

REAL CHANGE

Fairness • Opportunity • Community • Vol. 12, No. 2

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Seeing Red Native poets mix it up



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COVER PHOTO BY REGINA LISZANCKIE

By Regina Liszanckie

The spoken words of poetry, streaming from the free reign of a poet's imagination, can reveal certain truths and help foster an understanding between the different groups that together make up the greater cultural landscape. For no other group is this more important than the historically underrepresented Native American population.

Under the direction of local author and poetry activist J. Glen Evans, Seattle-based Poets West recently presented "The Gathering," a celebration of Native American poets and their poetry, as part of the continuing Poets West Reading Series at the Frye Art Museum. Long an advocate for literacy and the fostering of community through the promotion of the spoken word, the Poets West Reading Series allows emerging and established writers of the Pacific Northwest to share their poetry with the larger community.

The Dec. 5 event at the Frye was accompanied by the music of Thomas Hubbard, one of the poets in attendance, who opened the event with a flute and drum piece used at the beginning of a traditional Native American sweat lodge. The 40 people in attendance were silent and respectful as each poet took their turn in the round-robin format. While Poets West encourages submissions based on the themes of the public readings, the poets reading at The Gathering were of Native American ancestry, encouraging a network among poets of similar backgrounds and highlighting the importance of elevating their often unheard voices.

"The more I learn about [Native American] culture, the more I was convinced that the European invaders were the barbarians," says Evans, who is part Cherokee. "I also wished to honor the Native American aspect of my own ancestry." As part of the Poets West mission of bringing poetry into a wider democratic arena, Poets West will continue to offer the Reading Series at the Frye; the Spring 2005 theme is tentatively Rebirth and Regeneration. Says Evans, "We believe in expanding the interest in poetry to reflect the broadest possible spectrum of America and other societies. The cultural exposure helps all. Poetry should have no borders."

The following pieces were read at The Gathering, Dec. 5, as part of the Poets West Reading Series at the Frye Art Museum, re-printed with permission from Poets West. More information about Poets West's ongoing reading series can be found at www.poetswest.com.

Gifts

On Christmas Eve there was a lady
and told me her tribe
was Navajo. She gave me
greenish blue flowers
and a butterfly
pin.

Venetian strands of moon's halo
serrating an expanse of white
I lay my wire-rimmed glasses
on the wrinkled tablet
clicking my pen,
searching for words.

Being Christmas the tinny radio
they played Mahler's Beethoven.

She desired imported fruit
from the market and in the morning
I gave her a pomegranate
it was a round, red, pulpy
fruit
a many-seeded poem.

—EARLE THOMPSON

Thompson, a Yakama Indian living in Seattle, is a published poet whose work has also appeared in the anthology *Songs from This Earth* on Turtle's Back.

Continued to page 6

MAIL BAG

2129 2nd Ave., 98121
rchange@speakeasy.org

Too Close to Count

Dear *Real Change*,

I am a proud liberal, but I do not support the results of this election. No matter how you look at this race, it is a tie. Forty-two votes. Eight votes. One hundred and thirty votes. Each too close to declare victory. Our election system has no solution for a tie. WE WANT THE TRUTH. And that could mean losing the governor's race as well. I think that we should send a message to the rest of this country that we want the truth, by re-doing this race.

Sincerely,
Paul Margolis
Seattle

Following the Law

Dear *Real Change*,

It could have been Rossi or Gregoire in the end, but it was important to me that all the votes be counted and done so in a legal manner, so I volunteered and helped find the people and the votes that needed to be counted.

I think we did all that we could to find the ballots and people to make sure their votes counted and now the election certification process should continue. By following the election laws of Washington State, we now have a new Governor: Christine Gregoire.

It is too bad other parties were not as interested in making certain ALL votes were counted from the beginning, and during the time frames; they certainly didn't speak up when others of us did.

Perhaps our next election will have better consistency, better oversight, better machinery; whatever it takes to vote and be counted in the year 2005 and beyond.

Sincerely,
Marcy Johnsen
Seattle

Phony Sincerity

Dear *Real Change*,

Can state politics get any worse?

Extreme partisanship cloaked in pseudo-principles and specious arguments leads to embarrassingly hypocritical behavior, and a loss of even more credibility among understandably disgruntled voters.

I am a lifelong Democrat loyalist going back over the past 45 years, but

this is not my father's Democratic Party; this is not the Democratic Party I joined in an effort to advance social and economic justice and principles of fairness and equal treatment.

Our party leadership lacks moral authority and integrity and is not worth following any longer. Rather, it is time for more honest analysis and accountability. Our leadership hides from issues and uses loyal party volunteers for personal gain over public interests.

Having worked for several Democratic party politicians and on many campaigns over decades, I assure you voters that we are not always led by decent individuals.

We do have a problem with "moral issues" because we deserve to have the problem, not because some other group has imposed them. Honesty would be a better policy, for starters. I think this past election revealed those deep cracks in our foundation, and we need

to repair ourselves before we can repair America. Humility should be our guide, not some misguided sense of superiority.

The Democratic Party must stop attacking others and clean up our own house. Our foundation is cracking under the weight of indifferent workmanship and too many selfish special-interest groups on the rooftops. We are no better at caring for the poor, disabled, and the working class despite our empty rhetoric.

Did you hear what the campaign manager said to the candidate? "The key in this election is sincerity; once you learn how to fake that, you got it made."

Sincerely,
David Bashore
Seattle

REAL CHANGE

BOOTDRIVE 3

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Real Change

Fairness, Opportunity, Community

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On the Web at
<http://www.realchangenews.org>
Email rchange@speakeasy.org
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Mission Statement:

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

Goals

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

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

Editorial Policy

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

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Take Back Olympia

Labor, allies ready for 2005 legislature

By Robby Stern

The Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, is the largest union organization in the state, representing some 550 labor organizations with 430,000 rank-and-file members. Our organization has earned a reputation as a powerful advocate for working families in Olympia. But with very few exceptions, the WSLC's legislative agenda focuses on issues designed to benefit ALL working people, not just union members.

From the minimum wage to workers' compensation, from overtime pay to unemployment insurance — the WSLC is all too often the *only* voice speaking on behalf of everyday working people. That is unfortunate, given the number of high-paid corporate lobbyists that often fight to remove or roll back hard-fought workplace standards and rights, but it is a banner the WSLC and other unions carry with pride.

In 2005, we have set an agenda that includes the following issues:

Affordable Health Care. Our nation's employer-based health insurance system is broken as thousands of families lose coverage every month. Ultimately, national reform will be necessary to ensure all Americans have access to affordable health care, but there are things that can be done locally to address the problem.

One such effort is called Washington Fair Share. It would stop large corporations like Wal-Mart — which don't provide affordable health benefits — from exploiting taxpayer-financed health care programs and gaining an unfair competitive advantage over their competitors. Businesses with more than 50 employees would have to provide affordable health benefits or pay a fee to the state which will go into a pool to provide BHP coverage to uninsured low wage workers.

Prescription Drug Reform. The skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs is also driving health care inflation. As part of a coalition of consumer, faith-based, senior, labor, and community organizations, the WSLC will support legislative solutions to lower prescription drug prices. Two proposals are to allow drug re-importation from Canada and other countries with cheaper drugs, and to expand the state's drug purchasing pool, allowing more government agencies and private purchasers to take advantage of bulk discounts.

Restoration of Social Service Cuts. As our state emerges from an economic funk caused by the national recession, it's time to stop balancing our books on the backs of people who depend on public services and those who provide them. In recent years, rather than scrutinize billions of dollars in special-interest tax breaks, the legislature has cut important social services that the least fortunate among us depend upon for basic needs.

In 2005, we face another \$1 billion-plus revenue shortfall, but it's time to start repairing some of the damage done. That means making every effort to restore recent cuts in health care and other social service programs.

Ratification of the State Employee Contract. It also means ratifying the historic first-ever master contract for state employees, whose pay has been frozen since 2001 while their benefits have been cut to help balance the budget. Those who say recent state budgets have been balanced without raising taxes must not be Washington state employees. This contract will grant them long-overdue pay raises in 2005 as the state implements a new competitive bidding system intended to improve government efficiency.

Performance Audits of Tax Breaks. One way we can pay for this is by reviewing and/or sunseting the billions of dollars in special-interest tax breaks granted every year. Decades of passing these unaccountable tax breaks has created an unfair patchwork of laws that play favorites between certain industries and tend to leave small business owners out in the cold. Industries that receive special tax exemptions should have to demonstrate that these tax breaks help create and maintain good jobs, as promised. And the first step to achieving that accountability is for the state to disclose which corporations are taking advantage of the tax breaks.

Family Leave. Current laws requiring big employers to allow unpaid family leave are inadequate. Many workers are not covered and many of those who are covered can't afford to utilize it. Our children and families are the ones who pay the price. The WSLC supports proposals to create a family leave insurance program that accommodates working parents trying to juggle the responsibilities of work and family.

There are many other important working family issues that may be addressed in 2005, including workers' compensation, unemployment benefits, promotion of apprenticeship opportunities and the offshore outsourcing of state jobs, to name a few.

The Washington State Labor Council publishes a weekly electronic newsletter during the legislative session beginning in January. Visit www.wslc.org to subscribe so you can follow these issues, and call your legislators on the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-562-6000 to tell them what you think.

Robby Stern is a member of the Real Change Advisory Committee and on the staff of the Washington State Labor Council.

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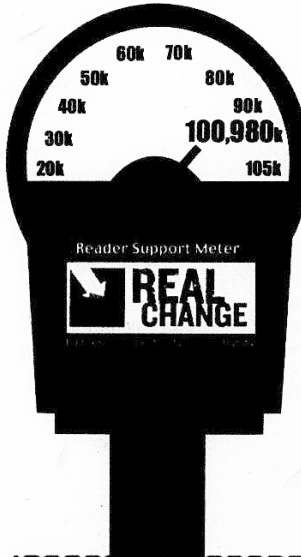
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Almost Home

This winter we set a very big goal of raising \$105,000 over November and December to come into 2005 with the resources we need to succeed. Thanks to the amazing generosity of our readers, we're almost there. There's still time to put us over the top. If you value opportunity for the poor, effective activism, and quality journalism, do your part to support *Real Change* today

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Sonics vs. the arts

Another Seattle sports team is headed to Olympia to vie for arts dollars. But if Seattle City Councilmember Nick Licata can help it, the Seattle SuperSonics won't get all the money.

Licata plans to introduce a council resolution Monday, Jan. 10, that would try to save a portion of the hotel-motel tax dollars the Sonics are after.

In the wake of losses at KeyArena, the Sonics' leased venue at Seattle Center, the basketball team wants the Legislature to give it \$175 million of the hotel sales tax to remodel its facility — just nine years after the team gutted and rebuilt the building at a public cost of \$76 million.

Since 1992, the state has allowed King County to keep 2 percent of the lodging tax, which the county currently uses to pay down debt on the former Kingdome and provide about \$4 million to \$5 million a year for arts and heritage programs.

Debra Twersky, funding program manager at 4 Culture, the private Seattle agency that distributes the money to artists and museums, says it is King County's only public arts funding — and it ends in 2012, when the Legislature agreed to redirect the money to finish off the Kingdome debt and pay for Seattle's football stadium.

In 2020, the hotel tax rebate expires altogether. Gretchen Johnston, executive director with Seattle's Washington State Arts Alliance, said arts groups had already planned to start lobbying the Legislature this year for an extension — the same thing the Sonics are after.

Licata's resolution could set the stage for city lobbyists to work on extending the tax rebate in Olympia — with an increased portion of the money to go to the arts.

"It's well documented by urban economists that the arts continue to promote economic growth at a far greater pace than professional sports teams," Licata says. "Part of the reason for that is that sports are so heavily subsidized by the public."

—Cydney Gillis

Any objections?

It's not as if John Kerry will become president. But if U.S. Rep. John Conyers can get one Senator to object with him Thursday, Congress would have to debate the Ohio vote.

Thursday, Jan. 6, is the day Congress will receive the electoral vote from each state. Conyers (D-Michigan), the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, has stated he plans to formally object to irregularities in the voting process in Ohio, which he has been investigating since the election.

On Nov. 5, Conyers called on and got the Government Accountability Office to investigate voting irregularities nationwide. On Dec. 8, he also held a Congressional hearing that had to be dubbed a "forum" because Republicans objected.

On Nov. 15, Washington Rep. Jay Inslee (D-Bainbridge Island) backed the GAO investigation with his own letter to the agency stating, in part, that voter confidence is "essential to the integrity of our democracy." Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell have not stated that they plan to object.

Conyers also wrote a letter — not signed by any Washington reps — asking the FBI to investigate. Whether any senator sides with him on Jan. 6 remains to be seen. Four years ago to the day, no Senator stood with the House members who objected to the Florida vote — the subject of early scenes in Michael Moore's film *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

—Cydney Gillis

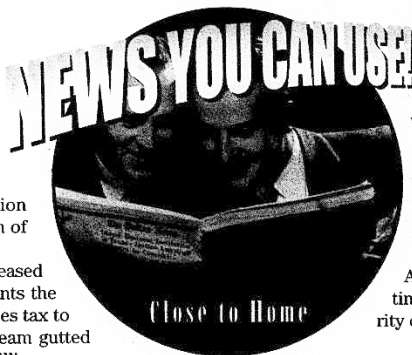
Meals to go

On Wednesday January 5, city officials and a group of nine community members who work with feeding the homeless will meet with the hope of choosing a permanent location for the city's outdoor meals program. They don't have much time; a new site must be chosen by January 15.

While admitting it's a tight timeline, Patricia McInturff, director of the Department of Human Services for the city of Seattle, says she believed the goal could be attained.

"Everyone is operating on the best of faith," says McInturff. "Providers have come to the table, advocates have come, the mayor's office has come. We're going to solve this problem."

Two potential sites are in the final running. McInturff says she was hesitant to name them, as the mayor's office didn't want to jeopardize the nego-



tiation process with either site. Both locations, she says, were in the downtown core. These sites were whittled down from a larger block, the majority of which proved impractical.

"Many sites are just not available," says McInturff. For example, most privately-owned sites, she noted, are cost prohibitive. "We don't have a lot of money," she adds. The city has given the committee \$50,000 to fund the final site.

The program's site has been in jeopardy since last August. It was then that the mayor placed restrictions on times meals could be served at City Hall Park, citing security concerns.

—Rosette Royale

2004's passages

As celebrations welcoming 2005 become the fodder of memory, now is the time to remember those homeless people who passed away in 2004.

This Friday, January 7, at 4 p.m., the Compass Center will host its 23rd Annual Memorial Service, honoring Seattle's homeless who died last year. The event will be held at the Millionaire Club, 2515 Western Avenue.

Joe Martin, of the Seattle Displacement Coalition, says there is a need, particularly among people who have homes, to remember the lives of those who do not by coming together in a spiritual gathering. "I think it's very important to remember people who may not have had anyone mourn their passing, or celebrate their passing or simply acknowledge that they were amongst us in this community. It's tragic that we have fellow citizens whose living circumstance results in lack of treatment and lack of care, and then, are relegated to dying outside."

This year's memorial service carries with it the weight of relevancy, following the November release of the King County 2003 Homeless Death Review. The review — a collaborative effort led by Public Health of Seattle & King County's Health Care for the Homeless Network, with assistance from the King County Medical Examiner's Office and such organizations as WHEEL (Women's Housing Equality and Enhancement League) and Women in Black — was the first comprehensively compiled record on the deaths of local homeless individuals. No other fully documented study on the precise number of homeless people, alive or deceased, as well as their demographic characteristics, yet exists for the county.

The overall goal of the review was to gather preliminary information on the number, causes, and characteristics on the deaths of 77 people who had no permanent address at the time of their deaths in 2003. A demographic breakdown of these 77 individuals shows:

- the vast majority, 83 percent, were men, with 81 percent of these males having been between 30 and 59 years old;
- Native Americans accounted for 17 percent of those deceased. (This percentage is considered significant as Native Americans account for only 1 percent of King County's total population.) African Americans and those of Hispanic origin were also disproportionately represented, relative to King County's population. Whites, while accounting for 58 percent of deaths, were underrepresented relative to King County population;
- slightly more than half, 55 percent, of deaths occurred outdoors (as opposed to inside a shelter, hotel/motel, or vehicle);
- prior to death, the deceased had an average of three pre-existing health conditions, with 68 percent having had a current use or history of alcohol/substance abuse; 53 percent had cardiovascular disease and 50 percent had a gastrointestinal condition;
- acute intoxication served as the most frequent cause of death at 26 percent, followed by cardiovascular disease (17 percent), homicide (9 percent), while deaths due to traffic accidents accounted for 6 percent.

Authors of the document caution against using the review as an accurate tool by which to gauge the actual number of deaths of the homeless in 2003, as not all deaths of homeless individuals fall under the purview of the Medical Examiner. Those with chronic health conditions whose deaths did not appear suspicious, or those homeless individuals who might have died while under the care of a health practitioner from diagnosable causes, would not have been part of the data.

A complete copy of the Homeless Death Review for 2003 can be obtained, via the Internet: www.metrokc.gov/health/hchn/.

—Rosette Royale

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

The Voting Fraud Frauds

Homeless voters backed by state rule

By Rosette Royale

Whether or not votes cast by homeless voters can be validated is at the center of a request for the county's elections office to investigate 300-plus new voters.

Election officials received a challenge from a county resident to verify that the names of several hundred voters who used the County Administration Building as their home address can be verified. The challenge, issued last week by Renton resident Christopher Clifford, asks elections director Dean Logan how several hundred voters could "receive their verification of information if they used your office as their mailing address?"

"This is a serious violation of state law and the procedures put in place by that law for guarding against voter fraud," the letter states.

Speaking by phone, Clifford says, "Unfortunately, what could be occurring is that some people have been using a loophole to cast invalid votes."

At issue is Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 434-208-100, which states, in part: "No person registering to vote, who meets all the qualifications of a registered voter in the state of

Washington, shall be disqualified because of a nontraditional physical address being used as a residence address. Nontraditional addresses may include shelters, parks or other identifiable locations which the voter deems to be his/her residence."

Bobbie Egan, media representative for King County, says that at the top of every voter registration form is an oath asking the registrant to assure the information she or he gives is truthful. If any registering voter takes the same oath as everyone, says Egan, "that's the only requirement." Providing false information on a registration form is a Class C felony.

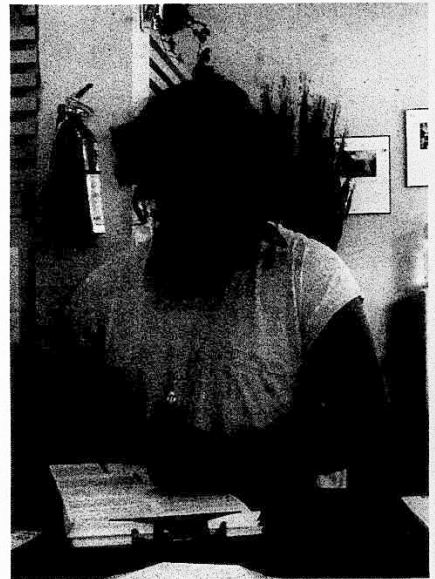
While Clifford, a registered Republican who admits that he voted for gubernatorial candidate Dino Rossi, claims that he is not out to disenfranchise homeless voters, the issue becomes a little stickier for others. A blog located on the Internet at www.soundpolitics.org provides several lengthy tirades on whether or not the votes from Precinct 37-1823, where the County Administration Building sits, can be verified. These bloggers, like members of the Republican Party, are questioning a hand recount which

gives the governorship to Christine Gregoire.

Tara Connor, of the Seattle-King County Coalition for the Homeless, says she believes the votes cast from this precinct were not fraudulent. "They were legal, perfectly legitimate voters who voted legally," says Connor. Instead, what Connor says she felt was happening was an effort to disenfranchise poor people. She noted that training was provided for the homeless and poor in proper voting procedures.

Unlike Clifford and others who question the efforts of the county, Connor supports the county. "I think King County has been phenomenal this year," says Connor. "They were phenomenal. They recognized they made some mistakes and excluded some important citizens in prior elections, and they worked very hard to counter that in executing this WAC."

Even still, Clifford says that he wanted a reply from Logan in the Elections Office. He notes he is writing a second request, which would state his points with more clarity, while reiter-



A REAL CHANGE VENDOR REGISTERS TO VOTE.

ating his desire to have the names of voters who used the Administration Building's address. "Then I plan to go find them [the voters] downtown," he says.

Egan says the Elections Office was preparing a response to Clifford's first letter, but it had yet to be mailed by January 3. ■

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THE GATHERING, Continued from Page 1

In Winnipeg

Shrouded in darkness,
a Manitoba town hung suspended, captured
in a haze of thirty-seven below.

In Winnipeg,
a frozen wasteland awaited
to pack me in its cold storage.
Muffled city,
lost in a maze of six-foot snow-drifts,
still welcomed a Métis daughter.

Hotel lobby,
heated cabin at the end of an airport trapline,
was a sacred place for loons and geese,
calling out from marshes and lakes
in the red, black, yellow, and blues
of traditional native painting.
Tall, black-haired Métis businessmen,
grinning shyly, slapped black buckskin mukluks and gloves,
bright beads, white fur trim gleaming
on the hotel desk,
their sweet whisperings
clicked with Cree tongues, followed me to the 22nd floor.

My thoughts,
my heart, beat along with native drumming
in nearby rooms,
while through ice-framed windows puffs of steam rose
like ghosts spreading ethereal fingers toward the sky.
My hopes sang
for the northern lights — the spirits of elders come
back to earth
to dance one last time with the rest of the tribe.
"The swish you hear is the movement of their dress,"
my mother's voice reminded in the silence.
At midnight
a wailing train across the Assiniboine River
told me to abandon my post
while the full moon, riding high above the city,
aunted, "Don't crawl under the covers and hibernate!"

—CATHY RUIZ

Cathy Ruiz, of Canadian Métis ancestry, was the 2004 recipient of Native Writer's Circle of the America's First Book Award. She currently is a professor in the Humanities at Seattle Central Community College.

That Injin Panhandling at Pioneer Square

Gazing into a cold grey drizzle
during the moon before
return of his Salmon cousins,
he raises a coatsleeve of habit
across the moisture of his nose.

Passersby step around him
looking pointedly away
from rags and blankets
tangled in the doorway
where he slept last night.

Asking for money
only with his bleary eyes
he holds his tongue
or mumbles drink-slurred
prophecies of obscurity.

Look at him.
He used to be Chief Joseph,
this tattered old fool
who has obviously pissed
in one leg of his
odorous, sagging trousers.

Only when it became necessary
in order to save the remaining few
of his starving women and children
from another US Army massacre
did he allow soldiers to touch him.

Now he stands on concrete
where a forest stood, and
he watches oily filth
run down the gutters
toward the Salmon People.

Look at him.
He used to be Crazy Horse

this weak old derelict
who spends his BIA shekels
to buy skidrow bottles of the
poison that brings forgetfulness.
Only because General Crook, whom
he had defeated at Redbud River,
called for a meeting, did Crazy Horse
enter that small, treacherous room where
authorities murdered the great warrior.

Now he serves as the butt
of ridicule from evening revelers
who after drinking and eating
stroll boldly like real men and
make light of the broken, old brave.

Look at him.
He used to be Sequoyah
this inarticulate, blubbing drunk
who neither reads nor writes
the invaders' language and
long ago forgot his own.

Only after President Jackson gave to Georgia
the Cherokees' gold-bearing ancestral lands,
and congress passed the Removal Act,
only then did Sequoyah carry his schools and
bilingual newspaper away to Oklahoma.

Now descendants of those Georgia militia
repair autos and do odd jobs
pursuing Andrew Jackson twenty dollar bills
while plantation owners' offspring
manage investments and vote republican.

Look at him.
He used to be Chief Pontiac,
this flabby statue of remorse

whose shame stems
more from loss of his world
than from his daily excesses.

Only when his confederacy of tribes exhausted
ammunition their French friends had supplied
did Pontiac turn over those eight captured forts
to the British, who later paid a barrel of whiskey
to have him murdered.

Now hip young students learn a
one-sided history in the university named for
Lord Amherst, who cunningly devastated
Pontiac's Shawnee and Delaware allies
by gifting them with smallpox blankets.

And these rude, ignorant ghosts
enjoying the bounty of his ancestral home
will never understand his reasons
for wallowing in filth, will never appreciate
his terrible, crippling loss.

But don't pity him, just
look at him and see why
in his alcoholic stupor
the only faith he still holds
is that after the invaders pass away
his people will survive
and their heroes will live on
in the faces and deeds
of those yet to come, the ones
he will never know.

—THOMAS HUBBARD

Thomas Hubbard directs the independent publishing company Gazoobi Tales, based in Everett, WA, and is a former winner of the Seattle Grand Slam poetry contest.

Here We Go Again

I sat in a chair
In Lucy's new apartment.
Another lady was there
Who I never met.

She introduced herself and said
Her name was Alicia.
She sat at my feet facing me.
She had blue eyes, auburn hair, tanned skin.
She asked if I was Native American.
I said, yes.
Native Americans are so cool, she said.
They are very spiritual,
They are in touch with the earth
And oh my god, there is the Great Spirit.
You have a beautiful culture.
It's not all mine, I said.
Native Americans have so much wisdom,
She said and leaned closer to me.
Do you know any sacred stories?
Can you tell me a story?

Okay, I said.
This one took place in old times.
There was a lone Calvary soldier.
He was stationed at an abandoned fort in South
Dakota.
There were Lakotas not far off.
The Lakotas watched this man
And wondered at his strangeness.
They saw him cleaning the fort.
They thought he was crazy to be alone.
Then they saw him trying to communicate
With a wolf that had white front paws.

Alicia interrupted me and said,
That is the storyline for
Dances with Wolves.

Yes it is, I said.
Then she stood behind me
And started to run her fingers
Through my hair.
It's unfair, she said.
Indian men have such beautiful hair.
It's so dark and thick and soft.
You are a beautiful man.
Thanks, I said, but you know
I have more of that beautiful hair
Around my cock.

Alicia quickly pulled her hand away.
You're disgusting, she screamed.
Maybe so, I said. But your ideas
Of me are just as repulsing.
Then Alicia sat on my lap and kissed my cheek.
She stood and left the apartment.

There you go, Trevino, Lucy said.
You have a great way with the ladies.
Yeah, I know, I said. The crazy ones
Come to me like flies to dog shit.

—TREVINO BRINGS PLENTY

Trevino Brings Plenty, a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, is a self-published author, musician, and radio host. He is currently at work on a spoken word CD.

Native Widow

Somewhere, fire is eating a hole
in the side of the bleeding world. But
on the Res. is just absence — tumbleweed
at the bottom of the old arroyo,
silence as stiff and tangled as old fingers.
She has spent the small change of a lifetime
holding back her words like lathered horses,
rearing, and thought is the light bulb burning hot
in the bathroom the night before last night
when her stingy husband died, a halfbreed
who rolled "I'm sorry" around in his mouth
like a mess he couldn't spit out or swallow.
She sees Death as a fish-belly bully
from the town, flabby feet in greasy boots.
He sends her fleeing to the post, with change
scooped from the insides of a cracked ceramic
cookie jar, hoping to find a dress without
flowers that will fit her for the funeral.
She sees the world through the barbed wire of
sheer necessity: she passes sheep cobbled
together, wet with rain and stupid with
thunder. His death has bitten off the thread of
her life. Crying is the least expensive
of her failures. She is a clothesline hung
with the wet wool of blanketed dreams.
Her husband lies stiff under mounded covers
in their sawed-off bedroom, and there are
grudges in the kitchen like dog bones in
the corners, gnawed clean of all but memory.
Poverty, like a snake of smoke, has
wound its way into the weave of even
her closet clothes. But she was once a child
who ran full throttle toward the smell of
her father's tobacco. She remembers
his catching fish in a singing river,
bringing them up from the bottom, his big hands
dripping. So — though the present is a horse
with stilted legs and a kicking rider,
refusing what comes next like a chest-high jump
with shaking metal bars, she still imagines
love like a rough-coated scrub horse somewhere down
the road, rascal-tongued and rubber-necking,
sticking out its head over the barbed wire,
over the "DON'T FEED THE HORSES" sign, and she
with good apples deep in the pockets
of her new, expensive, flowered dress.

—LYN COFFIN

Lyn Coffin is the author of seven books and is a former National Endowment for the Humanities grant recipient.

BOOK reviews

Nickels' Nemesis?

Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way

By Jim Diers

University of Washington, December 2004
Paperback, 176 pages, \$18.95

By R.V. Murphy

Jim Diers' first contact with the Seattle Mayor's office came when he was part of a community delegation that released a live chicken in Mayor Charles Royer's office because Royer had "chickened out" on honoring a campaign commitment he had made to neighborhoods.

A few months later, Royer appointed Diers as the city's first director of the new Office of Neighborhoods. Some 17 years and three mayors later, Seattle's neighborhood movement has been studied (and copied) throughout the country and as far away as Shellharbour, Australia, and Tokyo, Japan.

Diers' approach to community building is chronicled in his book, *Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way*. The book works on two levels: as a guidebook on how to organize, cultivate, and sustain neighborhoods; and as a grassroots history of Seattle in the last 20 years. And Diers played a key role in that history — his office was instrumental in helping every neighborhood form its own council (although they're independent from City Hall), getting money for citizen-led civic projects with the development of the Neighborhood Matching Fund, and formulating the city's successful P-

Patch Program.

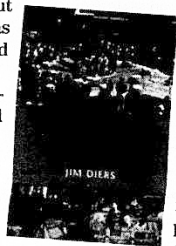
Diers served as the first director of the Department of Neighborhoods from 1988 to 2002. He brought to the job the idea of participatory democracy that includes three elements — community development, formal participation structures, and community organizing.

A disciple of 1930s community organizer Saul Alinsky, Diers believes that the so-called "have-nots" have one potential strength that the rich and powerful don't have — strength in numbers. And the organizer's job is to mobilize people around issues that are in their "self-interest and are specific, immediate, and realizable."

Diers notes that it's difficult to address vague problems like public safety or nuclear disarmament, but it's easier and more achievable to bring people together on issues such as demanding construction of a new Lucile Street Bridge, as neighbors in Southeast Seattle once did, or banning violent video games at an arcade after a local shooting.

A major part of community organizing is the organizer not forcing his ideas on people, but listening to their goals and helping them decide which ones are attainable. "This means organizing people around what interests them, rather than around what you think they should be interested in," Diers writes.

Diers also relishes "asset-based community developments," where a community's assets include those who have been labeled and dismissed in the past: the disabled, welfare mothers, at-



risk youth, the developmentally disabled. According to Diers, "All persons of every description have skills, knowledge, and passion to contribute to their community." Under Diers' watch, the "Involving All Neighbors" organization was created, which connected developmentally disabled individuals with neighborhood organizations. The American Association of Mental Retardation recognized Involving All Neighbors with its full inclusion award for 2000.

Success stories like this highlight the book's only drawback: all of Diers' anecdotes seem to have happy endings with no mention of projects that were lost in process or struck down by NIMBY (not in my backyard) types.

Despite all the kudos these programs received, Diers was one of the first people fired by incoming mayor Greg Nickels.

Despite all the kudos these programs received, Diers was one of the first people fired by incoming mayor Greg Nickels (on the poor man's 49th birthday, no less). Nickels said that Diers "promoted self-indulgent projects." Others speculated it was just Nickels' way of asserting his independence. Diers had been a supporter of outgoing Mayor Paul Schell, but didn't expect to lose his job.

Diers scoffs at any questions about him running for mayor next year, a scenario many neighborhood activists would like to see. For now, Diers is sort of on the campaign trail. In the next few months he'll be appearing at several area bookstores hawking his book. ■

The Complexity of Doing Good

Help: The Original Human Dilemma

By Garret Keizer

HarperSanFrancisco, 2004

276 pages, \$24.95

Review by Timothy Harris

When my work as a homeless advocate was just beginning, I kept a fortune cookie slip taped to my phone that said it all. "He who expects no gratitude will never be disappointed." It's a sentiment Garret Keizer would appreciate. Want gratitude? Keizer's advice is "get a dog."

In a world where need presses in on all sides, what is one's true obligation to others? When is helping mostly about you? Is help that is unbidden any help at all? The answers are, as the cliché goes, "in the journey," and Keizer is a companionable voice to sort things out along the way.

The archetypal story of help is that of the Good Samaritan, and this is where Keizer begins. The Samaritan sees what others ignore. He takes action at some risk to himself. He uses the means at his disposal, however inadequate. He, as we would say now, "has good boundaries." And he doesn't wait around to be thanked. "Go and do likewise," says Jesus. Alrighty then.

But, what if things aren't so straightforward? What if people who need help are on every freeway on-ramp, and we know their signs are mostly bullshit? What if your brother is addicted to crystal meth, but in recovery, and on his sixth relapse steals your TV? What if whole institutions have been built on top of exploiting human misery for its Christian fundraising appeal? What then? "Go and do likewise" doesn't quite cut it anymore.

In any other hands this whole subject would probably be one long sanc-

tionous yawn, but Keizer is humble enough to not have any pat answers, human enough to have his outrage set on full burn, and funny enough to make the thing work.

My own literary touchstone on this subject has always been Camus' *The Plague*, in which ordinary people rise to extraordinary levels because it is simply the work at hand. This all occurs within the predictably absurd and godless universe of French existentialism.

Keizer draws upon *The Plague* and many other stories, both fictional and real, and along the way describes the French rural village of Le Chambon.

Here, hundreds of ordinary people under Nazi occupation — motivated by their faith and organized by village clergy — conducted a massive operation lasting six years that saved the lives of more than 500 Jews.

Ironically, Camus lived in Le Chambon while writing *The Plague*. This, says Keizer, is as if C.S. Lewis were witness to

the Bolshevik revolution and wrote *The Chronicles of Narnia* in response.

The villagers who risked their lives never felt as though they did anything special. It was a common sense response. They had some practice, however. Years before, they had sheltered refugees of the Spanish Civil War.

"What practice do we have," asks Keizer? How will we rise to the occasion when history turns ugly if we ignore the less risky opportunities that might be under our noses now? How can we best balance the demands of justice and mercy? What are the partnerships that will sustain us?

This is a wise, compassionate book that I'd recommend to anyone, especially those in the "helping professions" who don't need Camus to appreciate the absurd. ■



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Family Counseling

Moral Politics : How Liberals and Conservatives Think
by George Lakoff
University of Chicago Press, second edition, 2004
Paperback, 471 pages, \$22.00

Review by Anitra Freeman

That "we think of the nation as family" may seem obvious, even trite. What George Lakoff has done in *Moral Politics*, seemingly for the first time, is analyze the consequences of what kind of family we consider the nation to be.

The conservative worldview sounds familiar: Humans have authority over animals; adults have authority over children; God has authority over all people. If you are self-disciplined, work hard, and obey the rules, you will be rewarded with success. If you are not successful, you lack self-discipline. The way to help people who are not successful is "tough love": make them be more virtuous and work harder.

The liberal worldview also sounds familiar: We all need each other. Parents are responsible for nurturing children into responsible, caring adults, and God is the nurturing Parent of all of us. We are all responsible for taking care of the environment that nurtures us. When someone is not thriving, they need help; when we help those of us who are weaker, we all become stronger.

Face to face with a child in need, conservatives and liberals alike tend to react the same: compassionately and responsibly. When the child exists as an abstract, however — as a subject of public policy — both liberal and conservative are influenced more by the metaphors they use for abstract ideas. Their metaphors don't necessarily correspond to their actual behavior any more than the cultural metaphor of "wolf" corresponds to real wolves. In their own home, conservatives will be sensitive to the needs of others. With their own families, liberals will practice ethical accountability.

Conservatives' emphasis on the virtues of strength, self-discipline, and "protecting the hearth from outsiders" helps explain what seem to liberals to be contradictory and morally outrageous stands. Being against abortion on demand for women who do not want to bear children, but against providing free prenatal care to mothers in poverty who do want to bear their children. Demanding that children be protected from sex predators and violent video games, but opposing gun control or mandatory car safety seats. De-

manding vengeance against terrorists who killed thousands of innocent Americans, but accepting the deaths of tens of thousands of innocent Afghans or Iraqis as "collateral damage" to our righteous vengeance. Outrage over "sins of the flesh" with no equivalent outrage over business corruption or abuses of political power.

Likewise, the liberal emphasis on empathy, responsibility, and equity start to make sense of what seem to conservatives to be contradictory and morally outrageous stands. Interfering with how parents raise their own children — with safety regulations, education reforms, and condemnation of physical discipline as "child abuse" — but calling a legal ban on abortion an unconscionable interference with individual rights. Taking tax money from others and spending it on prenatal care for welfare mothers, but calling it an unconstitutional interference with freedom of conscience to give tax money to churches who would counsel those women on changing their lives. Condemning conservatives for "imposing their morality on others," but insisting that people in power be "held ethically accountable" for fair and equal justice. Seeming eager to explain and forgive any crimes on the part of the enemies of our country, while being highly critical of our own country.

There is often a clash between the conservative ethic and the liberal ethic. We are outraged

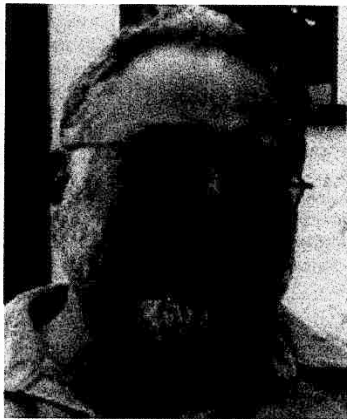
by each other. Lakoff, a liberal, does not transcend his outrage with complete success. But Lakoff does point out that most of the outrage on both sides of the culture clash is directed at the "demonic" version of the opposite worldview: the rare and distorted extreme. The abusive authoritarian father with the mindlessly submissive wife and children is as rare as the uncritically permissive libertine whose drug-addled, sexually promiscuous children wreak havoc uncontrolled.

Conservatives are not totally devoid of empathy and liberals are not totally devoid of self-discipline; and while the liberal and conservative worldviews are fundamentally different and therefore disruptive to each other, there are positive aspects to both. Both have been with us from as far back as we have recorded history, which indicates that both have contributed to our survival.

Nations with different cultures can learn — have learned — to understand each other and to work together. The

multiculturalism of America can and must expand to include both "liberal" and "conservative" culture, understanding each other, and working together, because both are undoubtedly with us for the rest of human history as well.

Moral Politics, while imperfect, is a good start toward that. ■



Lakoff points out that most of the outrage on both sides of the culture clash is directed at the "demonic" version of the rare and distorted extreme.

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From Punk to Panchen

Dharma Punk: a Memoir
By Noah Levine
HarperSanFrancisco, 2004
Paperback, 272 pages, \$12.95

Review by Stacey Silliman

There's a country song that mourns the loss of good old-fashioned community with the lyric "If the world had a front porch like we did back then." Noah Levine, author of *Dharma Punk: a Memoir*, would agree that we lack a strong, caring community. His solution would not, however, include a front porch for every citizen but rather a cushion and some quiet time.

Noah's memoir chronicles his personal transformation from angry punk rocker to Buddhist meditation teacher as he travels through the Northern California punk scene, India, Thailand, and New Mexico and finally rests — with simple meditation instructions. Throughout his memoir Noah's message is clear: the confused and hopeless should look to spirituality for salvation.

As Noah stated, "Prayer and meditation quickly became a more integral part of my life. They were helping me make sense of everything. I was beginning to find some sense of purpose in my life. I had tried everything else. I knew that this spiritual practice shit was the last hope for me."

Though the writing was sometimes awkward, Noah's account of coping with parents, drugs, suicidal tendencies, and a life of crime was too interesting to set aside. Incarcerated at age 17,

Noah decided to follow some simple meditation instructions that his father, meditation instructor and published author Stephen Levine, had given him and he decided to get clean. After Noah gave up his junkie life he still struggled with his criminal tendencies, but noticeably absent from that struggle was his best friend, Toby, who was mentioned sporadically as he struggled to get clean.

A diverse cast of punk rockers who had become spiritual through their 12-step recoveries joined Noah in adding appeal to the story. What kept me reading this book was my curiosity about Noah's friends. For some reason, their fates are never shown.

Noah's story almost seemed like fiction because of the remarkable changes that he made in his life: making restitution to everyone that he had hurt, teaching meditation at the same institutions that once imprisoned him, going from high school dropout to graduate school. Noah's transition to a clean and sober life seems too easy; he doesn't appear to struggle with his sobriety. Noah's inner struggle to reconcile his punk rock ethic and his Buddhist practice wouldn't have held my attention if not for the secondary characters in his life.

Noah also co-founded the Mind Body Awareness Project, a nonprofit organization, which attempts to teach inmates meditation in hopes of transforming their lives with the "loving-kindness" that Levine believes is uncovered through mindfulness. Perhaps the country song should declare, "If only the world had meditation cushions." ■



Thursday, Dec. 9, 11:42 p.m., 10th Ave. and S. Jackson Street. Suspect, a transient Black male aged 54, was contacted for loitering in a high drug trafficking area. A warrant was verified for his arrest, and he was booked into King County Jail.

Friday, Dec. 10, 2:00 a.m., 5th and Jackson. Officers recognized the suspect, a transient Hispanic male aged 30, from previous contact, and remembered that he had a verified warrant. He was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Friday, December 24, 5:15 a.m., 1600 Blk Western Ave. Officers were dispatched to Western Ave. for a possible assault. Radio advised that the caller had been assaulted at a different place earlier and had Pike Place security call 911. She then had walked away, yelling that she had been assaulted and raped. Radio established contact with Pike Place security, which advised officers that the victim was heading southbound on Western Avenue, still yelling and screaming. Officers found her at a payphone, and began to ask her about the incident. The victim, a Native American female aged 34, was very hard to understand due to her level of intoxication and her emotional state. Whenever a question was asked, she would mumble and cry. The officer was able to determine that the assault had happened at or near the surface parking lot just south of Victor Steinbrueck Park on Western. She was trying to describe the area, saying it was near three big fans. When the area was

found, it was near three large decorative grass plants by the parking lot. She stated there was one man, but changed her statement to two. Her call to 911 had indicated she knew their names, but she stopped talking to the officer when he asked her for them. The area was combed, but nothing was found that would constitute evidence. The area is often used by drug users and homeless, and due to her vague recollection of events, nothing was recovered as evidence. The victim was treated at the scene by Seattle Fire, and transported to Harborview for further medical attention.

Friday, Dec. 24, 8:30 a.m., 301 Union. Complainant, a transient white female aged 35, stated she was on the SE corner of Third and Union selling *Real Change* when the suspect started panhandling on the same corner. Complainant told him he would make more money if he went to Westlake Center. Suspect, a transient Black male aged 46, became very angry and agitated, and began yelling and calling her names. He stated, "I will hurt you!" and took a step towards her. Complainant is five months pregnant, and was very afraid of being assaulted. She fled to the Post Office to get away. The officer at the scene had dealt with the suspect before, and knows he is quick to make threats to people who say things to him he doesn't like. He was placed under arrest for harassment and immediately became hostile, threatening to kill the first white policeman he saw when he got out of jail. He was booked into King County Jail.

Compiled from incident reports of the Seattle Police Department by Emma Quinn. Got your own experience to relate? Call us at (206)441-3247 ext. 207 and we'll get the scoop.

Adventures in Poetry with ©Dr. Wes Browning



Let's talk about justice!

Here at *Real Change* we are always talking about justice, but do we know what it is? My answer to that question is, who cares? All I care about is if I know what justice is.

Upon close examination and careful study and other redundant picking about of that last question, I realize that answering it is problematical, and hinges a lot on what "knowing" is. If by "knowing" a thing, I can mean I "know" what it isn't, well, then I am really on top of this justice thing. For example, justice is not a Number 2 pencil. Nor is it an egg salad sandwich, a Ford Bronco, or a genetically engineered grapefruit. Whereas, if to "know" a thing, I have to actually "know" what it is, I could easily be in over my head.

Part of what confuses me about justice is that I get it all mixed up with righteousness. I notice that I'm not the only one who does this. Perhaps that's where I should start.

Instead, I'm going to start with an idea of righteousness that was inculcated in me at the malleable age of three. At that age I had been wronged considerably by someone and I desperately needed to understand how that could be. An informal teacher of mine then taught me a concept that he wrapped in his own language, which concept he translated into English as "standing up happens."

Notice what he didn't say: he didn't say "sh*t happens, get used to it." What he also didn't say was, "God will set things right some day and slay your enemies; yea, verily, unto the seven times seventh generation of your enemies will He slay them." He said that whoever is made to lie down, will stand up. He said the rest of us have basically three choices. We can either help the fallen get to their feet, or we can be in the way, or we can be utterly irrelevant. But the standing up will happen. Get used to it. Standing up is a force of nature.

By contrast, justice is a force of humankind. Justice isn't about the standing up; justice is about the helping or the getting in the way or the being irrelevant. My teacher's version of righteousness, as uprightedness, was morally neutral. If uprightedness happens eventually, no matter what, there's no good or bad uprightedness — only early or late. But there's definitely excellent, good, mediocre, poor, and bad justice. There's timely justice, there's stingy justice, there's belated justice, there's Roman justice, there's English justice, there's Papal justice, there's martial justice, there's poetic justice, there's sweet justice, there's sour justice, there's even surreal justice, to the point of Kafkaesque justice.

Now is the time in this column when I like to turn to concrete examples, examples similar to bricks, only more cement-like, to illustrate my musings.

But the standing up will happen. Get used to it. Here's an instance of justice and standing up: Rep. Robert Matsui died at the age of 63 on New Year's Day. Matsui spent his earliest childhood in an internment camp for Japanese-Americans during World War II. Later he stood up to become a U.S. Congressman for California, a job he held for 26 years, from 1979 on. One of his achievements in Congress was helping to gain the passage of an official apology for the wartime internment, together with compensation for the survivors. That would be justice. We should all honor his life and the justice he helped create.

Ironically, at the same time that Robert Matsui was dying, the Pentagon and the CIA were asking the White House to make arrangements to keep some alleged enemy combatants at Guantanamo in prison for life. Specifically, the Defense Department wants \$25 million to build a prison for about 200 detainees for whom there is likely not enough evidence to convict in a military tribunal, and whom the government acknowledges do not even have any intelligence to give up.

That would be bad justice, even Kafkaesque justice. I remember when it was supposed that Kafkaesque justice happened only in KGB-dominated USSR and Soviet satellite states. Welcome to the new world. But remember this too: standing up happens. ■

Upcoming & Notable

Wednesday 1/5

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

Sunday 1/9

Dinner and Community Forum for **ACTION Northwest**, a new organization helping local activist groups by providing a network of support on their various platforms. ACTION Northwest hopes to unite diverse organizations interested in peace, women's reproductive rights, labor issues, marriage equality, and socio-economic justice. This forum will include group training, preparing press releases, learning the permit process, funding strategies and a sign making party for Jan. 20th inauguration day events. 4 p.m., at the LGBT Center, 1115 E. Pike, Seattle.

Tuesday 1/11

Apprentice Opportunities project orientation. Learn more about job opportunities and other services. You must be a resident of King County, in excellent physical condition, and be able to pass a drug/alcohol screening test. Most projects require a valid Washington driver's license and a high school diploma or GED. 1 p.m., at AOP, 6770 E. Marginal Way S., Bldg D, Room 106, Seattle. Also Wednesday, Jan 12, at 1 p.m., at WorkSource North, 12550 Aurora Ave. N., Room 101, Seattle. Info 206-381-1384.

Wednesday 1/12

Shoreline Community College presents Morris Dees, chief trial counsel for the Southern Poverty Law Center, a non-profit group that specializes in lawsuits involving **civil rights, domestic terrorists, and racially motivated crimes**. Mr. Dees has devoted his time to teaching tolerance and will discuss "With Justice For All." Tickets are \$14 General, \$12 seniors and students. 7:30

p.m., at Shoreline Community College Gymnasium, 16101 Greenwood Ave. N., Shoreline. Info and tickets 206-546-4606.

Thursday 1/13

Hopelink in Bellevue is hosting a free weekly parenting class open to parents with children of all stages of development. Class is free to low-income families and free childcare will be available with a reservation. This is an 8-week course and parents can join at any date. 6 - 7 p.m., at Hopelink, 14812 Main St., Bellevue. To register call Jessica 425-943-7577.

Town Hall discussion with Steve Coll, author of *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden*, from the Soviet Invasion to Sept. 10, 2001. Tickets are \$5 and sold at Elliott Bay Books. 7:30 p.m., at Town Hall, 8th & Seneca, Seattle. Info 206-624-6600 or 1-800-962-5311.

Friday 1/14

YMCA of Greater Seattle Annual **Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration**. The public is invited to participate and enjoy youth performances that include music, dance, spoken word, and other expressions demonstrating their impressions of the life and work of Dr. King. 4:30 - 6 p.m., at Seattle Central Library, 1000 4th Ave., Seattle. Info 206-382-5343.

Saturday 1/15

Citizens Truth Alliance sponsors speaker, ex-cop, investigative journalist, and author Michael Ruppert. Mr. Ruppert discusses his new book, *The Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil*. Come hear the hottest speaker on the circuit. Endorsed by Seattle Thunder. General Admission \$10. 7-10 p.m., at Kane Hall, Roethke Auditorium, UW Campus, Seattle. Online tickets www.brownpapertickets.com or 1-800-838-3006.

Sunday 1/16

Seattle Chapter Fellowship of Reconciliation potluck and program, with Lea Zengage of Justice Works! She will discuss how justice works when its principles are not compromised. Potluck 5



MLK Day Rally and March

Decades after the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the unfair conditions created and perpetuated by racism persist. Our country's economic and military policies reinforce racism on a global scale, while the cost of our wars supplants domestic spending for education, job training, health care, housing, and other needs. The war on drugs, welfare reform, and the gutting of Affirmative Action have made it harder to overcome the disparities. Come honor the work of Dr. King by standing in opposition to what he called the "triple evils" of racism, economic exploitation, and war. Help build a world of racial equality, economic justice, and peace.

Annual **Martin Luther King Jr. Day Rally and March** with the theme, "Speak Truth to Power: End Racial Disparity Now." 9:30 a.m. workshops, 11 a.m. rally, noon march, at Garfield High School, 400 23rd Ave. at East Jefferson. Info: CAMP, 206-812-4940.

p.m., program 6:30 p.m., at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N. 70th, Seattle. Info 206-789-5565.

Monday 1/17

Central District Forum for Arts & Ideas presents a community reading of the "I Have A Dream" speech during the Annual Martin Luther King Day Peoples Celebration at the Seattle Center. Free and open to all. 1:20 p.m., at Center House Pavilion, Seattle Center, 5th Ave. N. and Harrison

St., Seattle. Info www.cdforum.org.

Wednesday 1/19

The Seattle Biotechnology Legacy Foundation sponsors a three-part lecture series. The first lecture will be by renowned researcher Bernard Weiss, Ph.D., speaking on "Enduring Legacies: **How Pollutants Shape Brain Development**." He will focus on local environmental hazards such as lead found in pipes of Seattle schools, food additives, and how pollutants contribute to disabilities. Advance tickets \$10, \$12 at the door. 7 - 8:30 p.m., at Seattle Art Museum, 100 University St., Seattle. Info or to register www.iceh.org.

Thursday 1/20

Not In Our Name (NION) Seattle hosts a convergence rally with music and a speak-out on inauguration day calling for resistance to the **Bush agenda of war and repression**. NION is calling for neighborhood gatherings followed by marches, caravans or group bus rides to Westlake Park. Actions and events will continue throughout the day and night to show the power and unity of our numbers. 2 p.m., at Westlake Park, 4th and Pine, Downtown Seattle. Info 206-322-3813.

Friday 1/21

Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice present Friday Night at the Meaningful Movies. This evening the film is the exciting film about the Iraq War, **Control Room**. Discussion follows. Free, donations appreciated. 7 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl., north of 50th, Seattle. Info wnfp@bridgings.org.

Calendar compiled in part from Jean Buskin's *Peace and Justice Events Calendar*, available in full at www.scn.org/activism/calendar. Email calendar submissions to calendar@realchangenews.org.

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Affordable Housing: Meet the Demand

Issue: The Housing Trust Fund is the state's primary funding source for the creation and preservation of low-income housing. It helps local communities in every county produce, preserve, and improve affordable and special needs housing. Current demand for funds is about three times the amount available. Currently, the trust fund is \$80 million per biennium and historically, King County receives about 40 percent of that amount. Raising the trust fund to \$100 million could bring \$4 million a year into King County to develop affordable housing locally.

Background: Each year the National Low Income Housing Coalition releases its Out of Reach report, which compares housing affordability in states and counties across the country. The 2004 findings, released in December, show that in Washington state an individual would need to earn \$14.32 an hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment. In King County, a worker needs to make \$13.33 an hour just to afford fair market rent for a one-bedroom apartment. No wonder homelessness is increasing.

Increasing our state's Housing Trust Fund is one way to begin to address the effects of out-of-control rents. It is a critical component to successfully implementing our community's 10-year plan to end homelessness and especially critical in light of decreasing federal funds.

The Housing Trust Fund deserves our support. Here's why:

The trust fund provides jobs. A \$1 million biennial HTF appropriation would create 20,754 jobs based on a model created by the Washington Center for Real Estate Research at Washington State University, primarily in housing construction.

It leverages local, federal, and private funds — at about a four to one ratio. The HTF has invested over \$420 million in new and preserved housing since 1989. This has leveraged more than \$1,560 million from the private and public sectors.

It generates revenue and spurs local economic growth, and will put an additional \$156 million into the economy during the next two years. Revenue from sales taxes supports education, fire, and police services. A recent study done by the Housing Development Consortium estimated that for every 1,000 housing units produced in a given year, \$77 million is generated in local revenue and \$9 million generated in taxes and fees for local government.

Affordable housing increases the efficiency of other services. Low-income households can afford critical medical care, childcare, food, and utilities without spending all of their income on housing. They can plan for their families' future instead of just trying to make next month's rent.

Action: Contact your legislators and the Governor-elect now, so they head to Olympia for the legislative session thinking about creating affordable housing. Ask them to **increase the Housing Trust Fund to \$100 million per biennium**. Find out who represents you at www.leg.wa.gov or personalize and send a pre-written letter by visiting our online action center at www.realchangenews.org. You can also find out who represents you, and have a message delivered to your legislators and the Governor by calling the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-562-6000.

For more information, contact the Housing Development Consortium at www.hdc-kingcounty.org.

Housing Advocacy Day is Feb. 3 in Olympia. Join citizens from around the state in supporting the Housing Trust Fund and other efforts to end homelessness. For more information contact the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance at www.wliha.org or (206)442-9455.



The Central Area Senior Center (CASC) Hot Lunch Program seeks volunteer lunch-welcomers and kitchen helpers. Volunteers are needed daily, monthly, and during special occasions, between 10:30 am ? 2:00 pm. Free meal offered in gratitude. The *suggested* donation for Seniors to eat is \$3 - though no Senior is turned away for lack of funds. For more information call Rhonda at (206) 726-4926, ext. 29.

World Heritage seeks a volunteer to provide **high school exchange students** with program support. Call Diana at 1-800-888-9040 or visit our website at worldheritage.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; volunteer@kcdrc.org; or call 206-443-9603 ext. 100.

To post a volunteer opportunity FOR FREE, email adsales@realchangenews.org or call Candi at 206-441-3247 ext. 205.

We want
to hear
from
you!



Bring story ideas, comments, suggestions, and questions to the fourth monthly open meeting of the **Real Change Editorial Committee**. Wednesday Dec. 22, 4:30 p.m., at the *Real Change* office. Everyone welcome. For additional information about the meeting, please call Adam Hyla, editor, at 206-441-3247, extension 207.

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

