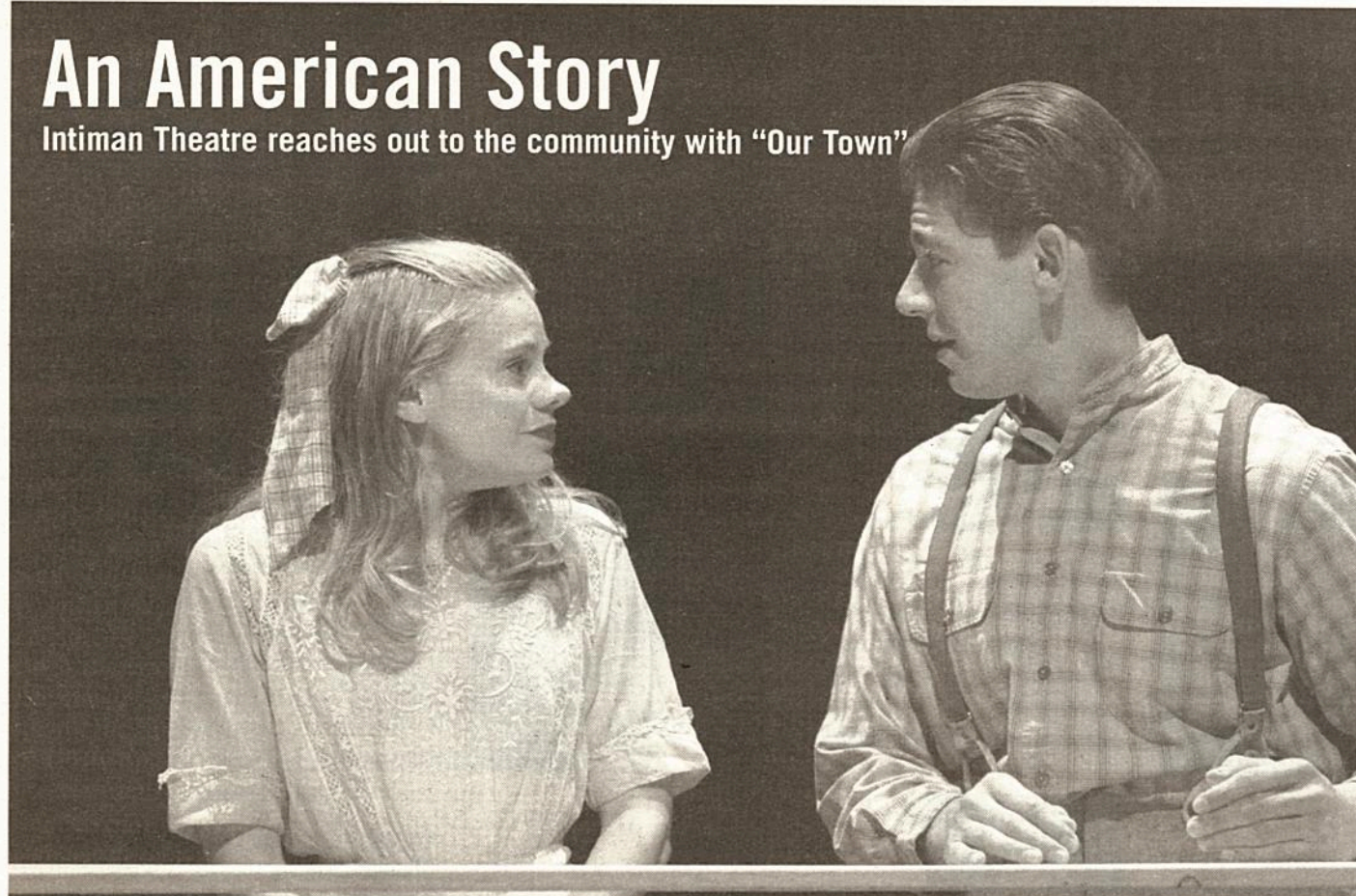
So what is the moral of our story? The moral is, don't demand that street names have to be easy to spell. What do elm trees have to do with presidential elections and baseball games? Nothing. So leave the names of streets alone. ■

**In any case, I could have learned that winning and losing isn't always what it looks like.... I could have been prepared for the 2000 presidential election, when the guy with the best score lost.**



# An American Story

Intiman Theatre reaches out to the community with "Our Town"



CELIA KEENAN-BOLGER AND JOAQUÍN TORRES ARE EMILY AND GEORGE IN *OUR TOWN*, PART ONE OF INTIMAN THEATRE'S FIVE-YEAR-LONG AMERICAN CYCLE. PHOTO BY CHRIS BENNION.

By Regina Liszanckie

Theatre is the oldest human art form. It has been a commentary on what it means to live now, offering ideas of who we are and where we are going. Yet to many, theatre is now a cultural diversion for the affluent. How does theatre reclaim its place as the people's art form? With the opening of *The American Cycle*, a series of five plays over five years, Seattle's Intiman Theatre unveils a program to bring the timeless, poignant and universal messages of American classics to a broader community.

Intiman has opened the first year of *The American Cycle* with an adaptation of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. "What [we will do] is tell a series of stories that come from our American past that will be a springboard to bring people together and understand our interconnectedness," says Intiman Managing Director Laura Penn. "*Our Town* is very accessible and in a complicated way it is very simple. It is a lovely story about very basic human things, yet in its simplicity, we see that

it is extraordinarily difficult and complicated to be human. *Our Town* is about living and loving and dying, about seeing and not seeing each other, about caring and being a part of something."

In coming years, Intiman will stage adaptations of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (2005), Richard Wright's *Native Son* (2006), Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men* (2007), and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (2008). "*The American Cycle*, in its trajectory, will take us through some extremely difficult conversations, and we hope, some transformational moments," says Penn. The five-year schedule examines issues of environmental stewardship, wealth distribution, the destructive nature of racism, the nature of power, the notion of right and wrong, and finally, central to *The American Cycle*'s core mission, the reality and beauty of being part of a community.

The emphasis on community is the producers' intention. When an individual ignores his place as part of a

larger community, democracy itself suffers. "What makes our decision-making process as a community so labored is a lack of understanding about our interconnectedness," says Penn. "We have lost that, and what it has done is polarized and paralyzed us. Where there should be joy, there is mistrust; where there should be movement, there is inertia; where there should be excitement, there is apathy."

Intiman is accompanying each play's stage run with a series of community readings intended to stimulate a shared interest of the arts in general; a community discussion follows each reading. The readings component of *The American Cycle* further illustrates

**"What makes our decision-making process as a community so labored is a lack of understanding about our interconnectedness. We have lost that, and what it has done is polarized and paralyzed us."**

Intiman's commitment to arts access. In addition to the free readings, the theatre has a number of \$10 tickets available for performances.


Jami Tomlinson and Jeremy Mitton hosted the second reading at their Renton coffee shop, The Ugly Mug, and read the parts of George and Emily, who later marry. "[After the reading the group] talked about marriage," says Tomlinson. "Even though the marriage in the play was specifically between a man and a woman, it could have easily been two men or two women, and nothing in the play would have changed."

Using the reading to discuss contemporary community issues is part of Intiman's mission. "To find a common thread [like the public readings], for different people to come together, that is very positive," says Tomlinson. "A lot of times, we may not realize that we think in stereotypes. There was diversity in this group at the reading, and it was great to hear what other people think, to open your eyes to views different from your own."

Thus the idea is to make theatre a more active part of democracy. The arts "have taken a passive role in the past 50 years," says Laura Penn. "Maybe that has to do with industrialization, with television and other forms of media. There are certain forms of culture that have brought that on: the nuclear family, the isolation of the suburbs.... It is time for us to take our place back. The American Cycle and the community readings is a way to say, here is our stake in the ground, we are going to be here awhile, why don't you join us?" ■

*Join The American Cycle and a community discussion at the last reading of Our Town on Saturday, October 30, 12 p.m. at Seattle Center (as part of La Casa de Arts' Dios de los Muertos Festival). Our Town runs through November 30; tickets and information on other aspects of The American Cycle are available at (206)269-1900 or www.intiman.org.*

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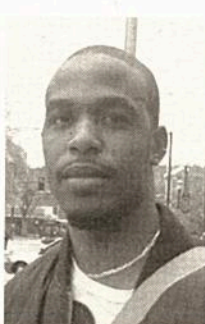
# Street Talk: Choose Your Vice

Photos and interviews by Meghan Peters

You may know whom you'd pick between Bush and Kerry, but when it comes to Cheney and Edwards where do you stand? *Real Change* visited The Ave to find out who your favorite vice presidential candidates are and why.



"I don't have a favorite vice presidential candidate. I wouldn't pick either."  
— *Shane Castillo, 25, chef/student*



"Edwards. Why the hell not? Cheney is too military minded and deemed himself insufficient. It's time for a little variety. We need someone new."  
— *Carlos Redden, 24, bartender/travel agent/student*



"Edwards. The other guy isn't even a human being."  
— *Greg Asbed, 41, community organizer*

"Cheney. He's not afraid to speak his mind, and he serves as a perfect right-hand man to George W. Plus he wasn't as mean in the vice presidential debate."  
— *Andrew Englehard, 18, actor/student*



"Edwards. He's from North Carolina and talks with a real nice accent. But for political reasons as well."  
— *Julia Perkins, 30, community organizer*



"I'm a Republican but I still choose Edwards. He's more of a people person. I liked his issues when he was trying to run for president but unfortunately that didn't follow through."  
— *Sinae Hong, 18, student*



**Friday, Oct. 1, 5:20 p.m., Alaskan Way Viaduct.** Officers observed two suspects walking northbound underneath the viaduct. The area is clearly marked "No Trespassing" in Spanish and English. Officers yelled at the first suspect, a transient white male aged 27, to stop, but he looked back and then continued to walk. Ignoring another order to stop, he began to climb a set of stairs towards Western Ave. One officer went up the stairs, the other drove around and spotted the second suspect, a transient Black female aged 30, coming out of the parking lot. The male was arrested and was found to have a trespass warrant outstanding. The female admitted that she had recently been arrested for trespassing under the viaduct. They were both arrested and booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

**Friday, Oct. 1, 6:50 p.m., City Hall Park.** Officers observed suspect, a transient Black male aged 39, walking in City Hall Park. He was in violation of his one-year parks ban, and was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

**Saturday, Oct. 2, 2:42 p.m., Virginia St.** Between the hours of 2:42 and 6:42 p.m., an unknown suspect removed the complainant's money and medications from his backpack as he lay sleeping. The victim, a transient white male aged 56, never saw the suspect, but stated that he believes it was a white male. There is no further suspect information.

**Saturday, Oct. 16, 4:47 a.m., Alaskan Way Ferry Terminal.** Officers contacted the suspect, a transient white male aged 39, sleeping on the catwalk leading to the Washington State Ferry Terminal that passes over Alaskan Way. Officers have admonished the suspect in the past for criminal trespass for sleeping in the same spot. They awoke the suspect and asked him to leave, but he refused. They reminded him that he had been trespassed from this location before, and warned him if he refused to leave he would be arrested. Suspect became hostile and started to throw his belongings around on the catwalk, yelling that he didn't care, and all his stuff was garbage. He was placed into custody and transported to the West Precinct, where his previous trespass card was located. He was then booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

**Saturday, Oct. 16, 10:43 p.m., Fifth Ave. – Westin Hotel.** Complainant, a security guard for the Westin, found the suspect on the top floor of the north tower of the hotel, in a fire escape stairwell. A transient white male aged 34, he is not a guest of the hotel and has been warned before to leave the premises. Complainant and several other security guards detained the suspect and called 911. Suspect was found to have several outstanding warrants. These were verified and he was booked into King County Jail.

*Streetwatch is compiled from Seattle Police Department incident reports by Emma Quinn. Do you have your own story to tell? Call Real Change at (206)441-3247 ext. 207, and we'll get the scoop.*

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Artwork by Jamie Johnson



**SILICIO, Continued from page 1**

With all our technology today, we could have saved more lives. I had blind faith in my government that they were doing the best that they could for the people. I don't think anyone can have blind faith in what's going on now, especially in Iraq. Either you're for it or you're against it, and it has divided our nation. This administration has divided our nation.

**RC:** I read you have an interest in humanitarian work.

**Silicio:** Yes. I want to be a humanitarian aid worker, helping supply food and clothing to starving people in this world. This is what I dream of and I am working hard to achieve this goal. I want to learn nursing also to work with the poor and suffering. I've applied to the Gates Foundation. I'd also like to work with Amnesty International or find a job as a photographer. It's been really hard since I lost my job. My car is dead. But I'm not going to complain. I brought this on myself and I would do it again. If I have to be burned at the stake for doing what I believed was the right thing to do, then go ahead and start the fire. A lot of people would jump in the fire with me. I've seen so many acts of right since that picture came out. Like the mother who

yelled at the president about her son's death, and Nadia McCaffery, who defied Pentagon policy and insisted on the media showing her son coming home, and Mike Mitchell, who has been speaking up about his son's death, and all the people who have candlelight vigils. And the incredibly great veterans from the last wars — they're jumping in the fire and doing their part to help put an end to this war. It makes me proud to be among them.

**RC:** I've read that your son is joining the Marines soon. How do you feel about that?

**Silicio:** I have mixed feelings. It needs to be a war worth fighting. And if my son were to die in Iraq in the service of this country, then I would want it to be known and I would want Americans to stand up with their hands on their hearts and honor him, or just to say a quiet thank you, as I did every night during the loadings, if I was on the flight line at the time. I know what it's like to lose a son who was just becoming an adult and had dreams for his future. [Tami's other son, Richard, died of complications from a brain tumor in 1996 at the age of 19.] I get all these emails from mothers. Like one mother, Cindy Lou Lee from

California. Her son, Spc. Casey Austin Sheehan, died six months ago. Cindy is trying to help others by helping stop this war. Here's what she wrote to me: "Let me tell you ... the troops over in Iraq who are in harm's way aren't getting enough food, water, or supplies. My son died in an unreinforced Humvee in an ambush by Shiite militia (men not hostile to my son until we invaded and occupied their country!!). My son was regular Army, but I've met families of National Guard and the Army Reserves who had to buy their sons' body armor and other supplies. Some units are down to one bottle of water per person per day. The soldiers are not getting enough

to eat. My son slept in his Humvee for the last two weeks of his life because he didn't have a cot on Post." ■

**If I have to be burned at the stake for doing what I believed was the right thing to do, then go ahead and start the fire.**



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**Compassion Over Politics**

*In an email interview Tami gave to a West Point cadet, she wrote:*

"The bottom line when joining the military is that it really doesn't matter if the war makes a lick of sense. What matters is that our young men and women join the military for their own reasons, like pride in their country and pride in themselves, and this is what makes sense. This is why they join. My own son is going into the Marines for his own purpose and cause. I respect that in him and I'm proud of him doing a great thing with his life, as you are. I'm proud of you too. And I thank you for serving our country. But our leaders should not put you in unjustifiable harm's way.

"I say forget the politics of hiding our Fallen Heroes behind a curtain at Dover Air Force Base, and let us honor our children for sacrificing their lives for something they believed they were doing for America and for themselves. It has everything to do with compassion and nothing to do with politics.

"Walk in peace."

—Tami Silicio

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## SHA, Continued from page 4

scrap the proposal. Instead, they plan to retain current restrictions for applicants' criminal backgrounds. Those include a bar from SHA housing of seven years after a kidnapping offense, 10 years after arson, armed robbery, or sexual assault, and 20 years after committing homicide. A complete list of the restrictions is found at [www.seattlehousing.org](http://www.seattlehousing.org).

Those candidates for low-income housing who are denied because of their criminal record can also go through an appeals process. "Oftentimes people have been denied due to a previous conviction, gone through the process, and gotten housing that way," says Dan Wise, co-chair of SKCCH. She cautions that the process can also be cumbersome for those without prior knowledge of the system.

Wise approves of SHA's decision to reject the lifetime ban. "The coalition and other service providers advocated that they not go through with the ban, and I'm very pleased that they listened."

—Shelly Martin

## PAPER CUT, Continued from page 5

Organizing Coalition.

Another surprise in the Mayor's budget was the big zero next to the amount of money that will be given to the Sand Point Community Housing Association. The SPCHA owns and operates 94 units of transitional housing in six buildings at Warren Magnuson Park. The program houses approximately 300 homeless families, individuals, and youth a year.

"At Sand Point I rebuilt my life," resident Stephanie Ray recently told the City Council. "Residents there are able to reintegrate into the community. If not for Sand Point, I would be in a shelter."

"If we don't get operational support from the city the future of the program is in jeopardy," says Bob Rench, SPCHA executive director. That's a far cry from 1993, when the city pledged to provide up to \$500,000 in annual operating support and up to \$12 million in capital funding to build or renovate housing for homeless Seattle residents at the

former Navy base.

When the naval station was closed in Northeast Seattle, the city wanted to establish up to 200 units in traditional housing in the area. The city received the base property at no cost. After negotiations with community groups and homeless advocates, the SPCHA was founded to provide on-site coordination. The SPCHA owns the buildings while the city owns the land.

This year, the SPCHA requested \$130,000 in operating support from the city. This number is roughly 50 percent of the SPCHA budget but the same amount the organization received in 2004.

Rench isn't dismissing taking legal action. "The group's first option will be to see if the city is meeting its obligations to the federal government by withholding funds," he says. Meanwhile, things are particularly frustrating these days as his office directly overlooks the sports fields at Magnuson Park that are receiving new lights and artificial turf.

The City Council will approve the budget by November 25. ■

**Another surprise in the Mayor's budget was the big zero next to the amount of money that will be given to the Sand Point Community Housing Association.**

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**NORTH AMERICAN NEWSBRIEFS**  
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Florida residents affected by Hurricane Charley are coming to a new appreciation of a homeless man who is pitching in to help them. Alan Backwell is homeless and unemployed, but he doesn't have time to think about his own situation. As a volunteer with the American Red Cross he is making

non-stop visits to homes all over Orlando, ever since the hurricane blew thorough the region months ago. As a damage assessment officer, he evaluates how badly damaged homes were from the storm. He has dealt with mold problems, leaks, and structural damage. "It makes you feel good because you know you're getting into the community and they really appreciate what you are doing," he tells WESH-TV. He says he is **getting as much as he is giving**. "Working with the Red Cross helped me out of a bad situation, and by volunteering, I was able to give some of the time back for helping me out," he said. Backwell will help out until the work is completed. "There's a job that needs to be done," he says. "It's not over until we get the last person sorted out and get them back on their feet and rebuild their lives, or help them to rebuild their lives."

More teens have been charged in a vicious attack on a homeless man in Albany, NY. Two 16-year-old girls admitted to buying gasoline and **pouring it on the possessions** of Michael Coene as a 14-year-old boy hit him with the handle of a shovel. Coene fled and a girl set fire to his shopping cart. His hand was shattered in the attack. "They burnt my New York Yankees hat, that beautiful black New York Yankees hat," says Coene, who had been living on Albany's streets for about six weeks before the late-October attack. All of his possessions were burned: his baseball cap, his clothes, his insulin and needles, his Bible, an Alcoholics Anonymous book, and sandwiches he kept in a cooler for others living on the streets. "I was kinda the Santa Claus of the homeless sect out there," he said. Since the attack the 50-year-old man says the response from the community has been amazing. "I think it was beautiful," he says of the dozens who have inundated the Homeless Action Committee with offers of help. The Homeless Action Committee in Albany has received over 100 donations for Coene. "It makes me feel really good that there is quite a bit of love in this world," he says. Coene tells WXXA-TV that this wasn't the first time he's been attacked.

Meanwhile, in Calgary, Canada, two men have been found guilty of aggravated assault for beating an unconscious homeless man and **urinating on him** while friends videotaped the attack. The CBC reports Alberta Court of Queen's Bench Justice Peter Martin rejected guilty pleas the men entered on a lesser charge of assault causing bodily harm. The attack happened in a downtown alley in Calgary in July 2003. Matthew Newman and Andre Hilderman, both 19, were high on animal tranquilizers when they beat 34-year-old Kelly Littlelight. The homeless man had passed out in the alley. They kicked him and urinated on him while a friend videotaped the attack. Laughter can be heard on the tape. Three other men pled not guilty in the case.

—Compiled by Patty Lane



# Upcoming and Notable

## Thursday 10/28

March and Rally against the War in Iraq, the war against people of color at home, poverty, incarceration, and racial profiling. This war has cost \$200 billion, money that should have been spent on **health care, creation of jobs, better schools,** and other human needs in the U.S. Sponsors of the March include The American Friends Service Committee, Carl Mack, Native Youth Action, Northwest Labor Employment Law Office, and many more. Come and be counted at this important event. 6 p.m., at Seattle Central Community College, on Broadway north of Pine, Capitol Hill, Seattle. Info Dustin Washington, 206-632-0500 ext. 14 or [dWASHINGTON@afsc.org](mailto:dWASHINGTON@afsc.org).

## Friday 10/29

Washington State **Jobs With Justice** Fourth Annual Honoree Dinner and Silent Auction honoring local activists committed to the goals of fighting for healthcare for all, workplace justice, and global justice. This will be a celebration of the good fight, with an inspiring program, dinner, entertainment, and a silent auction. Dinner \$50, call for low-income rates. 6:30-10:00 p.m. at Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 1155 Broadway E. Info and RSVP, Maria Fernandez, 206-441-4969.

## Saturday 10/30

Elliott Bay Book Co. and Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility present former acting director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Thomas Graham Jr., who helped extend the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. He will discuss his book **Weapons of Mass Destruction**, which argues for the use of diplomacy in negotiating for arms control. 7:30 p.m. at Elliott Bay Book Co., 1st Ave. S. and S. Main in Pioneer Square, Seattle. Info 206-624-6600.

## Sunday 10/31

Wild Women Don't Get the Blues Dance and Concert, featuring Alice Stuart, Hot Blue Sisters, Lady A, and more in a benefit for **Get Out the Vote** and others. Co-sponsored by Blues To Do. 5:30-9:30 p.m. at Highway 99 Blues Club, 1414 Alaskan Way, across from the Seattle Aquarium. Info 206-382-2171 or [www.highwayninety.com](http://www.highwayninety.com).

## Monday 11/1

Join with Statewide Poverty Action Network and volunteer to call **new and infrequent voters** and remind them to go to the polls on November 2. Also volunteer to drive people who lack transportation to the polls in Auburn and Kent, choose any three-hour shift. Sign up by calling 206-694-6794 and ask for Anne or Tim, info [www.povertyaction.org](http://www.povertyaction.org).

## Wednesday 11/3

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

## Thursday 11/4

**Public Hearing on Mayor's Budget.** The Budget for Justice Campaign is working to urge the mayor and Seattle City Council to divert the \$3 million used for Seattle Police Department's buy-bust drug enforcement program into drug treatment programs, transition support programs, and other needed human services. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Seattle City Hall, Council Chambers, 601 5th Ave., 2nd floor, Downtown Seattle. Info [www.seattle.gov](http://www.seattle.gov).

Home Alive's **Basic Self-Defense Workshop**, pre-registration is encouraged at least three business days in advance of class; drop-ins are welcome up to 10 minutes before class. \$0-\$50 per session, sliding scale, pay what you can. 6-9 p.m. at 1415 - 10th Ave., 2nd floor, between Pike and Union on Capitol Hill, Seattle. Info 206-323-4663 or [selfdef@homealive.org](mailto:selfdef@homealive.org).

## Friday 11/5

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice present Friday Night at the Meaningful Movies. This evening is a forum "Don't Go Back to Sleep America: **Energizing for the Next Four Years.**" Free, donations appreciated. 7 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl., north of 50th, Seattle. Info [wnfp@comcast.net](mailto:wnfp@comcast.net).

## Saturday 11/6

Join **Not In Our Name** and others in building the next wave of resistance to war and repression. No matter the outcome of the presidential election, we are still against the war and detentions and round-ups of immigrants. March through downtown Seattle and surround the Federal Building with orange netting beginning at 1 p.m., at Westlake Park, 4th and Pine, downtown Seattle. Info 206-322-3813 or [www.notinourname-seattle.net](http://www.notinourname-seattle.net).

The Statewide Poverty Action Network will host a **Poverty Action Summit**, which will include workshops and skills training to anyone interested in learn-

ing about the legislative process. The cost is \$20 and scholarships are available. The keynote speaker is author Frances Fox Piven. They are also looking for volunteers to help phone bank and assemble packets in Seattle. 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., at the Muckleshoot Casino, 2402 S. Auburn Way, Auburn. For info or to volunteer call Elizabeth at 206-694-6794 or [elizabeth@povertyaction.org](mailto:elizabeth@povertyaction.org).

## Sunday 11/7

IBEW Local 46 and King County Labor Council sponsor a series of the **Best Labor Films** ever made. Admission is free and everyone is welcome. 7 p.m., at IBEW Local 46 Union Hall, 2700 1st Ave., Seattle. Info Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies, 206-543-7946.

## Wednesday 11/10

Phinney Neighbors for Peace and Justice presents "**False Headlines and Empty Sound Bites**," a discussion on how the media is failing us and why. Bert Sacks, founder of Citizens Committee for Responsible Journalism, will speak about traditional media and Susan Gleason, co-founder of Reclaim the Media, will discuss alternative media. 7 p.m., at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N. 70th St., near Greenwood, Seattle.

## Thursday 11/11

"It's About Time Writers Reading Series," **beginning and experienced writers** read their work. Open mike precedes scheduled readers and speaker. This

## Saturday 11/13

**Derail CAFTA Northwest Tour**, featuring voices of resistance to "Free Trade." The Central America Free Trade Act was negotiated in secret between the presidents of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and the U.S. Popular pressure has stalled the legislation in the U.S., and it's time to derail it forever. Featured speakers are union leaders from Central America and the Northwest sponsored by many labor groups and unions from Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. 7 - 9 p.m., at Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave., Seattle. Info 206-325-5494 or 206-405-4600.

## Sunday 11/14

The Seattle **School of the Americas (SOA) Watch** invites you to a candlelight service. This event will bear witness to the thousands killed in Latin America by the U.S.-backed SOA and will also be a celebratory sendoff for the local people attending the peaceful protest against the SOA at its headquarters in Georgia. 7 - 8:15 p.m., at Seattle University, Campion Hall, Ecumenical Chapel, 914 E. Jefferson St., Seattle. Info Greg Speltz 206-632-1523.

## Through 10/2

**Online Election Resources:** state voter guide online, [www.secstate.wa.gov](http://www.secstate.wa.gov), side by side comparisons of local and national candidates and ballot measures visit [www.seattlepi.com](http://www.seattlepi.com) (look for the Voters' Guide button), info about local and national candidates [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org), several resources at [www.realchangenews.org](http://www.realchangenews.org) including the SPAN Voter Guide, and Hate Free Zone's voter education guide, League of Women Voters of Washington [www.washingtonvoter.org](http://www.washingtonvoter.org)



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- Other affordable housing

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Applications for housing assistance are available at the PorchLight Housing Center, and can also be downloaded from [www.seattlehousing.org](http://www.seattlehousing.org). To have an application mailed to you, call PorchLight at 206-239-1500.



citizens participation project



## Affordable Housing: We Can't Wait Any Longer

**Issue:** Governor Gary Locke is in the process of deciding the details of the budget he will propose to legislators in December. There's one obvious piece of the solution to homelessness — create an adequate supply of affordable housing. The Housing Trust Fund is one component of funding for affordable housing, and this year, advocates hope to increase it to \$100 million. Call Governor Locke this week and request that his budget include \$100 million for the Housing Trust Fund

**Background:** Bruce Katz, vice president and senior fellow of the Brookings Institution, recently called high housing costs "the one Achilles heel" for Seattle. Unfortunately, this problem affects our entire state. Senior citizens and those with disabilities are struggling with a wider gap between GA-U or Social Security and their rent. Families throughout Washington that work full-time and earn less than \$15.15/hr. (almost twice the minimum wage) cannot afford to rent a two-bedroom apartment at fair market rent. The need for affordable housing has never been greater, and Washington must meet the challenge.

The State Housing Trust Fund has created or improved more than 25,000 homes affordable to seniors, families with children, victims of domestic violence, those with disabilities, and migrant farmworkers. The Housing Trust Fund has been recognized throughout the nation as an efficient, economically savvy tool to help solve the affordable housing shortage.

For every dollar invested in the Housing Trust Fund, private and public sources match it with four. Washington's investment of \$360 million has leveraged more than \$1.5 billion. It serves the entire continuum of housing needs, from emergency shelter, through transitional and rental housing, to homeownership. Building housing in Washington does more than stabilize the lives of those who eventually live in the housing; it also provides an economic stimulus to our state's economy. According to the Washington Center for Real Estate Research at Washington State University, the current \$81 million investment in the Housing Trust Fund creates more than 16,000 jobs.

Washington must tap all available resources to solve the affordable housing problem — and a \$100 million investment in the Housing Trust Fund could leverage many more dollars. Applications have piled up, and affordable housing developers are waiting, year after year, to be approved for funding.

**Action:** Please contact Governor Locke today with the following message:

Please include \$100 million for the Housing Trust Fund in the 2005-2006 budget. The Housing Trust Fund is a good investment that leverages greatly needed funding for affordable housing. The effect of the lack of affordable housing in my community is homelessness and families living on the edge, deciding between housing and other necessities. The Housing Trust Fund provides farmworkers, victims of domestic violence, people with developmental disabilities, and others a way to afford a safe, decent home. We've been asking to raise it every year to \$100 million, and now that communities all across our state are planning for how to end homelessness, this is the right time to do it. To contact the governor via mail, fax, or email contact:

Governor Gary Locke  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002  
(360) 902-4111  
Fax (360) 753-4110

[www.governor.wa.gov/contact/govemail.htm](http://www.governor.wa.gov/contact/govemail.htm)

For more information contact the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance at (206)442-9455 or [www.wliha.org](http://www.wliha.org).



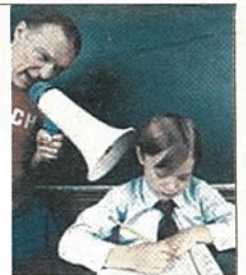
World Heritage, a non-profit student exchange program, is currently seeking a volunteer local community representative to provide high school exchange students with program support. World Heritage also provides international opportunities for families to host a student and for an American teen to become an exchange student. Please call Diana at 1-800-888-9040 or visit our website at [world-heritage.org](http://world-heritage.org).

The Attorney General's Office is recruiting consumer analyst volunteers to work with the general public and businesses to resolve consumer complaints. For information call Sean Beary, 206-464-6984.

Help people resolve conflict! Learn conflict resolution skills and contribute to peace and harmony in the community. The King County Dispute Resolution Center seeks good listeners to volunteer as Telephone Conciliators in our Seattle office. Weekly daytime shift; conflict resolution training provided. We especially encourage bilingual people, people of color, and sexual minorities to apply. Information: [www.kcdrc.org](http://www.kcdrc.org); [volunteer@kcdrc.org](mailto:volunteer@kcdrc.org); or call 206-443-9603 ext. 100.

To post a volunteer opportunity for FREE, email [adsales@realchangenews.org](mailto:adsales@realchangenews.org) or call Candi at 206-441-3247 ext. 205.

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, Nov. 24 4:30 p.m., at the Real Change office. Everyone welcome. For additional information about the meeting, please call Adam at 206-441-3247, ext. 207, or email [editor@realchangenews.org](mailto:editor@realchangenews.org).

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

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





# Mockingbird Times

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



November 2004

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak out Across the Nation

Volume IV, Issue 11

Visit us online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org) or call 206-323-5437 (KIDS)

## IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the Editor  
Jim Theofelis  
Page 2

Quote of the Month  
Compiled by Courtney Konietzko  
Page 2

Lambert House Part II  
Misty Lou Cook  
Page 3

Mockingbird Constellation Project Youth Speak Out  
Larishca and Terasa Asher  
Page 3

Poetry Corner: The Street  
Yasmina Damjin Ellis  
Page 3

Capitol Hill Homeless Youth  
J. Eboh  
Page 4

Seattle Shelter Merge  
Courtney Konietzko  
Page 4

Check out Our Exciting Bonus Articles Section Online at [mockingbirdsociety.org](http://mockingbirdsociety.org)

## Candidates for WA State Governor Face Off

COURTNEY KONIETZKO



*It's scary when the line blurs between Democrats and Republicans. Mockingbird staff were recently invited to sit in on a meeting with the Seattle Post-Intelligencer Editorial Board and Washington State's candidates for Governor. At times it seemed like the candidates were saying the same thing as far as what they cared about. I guess what makes them different is how they approach the issues and what parts of the issues they are willing to support because every good governor should care about employment and education. It's a matter of who will do a better job.*

ON OCTOBER 11, 2004 ONE OF THE MANY MEETINGS between the two gubernatorial candidates in Washington state, Dino Rossi and Chris Gregoire, took place at the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. There were striking similarities in Gregoire's and Rossi's priorities. Both stressed that making new jobs happen is their number one priority. Gregoire said she would create 250,000 new jobs by retraining the unemployed, supporting meaningful Tort Reform (Tort Reform commonly refers to laws passed on a state-by-state basis which place limits or caps on the type or amount of damages that may be awarded in personal injury lawsuits, according to [www.uslegalforms.com](http://www.uslegalforms.com)), and allowing employers to buy into insurance at wholesale prices. Rossi stated that on September 16<sup>th</sup> the national unemployment rate dropped when Washington's went up, and 75% of job growth is going to come from small business.



Chris Gregoire

Education came up as the second big issue for both candidates. Gregoire stated it was important to invest money in ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program) and Head Start and is fully committed to implementing Education Initiative 884 (a measure that would create a fund designated for preschool through college education by increasing the retail sales tax rate by 1%) if it passes. When asked if they were 'voting' for I-884 Gregoire said no and Rossi said, "I am voting against all initiatives." Rossi's website is divided into six reforms/priorities if he is elected governor. Reform four is education. He plans on reforming

education by giving local control to the school districts to remove ineffective teachers. Gregoire pointed out that Rossi cut 160 million dollars in education when he was a senator.

Rossi said, "I will never use the most vulnerable population as a political pawn." Gregoire pointed out Rossi raised a tax on nursing home beds. Neither addressed homelessness or foster care. This was the closest they came to either of these issues.

When asked about stem cell research Rossi said he supported 'adult' stem cell research and when pressed on whether he supported embryonic stem cell research he refused to answer, saying that it was not part of his platform. Rossi stated that therapeutics and diagnostics are the strengths of Washington's economy. Gregoire said that Washington is the leader in the world in this and that the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center is where it all started. Gregoire pointed out that 400,000 people were diagnosed with Parkinson's here in WA state and that stem cell Research is a crucial step to finding a cure for Parkinson's and other debilitating diseases. "Life sciences is the penicillin of the 21<sup>st</sup> century," stated Gregoire. Gregoire believes that life sciences (stem cell research fits in this category) will help create more jobs for people.



Dino Rossi

Another issue that came up was what they were going to do to protect the environment. Gregoire stated that water quality and quantity was the number one issue as far as the environment went. Gregoire cited finding and using alternative energy sources as important (like black rock or bio fuel) and commented that Washington has the largest wind farm in the U.S. Gregoire went on to say that, "We cannot continue relying on electricity, natural gas, and oil."

Gregoire seemed really passionate about the environment and closed with, "we have to maintain the environment to have a vibrant quality of life." Rossi stated, "this is how I will go forward, the three R's, reasonable, rational, and responsible." Both Rossi and Gregoire agreed that parks are important and want to fight to preserve them. It was great seeing politics this close up. I hope the best candidate wins!

## NAACP Provides Youth a Voice For Equality and Justice

HOLLIS RIGGINS



IMAGINE YOU ARE AN 11-YEAR-OLD BOY WHO ATTENDS EAST HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL and as a form of restraint you are forcefully held to the ground, by a security guard, with the full weight of his body and his knee in your back. Furthermore, you are repeatedly handcuffed despite a warning from your primary-care physician that you should not be restrained because of a medical condition. Now put yourself in the shoes of a seven-year-old who also attends East Hill Elementary School. You are repeatedly made to stand alone in a darkened room as a punishment. Who do you turn to? Who do you call?

For these students as well as several others, the answer was simple. They turned to the Seattle/King County Branch of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).\*

For nearly a century now, the Seattle/King County NAACP has answered the call for social justice. Since 1913, this branch has provided a voice for the concerns of African Americans and other minority groups. They have strived toward providing educational and employment opportunities, human rights, open housing, and voter registration.

The Seattle/King County NAACP has assisted African Americans in gaining employment opportunities in several sectors of the local

economy such as department stores, including Nordstrom's and the Bon Marche (now Bon Macy's) grocery stores like Safeway and Albertsons and municipal agencies including the Fire Department.

Lately, the Seattle/King County Branch has been a voice of concern and consciousness regarding law enforcement. It has challenged police actions (shooting incidents and use of the taser) resulting in death and/or injury. Carl Mack, the local NAACP President along with Chief Kerlikowske, even volunteered to be tased to demonstrate less lethal technology ([www.cityofseattle.net/police/](http://www.cityofseattle.net/police/)).

To increase African-American involvement in the political process, the Seattle/King County NAACP supports voter registration by registering people at local grocery stores, high schools, churches, and through special voter empowering events. The NAACP also recognizes that the youth are the future. It has provided opportunities for them to develop through the Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO), Youth Councils, and College Chapters.

ACT-SO is a year-long program designed to recruit, stimulate, improve and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among African-American high school students. The ACT-SO program centers on the dedication and commitment of community volunteers and business leaders to serve as mentors and coaches and to promote academic and artistic excellence among African-American students. There are 25 categories of competition in the sciences, humanities, performing and visual arts.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



# Letter from the Editor

**JIM THEOFELIS**

**NOW IS THE TIME WHEN WE BEGIN TO REFLECT** about the year that is coming to a close and start to look forward to the year ahead. Organizations are very similar to individuals in this regard. As the Executive Director of The Mockingbird Society, my initial review of 2004 is one infused with pride, hope and determination. My pride is a combination of our achievements and the young people and families who have secured these achievements. We have remarkable youth who write for the *Mockingbird Times*, provide public speaking and participate in the Advocates for System Kids and Youth (ASK-Y) program.

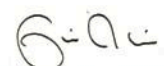
The *Mockingbird Times* now enjoys a circulation of nearly 60,000 monthly issues distributed through three community newspapers throughout Washington and to every state in the nation. Our Youth Speaker's Panel receives more requests than we can respond to and consistently receives the highest praise for their speaking engagements. In October, Mockingbird youth were part of two panels, one at the Fall Judicial Conference in Spokane, sponsored by the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission, and the other at the annual Foster Parents of Washington State conference in Wenatchee. The feedback from organizers and participants from both events was extremely positive.

During the 2004 legislative session, youth from ASK-Y and the several organizations who are members of ASK-Y were leaders in the effort to educate lawmakers

on the barriers young people face when turning age 18 and struggling to exit foster care or "street-life." The result was the passage of House Bill 3078 (Sealing Juvenile Records Bill), the only juvenile justice bill passed during 2004. This bill will help an estimated 10,000 young people who have been crime-free since being adjudicated with a felony as a juvenile. In fact there is a group of dedicated attorneys who are providing pro bono assistance to youth and families who need assistance in getting their juvenile record sealed.

Our pride from 2004 continues with the implementation of the Mockingbird Foster Family Constellation Project. After nearly one year of operations, we have had zero placement disruptions for participating children/adolescents, siblings have been able to live together, cultural competency is embedded throughout the model, respite care has been available upon request and caregivers report high satisfaction (see the most recent evaluation from the University of Washington at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org)). This sense of pride is combined with a sense of determination to continue this work *with* and alongside the children, youth and families involved in the foster care system.

Our determination is rooted in the philosophical position that the best folks to break down barriers, dispel myths and create positive change are those most impacted by the barriers and myths. At Mockingbird we know that the work we do is not limited to those kids in the middle of the foster care system today. Our work and our hope includes that five-year-old child and that fifteen-year-old teenager who are at risk of being "placed" in a "new" home tomorrow. Our hope is that you will join us and support us as we "build a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth." Happy Thanksgiving to you and those you love.

 Jim Theofelis  
[jim@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:jim@mockingbirdsociety.org)

**NAACP CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...**

The NAACP has one of the largest organized groups of young people of any secular organization in the country. Some 67,000 youth are involved with the NAACP through its Youth Councils and College Chapters. Its objectives are to inspire, motivate, and create interest in civic activities, provide young people with an understanding of pertinent issues, develop organizational skills for implementation of community-related activities, and encourage active participation in these activities.

Youth units attend NAACP conventions, sponsor tutorial programs, conduct voter registration drives, hold Black History essay contests, and host Mr. and Miss NAACP pageants. Today there are more than 400 Youth Councils and College Chapters actively involved in voter registration.

The Seattle/King County Youth Council is dedicated to providing young people with a voice within the community. Having reactivated its charter just over a year ago, a primary goal of the Council continues to be community outreach. The Council has been recognized as having the 3rd highest number of recorded new members out of more than 400 Councils worldwide. While still fairly young, they are continuing to recruit new members and advance and promote the economic, educational, social, and political status of African Americans and other people of color by encouraging active participation in Council programs and activities by its members as well as the community. According to Kyle James, NAACP Youth Advisor and life member, "We will continue to inform youth of the problems affecting African Americans and other people of color as we stimulate an appreciation of the African American contribution to US civilization."

James is actively involved with the Seattle/King County Youth Council. Even though she's not a youth, James plays a big role in the Youth Council. Some of her duties include chairing the Youth/Works Committee (a committee that researches and develops programs for the Youth Council to bring to the community), advising the Youth Council on various issues, and voicing the comments and opinion of the Youth Council to the Executive Committee of the Seattle/King County Branch. Please check out an exclusive interview with James online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org).

This year marks Seattle/King County NAACP's 91<sup>st</sup> year in existence. That's 91 years of service in the Greater Seattle and King County Area. Congratulations NAACP, we're proud of you!

*\*The East Hill Elementary Case mentioned is part of the Kent School District Case in King County, which is currently in progress. NAACP is providing support to families involved in this case. The Seattle Times ran an informative article by J. Patrick Coolican in May about NAACP's involvement in the case.*

**United Way Designated Donor: Mark Mockingbird Society as the non-profit organization to receive your United Way Donation!**

## Quote of the Month

To make democracy work, we must be a nation of participants, not simply observers. One who does not vote has no right to complain.

-Louis L'Amour

## THANK YOU'S...

*Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Wild Geese Productions, in particular Robert and Erin Shackelford, Kyle James, Jeff Reid and Stephanie Garlich, Charlie Courtelyou, Nancy Bardeen, Dan Keiner, Pat Thibadeau, Ole Carlson, and the Fremont Rotary*

**ABOUT US:** The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents involved in homelessness and foster care. The *Mockingbird Times* is a monthly newspaper written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.50 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The *Mockingbird Times* has a monthly circulation of 60,000 copies being distributed across Washington and the U.S.A. Youth involvement is the key to the philosophy, values, and success of The Mockingbird Society and, as such, youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. Donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the *Mockingbird Times* may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2004 The Mockingbird Society.

## A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox: Make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth.

I want to support The Mockingbird Society

Donations may be tax deductible and all donors receive the *Mockingbird Times*. Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Mockingbird Society in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Suggested Donations:*

- \$50 a year for one copy per month
- \$100 a year for 5-15 copies per month
- \$150 a year for 20-45 copies per month
- \$200 a year for 50-100 copies per month

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

Please fill out and mail this form with a check or money order payable to:  
 The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave South Suite 350, Seattle WA 98144

- Please bill me for the amount indicated.
- My employer will match my gift; enclosed is my matching gift form.
- I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.

## MEET OUR STAFF

- Executive Director**  
Jim Theofelis
- MFFCP Coordinator**  
Shannon Barello
- Administrative Assistant**  
Lauren Frederick
- MSW Intern**  
Erin Daniels
- Staff Reporters**  
Dennis Fisher, Courtney Konietzko, Darius Reynolds
- Satellite Reporters**  
Shay Deney, J.Eboh, Rico Evans, Ashley Grant, Anthony Guess, Jamica Henderson, Princess Hollins, Echo Speed, Hollis Riggins, Shakura Felder, Misty Cook
- Contributing Writers**  
Yasmina Damjin Ellis, Terasa Asher, Larishica Asher
- Volunteers**  
Anna Trombley, Kirsten Hansen-Day, Aleta Kennedy, Denise Redinger



# Lambert House: An Oasis for Homeless Queer Youth Part II

MISTY LOU COOK



ON JANUARY 1, 2004, THE CITY FUNDING FOR THE LAMBERT HOUSE DROP-IN CENTER WAS CUT. The Lambert House is a drop-in center for queer young people in Seattle. In the September Issue, I discussed the importance of the Lambert House and interviewed some of the Lambert House community. Here I am continuing to focus on the queer (identifying as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Two-Spirited or Transgender) and homeless youth who are being interviewed and speaking about the Lambert House community from their own perspective.

Mario is a 19-year-old youth of French and Italian descent. I've seen Mario around the Lambert House for quite a few years now and I happened to run into him on a Monday evening. I asked him how the Lambert House is different than other drop-in centers. Mario said, "It's much more focused on the queer community. We can feel free to talk about ourselves and talk about what we want to talk about. It's a safe space for us." I asked Mario how the Lambert House has helped him and he replied, "When I'm feeling depressed about who

I am I come here to hang out and it helps me feel better about where I am. It gives me hope."

I asked Blue, a 17-year-old who is mixed with "a lot of European" and Ukrainian, why he first became homeless. He replied, "I feel like there can't be a home unless there's love."

Remy is a 22-year-old who is mixed with "Spanish, Irish, Chinese, a lil' black and something else." I asked him what the effects of homelessness were for him. He said, "It makes you a lil' scared, depressed and uneasy about people. When you're in a situation where you are trying to find a place to stay, a lot of people will try to take advantage of you."

Rob is the manager of the volunteer program and a 25-year-old self-proclaimed "Euro-Mutt." Rob is one of the two paid staff at the Lambert House. I asked Rob why the Lambert House was first established. Rob said, "It was established because there was no other agency or program to help queer youth and also to give them a place to find people like themselves."

Rob told me it would take "\$30,000 per month" to keep the Lambert House alive and running. He said, "It would take \$180,000 for 6 months and \$360,000 for a year." Rob commented about the funds necessary to keep the Lambert House open and effective. He said about the money, "That's a bare bones budget." And "with more money we could do some really awesome arts programs."

Rob also told me about the volunteers that make the Lambert House's continual existence possible. He said that a community of individuals volunteer "600-700 hours per month" and emphasized that "there's no way we could pay for that." Rob told me that quite simply, "Without volunteers, we wouldn't be here."

"So Rob, why did you start volunteering at the Lambert House?" I asked. He replied, "Well, because I wish that I had a place like this when I was growing up. You'll probably get the same answer from any volunteer you ask...the reason I stay is because I love seeing people grow up and find friends...grow up healthy," Rob said with a sincere look in his eyes.

The value of the Lambert House to the queer and homeless youth of Seattle cannot be weighed in words or gold. Whether this is through volunteering, grant writing talent, soap donations or whatever, this is our community and we need to support it. It is up to you and me to provide safe spaces for the outcasts, the queers, the geniuses, the working poor, the homeless, the people of this Nation and World.

I am organizing a Lambert House benefit scheduled for November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004. There will be live music and poetry and admission will be by donation! For more information about the Lambert House Benefit, or if you would like to get involved, contact Misty at [lamberthousebenefitshow2004@yahoo.com](mailto:lamberthousebenefitshow2004@yahoo.com).

## Mockingbird Constellation Project Youth Speak Out

Mockingbird is excited to publish the stories of two young people involved in the Mockingbird Foster Family Constellation Project (MFFCP). This project is a pilot program in collaboration with UJIMA Community Services and the University of Washington. The model is simple: create a micro-community in which families work together and support each other to increase the quality of care they are providing for their foster kids. The model prioritizes keeping siblings together and ensuring that all services are culturally relevant.

We currently have 8 families in our pilot program, with one hub home that provides respite and hosts activities like tutoring, dinners and self-care workshops. The hub home operates as an "extended family" home—providing each child in the constellation project with an alternative place to stay, kind of like "grandma's house." This is particularly important if the child is not getting along with their foster family, or if the family is in need of a break—the hub home is there to provide respite before making a disruption in the child's life—such as a new placement or running away. The young people whose stories you'll read are blossoming young writers who you will be hearing more from in months to come!

TERASA ASHER



MY NAME IS TERASA AND MY LIFE IS NOT RIGHT. What is not right about it is that I have been suffering. Well, that is what I would call it. I just want to have a regular life without living in foster care. I just feel that I am different from others because I'm a foster kid.

It's been four years, soon to be five, and if I could make one big wish it would be to get out of foster care. It makes me sad, ever since I have been in foster care I cry more and I think more of my life and how it has been these past four years. I just wish to be with my mom all the time and to be with my family, period. That is what I don't like about being in foster care.

I like to be out a lot to spend time with friends, go places, just to be a teenager. But I can't do that 'cause of where I am at. If I decide to do something I will do it 'cause that is what I want to do. I just like to have fun with my life and explore things that I have not done before. I just like doing new stuff 'cause that is who TERASA D. ASHER is.

What I want you readers to know is that I am a very good person if you get to know me. That is what I want all y'all to know.

LARISHICA ASHER



Just when you think you know everything there is to know about hip hop, it lets you know why you fell in love with it in the first place...

MY LIFE IS LIKE A CD OR HIP HOP. The reason I say this is because I am a foster child. Being a foster child could be a blast and the greatest experience of your life if you make it that way. Or being a foster child could be the worst and most hating thing that someone could let happen to their child. My experience of being a foster child is that sometimes I have both of these experiences.

The reason I have both is because I have been in some pretty s\*\*\*\* situations. But none like the one I was last in. I was at [a family member's] house. She had three kids who were messy and nasty. One would leave and eat a lot and would never get in trouble. Another did things to my [family member] that he was not supposed to do. And the other would eat and watch TV and only clean up when their mom was coming home. My sisters and I would mess up and get in trouble for what we did but it didn't seem like her kids would get in trouble for what they did. Before we moved in with our [family member], [another family member] lived there and they treated her real bad. Sometimes they would hit her for no reason. They wouldn't do her hair and she and her sons wouldn't feed her. She was only a little kid so my [family member] wouldn't let her fix herself anything to eat.

When we got there things got a little better but not so good. We were mistreated but not like she was. So we came home from school one day and found out we had to move. We were happy but sad too because we didn't want to leave our friends—[but] we didn't care anything about our family. So to make a long story short this was a pretty s\*\*\*\* situation.

The reason I say my life is like a CD or hip hop is because a CD changes songs like we changed houses through the three years we have been in foster care. It's like every time a singer or rapper changes to happy, to sad, to mad, to curious and so on. Every time we changed houses we had to change our personalities so that the people we were moving in with would like us. This is why I say my life is like a CD or hip hop.



## POETRY CORNER

YASMINA DAMJIN ELLIS

### The Streets

- The People on The Curb don't want change,
- They don't even look very deranged.
- Nor handlers of pans-
- Without permits they stand
- Without picket lines
- Or campaign signs.
- I don't see a busstop.
- They aren't using the phone.
- The only thing they have is an odd
- determination to be left alone.
- The cold rain puddles
- Hold their Nirvana
- They sit cross-legged-
- Like life-size Buddha-shrines. Meanwhile
- midnight trines.
- But the People on the Curb
- Are not perturbed
- They sing a silent song
- Of hope.
- They are peacefully assembled
- The flashing yield sign is their beacon.
- They want nothing of me.
- Yet I need so much from them.



# Lack of Services Impact Capitol Hill Homeless Youth

J.EBOH



IT IS SO EASY TO RELY ON THE SIMPLE DICHOTOMY OF "US" AND "THEM" AND AVOID RECOGNIZING SIMILARITIES BETWEEN PEOPLE AND THE STRIKING UNFAIRNESS OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HUMAN LIVES. SHOULD WE LEARN SOME OF THE STORY BEHIND AN INDIVIDUAL HOMELESS YOUTH, OUR HEARTSTRINGS MIGHT BE PLUCKED, BUT THE EMPATHY IS OFTEN FLEETING."

-MAVIS BONNAR, HOMELESS YOUTH ADVOCATE

LARGE NUMBERS OF HOMELESS YOUTH live in Seattle's Capitol Hill District. Articles about this in local newspapers are given headlines like "Broadway Struggles to Reclaim its Hipness (*Seattle-PI*)."  
*The Stranger*, an alternative newspaper, recently gave their feature on Capitol Hill the title "Sh%thole." Statements like these capture the feelings of many Seattle residents.

There is one thing about Capitol Hill that doesn't make the headlines, however. The amount of human service programs in Capitol Hill are grossly disproportionate in relation to the amount of homeless youth living there. Capitol Hill isn't the only neighborhood with a population of homeless youth. On any given night in Seattle, an estimated 800 young people ages 12-24 are without a safe place to sleep. For all of King County, the number of homeless youth nightly may be as high as 2,000 ([www.ci.seattle.wa.us](http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us)).

Lately, Capitol Hill seems plagued with drugs, sex crimes and homelessness. These issues affect many homeless youth in Capitol Hill. This is where social service programs usually step in. These groups help youth meet their basic needs, while trying to work against the causes of youth homelessness. They often provide drug and mental health counseling, prep classes for the G.E.D., job training, temporary housing and housing referrals. That is assuming that such programs exist in a neighborhood.

Youth who are homeless and struggling to meet their basic needs often turn to drugs as a means of coping. "Most people who become homeless under the age of eighteen start using" says Johnny Ohta, a youth chemical dependency counselor in Seattle. Ohta goes on to say, "If they were using drugs before, when they become homeless they may start using hard drugs. As their addiction becomes deeper they use drugs like cocaine, methamphetamines and heroin." As a last resort, some homeless youth may turn to sex trading

and prostitution. In addition to being used as a way to get money, sex can be used as a way to get one's needs met. Ohta states, "Sex trading is pretty prevalent in Capitol Hill. In other cities it's pretty obvious. But that's not the case in Seattle. It's very covert. Someone might get picked up or go to a drug house. Once there they get high and exchange sex for drugs."

Another insufficient resource for homeless youth in Capitol Hill is healthcare. Rising health insurance costs ([www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A55301-2004Sep27.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A55301-2004Sep27.html)) and the fact that youth lose their free state Medicaid health insurance at age nineteen creates a need for affordable healthcare. The need is often met by seeking healthcare through community health centers or clinics specifically for homeless teens.

When these options are lacking or non-existent in a community, the youth do not have a way to get healthcare. Mavis Bonnar, co-founder and current coordinator of Capitol Hill's only youth clinic, the Country Doctor Free Teen Clinic, wishes there was more that the clinic could do. Country Doctor Free Teen Clinic offers free medical care to homeless youth through age 23 on Monday and Tuesday evenings. It is located at 19th Ave East and East Republican. "Funding for outreach and transportation to the clinic would be extremely helpful for us" states Bonnar.

Until last March, Capitol Hill did have one homeless youth medical outreach program. Safe Links provided mobile medical services to youth. It made stops on Broadway in Capitol Hill; afterwards it proceeded to the University District. It is estimated that between 2 and 20 youth were served each Monday night the organization made stops. Safe Links and its partner program that provided outreach services to youth, Streetlinks, served an estimated 1,900 youth a month, fifty-percent of whom lived in Capitol Hill ([seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local)).

"Today's homeless can be tomorrow's tax payers," says Elaine Simons, a homeless youth advocate and Executive Director of Peace for the Streets by Kids on the Streets (PSKS), a Seattle agency serving homeless youth and adults. Simons goes on to say, "Many of them have the potential to get off the street and do something with their lives. And many of them will choose Capitol Hill to be their home." When asked how she might address the negative beliefs people have about homeless youth, Simons said, "[I'd] sit down and talk to them, invite them for a tour of [my] work or have them meet a homeless youth. [I'd] let them know how [easily] it could be their children."

Bonnar comments, "Our society tends to make extremely harsh judgments of those people who are chronically traumatized. It is so easy to rely on the simple dichotomy of "us" and "them" and avoid recognizing the similarities between people and the striking unfairness of the circumstances of human lives. Should we learn some of the story behind an individual homeless youth, our heartstrings might be plucked, but the empathy is often fleeting."

Bonnar, Ohta and Simons all agree on one potential solution to this problem. As stated by Bonnar, "Capitol Hill needs a structured multi-service drop-in center. It needs to offer services that have 'kid appeal' as well as foster healthy challenges in order for these young people to recognize their strengths and capabilities. This should include: a school, a job-readiness program and an effective job training program. It should also include mental health services, case management, substance abuse counseling and therapeutic recreation. Most of all it needs ongoing one-on-one relationships between these young people and adults with good boundaries who care about them." Bonnar's reply mirrors the thoughts of many who are struggling to find a solution to this very real problem.

**NEED A JOB? CAN'T GET ONE BECAUSE OF YOUR JUVENILE CRIMINAL HISTORY? Come to the free juvenile records sealing clinic! Lawyers and students will help you seal your records at the Peterson Law Clinic, 901 12th Avenue Seattle, WA 98122 Call Kim Ambrose at 206-685-6806 for more info!**

## Seattle Shelters Merge to Improve Service to Homeless Youth

COURTNEY KONIETZKO

ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, homeless youth service providers in the University District, street-involved youth, and people who care about the future of shelter attended an event celebrating the merging of the University Young Adult Shelter and Rising Out of the Shadows (ROOTS). While University Young Adult Shelter (UYS) used to serve youth ages 13-20, both programs serve young people ages 18-25 because not many youth in the 13-20 age range were accessing services.



Homeless Youth Advocate Angel, City Council Member Peter Steinbrueck and Service Provider Janet Duff

Two 10+ year shelter volunteers, Janet Duff and Woody Pidcock, were honored for their years of commitment to the shelters and Seattle City Council Member Peter Steinbrueck gave an encouraging speech at this event. Several community churches were also recognized for providing space and support to the shelter for many years. Because of the merge, the hope is that homeless youth in the University District can be better served in part because more funding can be allocated to help

keep the shelters afloat. In addition to this, there is a collective of service providers in the University District who have come together to network with each other to figure out the best way to serve young people, rather than each organization acting in isolation. This collective, University District Service Providers (UDSP) is made up of 12 service providers, including ROOTS and UYS.

Shelter is one of the most important things in a street kid's life. It is something to depend on. There is familiarity with seeing the same people night after night (old school volunteers) and food if you miss the hot meal program (Teen Feed). Shelter is a stepping stone to accessing other more long term services like transitional housing (temporary housing up to two years), mental health and drug and alcohol counseling, etc. The merge of ROOTS and UYS ensures that shelter can continue being there as an essential service for homeless youth.

### How to Help Homeless Youth!

The ROOTS program relies on volunteers to make shelter happen every night. They need "at least 3 people to volunteer during the evening (8:15 - 11pm) and 4 people to volunteer to spend the night (11pm-8am). Volunteers are asked to commit to working at least one evening shift and one overnight shift per month.

If you do not want to spend the night there are other things you can do to volunteer like: make a meal once a month for Teen Feed (a hot-meal program for homeless youth), volunteer to help with laundry delivery or morning clean-up, become an advocate for homeless youth by speaking up when you hear stereotypes, write letters to your elected officials or letters to the editor about youth homelessness, donate used clothes and blankets, or new pillows and toiletries."

Multiply your helping ability by encouraging your friends and coworkers to volunteer, (and) donate (ing) money or needed items. If you would like to volunteer with the shelter program, email [uyshelter@yahoo.com](mailto:uyshelter@yahoo.com).