

NOVEMBER 24, 2004

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# REAL CHANGE

Fairness • Opportunity • Community • Vol. 11, No. 25

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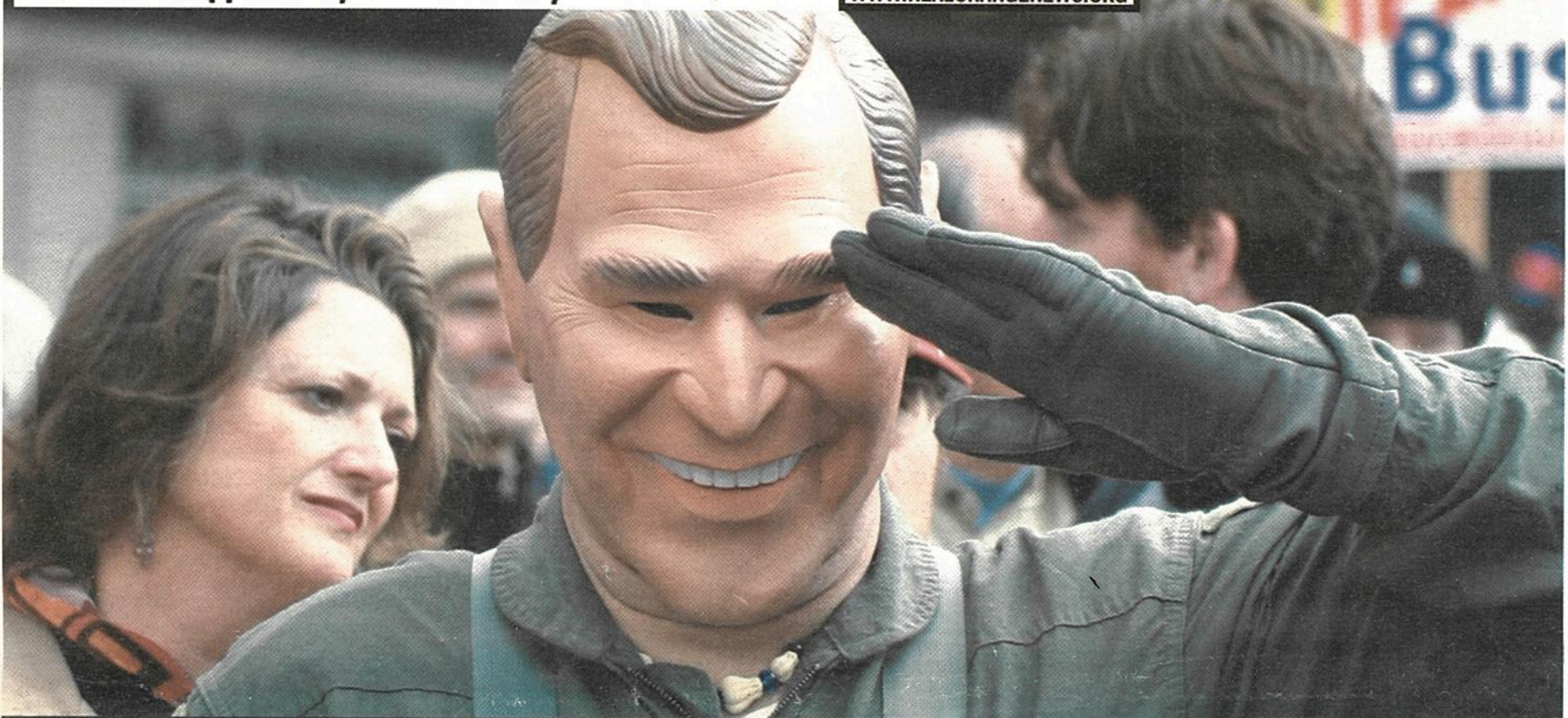
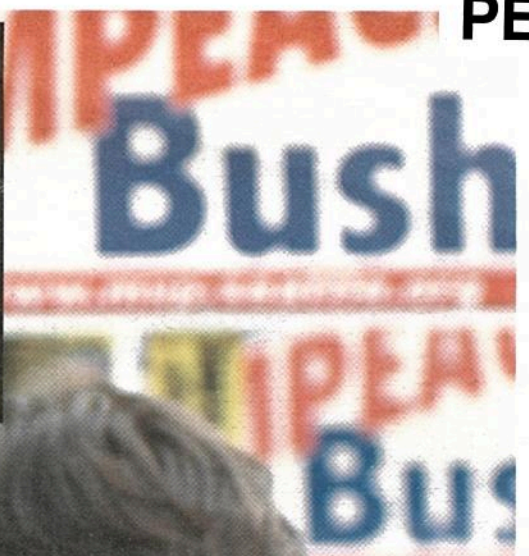


PHOTO BY KEN DEAN.

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## An Agenda of Plunder

Noted Author Francis Fox Piven on war, politics, and weathering four more years

Interview by Timothy Harris

**F**rancis Fox Piven is professor of political science and sociology at the graduate school of the City University of New York. She is co-author with Richard Cloward of a number of award-winning books, including *Regulating the Poor*, *The Poor People's Movement*, *The Breaking of the American Social Compact*, and *Why Americans Still Don't Vote*. Her latest book, published in 2004, is *The War at Home*. *Real Change* caught up with Professor Piven this month when she was in town to speak at the annual conference of the Statewide Poverty Action Network

**Real Change:** So your new book makes the point that the war and the events of 9/11 have provided political cover for a huge transfer of wealth and other sorts of shifts in national priorities. What are some examples of that?

**Piven:** I guess the more apparent examples are the tax cuts, which are geared to reducing taxes on the wealthiest people in the United States and corporations, much more than ordinary working people. Those tax cuts were justified in Congress as being necessary in time of war. It's a pretty obvious use of war to redistribute domestic wealth. You usually think of war as a strat-

egy in which one nation plunders another nation's resources. In this case our leaders were trying to do that for sure — they invaded a nation with a lot of oil resources — but they also were using the fog of war to impose their own agenda, which is an agenda of plunder in the United States.

I think another dimension of that is the environmental changes that are occurring. Now those don't have the acute pinch that cutting your wages does because it takes a much longer time to feel the environmental effects of increased pollution. But this administration is committed to the use of public lands for private business: more logging, more

drilling. That's a heritage, a public heritage, and it's being given away.

Another example, not so related to the war: the President and his party were able to increase subsidies to pharmaceutical companies. As if they needed subsidies! They are amongst the most comfortable industries in the United States. Bush is promoting the Medicare Prescription Drug Act as evidence that he really is a compassionate conservative! That act gives big subsidies to the pharmaceutical companies, and it also protects them from competition from drugs imported from Canada. It also protects them from any effort by the government to use its buying power to force down drug prices.

This is an agenda of plunder. One of the features of this that I'm not sure I entirely understand is the reckless quality of it. Ordinarily, when you look through history and across the globe,

elites try to ensure that they will remain elites over time. They look for stability. This regime is so risk-taking, so reckless, that it's as though they don't have a time horizon. Their roots are not sunk in society. They want to take it and run. I find that very, very strange and also very alarming. Because they're taking it from us, and they may run, but we will inherit the damage that they do.

**"This regime is so risk-taking, so reckless, that it's as though they don't have a time horizon. Their roots are not sunk in society."**

**RC:** During this election, the term "voter suppression" cropped up a lot in the media. This isn't anything new, is it?

**Piven:** Well, you know, Americans like to think that the political parties work to turn out the vote. It's a very easy, pretty sort of democratic faith. But if you look at history with a more callous eye, I would make the case that

the political parties work harder to prevent voting, especially by people who are either likely to cause trouble for

Continued to page 12







## Silent no more

Dear *Real Change*,

Until I got downsized this fall, I cooked, drove, and served thousands of meals with Operation: Sack Lunch, the free meal program downtown.

I'm writing because I am disturbed by the actions of a small minority of very vocal Eastside residents.

Tent City Solutions is a group following TC4 from site to site with their rhetoric of fear, and "due process." They do not represent the majority of folks here. I'm a parishioner at St. John's, the church hosting TC4, and a longtime Finn Hill resident. I have decided to volunteer with Eastside Cares, a group of literally hundreds of volunteers from the Eastside supporting TC4 through human service committees: Meals, Supplies, Security, Private Transport, and Health. Over 30 churches, youth groups, teachers, parents, students, and Finn Hill neighbors are jumping in to volunteer. The Eastside does care.

The good news is all this has helped me to decide to become more vocal myself. I'm writing letters, emails, and joining other homeless advocacy groups. Thanks for letting me share.

Lynn Mathews  
Kirkland area

## Thanks from cyberspace

Dear *Real Change*,

Thank you so much.

Thank you for caring about the Homeless.

Thank you for the web site.

I will pray for all of you and try to keep up with what you do.

I am privileged to be on the Internet (I figure it costs me .50 cents a day) and try to use it to help encourage others.

I will also try to keep legislators up on what I am thinking.

June Estelle Cash  
Cle Elum

## Another Eastsider who's A-OK

Dear *Real Change*,

Just writing to say how much I like your publication and all of the hard work you

guys do. As you're gearing up to go weekly, I saw your request in the Nov. 11-24 issue for 20 percent of us to donate, so I've enclosed a contribution. I've also included some PCC receipts as well. Every little bit helps, I hope.

In these awful Republican times, the changes you are seeking to grow the paper toward are the right ones, and I wholeheartedly support the direction you're aiming for. An activist weekly paper is exactly what Seattle needs and it's great to see that you won't be giving up your core values to do it.

Best of luck and success to you, your staff, and your vendors. *Real Change* is my favorite local organization and I look forward to being able to support you even further in the future.

Sincerely,  
Karen Alexander  
Kirkland

## Pride

Dear *Real Change*,

I just want to tell you that you should really be proud of your product. Your cover story this issue ["Trump Card," *RC* Nov. 11] was really interesting, and you are the only paper that covers issues like downtown protests and instant-runoff voting that are otherwise only covered on the internet. I read the Israel/Palestine sections of about 10 papers a week. Other than that, I read *The Nation* and *Real Change*.

I started buying your paper because I thought it was the right thing to do. I continued buying it because of the enjoyable interactions I was having with vendors—easily worth a buck. But now I buy it because I want to read it!

Regards,  
Wendy Smith  
Seattle



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# Real Change

Fairness, Opportunity, Community

*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.

On the Web at

<http://www.realchangenews.org>

Email [rchange@speakeasy.org](mailto:rchange@speakeasy.org)

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*Real Change* vendors receive 70¢ of the \$1.00 paid for this paper.

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.



# It Begins With You

## Build fairness, opportunity, and community in Seattle

Ten years ago *Real Change* began with a very simple premise. People who are poor and homeless need help right away, and given the opportunity, they have the power to help themselves. Since then, we've grown to employ around 225 people each month selling this newspaper. For some, it's a way into housing. For others, selling the paper helps buy the things that make life a little easier: a meal away from the soup kitchen, money for laundry, clean warm socks.

Along the way, something beautiful happens. Our vendors find themselves within the caring community of the *Real Change* readership. As one vendor told me, "Before I sold the paper, I used to hate people. I'd been kicked around for so long that I just gave up. When I started selling *Real Change*, I found people who cared about me." When our vendors sell this paper, they find their worth. The reward goes far beyond the dollar that you pay.

We live in profoundly unfair times. It takes twice the minimum wage to afford a decent apartment in King County. In one of the wealthiest cities in the nation, homelessness rose another 12 percent this year. The social compact that says if you work hard and play by the rules you will be rewarded has been broken. People work hard, and they're still poor. It doesn't have to be this way.

*Real Change* is your community newspaper, offering opportunity to those who have too little, advocating for basic fairness in a society gone wrong, and building community between the haves and the have-nots.

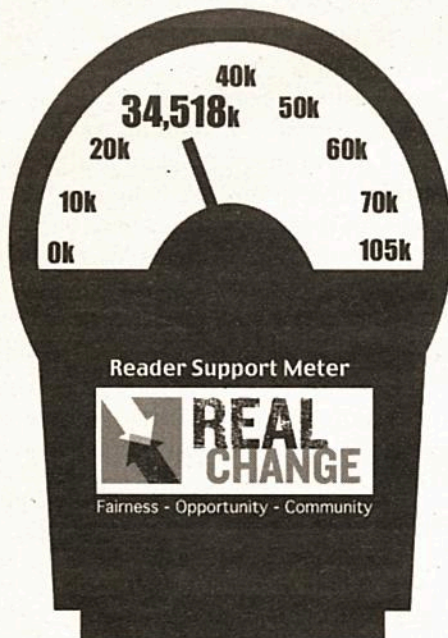
We need your help to continue our work. In 2005, this paper will go weekly. This will mean more up-to-date news for you on the issues you care about. Our vendors will have more opportunity to earn their pay.

This is a huge step. We want to be sure we can do it. Over the last two months of this year, we need to raise \$105,000 to enter the next year with more than a month's expenses in the bank. We need to meet this goal.

Last year, about 700 readers took the next step to being contributors. This is less than 5 percent of our readership. If you value *Real Change*, please let us know this holiday season by making whatever gift you can afford. Put your money where it matters. Do your part to support *Real Change*. ■

**"People work hard, and they're still poor. It doesn't have to be this way."**

# No one gets Free parking.



You paid \$1 for the paper you're reading. The vendor paid 30¢. We paid the printer.

You don't get much for nothing these days, and that includes *Real Change*. More than 40% of our 2004 budget comes from donations made by readers like you. That support keeps our doors open.

We need your help to continue to make a difference in the lives of hundreds of homeless and low-income vendors who sell *Real Change* every month.

We need to raise \$105,000 by December 31st to start 2005 on solid ground. Your contribution will help us provide a dignified alternative to panhandling and allow us to continue publishing the stories you've come to expect. As you consider your holiday giving, please consider doing a little more. Use the coupon below to make a tax deductible contribution today. We'll keep you updated on our progress.

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## Israel: refusing the draft

While their fellow 18-year-olds were looking towards their future, Shimri Zamaret and Noam Baret were willingly beginning jail terms in their home country of Israel.

Zamaret and Baret are part of a growing number of Israeli youth who have resisted their country's mandatory military duty because they don't agree with their country's policies towards Palestinians living in the West Bank. There have been about 1,600 "refuseniks" who have come forward in the past four years, although many accept some form of alternative to military service, such as working in a school.

Sentenced along with three other 18-year-olds, Zamaret and Baret did the most time (21 months) in Israel's history for the crime of refusing to serve. Since being released, Zamaret and Baret have traveled around the US, speaking before colleges and high schools. Last week, they attended a breakfast with about a dozen Seattle activists hosted by the American Friends Service Committee.

"Going to jail wasn't the hardest thing," says Zamaret. "The hardest thing was going against my age group. The day after I refused to enlist, there was huge graffiti on the wall of the school with my name and all kinds of profanities."

At first, Baret took a position in a boarding school as an alternative to going into the army. But he soon saw the hypocrisy of taking that route. "I'm trying to help kids have a better future. But then I saw the things my government was doing in the occupied territory. They had a curfew, which seemed immoral, because it prevented their kids from going to school."

Zamaret and Baret heard from friends in the army how the Palestinians are mistreated in the occupied territories. But there is also a strong sense of patriotism in Israel, and Zamaret and Baret were often encountered by people who felt they weren't supporting their country.

"Refusing military service is taboo," says Baret. "Especially with the group that thinks they have values. If you contribute to society, you join the army."

"I got a letter from a Palestinian about a year ago who was just starting to get active in terrorist attacks," says Zamaret. "He heard about us and changed his mind. Now he's working for peaceful change. That made my two years in jail worth it."

—R.V. Murphy

## High-cost heat

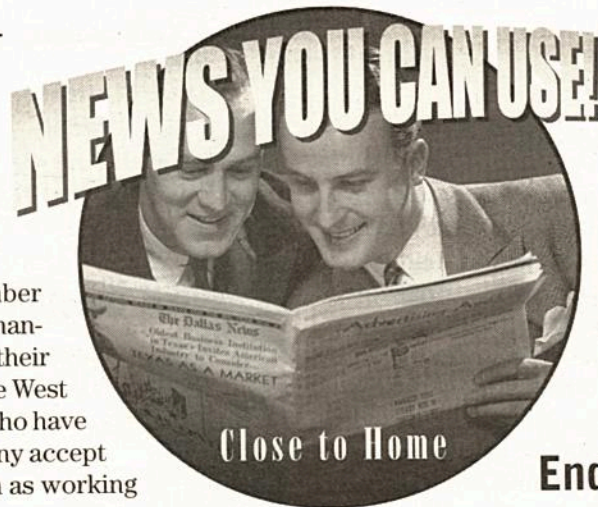
With the cost of oil reaching an all-time peak last month, local families with furnaces fueled by heating oil have cause for concern.

Customers in the Puget Sound area face up to a 50 percent increase in the cost of their heating oil, according to Richard Green, general manager of Sound Oil. The cost of heating oil elsewhere in the country has gone up by 37 percent, according to the Department of Energy.

The reason for this sharp increase is because the wholesale price of home heating oil has risen 17.9 percent from last year. The change in cost is even more dramatic in these last few months; according to one supplier in the area, the summer price of heating oil was \$1.60 a gallon compared with \$2.13 a gallon now. This change from season to season might lead consumers to refill their tanks in the summer months, while the price is cheaper, but it is unlikely that they will be able to avoid high winter prices entirely. The average household uses approximately 525 gallons of oil a year, depending on the winter season and the efficiency of their heating system; therefore, those who refill early will most likely need to top off their tanks in the winter months.

The cost of heating oil to consumers is affected by several factors: the price of crude oil, the cost to produce, market, and distribute the finished product, as well as the mark-up by wholesalers, retailers, and dealers. Most retailers of heating oil in the Seattle area require their customers to place a minimum order of 100 gallons. Approximately 40,000-50,000 households in the Puget Sound region use heating oil to heat their homes.

The Central Area Motivation Program (CAMP) helps approximately 7,000 low-income Seattle households apply for federal energy-assistance grants ev-



ery year. CAMP determines the eligibility of each household based on their income, housing type, and family size; a family of four with a monthly net income of \$1,964 would be eligible for up to \$750. CAMP can also help low-income homeowners make their homes more energy-efficient through furnace repair, replacement, or cleaning. They have a new 24-hour appointment line that consumers in need of energy bill assistance can call: 1-866-223-1068.

—Stacey Silliman

## Ending well, mostly

Overall, human service programs fared well in the 2005-2006 budget that, at press time, the City Council was expected to pass on Monday, Nov. 21.

Despite a \$25 million shortfall in the city's General Fund, the council increased Human Services Department funding by \$1.2 million. The mayor's original proposal had an increase of \$633,000 for HSD. Plus, the council backed the mayor's wishes for \$100,000 to help implement the 10-year plan to end homelessness and \$75,000 to find a new location for the outdoor meals program.

The council also restored cuts for social services to teen parents, LGBT, and at-risk youth, and to the SOAR Early Childhood Program.

The big loser among human service programs was the Sand Point Community Housing Association, which saw its

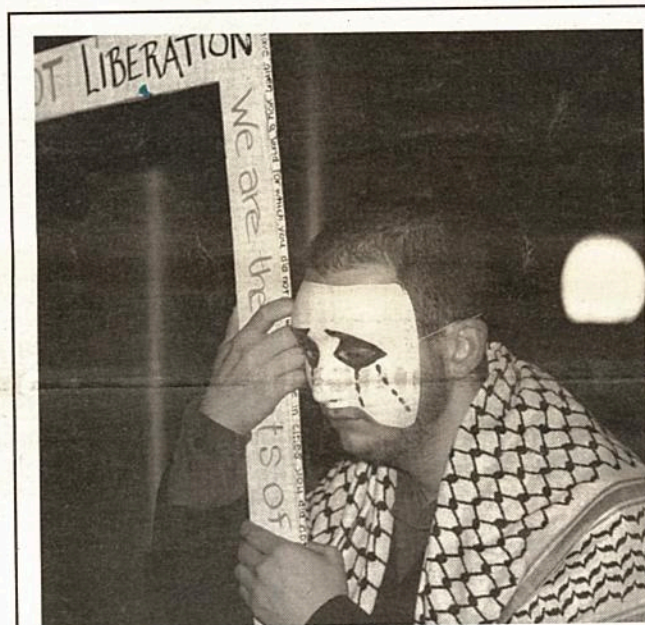
entire budget slashed. The SPCHA owns and operates 94 units of transitional housing at Magnuson Park. In 1997, the city agreed to eventually provide up to 200 units of housing for homeless families and individuals, and pledged to provide \$500,000 in annual operating support and up to \$12 million in capital funding. This year, SPCHA requested \$130,000 in operating support from the city, the same amount it received a year ago. "We believe the city has a commitment to fund Sand Point," says executive director Bob Rench. "Apparently, a previous contract doesn't resonate with the current mayor and council."

Rench plans to meet with the Office of Housing and city councilmembers to explore their options. "The worst case scenario would be us folding," he says, "but we're hoping to rise from the ashes."

The Seattle Human Services Coalition advocated the restoration of funding for programs in other departments. All were restored. They included a program that helps low-income people get their driver's licenses back, late-night weekend recreation in West and South Seattle, neighborhood legal clinics, and the workforce training project Port JOBS.

Perhaps the most high-profile program that the City Council took public testimony on was the library bookmobile program. After much protest, the council's Budget Committee added \$500,000 to restore the bookmobile.

—R.V. Murphy



## Mourning, marching

Seattle activists gathered downtown on Monday, Nov. 15, to mark the military assault on the Iraqi city of Fallujah. About 200,000 civilians had already fled their homes by the time U.S. forces attacked the city; they will return to "a tableau of destroyed buildings, burned-out cars, battered mosques, and piles of rubble," in the words of the *Los Angeles Times*. The number of civilian casualties is unknown.

Photo by Ken Dean.

## North country: fair?

Disenchanted fantasies about moving to Canada may come a little closer to realization at three informational seminars on the process, put on by a Canadian immigration law firm.

Right after the election, "Our phones started going nuts," says Sharon Hayer of the Embarkation Law Group of Vancouver BC. In an effort to answer questions economically, Embarkation is holding events in Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles on Dec. 4, 5, and 6, respectively.

Registration materials for the seminars were put on the group's website ([embarkationlaw.com](http://embarkationlaw.com)) on Tuesday, Nov. 16. Two days later, 50 people had paid \$20 U.S. (\$25 Canadian) to register for the 90-minute session.

This is the first seminar of its kind offered to U.S. citizens, says Hayer. ■

—Adam Hyla

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



# Supernova

Five years on, WTO protests still energize

By Adam Hyla

The SPD, vowing never to be caught out again, now maintains a stock pile of less-lethal weaponry. Bill Clinton failed to get the fast-track authority to negotiate trade deals with foreign countries — but George W. Bush did. But the spirit behind those days of mobilization against the World Trade Organization, which culminated in a massive shutdown of downtown Seattle on Nov. 30, 1999, flickers on.

The legacy of those days never looked worse than after the fratricidal collapse of the three-day Northwest Social Forum earlier this fall ("Death by Process," RC Sept. 2). The Social Forum was supposed to be a three-day, regional alliance-building event inspired by the lasting energy of the WTO protests. With the Social Forum's abrupt cancellation came the question: what happened to all that good energy?

It's persisting, although quietly, says Jeremy Simer, co-founder and director of the Community Alliance for Global Justice (CAGJ). Simer cut his organizing teeth educating Seattleites on the import of the WTO in early 1999. Begun in 2000, CAGJ offers a local voice for fair trade alternatives to free-trad-

ers' latest initiatives, the Free Trade Area of the Americas and the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

"What happened in 1999 was a supernova; there's no way to maintain that level of energy," Simer says. "Like a supernova, it can give birth to new stars and new planets. It did spin off a lot of energy: new activists, new collaborations. And a certain amount of energy that keeps a lot of us going."

Veterans of the fair-trade movement have gone on to fight corporate power in other ways. Sally Soriano, who helped lead efforts against the passage of NAFTA in the early 1990s, is now a member of the Seattle School Board. She sees the WTO protests as a culmination of the work that began when she first learned that NAFTA would authorize secret tribunals to overturn a nation's trade rules. At that time, one activist told her, "No, Sally, you're not reading that right. We have a Constitution." It took seven, eight, nine years for people to understand that these trade agreements could trump democratic law.

NAFTA's passage realigned politics in Washington state, as trade unionists cooled their heels during the 1994 elec-

tion campaign — much to the sorrow of venerable pro-NAFTA Democrats like Speaker of the House Tom Foley of Spokane. But with a centrist Democrat in the White House, fair-traders were effectively edged leftward off the political map. A year later, when the WTO was created, Soriano remembers that "there were only three or four of us, locally, working on that issue. People said [the WTO] was a done deal." The Seattle protests were an object lesson in not giving up.

Even Rep. Jim McDermott was out of step in 1999. McDermott wanted to give the president fast-track trade promotion authority during the Clinton years, but reversed his position in a bruising 215-214 congressional showdown in 2001. Soriano says that turning McDermott around was "one of the finest pieces of coalition work that was done by labor and environmentalists and fair-trade activists."

The community organizing conducted by Soriano, Simer, and hundreds of others in antipa-

tion of the WTO meeting also left a lasting stamp. It was mimicked in the creation and confederation of neighborhood antiwar groups under Sound Non-violent Opponents of War (SNOW) in 2002 and 2003.

Organizer Jim Goettler, who helped put on past WTO commemorations, is this year planning a gathering in Westlake Center to enact a theatrical facsimile of war-torn Fallujah. Free trade, he says, "is what this whole war is about."

While the city has yet to issue him a permit, Goettler promises that with or without it, the five-year anniversary of the WTO will be memorialized downtown on the afternoon of Tuesday, Nov. 30. ■



"THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS." PHOTO BY GEORGE HICKEY.

## Thanks for the memories (and the money too!)

Real Change threw a tenth anniversary party and 500 of our closest friends helped celebrate!

A Big Thanks to the Table Captains:

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|---------------------------------|--|
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| Maureen Kostyack                | FPA/Poverty Action                     |
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## Snowing

cold  
freezing  
to the bone  
the bus stop  
all night  
no money

outside the casino  
starts  
snowing

—RICK UNGRICH

## Your Touch

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

—PAUL VON KEMPF, JR.



## Angel

In my mind I travel far out  
into the night dotted with stars  
but it's too big cold and lonesome out there  
and I bring myself back to this town  
this bright table where I sit.

I make tea, the cold crouches outside,  
the night moves on the spindly legs of time,  
the steam from the tea rises like forgiveness.  
Conversations come back to me now: Sarah said  
Do you remember the woman who complained of her piles?  
She is gone. And Angel, the artist who sold his paintings  
and fell down drunk on Main Street? He is gone.  
He tried to teach me Spanish, I told her.  
I remember  
*cara* is face and *pelo* is hair.  
He's gone. It was a hit-and-run  
in a place where there are not enough streetlights.

We circled there, I remember. How could you  
someone said, drive on knowing you had hit someone?  
You could be more afraid, I said, of the trouble  
for that moment than of what you had done.  
But now I think it was darkness that killed Angel:  
That big cold lonesome night out there. I sip tea and think  
Of Angel.

*Cara, I think. Pelo.*

—ELIZABETH ROMERO

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



Let's take some time off from News We Can Use and have us a short helping of Useless News!

I enjoy useless news, and what could be more useless than learning that, recently, a homeless 17-year-old Kenyan found a treasure hunt prize of more than \$5,000 while urinating in a Nairobi park? Evans Kamande found a small box, with a piece of paper inside, between the forks of a cactus. The paper turned out to be a voucher for the prize, which Mr. Kamande later collected from the local radio station that had been conducting the treasure hunt.

What possible use could we get from that? Maybe if we played the lottery we could conclude that we might be better off urinating in city parks. But, realistically, what are the odds that a Nairobi radio station would leave a voucher for a cash prize in Denny Park? So all we get is an excuse to use the word "urinating" repeatedly. But we could have done that without the excuse!

Here's some useless news from Graz, Austria. Professors from the Karl Franzens University there are taking part in a project to bring the news to the homeless of Austria's second-largest city that laughter is the best medicine.

That's right. Frolicking, happy-go-lucky Austrian university professors are spreading the word to homeless people in shelters and drop-in-centers that if they would just laugh more, their immune systems would work better. Here is an actual translation of an actual hilarious quote from the "act" of one of these professors: "Phrases such as laughing yourself sick should actually be turned around to read laughing yourself well." STOP, I'm NOT in stitches! I'm well!

Sure, it would be useful if homeless people learned to laugh better. It might also help if they got plenty of sleep and avoided sweets. But how about getting them shelter?

OK, that brings us to news concerning world-famous Australian architect Sean Godsell. This guy designs cheap housing intended to shelter the home-

less. His works include a converted shipping container that has been on display at the Smithsonian design museum in New York, and a bus shelter house—a bus shelter by day, a homeless shelter by night.

How does that qualify as useless news? Well, ask yourself, why are these things always in museums and never in use? In order for a shelter idea to be useful, people have to permit it to be used. What good is a bus shelter house when every transit system in the world is so hostile to the homeless that they not only wouldn't want to install Godsell's creations but they would furiously destroy existing bus shelters whenever homeless people rest at them?

Godsell also has designed a park bench shelter. It's a park bench by day and a safe home out of the weather for someone at night. They say the only problem with it is, no city will have it. And when cities don't want something that tends to be the end of it. Except for homelessness itself, of course. That, you can't legislate away.

Which brings us to the least useful news of all. No more useful than that the sun will rise tomorrow. No more useful than that George Foreman has a kid named George. No more useful than my left nipple: knowing that neighbors N don't want a shelter in neighborhood X. (X can take on any value in the universe of all neighborhoods, and N can be any subset of the residents of X.)

Like, duh.

Guess what, some Kirklanders don't want Tent City 4 in Kirkland! Wow. You could knock me over with a feather. A 20-pound feather with a three-foot handle.

Useless: "Not in my neighborhood." Useful: "What can I do to help?"

Useful is rare, useless is everywhere. ■

**Guess what, some Kirklanders don't want Tent City 4 in Kirkland! Wow. You could knock me over with a feather. A 20-pound feather with a three-foot handle.**



# Too Many Chefs in the Kitchen

## Farestart to make a big new home for job training

By Chantelle Lusebrink

**A**t FareStart, the phrase "too many chefs in the kitchen" has never been used. Until recently.

The local nonprofit organization, which provides culinary training and social services to many of Seattle's disadvantaged men, women, and children, has long since outgrown its small facilities. Last year, it had to turn away more than 300 qualified applicants due to a lack of space and funding.

The organization now resides in two separate buildings on either side of Second Avenue downtown. The FareStart Restaurant, in the ground floor of the Josephinum building on the east side of Second, also serves as a meeting room, classroom, business, and kitchen, where more than 2,500 meals are prepared each day by the students working alongside staff chefs.

More than 500 students apply to FareStart each year because of its success rate for job training, placement, and retention. In response to the program's popularity, FareStart unveiled an ambi-

tious "Futures Rising Capital Campaign" last October to raise \$8 million over the next two years for the purchase and renovation of a new site.

In the first year of the campaign, the organization has already raised more than \$4 million and purchased a new site, three blocks away on Seventh Avenue and Virginia Street.

"The location is great for our organization," says David Carleton of FareStart's Business Development and Community Relations Department. "Here," as he gestures around at the current location, "we are out in a no-man's-land, between downtown and Belltown, but because the new site is near Westlake it connects us into the downtown area, where many people shop and eat."

The capital campaign will run through December 2005, at which time the new site will undergo renovation with an opening sometime in spring or

summer of 2006. The new facilities will accommodate both the administrative offices as well as the FareStart Restaurant, doubling current enrollment, allowing it to serve almost 400 students each year.

The new building will house improved student common areas with storage, shower facilities, and family meeting rooms. Carleton believes that these facilities will help enhance the

raised more than \$330,000. The single largest fundraiser for the organization, the auction was held at the Fairmont Olympic Hotel downtown with host John Curley of King 5 Television. With the sale of such items as Napa Valley wine tours, African safaris, sports and concert tickets, as well as large-party reservations to local restaurants, the auction put FareStart well over the \$4-million mark.

The three top selling items of the auction included an eight-night stay at the exclusive 5-star Manele Bay Hotel in Hawaii that sold for \$10,000; a Pinehurst golf experience package in North Carolina auctioned at \$5,000; and a four-course dinner for 12 prepared in the donor's residence by chefs Vicky McCaffree and Jessica Campbell

of Yarrow Bay, Tamara Murphy of Brasa, and Julie Andres of La Medusa, auctioned at \$4,700.

In addition to the October fundraiser, FareStart's weekly Guest Chef Night earns another \$1 million in proceeds annually. Every Thursday evening the FareStart Restaurant (206-267-6210) takes reservations from the public to dine on a three-course meal for \$16.95 prepared by top Seattle chefs who work throughout the afternoon alongside students. Meals often include a variety of wines donated from local wineries.

For students, however, the evening also serves as an opportunity to demonstrate their skills to other chefs and secure job offers upon graduation. The experience of one current student, Tammie, is such a case. She was recently approached by a visiting chef and offered a position upon graduation. Tammie, 39, says she has cooked all her life but has never been professionally trained. Today, she says confidently, "I am incorporating what I've known all my life and applying it to the things they have been teaching me."

FareStart's "recipe for success" is derived from not only ensuring that students learn a trade, but also from providing individual case management as well as culinary and life skills training, tempered with real experiences alongside professionals and fellow students.

Another student, John, 49, formerly a construction manager, said two things attracted him to FareStart: the incredible chef instructors and the support system. "FareStart is the only place that I have found which does everything they can do to place you back into society." ■



supportive and stable environment that is key to the organization's mission "to provide a community that empowers disadvantaged men, women and youth to create opportunities for themselves."

With the goal half met, FareStart kicked off its second year of fundraising last month with an annual action which drew 380 guests and

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*Chantelle Lusebrink is a student in the University of Washington School of Communications News Laboratory. Reservations for FareStart's Guest Chef Night: 206-267-6210 or [www.farestart.org](http://www.farestart.org).*



**PIVEN, Continued from Page 1**

their party — poor people, immigrants — or to prevent voting among people who will vote for the other party. So in a way we have party competition through vote suppression. It's been a very prominent pattern in American political history.

That certainly has been true with regard to the efforts of political parties at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century to reduce voting among immigrant working people, and the ferocious efforts of southern elites to eliminate the Black vote in the south, but it's still going on.

We have a structure that permits vote suppression that includes election officials who are partisan, who themselves are running for election. Nothing could be more bizarre: the absence of any national right to vote, or any standards for the conduct of elections, except for the Voting Rights Act, and the act of resistance to the expansion of voter registration opportunities by political officials up and down the system, from the national system, to the state, to the county, and the fact that Election Day is not a holiday. Americans work more hours as each year goes by, and they do that because their wages are shrinking and they're trying to maintain the same standard of living. So as Americans work more hours, the fact that Election Day is not a holiday becomes more and more onerous.

**RC:** *There's been a lot of talk, particularly out in blogland, about how exit polls have been more accurate in non-battleground states than in places where the election was more contested. Is this another stolen election?*

**Piven:** Maybe. I think we don't know. I think it's possible. I think for the time being it doesn't do us any good to keep stewing over that possibility, since we can't know if it's true unless somebody spills and it has to be more than one person who squeals because if one person squeals, that person will be immediately discredited.

There is no record, apart from the computer record, of the vote. And it's been arranged so there would be no record. And we don't know the codes.

We don't know. It's certainly a possibility. But what we should do is fight very hard for systems through which we can check those computers. And there are — those systems do exist — it's just that our election officials, and the computer companies themselves, have resisted that. So we shouldn't allow computers to be unchecked and uncheckable. They should not be permitted in our elections. You know when the Carter Center was asked if they would monitor the election in the U.S. it declined, and one of the reasons it declined is that it said it's an election system with so many different practices it's chaotic, we can't monitor it. And we can't monitor it either until we straighten it out.

**RC:** *What should we be most concerned about in terms of the Bush administration agenda on poverty over his second terms?*

**Piven:** We should be concerned about everything, but we should be concerned about the further erosion of income supports, which includes unemployment insurance. They did not extend federal unemployment insurance since 2003. TANF becomes more restrictive, more punitive, more derogatory of its clients. They want to privatize the Medicaid program because it's a big program. And union rights are very, very important, and worker rights generally. The attack, for example, on overtime pay standards is very important if it succeeds, if it is in fact implemented. We should work on a minimum wage increase. Five dollars and fifteen cents is the minimum wage. That's the lowest minimum wage in history, in real terms.

**RC:** *Why are they so fixated on social security?*

**Piven:** Because there's money to be made there. Money to be made by bankers, investment firms, brokers, and financial advisors, and maybe also because the social security reserve fund, which is built up through the social security tax, is paid entirely by working people. Social security tax is rigged so that there's no tax on incomes over a certain amount. But that fund has built up, and as it builds up, it creates at least the legal possibility that the public sector can become a player in the economy.

**RC:** *Kerry talked a lot about jobs, he talked a lot about tax priorities, but he didn't say that much about poverty.*

**Piven:** The entire tendency of the Democratic Party in the last 30 years, under the influence of the Democratic Leadership Council, which is pernicious, has been to



FRANCIS FOX PIVEN AT THE STATEWIDE POVERTY ACTION NETWORK CONFERENCE. PHOTO BY TIMOTHY HARRIS.

move away from the issues of the 1960s — the issues through which the Democratic Party becomes the party of the down-and-outs, the marginals, immigrants, people of color, and women. So the argument has been that they have to get with mainstream America. I actually think that the American people are not so selfish and so evil that they would not respond to appeals to improve the conditions of the poor. All the survey data show that they would. If you call it welfare, they shrink from it because welfare has been assaulted since the early 1970s. The program has been said to be the cause of every social problem in the world, without any evidence, to be sure, but the propaganda works. But if you ask people whether they think the poor should get a hand up, everybody agrees.

**RC:** *It strikes me that the cultural wars are a way to unite people — often poor people — against a perceived liberal elite, and that it operates as a smoke screen around class. Democrats need to counter that strategy by being more out front on class and poverty.*

**Piven:** And if the democrats won't do it, the social movements should. It's true that a lot of people are cultural traditionalists in the United States. A lot of people everywhere are cultural traditionalists. People have ideas that they learn when they were little about sex and gender and sin and stuff like that. If you keep talking about those ideas, those issues, and you don't talk about the problem of maintaining a standard of living, the problem of overwork, of too long hours, of not enough pay, of no healthcare, then you can lead people to fix their minds on the personal sin issues. I actually think poverty — keeping people poor — is a sin. But, you know, a lot of Ameri-

cans think sin is sexual transgression. And if you succeed in encouraging people to obsess about that, you can distract them while you steal their wages. That's what's happening.

**RC:** *There's been a lot of talk lately among progressives about recapturing the language of values. How do you rate that as a strategy for overcoming single-issue isolation?*

**Piven:** Well, I don't know about that. I mean, what do they mean by it? If they mean that we should talk about sex too, I think it's crazy. If they mean we should advance our own ideals with moral conviction our ideals about equality, democracy, the elimination of poverty, a

more inclusive society, yes, those are moral ideals. Those are values and we should be clear that they are values. It's not an economic agenda, it's a values agenda but it's a different values agenda. It's a values agenda that a lot of the people who are talking values talk would respond to.

**RC:** *Do progressives simply need to out-organize fundamentalists or is there room for dialogue?*

**Piven:** Grover Norquist, who runs a populist right coalition in Washington but now has links with such coalitions in the states, boasts that his coalition has moved evangelical Christians from being quasi-socialists to being free marketers. He's talking about the sense in which many evangelical Christians were big supporters of the New Deal. Why were they big supporters of the New Deal? Because they recognized that the New Deal gave them work relief. It gave them early food subsidies. It gave them WPA. These were things that made a lot of sense to them even though they were also evangelical

**“I actually think that the American people are not so selfish and so evil that they would not respond to appeals to improve the conditions of the poor. All the survey data shows that they would.”**

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Christians. And if Christ was an evangelical Christian, Christ also would have been in favor of relief, WPA, food subsidies, and so on.

**RC:** You've described the movement around George Bush as Authoritarian Populist but there are aspects, such as the transfer of assets to industry, the rejection of reason, and the appeal to bigotry, that appear fascist. Why not just call it that?

**Piven:** Well, do you know what I was trying to get at when I used that term? When we think about fascism we think about political systems that exercise total surveillance and total control. I don't think that's likely to happen in the United States. And I don't think it has to happen for the plunder of the ruling class to continue. I think all they need to do is exercise rough control and they'll allow you to publish your newspaper, me to make my talks and to teach my classes and to write my books but they will succeed in marginalizing us by whipping up a kind of popular passion around the personal values issues. That's where they're moving.

**RC:** In Poor People's Movements, you write about how social movements gain power in proportion to their ability to threaten and even stop business as usual. One of the things that was apparent to me in Seattle during WTO — and I've seen it growing around the

country — is the militarization of policing. Do you think the political space still exists for noisy disruptive movements to occur?

**Piven:** Yeah, I certainly do. It's not fascism. The political space still exists. If you wanted to be entirely safe without any cost, well, it never really is. There are risks associated with truly disruptive action. Sometimes high risks, but that has always been the case. And yet, people have undertaken such actions, they have gone to jail and they've sometimes won.

**RC:** So, what else would you say to those who are wondering, "What now?"

**Piven:** Well, it's gonna be a tough few years but I think only a few years. We cannot continue following these policies without creating domestic political crisis in the United States. And we should be ready for that crisis. We should be politically prepared, politically mobilized, straighten out our heads about what we believe in and what we want to correct in our own society. and we should understand that this is not only important for us, it's important for the entire world because the United States has become a very dangerous power. People all over the world now agree that the greatest danger to world peace is the United States government. ■



**Friday, Oct. 29, 12:02 p.m., Railroad Way S./ S. King St.** Officer reports seeing a person asleep under the viaduct at the above address. The suspect was completely covered up by a multi-colored blanket. He made contact with the suspect, a transient Black male aged 55, who willingly ID'd himself. The officer ran his name via the patrol car computer and found the suspect had been trespassed from the area on three different occasions. He was arrested for criminal trespass and booked into King County Jail.

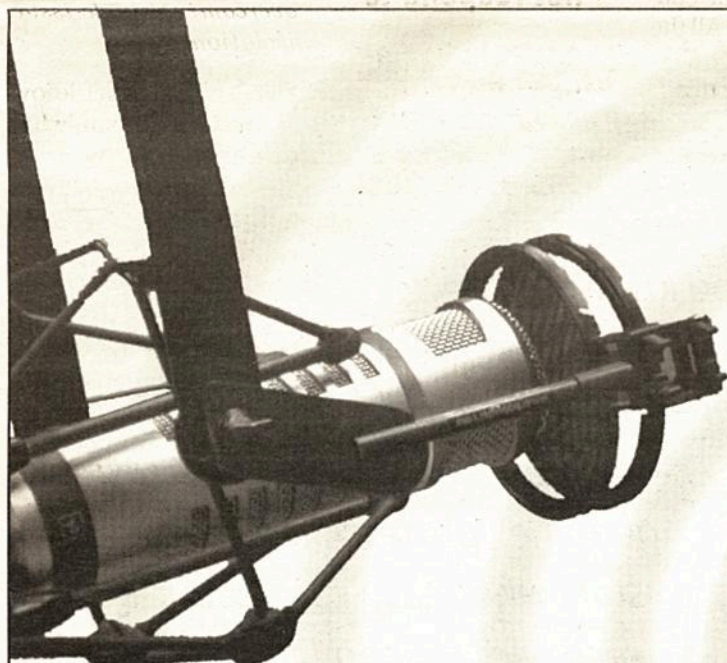
**Friday, Nov. 12, 11:59 a.m., 3rd and Pike.** Suspect, a transient Black male aged 54 is a known Department of Corrections active subject with many conditions to his parole. Market security advised officers that he appeared to be the "lookout" during a burglary/theft that took place in Pike Place Market. He was seen and contacted at Third and Pike and advised of a trespass admonishment from the market. The suspect was found to have a metal pipe on his person, which field-tested positive for cocaine, and two fixed blade knives. He was taken to the precinct, interviewed, and released to the DOC.

**Friday, Nov. 12, 1:25 p.m., 1st Ave.** Officers were dispatched to a report from a federal police officer of a victim being harassed by a nearby male. They arrived and contacted a

white female, aged 32, who identified herself as the victim. She stated she stands on the corner of 1st and Marion and sells the *Real Change* newspaper. Today a male not known to her showed up on her corner and began panhandling. He became very aggressive and verbally abusive to her. She became fearful for her safety with the threat of bodily harm, and flagged down the officer to get the suspect to leave so she could continue selling her papers. Officers contacted the suspect, a transient male aged 46, who instantly became verbally abusive and aggressive. He was informed that he had the option to leave the area, and the police would write a report, or he would be arrested. He left the area, traveling southbound on 1st, and made no further contact with the victim.

**Friday, Nov. 12, 9:36 p.m., 1999 Western Ave.** Officers observed a large amount of people standing in the southwest corner of Victor Steinbrueck Park. At the time of the observation the officers noticed several open containers of beer on the table in front of the suspects, a Native American female aged 27, a white male aged 33, and a Native American male aged 33. They were ID'd and were all found to have been previously trespassed from the park. They were all arrested, charged with "Trespass in the Parks," and 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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# Distinguished Service

*Will They Ever Trust Us Again? Letters from the War Zone*

By Michael Moore  
Simon & Schuster, 2004  
Hardcover, 224 pages, \$22

Review by Artis

For starters, Mr. Moore didn't write this one. So those critics of his "set-ups" and "phony" situations will have to dig deeper to tear this book apart. In fact, Michael Moore writes exactly seven pages in this collection of first-person accounts by current "in-country" U.S. soldiers and their families.

Should the Pentagon attempt to punish these soldiers, Michael Moore has let them know, in no uncertain terms, that he would personally "shine a very public light" on their vengeful actions.

These are not found letters or letters secreted away across the ocean by clandestine route and deciphered by a private party or elite, warrior spies. These letters were posted publicly, in cyberspace. Michael suggested, even requested, that authors remain anonymous in order to protect themselves from prosecution. However, most gave their names. Most? By my count, 80 percent of the letters were signed.

*Will They Ever Trust Us Again?* is a book of written accounts to a journalist, about a war. That's not the same as notes in a diary or letters home to Mom. The whole mindset is different. These young men and women are writing to the world through this man, Michael Moore, and they know it.

From Django: "I am writing to tell you and anyone else who may read this that it is you and others who are outspoken about the government who are the real patriots." Another from Kyle: "I was a naive 19-year-old looking for a different route in life. ...I had no idea my Commander in Chief was going to create all these blasphemies."

There's one declaration after the next, one page after another, of discouraging words to President Bush, of pleas and queries regarding the promises and statements about Iraq and Afghanistan. This book reveals the perplexing valor

and dignity soldiers experience when their leader has lied to them and they are put in a position to honestly respond, both defensively in a war zone and defensively on a political front.

From Stuart: "I'm a damn fool currently about to start my service in the U.S. Army for the exact reasons that you put out in *Fahrenheit 9/11*. I'm poor."

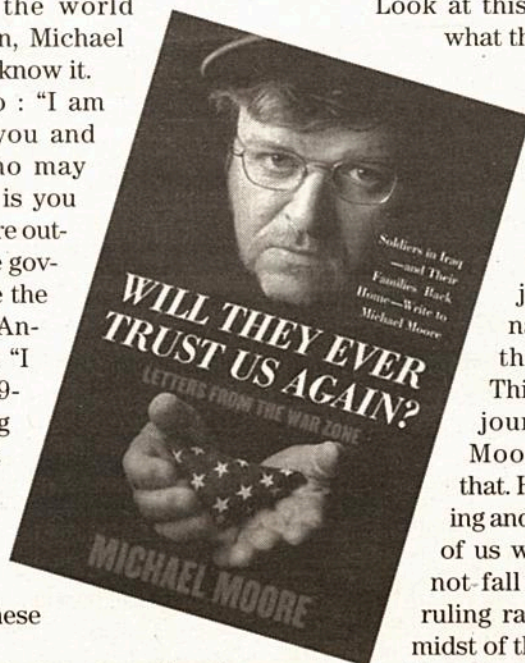
Look at this country. That's what this book is doing.

Personally, I feel the strong tug of the Bush administration pulling us toward lethargy: just let the dominant paradigm of the Empire rule. This character of a journalist, Michael Moore, isn't doing that. He is actively finding and prompting those of us who would rather not fall in line with the ruling ranks, even in the midst of the war itself. *Will They Ever Trust Us Again?*

is a coffee table read, even a bathroom or bedtime read. It's easy to pick up, do two, five, 20 minutes, anytime. Probably two and a half hours, total. Moore doesn't need the money; you don't have

to purchase the book. But read it. It's worth it. ■

**"This book reveals the perplexing valor and dignity soldiers experience when their leader has lied to them and they are put in a position to honestly respond, both defensively in a war zone and defensively on a political front."**



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# Upcoming and Notable

## Friday 11/26

Northwest Film Forum, a Seattle-based not-for-profit film arts organization, presents the documentary *The Take*, about how the once-rich country of Argentina became poor. This film embodies a vision of working people forging alternatives to a brutal economic model, a story with universal implications. 7:15 p.m. and 9:15 p.m., Nov. 26 - Dec. 2, at the Northwest Film Forum, 1515 12th Ave. Info 206-329-2629 or <http://www.nwfilmforum.org>.

## Sunday 11/28

University Unitarian Church sponsors a discussion with Jacqui Brown Miller, Assistant Attorney General for Washington State and an environmental attorney since 1996. Her talk is entitled "If Corporations are People and Money is Speech, Is Democracy a Myth?" 9:30 a.m., at University Unitarian Church, 6556 - 35th Ave. NE, Seattle. Info 206-522-9384.

## Monday 11/29

The Palestine Solidarity Committee presents *Activists and the Occupation: Solidarity and Resistance* in Israel and Palestine. Israeli human rights lawyer Yael Berda and International Soli-

arity Movement activist Aaron Kuller will speak. Co-sponsored by American Friends Service Committee. Admission is by voluntary donation. 7 p.m., at University Friends Meeting, 4001 9th Ave. NE, Seattle. Info 206-285-2154.

## Thursday 12/2

M Coy Books Benefit for **Pike Market Medical Clinic**. Today all book sale proceeds benefit this clinic that provides health care for low-income and uninsured people in downtown Seattle. Shoppers also can purchase books to donate to **Page Ahead**, the children's literacy program. 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m., at M Coy Books, 117 Pine St., downtown Seattle. Info Jan Gallagher 206-728-1687 ext. 3039.

## Signers

Seattle filmmaker Len Davis spent 2004 interviewing homeless men and women by the I-5 on-ramp. In *Signers*, Davis documents their stories and experiences with the public. Not a social commentary, this short film reminds the viewer that there is a human being behind every sign. "I wanted to tell the stories of the people that are not necessarily heard from," says Davis. *Signers* is part of New Voices, a series of local documentary shorts presented by KCTS in collaboration with 911 Media Arts. KCTS (Seattle Channel 9) Thursday Nov. 25 at 8 p.m., Sunday Nov. 28 at 1 p.m., and Monday 11/29 at 3 a.m. Additional info: [www.kcts.org](http://www.kcts.org) or [www.911media.org](http://www.911media.org).



Northwest Film Forum presents the Seattle premiere of the documentary *The Fourth World War*. This film is the story of men and women who resist being annihilated in the current global conflict, weaving together the images and voices from the front lines of struggles in Mexico, Argentina, South Africa, Palestine, Korea, and the "war on terror." 7:45 p.m. and 9:15 p.m., at Northwest Film Forum, 1515 12th Ave. Info 206-267-5380 or [www.nwfilmforum.org](http://www.nwfilmforum.org).

## Friday 12/3

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice present Friday Night at the Meaningful Movies, with the film *Incident at Oglala — The Leonard Peltier Story*, by Robert Redford and Michael Apted about the imprisoned Native American activist. Discussion follows, free, donations welcome. 7 p.m., at Keystone

Church, 5019 Keystone Pl., north of 50th, Seattle. Info [wnfp@comcast.net](mailto:wnfp@comcast.net).

## Saturday 12/4

Seattle Young People's Project presents the 12th Annual Bowl-a-Thon Extravaganza Soul Bowl "Dancin' and Rollin' into 2005." What could be better than a DJ, costumes, prizes, free food, bowling, and helping support youth empowerment? Fundraise for an amazing youth organization that promotes **social justice and youth leadership**. Volunteer opportunities are available. Noon-6 p.m., at Imperial Lanes, 2101 22nd Ave. S., Seattle. Info 206-860-9606 ext. 3 or [BAT2004@sypp.org](mailto:BAT2004@sypp.org).

The Central District for Arts and Ideas presents Northwest Passage: A sharing of poetry and song of **Africans in our community**. Individuals will represent northwest residents from various African communities. 6 p.m., at Richard Hugo House, 1634 11th Ave. between Pine and Olive, Seattle. Info 206-323-4032 or [www.cdforum.org](http://www.cdforum.org).

## Thursday 12/9

**Human Rights Day** panel discussion with Drs. Peggy McIntosh, Cherry Banks and James Banks. Presented by the Seattle Office for Civil Rights, the Seattle Human Rights Commission, and the United Nations Association. Free, info 206-684-4540. 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., at Seattle City Hall, Bertha Landes Room, 600 4th Ave., Seattle.



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**citizens participation project**



## Mayor, City Council Deserve Thanks

**Issue:** After weeks of debate, two packed hearings, and many calls, emails, and letters, the Seattle City Council passed the 2005-2006 budget. They did a good job, even with a \$25 million shortfall.

**Background: Homeless Service Center** The mayor's budget included funds to build a multi-service center in conjunction with a new fire command center. We've been talking about such a center for years, and the mayor's funding, plus identification of a site, moved us in the right direction. Responding to community concerns about process, the council inserted a 60-day period to look at other locations, but left the funds intact. If they don't agree on another site, the center will be built at the command center.

**Human services:** The Mayor's budget proposed reductions of more than a million dollars from human services. Those cuts included late-night youth activities, teen parent programs, neighborhood legal clinics, and programs that help low-income people access the services they need. The council restored almost all the cuts to human services.

**Budget for Justice:** The city spends up to \$3 million annually for police officers to pose as drug buyers and arrest the street-level dealers that sell to them. Recent research shows that this strategy results in racially disproportionate enforcement, and doesn't do much to reduce street drugs. They'd do better at reducing drug use and keeping communities safe by reallocating these funds for treatment, prevention, or community policing. While the final budget didn't address this issue, the organizers of the Budget for Justice campaign raised awareness in neighborhoods and in City Hall and built momentum for the future.

Councilmembers made it clear that their top priority was to put people first. The mayor did better too. In addition to the homeless service center funds, his budget included money for an outdoor meal program, the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, and an inflationary increase that human service providers needed to pay for the increased cost of doing their important work. The final budget increased human services funding by \$1.2 million. Besides restoring cuts, the Council added funds for LGBT homeless youth and to help CASA Latina buy a new building for its day worker program. They even restored much of the Bookmobile funding, and avoided adding some unpopular fees that were discussed.

The final budget demonstrated that the legislative process can work and that citizen involvement can make a difference.

**Action:** We still have our work cut out for us in Washington D.C. and Olympia, but before moving on, please take a moment to acknowledge the good work the Council and Mayor did this fall. Let them know that you appreciate their work to put people first and the way they listened and responded to Seattle residents. You can also remind them that we have a long way to go to make sure everyone is able to meet their needs and that you hope they'll continue to help move us in that direction.

*Nick.Licata@seattle.gov / 206-684-8803\**  
*Peter.Steinbrueck@seattle.gov / 206-684-8804\**  
*Tom.Rasmussen@seattle.gov / 206-684-8808\**  
*Richard.McIver@seattle.gov / 206-684-8800*  
*Jan.Drago@seattle.gov / 206-684-8801*  
*David.Della@seattle.gov / 206-684-8806*  
*Jean.Godden@seattle.gov / 206-684-8807*  
*Jim.Compton@seattle.gov / 206-684-8802*  
*Richard.Conlin@seattle.gov / 206-684-8805*

\*Councilmembers Steinbrueck, Licata, and Rasmussen deserve an emphatic thank-you for their leadership on homelessness.

Mayor Greg Nickels: [www.cityofseattle.net/mayor/citizen\\_response.htm](http://www.cityofseattle.net/mayor/citizen_response.htm)

Or visit [www.realchangenews.org](http://www.realchangenews.org), click First things First, and click Take Action to personalize and send a sample letter.



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).

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.



**MISSING!!!**

**RICHARD (CODY) HAYNES**

DOB: Apr 16, 1993      Eyes: Blue  
Missing: Sep 12, 2004      Race: White  
Age Now: 11      Height: 5'0"  
Sex: Male      (152 cm)  
Weight: 90 lbs (41 kg)      Hair: Brown

Missing From:  
KITTITAS, WA  
United States

Richard was last seen at home on September 12, 2004. He has a round birthmark on his right inner thigh. Richard may go by the nickname Cody.

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT  
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children  
1-800-843-5678 (1-800-THE-LOST)

Kititas Police Department (Washington) 1-509-925-8534

**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



December 2004

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak out Across the Nation

Volume IV, Issue 12

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

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

## Election Proves that Every Vote Counts

ECHO SPEED



ROD LOVE, CANADIAN ALLIANCE CAMPAIGN STRATEGIST, was once quoted as saying, "Once again we saw the phenomena of three kinds of citizens in this country: the activists who campaign hard, the regular citizen who votes but does not otherwise participate and the truly tuned out who never even know when an election has been called." Only about 18% of the overall ballot count for the 2004 presidential election belonged to youth voters. Because 18% was the youth count for the 2000 presidential election as well, there are many who assume the youth vote for this election just repeated history. In reality it isn't quite the same, because truth be told a large number of youth did turn out to vote for this past election.

However, despite the marketing for this election, not near as many anticipated youth voters took the time to go to the polls, and given that there was such a large number of votes from the rest of the population, the number of youth who actually did vote still only averaged out to 18% from our prior election ([seattlepi.com](http://seattlepi.com), 11/4/04).

It's safe to say that the 2004 presidential election was viewed as very important by most everyone in the nation, and getting people to vote, primarily youth and minorities, was a major focus for political parties. You might as well have been living under a rock to have missed all the talk and efforts to gain every youth vote. "Rock The Vote" and MTV's "Choose or Lose" both made immense efforts to get young people registered to vote and involved in the campaign issues. Moreover, let us not forget the "Vote or Die" project thanks to P. Diddy and Russel Simmons. Many people and groups would stop you in the street, or come knocking at your door, and some

would set up booths around every promising area to get as many youth as possible (or just anyone for that matter) registered to vote. 18 to 29 year olds' votes showed a 9.3% increase over the amount of votes (from the same age group) from the 2000 presidential election. Cardinal De Retz once appropriately said, "There are no small steps in great affairs."

Unfortunately, there are reports from CNN Headline News that although "Rock The Vote" had hoped to bring 25 million new voters to the polls, estimates show they only got six million. The "Vote or Die" campaign was surpassed four to one by the Christian Youth Vote. 47% of those who were newly registered either slept in or were no shows. On top of that, even though Senator Kerry conceded, making President Bush victorious, the fact is that the election was razor close. According to

Kevin Drum for *Washington Monthly*, it all came down to a swing of 1% of the vote in one state. Imagine how easily the outcome of this election could have changed if more of the nation's youth had gone out and voted.

Considering how significantly the outcome of this election affects all youth, it is both amazing and disappointing that so many did not care enough to go out and vote. This was our future at stake, so what happened? Those who did not vote now have the next four years to ultimately determine whether or not our great country was put in good hands, knowing either way that they gave up their chance to have any say in the matter.

The US has been through difficult wars and hard times, managing to get through it all one way or another, despite the odds. People need to stay involved to secure the future of our country. It's such a shame that so many seem to care less about what may happen during the next four years. Congratulations are in order, however, to the great many youth who did get out and vote. No matter who they voted for, their voice was heard in this election because they cared about the future of the United States of America, and that is something to be very proud of.

## Kinship Care Forum Addresses Needs of Families Providing Care

MOCKINGBIRD STAFF

DID YOU KNOW THAT 4.5 MILLION CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES LIVE in grandparent-headed households? Or that, according to a 1997 report, around one third of all children in foster care are living with a relative? When a relative takes on the responsibility of raising a child as an alternative to that child being placed in a foster home, it is called a Kinship Care Placement.

The Child Welfare League of America defines kinship care as "the full time care, nurturing and protection of children by relatives, members of their tribes or clans, godparents, stepparents, or any adult who has a kinship bond with a child. Kinship care allows a child to grow to adulthood in a family environment." Although kinship care is one of the fastest-growing trends in Child Welfare and is recognized as often the most culturally appropriate and nurturing placement for the child, many relative caregivers find themselves without financial support or legal rights as guardian. In recognition of the vital role that kinship caregivers play in the lives of children as well as their often neglected status as legal caregivers, the Seattle office of Casey Family Programs along with several community partners including The Mockingbird Society, Department of Social and Health Services, Black Child Development Institute, Seattle Affiliate, One Church on Child/UMJIMA, DADS, and a number of kinship youth and grandparents came together to host the event "Kinship Care: A Gathering of Families Caring for Families." After months of planning, the day-long event took place in October 16 and

was well-attended by kinship care providers, youth, local service providers, community advocates and policy makers. It was billed as an opportunity to "share information and ideas, find resources and support, and celebrate families caring for families" and included workshops and information for both caregivers and young people, a youth panel facilitated by Representative Eric Pettigrew, on-site massage for caregivers, free food and entertainment and daycare for young children.

Anna Leon, one of eight young people involved in planning the event, is 16 years old and has been in kinship care for 14 years. Leon comments, "I think it (kinship care) was the best thing for me, because I know that my mom couldn't take on the responsibility for me and I wouldn't be the person I am today." Of the event Leon says, "I was so excited for this day. I got to experience being on the Youth Panel which was fun, exciting, nerve-wracking, and somewhat emotional for me. I got to meet a lot of new people and find out that there are other youth out there that are going through what I'm going through. I feel like more children should be placed in kinship care, instead of being taken away from their parents and placed in foster care. I'm not saying there is anything wrong with foster care, but it would be better from my experience that children are placed in kinship care."

For more information on the support available to kinship care providers, check out [www.childrendefense.org/childwelfare/kinshipcare/resourcekit/otherresources.pdf](http://www.childrendefense.org/childwelfare/kinshipcare/resourcekit/otherresources.pdf)



## Letter from the Editor

**JIM THEOFELIS**



ON BEHALF OF THE STAFF, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, YOUTH AND THE ENTIRE MOCKINGBIRD SOCIETY I want to extend to you our deepest wishes for peace and joy during this holiday season and into 2005. The Mockingbird Society is grateful for our ability to participate in the social justice effort to improve the current and future lives of the children, youth and families who find themselves separated from loved ones due to foster care and/or homelessness. For too many of us, the plight of abused and neglected children and teenagers living in a foster home or "on the streets" during the holiday season seems like a foreign concept; something that seems to happen to "those folks over there." We at the Mockingbird Society believe "those kids over there" are still our kids and "those folks over there" are still our neighbors; our brothers and sisters who need and deserve the compassion and support of our community. As you celebrate the season of Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa I urge you to find ways to share the love and bounty with those less fortunate. Additionally, I hope you will remember those service men and women who

are separated from their loved ones during this time of war. Independent of one's view of the war and surrounding politics it's still our young men and women from our neighborhoods that are in harms way. This is indeed the time of year to count our blessings and I start by thanking the staff, volunteers and the young people we serve for their commitment over the past year. I thank Shannon, Lauren, Erin and all the Mockingbird youth who have worked so hard this past year to produce the Mockingbird Times each month. I also want to thank the members of our Board of Directors who continue to invest their time and energy in the development and success of Mockingbird. We are all excited about the documentary being produced at Mockingbird under the direction of Wild Geese Productions due for release in early 2005. I also thank our donors who have ensured that the vision and mission of The Mockingbird Society continues to grow. I also want to thank the young women and parents from the Holy Names Academy Varsity Soccer team. These young ladies collected donations for The Mockingbird Society and I am appreciative of their loving efforts. Finally, I close by again wishing each of you a holiday season that is filled with joy and peace. And as always: Remember the children!

Jim Theofelis

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

## Letter to the Editor

Too many times do I get to hear about youth in the adolescent unit are their bad qualities and negative behaviors. Too many times, these comments are directly from professionals within the community whom are working together to serve these teenagers. As a social worker, I am able to find positives in every teenager on my caseload and I encourage every professional working with adolescents being raised in foster care to do the same. Too many times do I hear from kids on my caseload that they think that no one cares, deep down, about them. I want to take this time to thank Mockingbird Press for the chance to offer a creative outlet for these teenagers and the opportunity to express themselves.

Signed,  
A Caring Social Worker

## In Memoriam

**JOHN D. BARELLO** Age 82, born in Leechburg, PA, Jan. 1, 1922 to Mario and Marie (Vallino) Barello, passed away Nov. 1, 2004 at his home in Sequim, WA. John was a Master Sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps in WWII and the Korean War. He served in the South Pacific during WWII and was one of the first to enter Japan after the Atomic Bomb was dropped.

John Barello was my grandfather. He taught me how to be strong and courageous in this world. He also taught me how important it is to laugh and enjoy the life that you have, no matter what obstacles get in the way. I feel honored and fortunate to have had someone like this in my life as a role model. I wish that more of our young people had family members to provide this kind of example to look up to and learn from.

In honor of Veteran's Day, on November 11th, we at Mockingbird want to honor my grandfather and all of our veterans—alive and deceased—and families, for their courage, strength and example over the years.

--Shannon Barello

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Photo from reception in November celebrating The Foster Care to College Partnership, a collaborative partnership between Treehouse, The Washington Education Foundation, Casey Family Programs, DSHS Children's Administration, The Higher Education Coordinating Board and The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Included in photo is CEO of The Washington Education Foundation Bob Craves, MBT Reporters Jamica Henderson and Ashley Grant, DSHS Children's Administration Assistant Secretary Uma Ahluwalia and DSHS Secretary Dennis Braddock.

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## THANK YOU'S...

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Wild Geese Productions, Bruce Cross from Perkins Coie, Jessica Hunting and Charles Cortelyou, Nancy & James Bardeen, Microsoft Matching Gifts, Mary Lou Blaney and the Teppner and Blaney Family, Julie Thornton, Jeffrey & Wendy Shibuya, Stephen Gove & Eve Carlson Gove, Stephanie Brosio, Craig & Holly Norris, Becki & Andrea Rance, Holy Names Academy Varsity Soccer Players and Families, Kellie Port.

**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 and 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: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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\$50+.....Supporter    \$25.....Foster Parent

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  Please do not include 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

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Jim Theofelis

**MFFCP Coordinator**  
Shannon Barello

**Administrative Assistant**  
Lauren Frederick

**MSW Intern**  
Erin Daniels

**Senior 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**  
Josh Sweet, Zach Messner

**Volunteers**  
Anna Trombley, Kirsten Hansen-Day, Aleta Kennedy, Denise Redinger



## Letter from the Editor

JIM THEOFELIS



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Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Wild Geese Productions, Bruce Cross from Perkins Coie, Jessica Hunting and Charles Cortelyou, Nancy & James Bardeen, Microsoft Matching Gifts, Mary Lou Blaney and the Teppner and Blayne Family, Julie Thornton, Jeffrey & Wendy Shibuya, Stephen Gove & Eve Carlson Gove, Stephanie Brosio, Craig & Holly Norris, Becki & Andrea Rance, Holy Names Academy Varsity Soccer Players and Families, Kellie Port.

**All incoming Letters to the Editor should be addressed to Mockingbird Editorial Staff and will be opened by Editorial Staff. All incoming correspondence to reporting staff under 18 years of age will be opened first by Mockingbird Editorial Staff.**

**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.

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Make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth and support the Mockingbird Society!

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### Suggested Donations:

\$ 1,000+..... Protector    \$500-999.....Caretaker    \$250-500.....Organizations  
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- Please bill me for the amount indicated.
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- I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.

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# Positive Power: Money Management 101

COURTNEY KONIETZKO



I RECENTLY ATTENDED A MONEY MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP taught at the Fremont Public Association by Kellie Port. It was extremely helpful and I thought it would be good knowledge to pass on. Port is a very good teacher; she made the time fly and was good at answering any questions that came up.

I recommend taking this free class because it is good knowledge to have. It also satisfies the money management requirement for getting an Individual Development Account (IDA); a great resource to have if you are low-income and wanting to go back to school, become a homeowner, or start your own business. Following is a summary of Port's workshop.

## Identifying and Increasing Net Income

Port had suggestions for increasing net income. One of these suggestions was to get as much as you can out of each paycheck by choosing to get more with each pay check and less back at the end of the year because it will be more useful to you throughout the year. Also we discussed the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) which is a credit where you get money back at the end of the year.

According to Port, "To qualify for the EITC, you must have a valid Social Security number, be between the ages of 25 and 65 years, and have earned income. An EITC benefit can range anywhere from \$350. to \$3,888. Any benefit earned from the EITC will not affect SSI benefits, TANF benefits, or food stamps and housing assistance."

Another credit that you might qualify for if you have children is the Child Tax Credit which, according to Port, "can lower the amount of income tax you owe and increase any refund you might receive. The benefit can be as high as \$500 per child. There are additional benefits for single working parents." To qualify the child must be 17 years or younger by the end of the tax year and be a U.S. resident.

## Budgeting

One of the best things to do is make a need and want list and according to Kellie, "think in terms of choices, and set priorities." The income you use to figure out your budget should be your net income. The difference between gross and net income is the gross income is before taxes and the net income is what you actually have to spend. According to Port, "If you don't know your net income because it varies paycheck by paycheck, a quick and easy way to figure out net income is to multiply your hourly wage by the number of hours you work in a month, then multiply that number by 85% (x.85 on the calculator) to reflect 15% taken out for taxes and other deductions."

It is also helpful to make another list of fixed and variable expenses. Fixed expenses are things you must pay that are the same amount every month like rent. Variable expenses are things you must pay that aren't always the same amount; like gasoline, clothes, etc. When figuring where you can save money, look at the variable expenses. There will be a handout online on the Mockingbird website from the money management booklet #1 on "Ways to Reduce Routine Expenses (a.k.a. ways to save money)."

## Controlling Variable Expenses

When figuring out where your money goes, Port suggests that some things to look at are: "child care, clothing, education, food, gifts, home entertainment, housing, insurance, medical expenses, personal care, recreation/leisure, savings taxes, transportation and miscellaneous expenses like carpooling."

## Cash Flow

Another thing to keep track of is what days you are paid (the net amount), what bills you have to pay, when they are due, and what paycheck you should be saving from to pay them. For example, it might be better to start saving rent money closer to the 20<sup>th</sup> of the previous month than five days before rent is due.

## Managing Paperwork

One thing that is very helpful to learn about is record keeping. Keeping a record of how much you are paid and everything you spend money on and keeping the balance up-to-date each time you make a purchase will help you keep track of where your money goes. A pattern will become evident after keeping a record for a month or longer. After you see the pattern you have a better idea how to budget.

Coming up with a system that works for you for filing important papers is also important because it saves time and stress when you need to locate something important like a bank statement. I used five shoeboxes to 'organize' my papers, which didn't really work because they were still piled on top of each other in no particular order, just in five loose categories. Now I use a filing cabinet, a safe and one shoebox. Find what works for you!

The money management booklet suggests five ways to file your papers:

1. Current active records that you use regularly.
2. Records you carry with you.
3. Permanent active records at home.
4. Permanent records in a safe deposit box.
5. Inactive records for long-term storage at home.

Current active records include current bills, papers to file, banking records, and copies of the papers you carry with you. Records you carry with you include personal identification, credit or debit cards, medical information for emergency treatment, and membership cards.

Permanent active records at home include employee pay stubs, resume, transcripts, immunization records, travel documents, property records, and financial records. Permanent Records for a Safe Deposit Box include birth, adoption, baptismal, marriage and death certificates, military service records, custody agreement, divorce decree, copies of social security

MONEY MANAGEMENT CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Donations for the Mockingbird Society's annual silent auction are now being accepted! Contribute to the Mockingbird Society's annual fundraiser by donating a silent auction item. The auction will be held on Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. For more information or to donate, contact the Mockingbird Society at 206-323-KIDS (5437).

## Take Action: 1-2-3 Political Action Plan

J.EBOH



STOP CRYING! GET OFF YOUR COUCH and place the bag of Cheese puffs on the coffee table and put your passport away. Canada doesn't want you. It's time to face reality. There's not going to be a recount. Bush did not "steal" the election and Kerry would not have won Ohio. On November 2<sup>nd</sup> voters made their decision and now it's time for you to make yours.

"Who are you to talk?" you ask. Truth be told, I'm not on anyone's side. I identify as neither liberal nor conservative. I have no political inclinations. I do believe however that before everyone who hates Bush collectively jumps off a building "lemming-style" they should think about a few things.

If you were against Bush you might be feeling angry, disappointed or afraid. However there is one thing to consider. Whether or not you agree with his politics is of no importance. You have the benefit of having a pretty good understanding of his platform. Bush is committed to his agenda. His future choices will likely support that. ([www.georgewbush.com/Agenda/](http://www.georgewbush.com/Agenda/))

This brings me to my next point, would EVERYBODY PLEASE STOP RUNNING AROUND LIKE RABID WOLVES! This is not the time to point fingers, wallow in pity or have a panic attack the size of Kentucky. Instead use that energy to prepare yourselves for the turbulent path that lies before you. Everyone needs to be on the same page right now. Poverty knows no party. Everyone needs a safe place stay, food on the table and way to pay the bills with dignity.

The reality of the situation is that for the current administration employment, education and welfare reform and the like are their main priorities. What does all that mean to you? Look closely at the list above. Do you see the words homeless or foster care listed anywhere? To put it in a not so subtle terms, you're not a priority.

So you need to make yourself a priority. Advocate for yourselves, form groups and get educated about government. It doesn't matter whether or not you're on the White House guest list. If you come together and make yourselves heard, they'll be forced set out a few extra plates at the dinner table.

### 1-2-3 Political Action Plan...

1. Get educated. The websites of both the candidates for president are still up and running. Check them out and

make an effort to go beyond your party lines. Don't worry if you're not a political buff. You can start to learn about local government and then move up to national government.

2. After you've learned about local and national politicians; start thinking about social issues that you might be interested in. Research what the government is doing about your chosen issue. After doing more research, pick one issue to focus on. I know you want to save the world. But if you're going to put your heart in a campaign you should lay a foundation for success not failure. If you're running around trying to save the whales, reform social security and feed Hungarian orphans you won't be able to commit yourself to anything. And if you can't commit to something it'll be difficult to convince a politician that they should commit.

3. Finally get Active. Start writing letters to people and politicians for support. Form a club at school and enlist your friends. Then you all could encourage each other when things get tough. Contact local non-profits and ask if you can join. Some organizations even give workshops on how the government policies, lobbying congress or even forming your own nonprofit.

Advocacy is your right and responsibility Check out [www.scn.org/politics/](http://www.scn.org/politics/) for more information on what you can do.



# The Difficult and Challenging Road of Teen Pregnancy

JAMICA HENDERSON




**TEEN PREGNANCY IS A BIG TOPIC IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY.** When I started high school in the fall 2001, teen pregnancy was talked about but not seen as much. Now that I am going into my senior year, not only is teen pregnancy being talked about, it is also being seen more and more. As I get older I wonder why more young teens are becoming parents. Being a teenage mother is a very hard job to attend to.

Once you become a parent, it's challenge because not only do you have to care for yourself but your child as well. When you have a child, your life changes. You have to mature fast, put yourself last and be positive at the same time. When you become the parent you have to change your ways because that baby you are carrying is going to look up to you. When you become a parent at a young age every penny you get or earn will be for your child. You don't have as much time to yourself anymore. If you want to be a good mother, you will not be able to go to clubs as much as you used to or be out all night. That can be a challenge because as you get older you want to go out with your friends.

Having a positive attitude is the best way to go in life no matter what the situation is. If your attitude is not positive there's going to be complication. Attitude will get you far in life. If you're going to be a parent you should really make sure your attitude is together that will help you raise your child at a good pace. These are just the little parts you have to fix. So if you are having trouble with these three things now you should think long and hard about having a child at a young age.

**Protect yourself if you are sexually active.** Think twice about having **sexual contact with out protection.** "It is estimated in the U.S. That 40 percent of white teen girls and 64 percent of black teen girls will have experience at least one pregnancy by the age of 20 ([www.surebaby.com](http://www.surebaby.com)).

I understand that it's hard once you get yourself in this kind of a situation. Educate yourself. If you come across this article and know of someone who is wanting or going to be a teen parent, help educate them about the facts. 

SHAKURA FELDER



**HAVE YOU EVER SEEN SOMEONE AT SCHOOL WHO IS PREGNANT?** Someone who is an adolescent like you? Have you ever seen a young mother getting on the Metro bus with a young baby in a stroller? Maybe you know of someone who is pregnant or was a pregnant teen. High school peers and people throughout the community see this everyday. Some people don't think much about it, but if you're concerned like I am about this topic, you'll get to thinking, "I don't want my life to be like that." Becoming an early parent limits your goals in life. You are forced to become an adult.

Teenage pregnancy is a major issue in our community. Girls are becoming pregnant as early as 15-17 years of age. If you are a teenage girl ranging from the age of 15-17 years old, you are at great risk of becoming an early parent. According to the 2004 Kids Count Data Book, teens are more likely to become early parents if they come from a single-parent home, live in poverty, or are low-income, than teens who come from undivided families and come from wealthier communities. You might be stunned to hear this, but it's true. The odds are stacked up against teenage girls everywhere.

According to the 2004 Kids Count Data Book, teen pregnancy rates have dropped nationwide. Why are the rates improving instead of getting worse? It may be due to more teens having protected sex or abstinence. However, there are still many teens having unprotected sex. Many teenagers are unprepared when they get pregnant. The results of having a baby at an early age might cause a young teen to drop out of high school, live in poverty, become a single parent, and be an unsuccessful parent (2004 Kids Count Data Book).

Here are some effective ways out there that might help prevent YOU from becoming a pregnant teen. First, try getting involved in your community. Involvement in sports, a job, or volunteer work can help you to stay busy. Second, communicate with a trusted adult. For example a service provider, family friend, etc. Talk with them about making the right

choices about sex and other issues. Third, be smart. Always use protection when sexually involved, or choose to stay abstinent.

I recently interviewed Tracie Howie, a young African-American mother. At the age of just seventeen years old, Howe had a baby. She was a junior in high school. Her son is now three years old. Years later, Tracie shares her story about the experiences she faced as an early parent.

**Shakura:** What reasons do you think lead you to become a pregnant teen?

**Tracie:** Disobedience and not listening to helpful advice about being sexually active. As a teenager, I had strong goals in school. I was also working, attending South Community College and trying to get my GED. I developed a close relationship with a guy I had met and had gotten pregnant.


**Shakura:** Can you explain to our Mockingbird readers, your personal experience as a young mother?

**Tracie:** Having a baby at an early age slowed me down. My freedom was limited because I had to care for my son. I couldn't do what I wanted to do. I was young and I wasn't ready for adulthood. I didn't know how to raise a baby. Having a child changed my life and it helped me to become a better person.

**Shakura:** How have you changed becoming an early parent into a success for you and your son regardless of the public's perception of teen mothers?

**Tracie:** I got a place together for my family and we live in a house. I am currently married and my son has a good, loving father. I have always had faith in God. I put Him and my son first. We are involved in our church. I am also working and at the time I am looking for a second job.

**Shakura:** What type of advice would you give to teenagers about early pregnancy?


**Tracie:** I think that teenagers should wait and think about what they are doing if they are sexually active teens. They should study other teenagers who have children and learn from different experiences of what having a child is like for them at a young age. Having a baby is a huge responsibility. Teenagers should get their educations as a first priority. Every teen should study sex education and research pregnancy. Teenagers should consider having children [when they are adults] when they are actually prepared to raise a child. They should not consider having any children as a teen. If teenagers wait, they will find out that waiting longer enables them to enjoy their teenage life. 

## MONEY MANAGEMENT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

cards, etc. "The booklet has some filing tips like color coding or alphabetizing each major section of your files."

### Savings and Planning

An IDA account stands for Individual Development Account which is a program run by the United Way of King County that matches every dollar you save with three more as long as you are saving towards starting your own business, owning a home, or going to school. If you want more information on this program you can find it at [www.unitedwayofkingcounty.org/ida](http://www.unitedwayofkingcounty.org/ida) or call the Fremont Public Association Housing Counseling Program at (206) 694-6700.

If you are interested in taking the money management class contact Kellie Port at (206) 694-6864. The 2005 schedule for the class is at [www.fremontpublic.org/hotnews.html#takesched](http://www.fremontpublic.org/hotnews.html#takesched). I really recommend this class because the information I present in this article is so much better first-hand with visual aids which you get at the class in the form of handouts and worksheets made into two large easy-to-understand booklets. Hand-outs and worksheets will be online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org). 



## CREATIVE CORNER

**Nightmares?**  
-ZACH MESSNER-



## MICROWAVE SOLUTIONS

-JOSH SWEET-

What is wrong with our society?  
Microwave solutions are the core of our disease  
Take a minute out of your busy life  
To listen, if you please.

What I mean by this, my purpose is not the intricately constructed riddle of a philosopher. Nor is it the garbled nonsense of a street prophet.

No my solution is not as complicated as the inner workings of a laptop computer, yet is as simple as a Kindergartener's finger painting

Take a second to stop and listen, if you will  
Everything wrong in our country, neigh, the world stems for a single source. This is an inconsideration for the taking of time. Sometimes we must do things the hard way for them to work.

What is wrong with our society?  
Microwaves Solutions the core of our disease  
Take a minute out of your busy life  
To listen, if you please.  
Then you will be part of the answer.