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NOV. 2-8, 2005

## GOAL KEEPERS

*Real Change* needs to raise  
\$90K to stay in the game. You  
can help us reach our goal.

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## BIG CHANGE

Meet Aiko Schaeffer, recipient  
of our inaugural Change  
Agent Award.

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Activists from the Emerald City  
venture to the Big Easy, to see  
how well the city is working.

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## SQUEAKY CLEAN

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## THE BUTLER DID IT

Religion, myth, and women are  
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## Strike Three?

**Activist Anwar Peace hopes  
a third arrest won't deny his  
voting rights**

By ROSETTE ROYALE  
Staff Reporter

There's a charm to most, but to Anwar Peace, a local activist who for years has railed against what he feels is inexcusable police misconduct, three may be the harbinger of bad news. Three gross misdemeanor convictions, that is.

That's just what Peace, 31, doesn't want to face at some point in the future. But there's the sense such a situation may be heading his way.

Recently, he was saddled with two gross misdemeanor convictions for violating a no-contact order obtained by Seattle Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske. Peace was found guilty by a jury last week for willfully violating an order to stay 500 ft. away from the chief on two separate occasions: the first, when he encountered the chief at City Hall in mid-Sept. 2003; the second, for coming too close to the chief with a placard during the 2004 Torchlight Parade.

Two convictions of violating a no-contact order are bad enough. But the looming possibility of a third is what's got Peace and his attorney, Alfoster Garrett, worried. A third conviction wouldn't simply amount to a third gross misdemeanor: the third conviction would be transformed, automatically, into a felony conviction. "If that's true," says Peace, "then I've lost my voting rights, all because I wanted to use my voice to speak."

Garnering that one transformative gross-misdemeanor conviction would seem nothing more than pure conjecture if not for one sticky issue: Peace may have already experienced his third gross misdemeanor arrest.

Peace was arrested on Oct. 19, during a lunch break at his most recent trial, wherein he received misdemeanor convictions one and two.



BANNED IN EUROPE, BUT SOLD IN THE U.S., SOME PERSONAL CARE AND HYGIENE PRODUCTS CONTAINING DANGEROUS CHEMICALS — BUT YOU WOULDN'T KNOW IT BY READING THE LABEL. PHOTO BY ELIOT STOLLER.

## Face-Off

**Cosmetics, even the "natural" kind, contain some suspect ingredients**

By CYDNEY GILLIS  
Staff Reporter

Coal tar. Lead acetate. Toluene. Petroleum distillates.

It sounds like a list of manufacturing chemicals no one would want to work around, much less touch. But these chemicals are touching most of us everyday in many of the cosmetics and hygiene products we use on our bodies.

They're known to cause cancer, lower fertility, or cause birth defects — yet they're widely used in makeup, shampoos, hair coloring, nail polish, moisturizers, and a list of more than 14,000 products that have been rated by the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics.

The campaign, which is co-hosting a community forum on safe cosmetics Thursday at Swedish Hospital, was started two years ago by a coalition of health and environmental groups led locally by the Seattle office of the Breast Cancer Fund.

Pam Tazioli, state coordinator for the Breast Cancer Fund, explains that the coalition — which includes the Environmental Working Group, Friends of the Earth, and Health Care Without Harm — is trying to get people to make the connection that what's in the environment has a direct impact on them.

"We could say, 'Do you know the orca whales are declining?' but oftentimes that doesn't help people understand the link between the environment and human health," Tazioli says. "Cosmetics is a way to do that — it's a product we all use, to some extent."

That includes men. Tazioli says Grecian Formula, one of the most heavily advertised hair-coloring products for men, contains lead acetate, a known carcinogen and reproductive toxin. Another common ingredient in men's and women's colognes, deodorants and hairsprays — dibutyl phthalate — can impair fertil-

See MAKE UP, Continued on Page 12

See PEACE, Continued on Page 12

# A Community in Action

*Real Change needs your help to continue to thrive*

*Real Change* relies on reader support for more than forty percent of our budget. Last year, more than 1,000 people took the next step beyond buying the paper and became direct supporters of our work. This holiday season, we need you to help us reach our goal of raising \$90,000 over Nov. and Dec.

By **TIMOTHY HARRIS**  
Executive Director

Three years ago, we asked our friends why *Real Change* matters, and they told us. It's about a community in action. By building on our common interests, we help people reach past economic barriers to create a better society. We tackle the issues that other media often miss, and offer perspectives that you don't see anywhere else. We lead people to take action.

Based on your advice, we've been hard at work, making *Real Change* better. We turned a good paper into a great paper. We put more resources into organizing and building community and success for our vendors. We recruited a working advisory board — representative of the communities and issues we care about most — and geared up to go weekly. This year, we made the leap.

It worked. Our vendors now sell 10,000-11,000 copies of every issue and monthly circulation is up by more than 20 percent. We serve more vendors than ever, with an average of 270 people selling the paper each month. The vendors get great reader feedback. More and more, people say they buy the paper for the quality of the content.

*Real Change* relies on reader support for more than forty percent of our budget. Last year, more than 1,000 people took the next step beyond buying the paper and became direct supporters of our work. This holiday season, we need you to help us reach our goal of raising \$90,000 over Nov. and Dec. We know it's a big number. That's why we need your help. Here are three good reasons to support our work.

## Real Change Transforms Lives

We change lives, right here, right now. By offering direct opportunity to those who are often the most desperate, we help people to help themselves. Anyone can walk through our front door and be earning money an hour later. When our vendors sell the paper, they find that they are embraced by the large, caring community of *Real Change* readers. They discover their potential and learn that they are not as alone in the world as they may have thought.

## Real Change is Gutsy Alt-Journalism

*Real Change* is an unabashedly progressive publication that helps remind us of where our values are. We profile people in our community who are making a difference and give our readers the information they need to take action. Our advocacy journalism strives for fairness and balance, but stands on the side of the poor and marginalized. In just the past year, our weekly Interview has featured such luminaries as Barbara Ehrenreich, Jonathan Kozol, Sherman Alexie, and bell hooks.

## Real Change Takes Action

Social change is a long-haul proposition, but *Real Change* is making a difference right now, defending poor and low-income people on a variety of issues while laying the groundwork for a growing social change movement. Our strategy engages poor people themselves in our advocacy while building alliances with those who have more resources. Through direct activism, advocacy journalism, and engaging our readers to take action, we have built a bottom-up organization with recognized clout.

Over the last 11 years, *Real Change* has constantly grown to reach more people, serve more vendors, and be more

effective advocates for the people and issues we care about. Over 2006, we will build a plan to take us through the next five years. What can you expect of us?

We will become more of a unifying force within the progressive community, acting as a convener and facilitator for action. We will help activists to reach beyond the choir, involving and including the broad public that has a stake in a more just society.

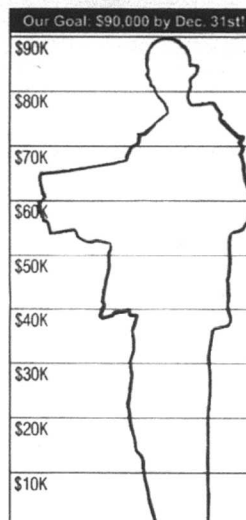
We will focus our own activism on issues that affect the poor and homeless that would otherwise go largely unnoticed. We will defend the use of parks and other open space by the poor. We will challenge the Mayor's developer-friendly agenda when it collides with the interests of low-income people. We will help to see that the 10-year plan to end homelessness serves the interests of homeless people, and not just those of service providers and government.

We will continue to build community and opportunity for our vendors. This can mean something as simple as making sure that someone remembers their birthdays. It could also mean expansion of our successful writers' workshops or more life-skills support and training. Our vendors will tell us what matters most to them, and we'll go from there.

We're building a better society, one paper at a time. We can't do it without you. Please. Be a *Real Change* supporter. We're counting on you to make the difference. ■

## [Donate Now]

*Real Change* needs to raise \$90,000 from readers over Nov. and Dec. to enter 2006 with the resources we need. We get there one donation at a time. Please do your part.



*Real Change* is published weekly and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Annual subscriptions are available for \$35.

*Real Change* vendors receive 65¢ 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.

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.

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

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ISSN 1085-729X

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# Change Agent

**F**or years, Aiko Schaefer struggled to get the agenda of ending poverty onto the state's list of priorities.

Lobbying and picketing outside Olympia garnered little attention, and lawmakers had minimal interest in hearing what Schaefer or the organization she directs, the Statewide Poverty Action Network, had to say about the low-income residents in Washington.

After cornering and asking lawmakers why low-income residents weren't a priority, the common response, according to Schaefer, was that they didn't vote.

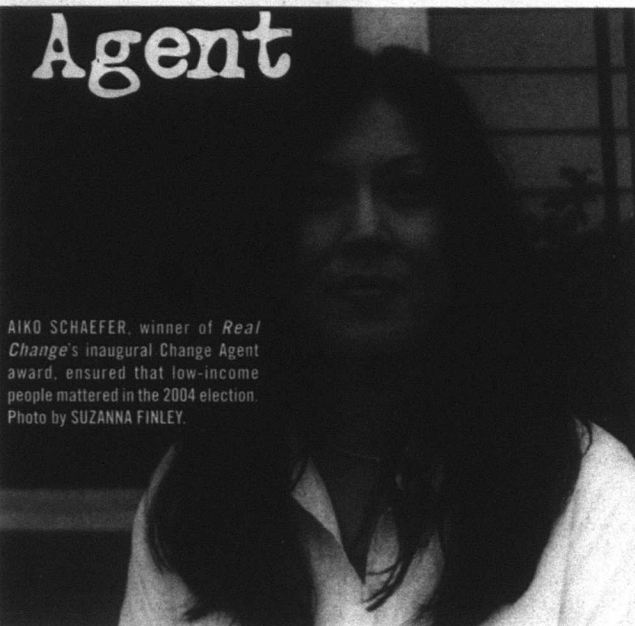
So with the support of the members and board of the Statewide Poverty Action Network, Schaefer piloted a project to get out the vote.

The goal was not just to register lower-income residents of South King County, but to inform them and help them get to the polls on Election Day.

"We were hoping for a two percent increase in voter turnout," explains Schaefer. "But when we looked at the records, voter turnout had increased 16 percent in South King County."

Schaefer's dedication to getting low-income voters registered, educated, and empowered is the reason she has been chosen for *Real Change's* inaugural Change Agent Award for 2004-2005.

The sudden shift in voter turnout has helped usher in newly re-funded and expanded laws aimed at breaking down the systemic causes of poverty, like the SEED (Saving, Earning, and Enabling Dreams) Act, which helps secure low-income people's economic independence by rewarding personal savings. The SEED Act went into effect in late July.



AIKO SCHAEFER, winner of *Real Change's* inaugural Change Agent award, ensured that low-income people mattered in the 2004 election. Photo by SUZANNA FINLEY.

Her work has also brought a new, attentive ear to poor people's concerns.

For Schaefer, the most exciting reward came when she was able to take new voters to Olympia only two months after the election to talk with their representatives.

"To have lawmakers listen to those voters and their stories and say they will do whatever they can to support the changes that those voters suggested, to support Poverty Action's proposals — it brought a full circle to what we're trying to accomplish."

And it's not just representatives from South King County who are listening. According to Schaefer, the ripple effect has spread throughout Olympia

and there is a new awareness of the power of Poverty Action Network.

Starting in April or May, Poverty Action plans to gear up for a new push to get out the vote as representatives in Olympia start to campaign for re-election in 2006.

There is hope to spread the program used in South King County to districts across the state through the use of Poverty Action's 4,000 active members.

—Kimberly Ervin

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Statewide Poverty Action Network, you can get more information online at [www.povertyaction.org](http://www.povertyaction.org) or call toll free 1(866)789-7726.

## Just Heard...

### LEIU: Divide and Conquer

Two Seattle lawyers have a tall order: serve charges to each person named in a big federal lawsuit against four city governments, 75 police officers, and the makers of less-lethal weapons used on protestors during the 2003 standoff at the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit meeting by Nov. 30.

U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Zilly handed down a tall order Oct. 21, says attorney Paul Richmond, one of the protestors' lawyers. "The only way we can do this is by getting a lot of help from the community," with photocopying and delivery.

### Pro-Bono Promo

A local group of young public-relations professionals is starting a free advertising campaign for the school-counseling nonprofit Seattle Education Access, which makes academic achievement possible for people whose schooling has been interrupted by homelessness ("Honor Society," Aug. 10).

Each year, Ad 2 Seattle picks a local nonprofit to assist in getting out the word about its offerings. The gift "symbolizes what is best in the community-based approach to social change," says Polly Trout, the founder and executive director of the three-year-old Seattle Education Access. Ad 2's members are "working hard to pay off their own student loans [and] taking the time to put college degrees within reach of other young adults."

—Adam Hyla

### Walking Papers

A counter-recruitment activist says her being escorted off of a high school campus last week directly violates the school's equal-access policy.

Carrie Hathorn says her early dismissal took place on Oct. 26, while seated at a table proffering anti-recruitment literature at Chief Sealth High School. When a student at her table independently handed a flyer about a nationally planned Nov. 2 student walkout to a fellow classmate, Hathorn claims administrators accused her of disseminating the flyer. Hathorn, 25, says she replied that she didn't. When she denied a request to have her backpack searched for more fliers, Hathorn says she was shown the door. She says she's checking into how to appeal being kicked out.

School Board member Sally Soriano says that, indeed, the board created a policy in Sept. charging schools with crafting guidelines allowing recruiters and counter-recruiters the same access.

Hathorn says in her work with students in various schools, the possibility of a Nov. 2 walkout is "overwhelmingly popular," especially to those who find hypocrisy in poorly funded schools while millions are poured into a war in Iraq. "Those are some of the things students recognize," says Hathorn.

—Rosette Royale

## Sky and Land Bland Gray

It hasn't rained like this since she threw that shoe

A careening green emphasis  
to the end of the clothesline

Articles of attire strewn askew  
in the bright September sunshine

Now soaking up the dust turned mud  
Around our morning light camp

This rain is the daughter of that day

My misery as moist  
As a Chinese lantern photographed in black-and-white

All because

The houses of the holy elude us like the queen  
In a streetcorner game of three-card monte

Her royal mascara  
Running rivulets from the deuces juice

Here comes another night without a shingled roof



# Alone Together after Katrina

Despite disorder, grassroots organizations undertake New Orleans recovery, say Seattle visitors

By LAURA CRUIKSHANK  
UW News Lab

"The Environmental Protection Agency is not adequately informing the public to the dangers of the toxic waste in areas like the Ninth Ward [of New Orleans]."  
— Kate Villarreal, Community Coalition for Environmental Justice

Kate Villarreal and Yalonda Sindé, with the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice, made a trip to New Orleans last month. Using their own funds, they traveled to the flood-ravaged area because they wanted a firsthand look at the damages.

"We wanted to see what the ground efforts were and what New Orleans needed," says Villarreal. "There is a combination of players in New Orleans to reconstruct the city, but it is not entirely clear as to who the major players are."

The Community Coalition for Environmental Justice is a Seattle-based nonprofit organization that promotes environmental and economic justice in low-income communities and communities of color, says Villarreal.

The Ninth Ward is a low-income area in New Orleans with a population [that is] 70 percent Black, says Villarreal. "Today, there are less than 30 percent Blacks left, and with the elections coming up they will not have a voice."

When it comes to rebuilding the area, the survivors have demands. "They want to return to their homes and they want to see hiring come from the people who live in the area and [see workers] be paid a livable wage," says Sindé.

Instead, Halliburton has a no-bid contract and is hiring workers from South America and Mexico for cheap wages, says Sindé.

"This is all happening hastily, with very little regard for paying the workers a living wage," says Villarreal.

Workers are also operating in contaminated areas with inadequate supplies, says Linda Moore, spokesperson for Common Ground Collective, a nonprofit relief organization based in New Orleans.

"The Environmental Protection Agency is not adequately informing the public to the dangers of the toxic waste in areas like the Ninth Ward," says Villarreal.

"Environmental racism is a trend where poor communities become a hazardous-waste dump. People need to be warned of the dangers of toxic soil and sediment, and the EPA needs to assess the contamination and take the proper precautions."

Despite ongoing disorder, Villarreal and Sindé were inspired by the grassroots organizations working to improve conditions for displaced people.

SHAPE, an African-American community-based organization, has housed more than 150 people in Houston. It is a very small organization, but all donations are going directly to serving the people who are affected, says Villarreal. SHAPE is doing a lot on very little with immediate results, she adds.

In addition to organizations like SHAPE, medical clinics are providing free medication for people with HIV. A counseling center for lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transgendered persons is finding safe housing where its clients won't encounter discrimina-

tion. These organizations are run by donations from local people, says Villarreal, and they operate with virtually no overhead.

A coalition called Gulf Coast Justice is conducting a tour of the damaged areas this week. Grassroots and nonprofit leaders will come from all over the country to see firsthand what is going on and sit down and strategize, says Villarreal. "They will find ways to help low-income people and people of color make a life in New Orleans again." ■

## [Locals helping locals]

Gulf Coast community organizations that are assisting with recovery include:

SHAPE Community Center, a 37-year-old Black community-based organization that has housed 150 evacuees so far and provides a store stocked with supplies for them. They also run a vegetarian café and an alternative school. [www.shape.org](http://www.shape.org)

Montrose Counseling Center does case management for GLBT evacuees seeking housing, food, cash assistance, counseling, etc. They could use cash donations or gift cards to places like Target. [www.montrosecounseling-center.org](http://www.montrosecounseling-center.org)

Louisiana Environmental Action Network, a network of statewide grassroots organizations fighting environmental battles and providing immediate local relief work to Hurricane survivors. [www.leanweb.org](http://www.leanweb.org)

## Short Takes

### Safe Harbors: knowledge is power

A flyer generated by the homeless people's group SHARE is raising some eyebrows on the streets. The flyer's header reads, "Stop the invasion of your privacy." The flyer indicts Safe Harbors, the city-approved program being implemented as a part of the 10-year plan to end homelessness to gather information on individuals seeking services.

According to Alan Painter, head of the Human Services Department, "Information being put out [by SHARE] about Safe Harbors is inaccurate. There's no intent to follow individual homeless people. The only interest we have is getting a profile on homelessness itself, and stopping the duplications of services."

The program is asking for individuals' names, gender, date of birth, and Social Security numbers, something SHARE says people "have a fundamental, Constitutional right to refuse — especially your Social Security number — in exchange for a shelter bed for the night." Attached to the flyer is a form that allows individuals to opt out of Safe Harbors.

But Painter says the debate is over misinformation. "The information being shared through the database will not come in the form of John or Jane Doe, it will be encoded — and providers will not be able to access personal information."

The flyer goes on to say, "Safe Harbors is a sneaky, negative system." It then lists services participating currently in Safe Harbors, or planning to do so in the future.

Asked several times if SHARE thought the flyer's dissemination would dissuade people from seeking the services listed, Tent City member Lantz Rolland says only that "the system is a crock. We don't want to participate in the program, and people should know their rights."

Painter went on to say his department has heard from people on the streets whose "biggest wish is that they tell their story [to agency staff] as few times as possible. We're trying to make it easier for people access services."

SHARE has refused to partake in the collection system. ["Homeless to Housing," Oct. 12]. The city is poised to cut the organization's funding in April for 300 shelter beds for refusing to take part in the system — beds most homeless advocates and providers agree are crucial to replace in some capacity.

— Israel Bayer

### After the storm, the storm-troopers

For Seattle residents who lived through the protests against the WTO, another lesson is

emerging from the Hurricane Katrina disaster that will sound all too familiar:

New Orleans is under a military occupation that could finally pry open the door on using soldiers to police civilians — something Seattle University Professor Elizabeth Iglesias says the Bush Administration has been trying to do since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"Katrina may be the 9/11 for introduction of wholesale military policing," Iglesias told participants of a post-Katrina seminar on race and class held Saturday at the university's law school.

In early June, during the G8 summit of world leaders, the Army did door-to-door "checks" in New Brunswick, Ga., asking residents if protesters had assaulted anyone — an intimidation tactic, Iglesias said, that kept residents away from protesters.

In New Orleans, reporter Barbara Starr extolled the command of Lt. Col. Russell Honore in a CNN segment that Iglesias showed. In the clip, Honore is seen making plans for New Orleans' mayor and Louisiana's governor. The military's leadership and resources, Starr says, have led some to ask if the federal law that keeps the military out of civilian affairs should be changed.

The segment, Iglesias noted, never mentioned why the Army was in New Orleans: because 40 percent of Louisiana's National Guard is fighting "a war of choice" in Iraq. The message, she said, is that "because of this natural disaster, we need to change the law."

— Cydney Gillis



JACYN STEWART, LISA PAWLEWICZ, AND AUSON SHULTZ WERE PART OF A CROWD OF 300 PEOPLE AT A CANDLELIGHT VIGIL AT GREEN LAKE ON WEDNESDAY OCT. 26, THE DAY THREE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. MILITARY WERE KILLED IN IRAQ. THEIR DEATHS PUSHED THE NUMBER OF SERVICEMEMBERS KILLED PAST THE 2,000 MARK. AS OF NOV. 1, 2,018 MILITARY PERSONNEL HAD BEEN KILLED SINCE THE INVASION BEGAN. PHOTO BY ELLIOT STOLLER.



## Show of Strength

Crising discrimination and harassment, janitors walk for benefits, respect

"Cascadian has violated the workers' rights to organize. The janitors were making a point that they will not tolerate the kind of treatment Cascadian is practicing."

—Barb Wiley, SEIU spokeswoman

By LAURA CRUIKSHANK  
UW News Lab

Last Friday, 40 people gathered in front of the Cingular Wireless offices at Redmond Town Center to rally against what they say is discrimination, sexual harassment, and unfair labor practices from Cascadian Building Maintenance Co. With makeshift drums and noisemakers the crowd chanted "We want respect — we work hard for our money," and "Treat your workers like you should."

Sergio Salinas, president of Service Employees International Union (SEIU), made their intentions clear. "We're here today to support janitors who clean this building."

On Sept. 22 Kansaikou Darboe, a former janitor for Cascadian, was fired one day after he was observed passing out pro-union fliers to his co-workers before their shift, says SEIU spokeswoman Barb Wiley (Short Takes, Oct. 12).

On Oct. 24, SEIU filed charges against Cascadian with the National Labor Relations Board for discharging Darboe because of his protected concerted activities.

Two other charges were filed on the same date. The complaint papers read that on Sept. 22, Cascadian conducted surveillance of employees holding a union meeting outside the building on their lunch break, and that Cascadian changed the rules, forbidding three employees from eating lunch outside the building because of their pro-union activities.

On Wed., Oct. 26, six employees working for Cascadian went on strike to protest the mistreatment of janitors. They reportedly returned to work on Thursday with no repercussions.

"Cascadian has violated the workers' rights to organize," says Wiley. "The janitors were making a point that they will not tolerate the kind of treatment Cascadian is practicing."

A call to Cascadian about the strike and the charges has not been returned.

"Janitors working at Cascadian do not have family medical insurance benefits, and until last November it had been years since they had received a pay raise," says Wiley. "And because Cascadian does not pay medical benefits, pension plans, vacation, or short-term disability costs, they can undermine community standards and underbid to obtain contracts."

Despite the underbidding, Cascadian has lost two of its big contracts in the last six months, says Wiley. The Holland America Building on Queen Anne has found another maintenance company, and The Exchange building in Seattle no longer uses Cascadian's services, she says.

Speaking to the crowd Friday, Salinas said, "We are here to express our concern because we believe it's the right thing to do to raise the bar for everyone."

In addition to the discrimination and unfair labor-practice charges, two sexual-harassment complaints are pending against Cascadian, says Wiley. Charges have been filed with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In one of them, a worker complains of a five-month period of sexual harassment, including an attempted rape, by a senior co-worker. According to her testimony, the victim didn't speak to supervisors because she believed they would do nothing. Indeed, she states, when they heard about the mistreatment from other workers, supervisors failed to ask the victim about the incidents until after the harasser had been transferred. "I thought you two were in a relationship and that is why I didn't get involved," one of them told the victim, according to the testimony.

"I am tired of putting up with mistreatment. I am taking a stand because I deserve respect," said one of the plaintiffs at the rally. "Sexual harassment has got to go," chanted the crowd.

"Benefits are important for the employees of Cascadian, but what the employees want most is respect," says Wiley. ■

Esther Juarez, below, took part in a one-day strike by employees of the custodial firm Cascadian Building Maintenance at office complexes in Redmond, Bellevue, and Seattle. The janitors, seeking workplace representation, have filed a federal complaint over what they say are Cascadian's union-busting activities. Photo by Luke McGuff.



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PorchLight

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# The Sower of Parables

Through tilling the rich soil of her life, writer Octavia E. Butler pens vast fictional worlds

"Now, it seems to me that religion was the only thing that would make us act in the long term. I mean, you think about cathedrals, for instance. I'm sure they didn't know the best way to build a pyramid until suddenly they had to do it, as much for religious reasons as for political. So I think religion is probably essential for every society, but not for every individual."

Interview by ROSETTE ROYALE  
Staff Reporter

A Black woman from 1976 suddenly finds herself transported back in time to a slave plantation in pre-Civil War Maryland. A tribe of mutated people isolate themselves from humanity in hopes of saving the rest of the world from the same fate. A woman resurrected by an alien is part of a plan to people a near-dead planet with human-alien hybrids.

Welcome to the worlds of Octavia E. Butler.

A writer of 12 novels and a short story collection, Butler has carved a niche for herself in the literary world: she is often heralded as the reigning Black female science fiction writer. More than this, however, she has fashioned tales that cross genres in ways few other authors have been able to master, weaving unforgettable characters into impossible-to-put-down narratives. This ability has gained the admiration and respect of a legion of science fiction readers, though critics from numerous literary circles have also fallen under her spell: she's won two Nebula and two Hugo Awards for her fiction, she's been awarded the PEN lifetime achievement award in writing, and, in 1995, Butler received a MacArthur "genius grant."

A resident of Seattle, Butler has written a new book, *Fledgling* (Seven Stories Press, \$24.95), the tale of a young amnesiac who awakens to discover she's a 53-year old vampire who can walk in daylight. Shortly before a recent reading of her new tale at the Elliott Bay Book Co. — where a crowd of book-clutching fans awaited the chance to hear her lush baritone for themselves — Ms. Butler sat amongst

the book stacks and talked about her life and its effect on her work.

**Real Change:** A good number of your protagonists are Black women who find themselves in what have been described as "impossible" situations. So, what experiences have you had in your own life, of Black women —

**Octavia Butler:** Well, I've been one for about 58 years, so there's that.

**RC:** Do you consider that an impossible situation?

**Butler:** No. No, I seem to have managed.

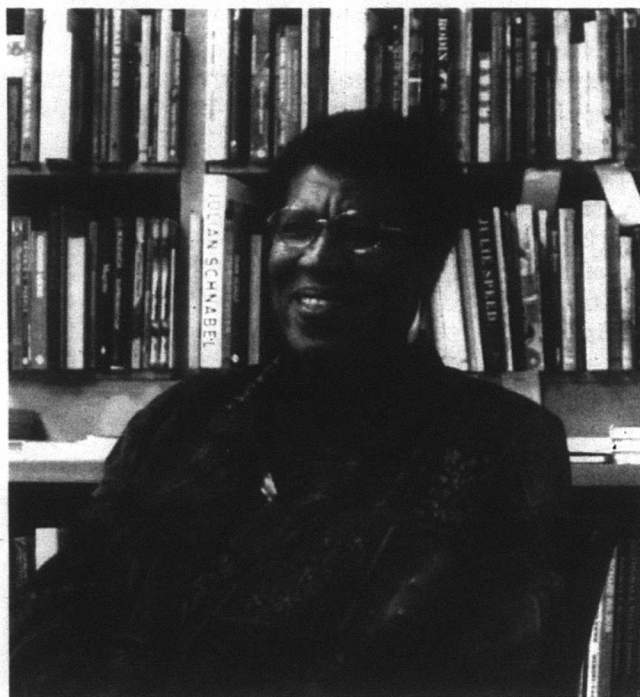
**RC:** [laughs] What of other Black women? I know you talk about your mother, how she raised you as a kid.

**Butler:** Oh yeah, my mother and my grandmother. You shouldn't really try, if you're writing, to get away from the things that meant a lot to you as you were growing up.

**RC:** What was one of the things about your mother that really impressed you when you were growing up?

**Butler:** Ohhh... well... I think I could talk about my grandmother.

**RC:** Okay, let's talk about her.



**Butler:** One of the things that impressed me most about her was that she survived. She was born in southern Louisiana in a rural area, at a time when it wasn't really a good idea to be a Black person in southern Louisiana. Unfortunately for her, her mother died when she was born, and she was raised by people who didn't really want another mouth to feed. So she wasn't treated very well. She met a man in his 40s who wasn't actually a monster, and, by goodness, they got married.

*Parable of the talents: Author Octavia E. Butler reminisces about her life. Photo by Luke McGuff.*

**RC:** And how old was she?

**Butler:** She was 12.

**RC:** She was 12?

**Butler:** Yeah, it was legal... Louisiana... [laughs]. But anyway, she of course began having children. The first few died, but eventually she had seven surviving kids. Right after she had the second one, [her husband] died. That happened to be around the beginning of the Depression, where there hadn't been very much work or very much money. Now, there was even less. So she went to California, as a domestic, and worked and



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## Continued from Previous Page

worked and worked, and had to send for her kids — she left them with friends. She eventually was able to buy a house. Once she got her kids there, of course, she had to be a day worker. Eventually, she was able to start a small business so that she wouldn't have to work for other people. She started a café, a little tearoom. She gave up the tearoom because she was an absolutely strict Baptist — no drink. Actually, my mother ran it for awhile. [My grandmother] bought some land out in the desert and set up a chicken ranch. So, I mean, here's this woman who could pretty much bring something from nothing. And she was really very admirable. Very, very, very tough lady.

**RC:** How do you know so much of your grandmother's story?

**Butler:** She was my grandmother. [laughs]

**RC:** Yes, I know, but, she told you her story?

**Butler:** No, she didn't. Our mother did. No, [my grandmother] died when I was 10, and there were a lot of things she thought were inappropriate to tell me. But my mother was her oldest daughter, so my mother kind of got all the family secrets. I don't know, I think sometimes when you have a really, really strong mother — and my mother had a very strong mother — you wind up with a daughter who isn't as strong. My mother always felt inferior, she only had about three years of schooling. But she always pushed me. She would tell me, "Get an education, or you'll be doing what I'm doing." She did day's work.

**RC:** What did you think when she was pushing you?

**Butler:** I didn't appreciate it while it was going on. What's scary now is the number of older Black people who don't encourage the kids to go ahead and get the education. So yeah, I knew she was right. I just didn't know it at the time.

**RC:** I want to talk a little bit about one of your characters, Dana, in your book *Kindred*. This is a woman who experiences slavery directly, through time travel. What led you to explore, through time travel, this notion of —

**Butler:** Well, it was pretty much the only way that I was going to have a modern-day Black person experience slavery. I wanted to work with a really horrible time in history, and put someone from today into it. I wanted this to be a book that caused people to experience the emotional side of that history. I wanted people to feel it.

**RC:** In your *Parable* series, religious themes weave in and out of the narrative. Do you think religion is crucial to our existence as humans?

**Butler:** Well, if you can show me a society that didn't have a religion, I would be very interested. Every society has two things: religion and music. You might break it into three, [with] some kind of death concept, but that usually goes into the religion. My grandmother and my mother probably wouldn't have survived if they'd had nothing at all. But they had religion, and it mattered

very deeply to them. They tried to push it on me. Didn't work.

It was important to me to show [religion] as something that the people — that my character in particular — would need as kind of a tool. The destiny of earth is predicted among the stars, that's part of the [character's] religion. Now, it seems to me that religion was the only thing that would make us

act in the long term. I mean, you think about cathedrals, for instance. I'm sure they didn't know the best way to build a pyramid until suddenly they had to do it, as much for religious reasons as for political. So I think religion is probably essential for every society, but not for every individual.

**RC:** Have you ever read any Joseph Campbell?

**Butler:** Oh yeah.

**RC:** In *The Hero with the Thousand Faces*, he describes the hero's or the heroine's journey: the breaking away from, the common world, the victory over some kind of cosmic force, and then, ultimately, a return back to his/her world with a gift or some sort of magic craft. What kind of journeys do your characters take?

**Butler:** They kind of grow up. As a matter of fact, a character in *Wild Seed* says, "Earth Seed is a dolphin." She goes on to describe it as something that we are viewing as a more mature people than we were before we came upon it.

**RC:** In your writing, how does myth inform the work that you do?

**Butler:** I read a lot. I did what I could to expose myself to a lot of different religions. I got a lot of [Joseph Campbell's] lectures talking about Buddhism. There was an interesting bit about temptation: Buddha was tempted as Christ was tempted. But Buddha had a temptation that Christ didn't have: one of his temptations was duty. "Oh, you've left your father, and your people and left your duty to them that you should be attending to

— your wife, your daughter. For shame. How dare you not go back and attempt to be things that you know should be the focus of your life." He turned away from it. I'd never thought of the possibility of duty being a temptation. Every now and then, I find something like that.

Titles are difficult for me. I mean, I really have to hunt to find titles. Dictionaries of all kinds, quotation books, religious books, you name it. I was listening one day to a tape, a self-help tape — I still like them, but it's hard to find some now that don't sound like, well, like each other, you know? It's kind of gotten canned. But there was a time when it wasn't. Every now and then, when I got really depressed, I'd put the tapes on. [The speaker] began to talk about the Parable of the Sower, and I thought, "Wow, I remember that." I mean, I was the kid who used to read the Bible because I liked it. I like the King James version. I have this American Standard version that I would read to figure out what the heck they were talking about. But the King James version was for poetry. Anyway, I went back and I read the Parable of the Sower, and I thought, "That's perfect!" So that's a really 'round-the-block way of answering your question.

**RC:** That's all right. There are a lot of 'round-the-blocks in life.

**Butler:** It's 7:25 now. We should probably wrap it up.

**RC:** One more question, and then that's it.

**Butler:** I'll try to answer it in less than half an hour!

**RC:** [laughs] So, you're considered a science fiction writer —

**Butler:** By whom?

**RC:** [laughs] People *do* consider you a science fiction writer. But what do you consider yourself?

**Butler:** A writer.

**RC:** Just a writer?

**Butler:** Mm-hmm. I don't worry so much about labels because I can't stop people from sticking them on me. It doesn't really matter what I write. They're going to call it what they want to anyway. ■

### [Reading]

Octavia E. Butler reads from and signs *Fledgling* on Nov. 7 at 7 p.m. at the University Bookstore, 4326 University Way N.E.

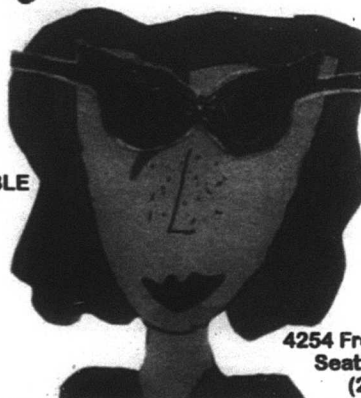
## The Girl Inside

I am a happy girl jumping up and down  
I am somebody who doesn't eat any of her vegetables  
I am lightning and thunder  
I am an empty room  
I am a whole bunch of kids throwing rocks at another kid  
I am a parent holding her baby for the first time  
I am a contorted face that only sees red and black  
I am the ugliest wallpaper in the prettiest house  
I am the most interesting book cover  
I am a girl teasing a guy  
I am somebody crying with her face all red and bunched up  
I am the girl that doesn't show her feelings on the outside

—AMELIE

(The author is a 17-year old and is part of the pongo teen publishing project.)

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# Reading Jesse Helms Fairly. (Or, at least, trying to.)

Jesse Helms acknowledges having a racist reputation but denies the charge, citing the indelible inclusive influence of his father. I think he genuinely believes his disclaimer, but the malign influence of his southern constituency and culture is certainly apparent in his criticisms of Dr. King.

**Here's Where I Stand: A Memoir**  
by **Jesse Helms**  
Foreword by Senator Bill Frist  
Random House, 2005  
Hardcover, 336 pages, \$24.95  
Reviewed by **LLOYD J. AVERILL**  
Contributing Writer

**W**hen the late liberal Democrat Paul Wellstone first went to Washington to represent Minnesota in the U.S. Senate, he said publicly that whatever North Carolina's Republican Sen. Jesse Helms was for, he would be against.

When I first picked up the Helms autobiography in preparation for this review, my preliminary estimate was exactly the same. I was prepared to dislike everything I would read from the prototypical right-wing hardliner. But I immediately realized that that was no posture for a reasonably even-handed assessment, so I was determined to try to separate the living, breathing human being from what Wellstone called Helms' "awful politics."

That determination was rewarded. Jesse Helms is a far more complex person than I was willing to concede. He is a prime example of the Southern Gentleman: capable of a gracious generosity that often softens his personal judgments about his political adversaries. That was true not only in the case of Wellstone but of Hubert Humphrey ("I loved Hubert Humphrey... and told him so"); of Robert Byrd ("the most effective member of the U.S. Senate" and

"always a man of his word"); of Joseph Biden ("Joe and I knew we could trust each other") and even of Sen. Hillary Clinton ("I was concerned that we might have some problems, but I was determined to do my part—and it was soon clear that she was determined to be collegial as well").

My suspension of judgment lasted intermittently through several chapters, but collapsed entirely in the chapter entitled "Hot-Button Issues," in which the gracious "Southern Gentleman" appears nakedly as a rigid right-wing ideologue. The issues were entirely predictable: the divine mission for America, school prayer, the notion of a "Christian" America, abortion, the Panama Canal "giveaway," "liberal bias" in the media, denial of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, homophobia. Only on the issue of support for AIDS-prevention funding for Africa does Helms describe a change of heart, partly influenced by contact with U2 lead singer Bono.

Significantly, the following chapter he entitled "Race Relations," a gentler way of saying racism. Helms acknowledges having a racist reputation but denies the charge, citing the indelible inclusive influence of his father. I think he genuinely believes his disclaimer, but the malign influence of his southern constituency and culture is certainly apparent in his criticisms of Dr. King.

It does no violence to Helms's views to insist that a misunderstanding of both liberalism and of conservatism are faults that lie at the root of what is most

unacceptable in his politics. He thinks that liberals believe government is the answer, while as a conservative he believes that government is the problem. Both formulations are false, and his mistake about liberalism leads to the distortions of his conservatism.

At the root of both errors is a failure to appreciate the nature of the society we inhabit. Helms seems to view life still as the simple agrarian world of his childhood, where individual initiative and hard work, aided by the support of a relatively close community, promised success. He seems not to understand that we now live in a complex, fractured, anonymous culture in which reciprocal interpersonal supports rarely exist and where, instead, structured, government-sponsored resources are critically required to complement an individual's natural strengths. He seems to have no awareness of the influence of human sin, ably augmented by competitive greed and by the systemic injustices of market capitalism. If those forces are not to reward predation and destroy opportunity, they require impartial regulation by governmental agencies — bureaucracies — that are themselves subject to review.

Which is to say that, in the incredibly complex society in which we live, a proactive government is neither the answer nor the problem. To paraphrase Reinhold Niebuhr, the human capacity for justice makes government possible; the human inclination to injustice makes government necessary. Pace, Jesse Helms! ■

*Lloyd J. Averill is an emeritus faculty member of the UW School of Social Work.*

## What Lies Beneath

**The Squid and the Whale**  
Written and Directed by **Noah Baumbach**  
Opens Nov. 4.

By **LESTER GRAY**  
Arts Editor

**I**n *The Squid and the Whale*, Bernard Berkman (Jeff Daniels) is a fraud whose patriarchal delusions have been indulged due to fluky (given his middling intellect) critical and commercial success as an author. As Bernard's marginal talent is made apparent, his evaporating celebrity and income become blunt instruments of unanesthetized castration.

His position as an English professor provides a last bastion of glory. Here he retains status as a published author. However, as his off-campus capital as a literary figure is devalued, even this heretofore safe haven is threatened by his desperate ego.

Joan, his wife of almost two decades, played by Laura Linney, has been a willing codependent to this dysfunctional behavior. Also a writer and once mentored by her husband, she is beginning to eclipse him in their shared profession. Attracting attention in literary circles, she buds; he wilts on the vine. She needs him less. He needs her more.

This simultaneous turn of fortune reveals an entwinement of zero-sum dynamics, where the success of one spouse corresponds to the failure of the other. That they are so cruelly victimized by their own hand is the paradox proposed by author and director Noah Baumbach.

This seismic shift exposes the family's fault lines: baring egos, stirring up the sediment of past transgressions, and

opening wide crevices into which the couple's two sons inevitably fall.

Walt (Jesse Eisenberg), 16, is in high school. His brother, Frank (Owen Kline), at 12 is four years his junior. While there are hints the boys may have once enjoyed a bit of quality attention, it is long since they have enjoyed any semblance of security, emotional or otherwise. They are puppets and pawns.

The formal announcement of a marital separation gives shape to the young men's fears, while granting mom and dad a license to even further indulge their own self-centered and gratuitous behavior.

Dad tries to seduce his student. Mom seduces the tennis instructor. Walt, using his dad's behavior as a model, decides to go after his girlfriend's psyche. And Frank, working from the skimpiest of clues, turns to primitive instinct and announces his arrival into puberty by marking his territory.

Bernard's character is designed and rendered with a skill that allows him to be ridiculous yet credible. He may be seen as pitiful or enraging. But there is one thing that is indisputable, whether intended or not by Baumbach: Bernard has been a schmuck for all of his life. His personality is not a recent phenomenon. As such, the repressed contempt that righteously seethes in his wife, when the relationship is no longer advantageous or of material benefit, is not about his integrity but hers.

While *The Squid and the Whale* is a heady film, it's accessible. You can just let it come to you. If you would like to turn it upside-down and sideways for examination, that works too.

This film rides on the spirit of naked examination. It appeals to the sadistic side of our character: a voyeuristic fascination with animals caught in a maze. So don't tell people you enjoyed the film; tell them that it was stimulating and thought-provoking. Noah Baumbach, however, knows the real truth. ■

*While *The Squid and the Whale* is a heady film, it's accessible. You can just let it come to you. If you would like to turn it upside-down and sideways for examination, that works too.*

*Jeff Daniels and Laura Linney play a husband and wife on the outs in *The Squid and the Whale*.*



Adventures  
in Irony



Dr. Wes Browning

In the future, we can look forward to a local sausage company using money to make their interest coincide with the interest of our Seattle Public Utilities. Then we will all be able to enjoy pepperoni-smelling water, straight from the tap. The free market marches on!

## Hey, Man, Smell my Finger™

While the rest of you have been contemplating Harriet Miers' excellent career decision and Scooter Libby's pending trial, I've been mulling over a little news story that CNN carried in its "offbeat" news category. A court in the European Union had denied someone the right to trademark the smell of strawberries.

What caught my attention about the story was that the court did not say that you can't trademark smells. What the court said is that there is no one smell of strawberries. The court implied that the petitioner might later trademark one particular smell arising from strawberries.

Just so you don't think it's never going to happen, the story goes on to say that some Dutch perfume company has registered the "fresh cut grass" smell, and uses it to make tennis balls smell good.

What the EU court actually said was, "The olfactory memory is probably the most reliable memory that humans possess. Consequently, economic operators have a clear interest in using olfactory signs to identify their goods." So the Dutch company was really olfactorily signing, sort of like what dogs do when they pee on trees, only they're doing it on tennis balls, and they get exclusive use of their sign.

Of course, if companies can do it because they have a clear interest to identify their goods, who's to say a dog owner can't do it, having a clear interest to protect the clear interest of their charge? So someday a dog owner may, acting as a guardian, trademark his dog's sign.

What I'm focusing in on here is this clear interest business. Hey, maybe I have a clear interest to buy tennis balls that haven't been marked by some perfume company. Who's going to protect my clear interest when the day comes that every tennis ball has to stink of some corporation or other?

And don't think it will only be tennis balls. Sure, not everyone plays tennis. I don't. But I wear T-shirts. We've already lived through an age in which all T-shirts had to have a message and/or a brand. Well, brace yourself: in the future, all your T-shirts will also smell of a brand!

Oh, you'll have choices. You won't have to choose between "fresh cut grass" and "grass gone to seed." There will also probably be smells like strawberry A, strawberry B, strawberry C, Old Spice, refried pinto beans, roasted garlic, Chanel No. 5, horse sweat, Tabasco, and white chocolate — depending on the company that's sucking up your money.

It's all a natural progression. It's in the clear interest of businesses to sell you what you thought you already had. And the courts give businesses all the rights that are in their clear interest, because they never consider that the rest of us may have legitimate competing interests — like an interest in being able to play tennis or get dressed without having our nostrils assaulted by inappropriate smells that we could whiff any other time, thank you.

It happens all the time. When was the last time you were about to purchase a snack or sweet beverage, and you checked the ingredients to be sure that the product contained corn syrup, because you just had to have corn syrup at that moment? I'll bet never. You have never had a jones for corn syrup. So why is it in everything? Because somebody had a clear interest in putting it there and you weren't consulted.

Somebody had a clear interest in branding the baseball stadium in this town. It happens that somebody was Safeco and they had the money to make their interest coincide with the city's. So we have Safeco Field.

In the future, we can look forward to a local sausage company using money to make their interest coincide with the interest of our Seattle Public Utilities. Then we will all be able to enjoy pepperoni-smelling water, straight from the tap.

The free market marches on! Smell its boots! ■



### REAL-LIFE ANSWERS TO YOUR LEGAL HASSLES

**M**y girlfriend left me and now she won't let me see my child. I signed a paternity affidavit. What do I do?

According to attorney Jennie Laird at Seattle Divorce Services, an unmarried parent may be able to gain legal rights to see his or her child if the other parent is refusing to allow visitation. However, if the parent is the father, paternity must be established first. "Paternity" simply means identifying, in a legal form that the courts would recognize, a child's father. In next month's article, we will discuss what to do if you do not have a paternity affidavit, or if you are not the biological father.

Generally, when unmarried parents have a baby at the hospital, they will be offered a statement to sign, called a paternity affidavit. This is an official document which states the name of the father of the child and therefore establishes legal paternity.

If you signed a paternity affidavit when your child was born, you are the legal father. To enforce your rights, you will need a copy of this affidavit. You may check if you signed an affidavit and get a copy, for a fee, by contacting the Washington State Department of Health.

Answers are intended for general information only and are not intended to take the advice of your own attorney. Ask a lawyer is in partnership with the Access to Justice Institute, Seattle University School of Law and the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Got a question? E-mail: atji@seattleu.edu.

If you have a paternity affidavit, you may then file a petition with the court to establish a parenting plan in order to get specific visitation with your child. A parenting plan states when each parent is to see the child and protects each parent's right to see the child during those times. If you are the mother, and it is the child's legal father who is refusing to allow you to see the child, you could also file a petition to establish a parenting plan.

If there is a paternity affidavit on file but no parenting plan, the father has no legal right to specific times and days for visitation. If the parents can communicate with each other amicably, they could try to work out a visitation schedule, either by speaking with each other about it or by communicating through a third party such as a mutual friend or a family member. An informal visitation agreement should generally be made into a court-ordered parenting plan, so that both parents have a legal right to a specific time with their child.

For more information on parenting disputes and paternity actions:

[www.washingtonlawhelp.org](http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org) or [www.courts.wa.gov/forms/](http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/) or

[www1.dshs.wa.gov/dcs/parents.shtml](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/dcs/parents.shtml). Or contact Northwest Justice Project for information on legal services for non-criminal matters: [www.nwjustice.org](http://www.nwjustice.org), (206) 464-1519, or 1-888-201-1014. ■



### Sat., Oct. 15, 11:02 a.m., Queen

**Anne Ave N., Dick's Drive-In.** The manager of Dick's advised officers on bike patrol that there was a transient white male sitting on the side of the building. They made contact with the suspect, who is well known to the officers, and they advised him that he was sitting on Dick's property, and was not allowed to be there. They ran his information through the police computer, and found 2 active previous trespass admonishments for Dick's. He was arrested, a new trespass admonishment was issued, and he was then booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

### Sat., Oct. 15, 3:21 p.m., Denny

**Way/Warren Ave.** Complainant called 911 to report that the subject, a transient Black male aged 53, was in the middle of Denny Way with a shopping cart. Officers arrived to find the man in the roadway. He was walking down the center of Denny Way, disregarding vehicles passing him, and was in danger of being struck, showing no concern for his safety. Officers moved him to the sidewalk and moved his shopping cart out of the middle of the road. Subject stated that another witness had ordered him to move it into the road. This witness, a woman dressed as a tiger, was standing on the corner promoting her costume company. She stated she had seen him in the road, but had not told him to go there. The man, along with his cart of belongings, was taken to Harborview Medical Center for a mental health evaluation.

### Sat., Oct. 15, 11:22 p.m. Third Ave.,

**City Hall Park.** Officers contacted the suspect in the park during the hours the park was closed. Suspect, a transient Black female aged 46, was concealing an open can of beer. At first she gave officers a false name, but then admitted her real name, and stated that she had been trespassed from the park previously. This was confirmed, and she was issued a new trespass admonishment, and booked into King County Jail for trespass and an open container of liquor.

### Sun., Oct. 16, 4:33 p.m., Alaskan

**Way.** Officer awoke six people sleeping on a loading dock clearly marked "No Trespassing/Litering." Five of the sleepers were adult males; the sixth was a minor: a transient white female aged 16. She had no ID on her person, and gave officers her name verbally. She said she had been kicked out of Teen Hope, and was waiting to get into Cocoon House. Officers attempted to contact her mother, but there was no reply at the number provided. She was transported to the Spruce St. Youth Facility.

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.

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*How hard it is for those who have wealth  
to enter the Kingdom of God! Indeed it is  
easier for a camel to go through the eye of  
a needle than for someone who is rich to  
enter Kingdom of God.*

— Luke 18:24-25

SO WE HAVE TO ASK, FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR SOULS:  
SHOULDN'T TAXES BE SUBSTANTIALLY RAISED FOR THOSE WHO  
ARE SHARING-IMPAIRED (I.E., THOSE WHO HAVE WEALTH)?



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United Church  
Of Christ**  
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Worship Sunday 10:30

## Letters

[editor@realchangenews.org](mailto:editor@realchangenews.org)

### Akbar: Justice Served?

Dear Real Change,

What are you thinking re. "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost" (Oct. 19)?

I cannot think of a more sorry excuse for a parent, and none of this appears to be part of the story: the responsibility of a parent. It's a little late to be helping his son. How do the parents of his son's victims feel? Do they think justice is being served? I am not for the death penalty, but this appears to be one very good candidate.

Can we hear how justice is being served, and the effects of this sorry excuse for a person is having on his victims' families? Is the good Mr. Akbar apologizing to the victims?

The religious overtones of your article and yet another Black vs. white article has convinced me that this is my last purchase of your newspaper. I will still support the individual vendors, but in this case they get the full dollar.

Henry Fielding  
Seattle

**RC replies:** While judging Sgt. Hassan Akbar is a matter we'll leave to the courts, it seems clear that what he did was wrong. That's not, however, what the story was about. When we dismiss Akbar as simply being a monster, without history or family, we miss the opportunity to learn how racism shapes our world. This article wasn't about Black versus white. It was about how race hatred is a sickness that can't always be controlled. We're sorry to lose you as a reader, but the story of Mr. Akbar and his son was one that needed to be told.

Real Change welcomes letters to the editor of up to 250 words in length. Please include name, address, phone number, and email for author verification. Letters should be addressed to Editor at Real Change, 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA, 98121, or emailed to [editor@realchangenews.org](mailto:editor@realchangenews.org).

## The Budget Debacle

There's a single, green, transparent, twelve ounce, bottle of "Madame Pearl's" cough syrup placed empty, upon a blank, voter registration form aligned carefully near the entrance to San Francisco's City Hall. Inside the exalted rotunda an older Asian man sits quietly holding his cardboard sign, "Don't Cut Senior Services." The chambers are intense this day as animated city residents vigil holding signs high; "People Not Profit," "Immigration is Not a Crime." The Mayor's backlash budget is presented by the Board of Supervisors. Ravenous hyena laughter of insurgent corporate interests is audible amid the face squint from media glare. How is it right for the richest people to give less because they have more. While we the good enough people are suckers for higher express bus fares fewer human services. Our wages if any rise and fall like the consumer defamation index. Although the corporate sector proclaims billions in profit dictates even the terms for keeping score. The cost of Have-A-Nice-Day bread now is half the minimum wage. So coffee, milk, and tea, can become luxury items like full employment equal justice. Multicultural economic human rights for us all.

—LARRY EBERSOLE

## CLASSIFIED

### Opportunity

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### Events

**Benefit Concert for Housing Justice.** Sun., Nov. 6, 2 p.m. Children of the Revolution, Andre Feranti, Geoffrey Castle, Jeanette Alexandra. Broadway Performance Hall. Tickets available online, [www.paperhousescd.org](http://www.paperhousescd.org). Proceeds Support the Tenants Union.

**Phinney Neighbors for Peace and Justice** presents our sixth series of community forums at the Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, N 70th St. & Greenwood Ave. N, Seattle. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. — Forum begins at 7 p.m., Wed, Nov. 16, *Is Iran Next? History, Politics, and 70 Million People in U.S. Gunsights.*

Real Change classifieds are a way to reach 30,000 loyal readers. Call 441-3247, or email [classified@realchangenews.org](mailto:classified@realchangenews.org).



# Calendar

## This Week's Top Ten

### Wednesday 11/2

**Margaret Cho**, often called the Richard Pryor of her generation and Bush's worst nightmare, presents her new book *I Have Chosen to Stay and Fight*, an angry and funny call to arms about civil rights, gay rights, racism, and the death penalty. Tickets free upon request. 7:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St., (206)624-6600.

### Thursday 11/3

Palestinian Ayed Morrar and Israeli Jonathan Pollak are friends and leaders in the Palestinian-led and Israeli-supported nonviolent resistance against Israel's military occupation. Coming to Seattle to discuss their ongoing efforts, the men will share true accounts of their protests and imprisonments. 7 p.m., University of Washington, Gowan Hall, Room 301.

Winner of the 2002 Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Scotland, the play *Black to My Roots* explores African-Americans' collective relationship with "hair" and uses hair as a metaphor for life. Tickets \$12 and up. 7:30 p.m., Rainier Valley Cultural Center, 3515 S. Alaska St.

### The END of SUBURBIA

The **Seattle Environmental Film Festival** presents poignant and educational films focusing on art, nature, and environmental issues affecting us all. Films include *The End of Suburbia*, *Living with Wolves*, *Oil on Ice*, and *Taken for a Ride*. Tickets \$8 and up. Friday Nov. 4 and Sat. Nov. 5, Broadway Performance Hall, 1625 Broadway. Info and show times: [www.hazelfilm.org](http://www.hazelfilm.org).

### Friday 11/4

The haunting true story of 350 kidnapped, raped, and murdered young women in Juárez, Mexico, *Señorita Extraviada* is an investigative film that unravels the layers of complexity in a society and government that allowed these inhuman acts. 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Place. Info: [wfnf@bridgings.org](mailto:wfnf@bridgings.org)

### Saturday 11/5

The **Hmong New Year's Celebration** salutes the culture that began in the mountains of Thailand and Laos. The festivities include hands-on exhibits, embroidery, basket weaving, leaf blowing, photo and artifact shows, clothing, music, and food. Noon - 6 p.m., Seattle Center, 305 Harrison St.

### Monday 11/7

Jennifer Harbury's investigation into torture began when her husband disappeared in Guatemala, was tortured, and murdered. Her book, *Truth, Torture*

and the American Way: *The History and Consequences of U.S. Involvement in Torture*, examines U.S. policy abroad, showing that the use of torture is widespread, illegal, and ineffective. Using her Harvard Law School training, she shows legal avenues for convicting those guilty of these brutal acts. 7 p.m., University Book Store, 4326 University Way NE, (206)634-3400.

### Tuesday 11/8

Are Americans complicity allowing an ongoing global slaughter? Ward Churchill discusses his book, *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens: Consequences of American Conquest and Carnage*, which examines past and current U.S. policies on genocide, colonization, and racism, and the role activists are (or aren't) playing to stop the carnage. 7:30 p.m., Shoreline Community College, Gymnasium, 16101 Greenwood Ave. N.

Pasuk Pongpaichit, University of Washington Professor of Economics, delivers his lecture "Corporate Corruption, Conflict of Interest, Crime: Local Complexities and Global Connections." Once upon a time, thwarting bad people and companies

was easy: bad people made money and better laws stopped them. In a new global culture where capitalism reigns triumphant, how do we distinguish between a legitimate super-profit company and a crime or a conflict of interest? 6:30 p.m., University of Washington, Kane Hall 210.

### Through Sunday 11/19

John Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, about migrant farm workers during the Great Depression, is transformed into a majestic play in Frank Galati's adaptation. Combining social activism and spiritual urgency, the play stands as a tribute to human dignity and the profound strength of the human spirit in severe adversity. Tickets \$42 and up. Intiman Theatre, 201 Mercer St., [www.intiman.org](http://www.intiman.org).

Calendar compiled by Dena Burke. Have a suggestion for an event? Email it to [calendar@realchangeews.org](mailto:calendar@realchangeews.org).

## Director's Corner



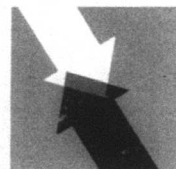
This week, *Real Change* celebrates 11 years of publication with a party for us and about 450 of our closest friends, including elected officials, nonprofit, church, and labor leaders, and numerous long-time supporters.

In 1994, there were about 4,500 homeless people in Seattle, with about 2,000 shelter beds available. Now, that number has nearly doubled, and we still have about half the shelter beds we need to meet demand. Shelter has expanded to meet increasing need, but the root causes — low wages and expensive housing — haven't changed. Now the theory is that increased resources for services will end homelessness. So long as shelter remains available, more services can't hurt.

When *Real Change* started, we were part of a grassroots challenge to homelessness. Operation Homestead was claiming abandoned buildings for the poor. SHARE was already doing Tent Cities to offer safety to those camped out doors. Seattle's anti-homeless civility laws were being actively challenged.

We don't see so much of that anymore. I kind of miss it. The best thing we ever did was to kick Nordstrom's ass over using low-income housing dollars to subsidize their damn parking garage.

About three years ago, during our re-opening ceremony after a remodel, Peter Steinbrueck congratulated us on our success, but warned us to not become too complacent. That was good advice. Our aim, like the city's, is to end homelessness. But our means should be more insurgent. Something to think about.



## First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

## Spend Surplus on All of Us

**Issue:** In proposing his 2006 budget, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels recently announced a \$55 million revenue surplus. Of this, \$17 million is unrestricted and could be used to meet human needs.

**Background:** Given the painful cuts to human services made over the last few years, and the fact that the need for food, shelter, and other services has increased, the Seattle City Council should allocate just over \$2 million to restore and shore up Seattle's network of human services to restore past cuts.

Policy advocacy and systems support: Advocacy and support services are a good investment for the city. They leverage state and federal resources and increase the help that's available to Seattle residents — while costing the city very little for what it gets in return.

CASA Latina Day Workers' Center: The jobs that immigrant laborers obtain can make the difference between dependence on emergency services and independence.

Increase funds for human services and health clinics so they can continue to meet community needs as inflation rises. This will help ensure that service providers don't have to choose to see fewer people.

Expand supportive services to help people exit homelessness without reducing the city's contracted shelter or transitional beds. The City is likely to end funding for the least expensive shelters at the same time it commits to funding "enhanced shelter" over just a mat on the floor. Both these policy decisions mean it will cost more money to provide the same number of places for people to go at night. The City should increase funding to avoid cutting any beds. Expand the safety net by supporting the following programs:

**Shared Food Transportation:** This program gets food from central locations out into the communities that need it. Additional funds are needed to meet rising gas prices.

**Seattle Employee Food Fund:** Replace funds from this program that the city recently ended that provides money for foodbanks to join together to buy food in bulk to feed more people.

**Food Security:** Allocate funds to create a grocery delivery service for seniors and disabled housing residents.

**2-1-1 system:** Fund this referral system to make human services more accessible and efficient.

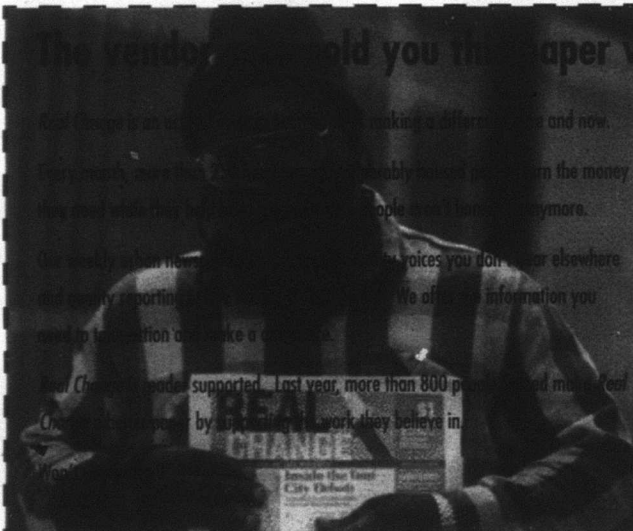
**Architectural assistance to non-profit agencies:** Restore the Mayor's proposed cut to this program that allows non-profits to do much needed capital projects.

**Transportation for working families:** Provide start up funds for the Fremont Public Association's Community Garage to provide car repair at cost for low-income working families.

**Support the Mayor's proposed \$1 million in operating funds for the new downtown homeless service center and \$295,000 for human services urgently needed in the South Park community.**

**Action:** Tell the City Council to invest in people first and support the \$2.07 million human services package.

We've made it easy for you by setting up an online advocacy campaign. Just visit [www.realchange-ews.org](http://www.realchange-ews.org) to send your message now. You can also help by attending the City budget hearing on Nov. 3 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. Come and testify or just come show your support.



The vendor told you the paper works. So does *Real Change*.

*Real Change* is an award-winning newspaper making a difference here and now. Last year, more than 2 million people were probably passed up when the money they need while they look for a job or when people aren't home anymore.

We report when news is breaking, the prices you don't hear elsewhere and equity reporting that makes a difference. We offer the information you need to take action and make a difference.

*Real Change* is reader supported. Last year, more than 800 people helped make *Real Change* what it is today by supporting the work they believe in.

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Make checks to *Real Change* and mail to 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121, or use our secure online giving option at [realchangenews.org](http://realchangenews.org). *Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project* is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.



# Mockingbird Times

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



November 2005

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak Out Across the Nation

Volume V, Issue 11

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

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## Mockingbird Meets Mayor

MISTY LOU COOK

Some of our own *Mockingbird Times* Reporters recently met with Mayor Nickels to discuss the city's "10-Year-Plan" to end homelessness. Nickels was focused on giving every age bracket equal opportunities and was surprisingly open to what *The Mockingbird Times* had to say in regards to helping the homeless people of Seattle. Anthony Guess, Echo Speed and I represented the young writers at the *Mockingbird Times* while Jim Theofelis and Najja Morris supported our questions and emphasized the importance of helping this city's marginalized youth.

Guess asked concrete questions about the foster care system and what Mayor Nickels was doing to help kids who were "aging out" of foster care. Presently, "aging out" is when youth in foster care reach the age of 18 and have earned their GED or High School Diploma. After this, they lose all state support, and, in many cases, end up homeless/ on the streets and have no idea where to turn to for basic needs. Mayor Nickels seemed shocked to learn the truth about "aging out" and Mockingbird Society's Jim Theofelis was quick to introduce a solution to this problem: having full state support after foster youth graduate from High School/earn their GED, up until the age of 21. State support includes basic funding for clothes, hygiene products,

medical insurance, housing costs, food and other essentials necessary for a good foundation.

I asked Mayor Nickels to tell us what his understanding was of why youth generally become homeless and what he was doing to ensure the protection of these homeless youth. He replied that he knew there were various reasons that youth became homeless, but that he'd like to gain a better understanding of the reasons why. We all agreed that if the city could understand why youth became homeless, we could use our resources more effectively to prevent and end homelessness altogether. When we looked at preventative measures for his "10-Year-Plan" to end homelessness, I emphasized the importance of the Mockingbird Model (explained in the July issue of the *Mockingbird Times*). I related that, in my seven years of being on and off the streets, about half of the youth I met had "aged out" of the foster care system and the other half I had met were queer (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited, etc) youth who were kicked out of their homes. I told him that a large part of preventing homelessness was to



Seattle Mayor Nickels talks with MBT Reporter Anthony Guess

give youth a positive environment in which they could grow and be comfortable being themselves, and that the Mockingbird Model kept families together and was supportive to both youth and foster parents; building community and preventing homelessness. I related my own experience, to put a face to these statistics and Mayor Nickels seemed equally concerned after hearing this information.

It was pretty incredible to meet and speak with the Mayor of Seattle. We all felt positive about our visit with Mayor Nickels. We felt that he genuinely listened to our solutions in preventing youth homelessness here in Seattle, and really valued our experiences and perspectives.



Jim Theofelis, Najja Morris, Misty Lou Cook, Mayor Greg Nickels, Echo Speed and Anthony Guess

## Remember Us!

United Way is conducting their annual campaign during September-December. Please remember that you can designate that your donation to United Way be directed to the Mockingbird Society. Thanks for all your continued support.

## One Picture of Homelessness

COURTNEY KONIETZKO



On 45<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> in the University District of Seattle, there was a 10-year-old mural that was painted by street-involved youth that is now being repainted by street-involved youth because of it being vandalized by someone with a can of spray paint. It sucks when people vandalize something with that much meaning behind it. Channeling skills and feelings onto a blank overpass or a sketch pad is much more productive. The old mural represented homelessness to a point because there is a church behind the mural that gave shelter space to homeless youth and on the mural at the leftmost corner there is a painting of people's hands of all colors raised in the air underneath an archway with the words on the arch being, "in the shelter the people."

The wall where the old mural was painted, and the new one was created, is owned by the University Congregational Church. The church paid the youth who worked on the new mural a stipend. Art is valuable. People's time is valuable. The Metro Bus system also agreed to take down the glass in the bus shelter at this intersection to make the mural more visible. One of the most striking images is of a person's face painted in black with a beige cube around it, smack in the center of the bus shelter.

People's visions are important and working together on a group project can be a daunting task, but judging from what I saw by looking at the finished product, there was great communication to create this new mural. The picture doesn't do the mural justice because in order to see the fine details you actually have to go see it. So if you live in Seattle check it out! It is great! I didn't want to get hit by a car; that is why the photo only covers a portion of the mural. There are many murals within the big mural where you can see people put their personal touches to the project. There is Santa Claus, and Scooby Doo, and a heart with a music note inside of it.

The mural project was collaboration between the Sanctuary Arts Center, street-involved youth, and Jeffrey, the mural's lead artist and mentor. Leslie Bourgoin of the Sanctuary Arts Center (SAC) put an ad on Craigslist and it received over twenty responses. Three people were interviewed and Jeffrey was the winner because he is part of the local community and has experience working with organized teams of people to create art. Jeffrey is a sculptural artist who works with metal and creates cities at Burning Man, a yearly festival held in the burning Black Rock Desert of Nevada where people come to create community and build art installations and create their own city which is burned down at the end. It really is an amazing event ([www.burningman.com](http://www.burningman.com)). There couldn't have been a better pick of an artist to help create this new mural. With Jeffrey's eye, experience, and the mutual enthusiasm between Jeffrey, SAC, and the youth, the new mural was completed in record time - 2 weeks. Miranda, a participant in the mural project, said about

MURAL Continued on Page 3



## Letter from the Editor

JIM  
THEOFELIS



As usual, November is a very busy month for Mockingbird Society and especially the youth involved in our Youth LEAD program. Several Mockingbird youth and staff will be attending the national *It's My Life* conference in Baltimore this month. Mockingbird will be presenting two workshops at the conference. Our youth will be facilitating a workshop focusing on their experiences with advocacy and leadership development through their participation with the *Mockingbird Times*, our Speakers' Panel, and the ASK-Y coalition. Degale Cooper (foster parent) and I will be facilitating a workshop focusing on the success and replication of the Mockingbird Family Model. This is a special opportunity for the youth to fly across the country, stay in a fancy hotel and see some of the sites in Washington, D.C. Special thanks to Casey Family Programs for sponsoring the conference and supporting our participation. Also this month, Mockingbird Society has completed a short documentary that we have been working on for several months, in partnership with Wild Geese Productions. It is a compelling look at the issues facing the children and adolescents in foster/kinship care as

well as the solutions and programs sponsored by Mockingbird Society. Several youth are featured throughout the video, and of course they are amazing. We will have a premier showing at our annual fund raiser on the evening of March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006. This event includes a Silent Auction and we are hoping you will help us procure items for the auction and of course, attend the event. More details to follow. November is also a month of holidays, including Thanksgiving and Veterans' Day. This month, I invite you to be mindful of the many blessings we have while also remembering those who are less fortunate but just as deserving. Also, independent of your feelings about the war, I hope you join me in sending our deepest gratitude and highest hopes for a safe return to all those men and women serving in uniform—many just kids themselves (at least when they left) who are away from their families and loved ones. Finally, I close by offering my admiration and deepest appreciation for the life of Mrs. Rosa Parks who had "enough," and by sitting down actually stood up for all Americans. Her single act of courage sparked the Civil Rights movement that brought a young Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to the forefront of American life and ultimately changed an entire nation and indeed the world. Thank you Mrs. Parks! May she rest in peace!

*Jim Theofelis*

Jim Theofelis

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

### PLEASE REMEMBER TO VOTE ON NOV. 8!

Your voice does count! Don't let the thought of it being too hard to do get in the way!

1. Bring your ID with you to the polls.
2. If you vote by absentee ballot make sure you mail it in on time.
3. If you don't know where your poll is go to <https://www.metrokc.gov/elections/pollingplace/voterlookup.aspx> to find it.
4. Do your research before going to the polls! Go to <http://www.metrokc.gov/elections/2005Nov/votersguide.htm>

Also look into other media sources because the more you read the better informed you will be to make a choice.

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 40,000 copies being distributed across Washington State and the U.S.A. through a private distribution list and as an insert in Real Change, a Seattle-based community newspaper. 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 2005 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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Please fill out and mail this form with a check or money order payable to: The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave South Suite 240, Seattle WA 98144

## Letter to the Editor

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find a check for \$250 that we are contributing to your organization. We are pleased to make this donation on behalf of Najja Taylor from your organization who recently spoke at our National Community Voice Mail conference.

We appreciate the work that your organization does and found the discussions provided during our conference inspirational.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Brandon  
Executive Director

## Mockingbird Society: The Story Behind the Name

The 1962 American classic *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee is the inspiration for our name, Mockingbird Society. Atticus, the widowed father of Jem and Scout, joins Miss Maudie in teaching his kids that it's a sin to kill a mockingbird because "...Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for

us." What if we created an organization, a community, indeed a world in which our most vulnerable children and youth were protected and valued with the same commitment that Atticus had for mockingbirds? Join the Mockingbird Society today and help us give young people a safe place to nest and sing.

## Thank You's

Ms. Florence Manos; Tammy Clapp; Kevin and Rena O'Brien; Jennifer Brandon; Ruth Williams; Muir Public Relations; Lisa Dobson Gould, Attorney; Chris Marsh, Attorney; Greg Nickels, Seattle Mayor; Rollie Munger, Moss Adams LLC; Dean Robert Taylor, St. Mark's Cathedral, David Koopmans, Atty., Short Cressman & Burgess; Zorn B. Taylor, photographer.

## Free Advocacy Training! Presented by Children's Alliance & Hosted by Mockingbird Society and ASK-Y (Advocates for Systems Kids & Youth)

Monday, November 28th - 3:00-5:00 PM  
2100 24th Ave S, Community Room A  
Seattle, WA 98144

Topic: Training the Trainers by Jon Gould of Children's Alliance. Learn the basics of advocacy, and effective techniques for teaching others to be advocates.

This training will help us get ready for our Youth Advocacy Day in Olympia in February 3rd, when we will be taking a coalition of youth and providers to Olympia to advocate for funds to extend foster care through age 21. Anyone with an interest in advocacy and youth issues is welcome, including youth and staff from local agencies. Please RSVP to [lauren@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:lauren@mockingbirdsociety.org) by November 21.

### A Mockingbird In Your Inbox!

Mockingbird Times is now Available by email!

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## MEET OUR STAFF

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Youth LEAD Coordinator

Najja Morris

Operations Manager

Ros Chan

Administrative Assistant

Darcie Gray

Executive Assistant

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Contributing Writers

Natashija Ashton-Allen, Raheem Fennell, Thomas Harris

Volunteers

Patricia Gray, Dietra Clayton, Anna Trombley

## MURAL Continued from Page 1

her experience, "I liked working on the mural because of the fact that I love art and I love the Sanctuary Art Center. It was super productive and it was the first time I started something and actually finished it and didn't quit in the middle. It felt really good. Working together with the group was good. We came up with the ideas together and everybody was very helpful."

The Sanctuary Art Center has really grown since I first started going there,

which was something like 5 years ago. Projects like turning youth's poems into music, the poetry project which happened last month, and now this mural project. The new mural's theme is a mixture of urban city-scapes with bursts of color everywhere and nature - Mt. Rainer with trees in soothing blue and green. Leslie wanted it to be all nature but the youth were not going for it. One thing that is great about the mural is that it is murals within murals. There are mini-murals in the urban landscape part of the mural, painted within the buildings. One thing I really liked was

Rat's idea (Rat's paintings were featured in a previous article, he has a really good eye for color) to have 4 concepts: think, dream, create, food.

Go check it out, look at it more than once and you will see different things pop out at you. I noticed the more I looked at it, the more there was to see. The colors are vibrant and brilliant. It's amazing what people can accomplish as a group. Arteaga, a participant in the mural project commented, "Working on the mural was fun, good, and exciting."

The CDs and Chap books of homeless youth reading their poetry from the poetry project are now available. Proceed benefit the youth and more art projects through SAC. If you are interested please contact Leslie Bourgoin at (206) 914-3956 or write her at [sac@drizzle.com](mailto:sac@drizzle.com) I HIGHLY recommend this CD, I got the privilege to preview it and was blown away mentally by some of the tracks because they hit me right in my heart.

We are looking for articles, poetry, artwork and photography from our young readers who have experience in the foster care system and/or homelessness. If you want to be published in the *Times*, contact us at 206-323-5437 or via email at [newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org). For more info and to check us out, go to [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org).

## My Life as a Young Mother

NATASHIA ASHTON-ALLEN - SEATTLE, WA, 20 YEARS OLD

Four days after my 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, I got the shock of my life. I was pregnant. My chest was burning with disbelief, I could not breathe. I was so surprised I could not think. My son's father was talking to me, but I could not hear him. At first I did not know if I wanted a baby or if I could see myself being responsible for this child's life. For two weeks, I cried myself to sleep. I had always wanted someone to love me, but would a baby fill that void? I could not see myself going through with an abortion. I had made up my mind, I was keeping my baby.

When I was 2 months along, my son's father and I started to have problems. We did not know each other long enough to have a baby. I tried to become happy with my pregnancy, and he decided

to move on with his life, but every once in a while would come in and out of my life. Never before had I been so confused.

When I was growing up, I had a mother and father that were only there when they wanted to be. This was something that I did not want to expose my son to. I had a hope that everything would work out with my son's father, so we could be a family. Every time I saw Jayden's dad, I set myself up for disappointment. I allowed this to go on during all of my pregnancy.

Overall, I had a healthy pregnancy. I thought that because of all the stress that my son's father was causing me, that my son would be a stress baby. I walked as much as I could, and ate healthy foods whenever possible. I read my pregnancy

book to learn as much as possible about becoming a parent.

The day I went into labor with my son, I was scared out of my mind. I was in labor for nine hours. The first time I looked at my son, I was filled with joy and amazement. I had just done of the most beautiful things a woman can do. For the next two weeks, I felt like I was floating on a cloud. I was so happy my son was here and healthy.

However, having Jayden was one of the biggest decisions I have ever made. I did not understand the benefits and responsibilities of having a child. Sometimes I had the "baby blues." I was happy and sad at the same time. I had this beautiful, healthy baby, but felt so depressed that I was doing this all by myself.

My son's father is not involved in Jayden's life, but appears when he wants to see him. He has not paid for anything since his son has been born. Not only do I have to get up in the middle of the night

with my child, but I also have to deal with all the emotions of this relationship. I try hard not to be angry, but life as a young mother has been one of the hardest things that has happened.

Now my son is almost a year old. I'm attending college at Cascadia Community College. I also work at my school. Raising my son has been challenging. I know that my son will benefit from the things that I have over come in my life and what I will accomplish in life. Being a mother is one of the hardest jobs you can have. Your full-time no matter how you try to play it, you always work over time, with no breaks. The thing that I'm proud of besides having my son, is the fact that I have let the anger go. I no longer blame his father for not being here. I thank him for it. If it were not for him I would not be as strong as I am.

## What You Need to Know About Date Rape

JAMICA  
HENDERSON

Teens and young adults, school is back in and there's going to be lots of parties. There's going to be smoking, drinking, dancing and music. Sounds fun! All your friends are going to be there, but the question we all must ask ourselves before deciding to go is: Is this a safe place for me to be? When we hear that there's going to be a party, we focus on how fun it's going to be, what to wear, how we will get there and home, how much it cost, who is going and more. Never do we think about date or acquaintance rape.

Before we get into the statistics, do you know the difference between date rape and acquaintance rape? "Date rape" is the combination of two words put together. Date: "To go on a date or dates with" (1). Rape: "is a crime wherein the victim is forced into sexual activity against his or her will" (2). In summary, "date rape" is when you go on a date with someone you know and are then forced to do things that you don't agree to.

Acquaintance rape: "Rape perpetrated by someone known to the victim" (3). Date rape and acquaintance rape are pretty similar. Acquaintance rape is somebody that you knew previously and not necessarily "dated" or were intimate with. It could be a person who you have had a relationship with, a friend of a friend, a classmate, etc. If one of you says "NO" to sex and you're forced anyway that's when it becomes a rape. "acquaintance rape." "One of the most common types of acquaintance rape is date rape. If you are a female between the ages of 16-24, you run the greatest risk of being raped by a date. The use of alcohol or drugs also increases your risk. In one study, 74% of the men and 55% of the women had been drinking or using drugs prior to the sexual assault" (4).

How do you know when this is going to happen? You don't, but there are steps you can take to stay safe for all involved.

## For Potential Victims

- Say no as if you mean no; if you don't mean no then don't say it.
- Be clear, honest and consistent in your verbal communications about sexual desires.
- Trust your instincts. If you have any

hesitations about a man, think carefully about dating him. Pay attention to situations that make you uncomfortable and think of ways to decrease potential problems.

- Be aware that nonverbal behaviors or actions may be interpreted differently than you intended. That DOES NOT mean it is your fault if you are assaulted.
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol and/or other drugs (4)

## For Potential Aggressors

- Understand that forced sex is NEVER acceptable; it is against the law.
- Accept "no" as "no." Don't read other meanings into that word.
- Know the difference between desire and action. Being sexually aroused does not give you permission to force sex on another.
- Be responsible for your own sexual limits and actions; they are your responsibility.
- Realize that dating for a long time, spending money or previous sexual intercourse does not obligate a woman to have sex.
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol and/or other drugs.
- Don't make assumptions. Just because

your date welcomes some sexual contact doesn't mean she wants other types of sexual contact. (4)

Remember that rape occurs in ALL relationships, regardless of gender make-up. Rape and sexual assault occur just as frequently and should be taken just as seriously in Lesbian, Gay and other "queer" relationships. The following are a few resources if you or somebody you know become a victim of this crime:

Communities Against Rape and Abuse (CARA) - 801 23rd Ave S, Suite G-1, Seattle, WA 98144 (206) 322-4856

Harborview Center for Sexual Assault-1401 E Jefferson St, 4th Floor, Seattle, WA 98122 (206) 521-1800

King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (888) 998-6423 (confidential address)

Northwest Network of LGBT survivors of abuse- PO Box 20398 Seattle, WA 98102 (206) 568-7777

- <http://www.answers.com/date>
- [http://encyclopedia.laborlawtalk.com/date\\_rape](http://encyclopedia.laborlawtalk.com/date_rape)
- <http://education.yahoo.com>
- <http://www.wcstx.com/friendrp.htm>



## "We Are Dad": Movie Review

MISTY LOU COOK



I recently enjoyed the opportunity of watching a documentary entitled "We Are Dad" at the (10<sup>th</sup> Annual) Seattle Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. The film, documented by a close family friend, was about the lives and struggles of two gay foster parents who had adopted 5 HIV Positive Children and Children with AIDS. The couple, named Steve Lofton and Roger Croteau, met during nursing school. They met, fell in love, and were together for 13 years before adopting their first child. Both Steve and Roger worked in the Pediatric AIDS Dept and were AIDS Specialists at the Jackson Memorial Hospital in Florida during the beginning of the AIDS epidemic.

"Steve and Roger ... don't refer to themselves as 'taking in' kids, and they never say the kids 'joined the family.' They talk warmly about when each of the kids 'came home.'" (1) Frank was the first of their kids to "come home." He was a baby whose mother had died in the AIDS ward in Miami shortly after giving birth to Frank. As his mother was dying, she "asked them to take her baby boy after she was gone" (2). Although Gay Adoption in Florida was illegal, and still is to this day, "social workers had asked Steve and Roger if they would think about being foster parents to children with HIV who were impossible to place because of stigma and fear of AIDS at that point in the epidemic." (3) Steve and Roger welcomed their first baby with open arms as he "came home."

A few weeks later, their second child, Tracy, "came home" to them on her 1<sup>st</sup> birthday on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1988. Tracy was born severely drug-addicted and HIV Positive and welcomed with loving arms. From 1988 until the late 1990's, Steve Lofton and Roger Croteau welcomed four more babies into their humble family, all of them HIV Positive or suffering from AIDS, most of them born drug-addicted, some with fetal alcohol syndrome on top of everything else. All of them "came home" to a house and family full of love, where they were loved and cherished for their individuality. One of Steve and Roger's children, Ginger, passed away after graduating from pre-school in 1994 at age six. Despite the special needs of their children, Steve and Roger "treated the medical needs like just another fact of life and devoted themselves to raising the kids like any other family, filling their lives with love, fun, and learning." (4)

Raising Frank, Tracy, Ginger and Bert in the State of Florida, in the 80's and

early 90's, wasn't easy. Steve and Roger encountered abundant homophobia and racism, because Frankie, Tracy, Ginger and Bert were black children and Steve and Roger were gay, white parents. On top of the homophobia and racism, there was the knowledge that most AIDS babies weren't expected to live beyond the age of two. Later on, after the family moved to Oregon in the late 1990's, the children's pediatrician "quickly noticed Steve and Roger's parenting skills and the kids' development. He asked if they would consider taking in two brothers with AIDS whom the state couldn't place with anyone else." (5) So, the Lofton-Croteau family grew by two, and Frankie, Tracy and Bert grew to love their rambunctious and inquisitive little brothers, who were white. In the face of all of the family's obstacles, the quality of care, love and patience that Steve and Roger showed their children gave the family hope.

When the documentary about this family was finished in 2000, "Frank, the baby boy who was placed with them in 1988, is 14. Tracy, the baby girl who came weeks later, is also 14. Bert is 10, and the two Oregon boys, Wayne and Ernie, are 8 and 5. The five of them are a family by any definition..." (6) A decade later, "The Children's Home Society, one of the leading kids' social service agencies in Miami (and the group that placed foster kids with Steve and Roger), created an award for outstanding foster parent of the year. They didn't just give the first award to Steve and Roger—they named it the 'Lofton-Croteau Award.'" (7)

Despite the overwhelming evidence that gay people can raise healthy, loving and happy families, there are many states that have specific bans AGAINST Gay Adoption. Despite the fact that there are thousands of gay couples who would LOVE to adopt some of the thousands of children stuck in the foster care system, without homes or families, gay people aren't legally allowed to adopt. The ACLU put together a website for Steve and Roger's fight for justice, equality, and the right to keep their children. The website tells the Lofton-Croteau story, the kid's stories, their legal battles to keep their children and legalize gay adoption, how to take action and help legalize gay adoption and has some really cute pictures of the Lofton-Croteau family. You can check out the site at: [www.lethimstay.com](http://www.lethimstay.com). This site is produced by the ACLU Lesbian & Gay Rights Project.

"We Are Dad" was a heart-warming, wonderful and very educational movie.

(1,2,3,4,5) [http://www.lethimstay.com/loftons\\_kids.html](http://www.lethimstay.com/loftons_kids.html)

(6,7) [http://www.lethimstay.com/loftons\\_steveroger.html](http://www.lethimstay.com/loftons_steveroger.html)

saults were under investigation until I was 20 years old.

It all started at a Seattle Group Home. It was there that I was slammed against the wall and injured, and the facility decided not to report the incident to C.P.S. Instead, they continued "care" for another 2 years, in violation of the law that states that an agency must make Child Protective Services report if a child has been injured or a suspected injury has occurred. It was very scary at such a young age to be injured and not know what to do. It felt like nobody cared about me. I felt that I was all by myself, with no family and nobody to help me. I felt abandoned, hopeless and like my life was filled with nothingness.

The remaining 5 years in foster care

## Creative Corner

RAHEEM FENNELL - VIRGINIA, USA, 13 YEARS OLD

### a different kind of hero

a different kind of hero one I'd like to see a different kind of hero one I'd like to be different kind of hero someone who i trust a different kind of hero the one who watches me

### mommy

mommy,mommy my old mommy  
mommy,mommy the mommy i shall love  
mommy,mommy the mom right for me  
mommy,mommy don't take my mommy

### Something i wont waste'

this is my day of opportunity and i will not waste it on a corner doing or selling drugs or in a club drinkin beer I'd rather spend my time getting a valuable education

## Calendar of Events

**November is National Adoption Month**  
Visit [www.nationaladoptionday.org](http://www.nationaladoptionday.org) for more local and national information.

**November 18-19**  
Seattle Adoption Day Activities

**December 1, 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.**  
The Washington Association of Family-based Treatment Services (WAFTS)  
Is offering a FREE TRAINING to foster parents and social workers  
1201 S. Proctor  
Tacoma, WA 98405

To register, call or Email:  
1-800-701-8711  
WAFTS55@hotmail.com

**February 2**  
Advocacy Day Training  
2100 Building

**February 3**  
Advocacy Day  
Olympia, WA

**March 30**  
Mockingbird Annual Fundraiser  
Location To Be Determined

## Stay in Touch With Community Voicemail

ANTHONY GUESS



Community Voice Mail (CVM) is a voice mail system that was started in 1991, and its primary focus is to provide a free and adequate number where you can be reached at all times. Currently, there are only 37 sites in the United States. By the year 2008 CVM is expected to serve the biggest 50 cities and an estimated 65,000 people in the U.S. On October 7, 2005 Community Voice Mail had its annual conference, where people from around the country came to share what's working and what's not. During that conference, four people spoke about how CVM can help in different aspects; June Krumpotick (Northwest

Womens Law Center), Najja Morris (Mockingbird Society), Shereese Phillips (Casey Family alumni) and Nate Caldwell who is the Director of King County Community Corrections Division.

Having CVM allows you to take control of your life. For example, while growing up in the "Foster Care System", there are a lot of appointments and personal business being discussed. CVM is a way for your case worker to talk to you instead of having the messages relayed through other people. Or how about if you just aged out of the system and you are now homeless, lack a permanent residence and /or number and need to communicate to get stable. This is a wonderful resource for many! For more information or to receive a voicemail number you can contact Fremont Public Association: (206) 694-6771 if you live in Seattle, or visit [www.cvm.org](http://www.cvm.org) to contact them nationally.

## My Story

THOMAS HARRIS



My name is Thomas Harris and this is my story about how I survived one gun shot and two sexual assaults. I went into foster care when I was 11 years old. It seemed fun at first, but later became a nightmare that would not go away for nearly 10 years. The shooting case lasted until my 19<sup>th</sup> Birthday and the sexual as-

saults were under investigation until I was 20 years old. It all started at a Seattle Group Home. It was there that I was slammed against the wall and injured, and the facility decided not to report the incident to C.P.S. Instead, they continued "care" for another 2 years, in violation of the law that states that an agency must make Child Protective Services report if a child has been injured or a suspected injury has occurred. It was very scary at such a young age to be injured and not know what to do. It felt like nobody cared about me. I felt that I was all by myself, with no family and nobody to help me. I felt abandoned, hopeless and like my life was filled with nothingness.

The remaining 5 years in foster care seemed to go by somewhat fast. However, those years in Foster Care were frightening and very emotionally, physically and mentally damaging. I was moved in with a gay foster parent that would later assault me and admit to the assault. The agency would later violate the C.P.S. order, jeopardizing my life once again, as well as showing their willingness to break the Foster Care laws.

After all of this happened, it seemed to me like life was a tunnel of doom. I was sexually assaulted, then moved, then sexually assaulted again, then shot. It seemed that life was going to end for me. I was a child inside that never had a caring family. I struggled to get anything and not be abused. Prior to entering Foster Care, my bi-

ological parents had 22 C.P.S. reports from a number of different public schools, private agencies and neighbors that would eventually lead to my removal from their home. I have had three surgeries on my mouth due to abuse.

I am now 20 years old and have dreams of becoming a City Council Member and changing laws to protect foster youth, especially orphaned and in-state care children. I am also working on my degree at S.C.C.C. with a major in Biology, and would one day like to become a surgeon.

I have a television show in the works on the public access channel and I have some art that I would like to put on display at the SAM Art Museum.