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DEC. 7 - 13, 2005



FOR NOW, NEW ORLEANS NATIVES LATRICE AND REGINALD GILLUM ARE LIVING WITH THEIR TWO CHILDREN IN KING COUNTY PUBLIC HOUSING SLATED FOR DEMOLITION. PHOTO BY SHERRY LOESER.

A Measure of Comfort

Displaced New Orleans family finds hope, stability in White Center

By CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

Reginald Gillum doesn't want to go back to New Orleans.

The job he and his cousin Keith were doing there — emptying the putrid insides of thousands of refrigerators left over from Hurricane Katrina — is only part of the reason.

On Nov. 12, Gillum, 22, says he had just come out of a store at about 9:30 or 10 in the evening and was opening the door to Keith's car when an unmarked police car rolled up beside them in the parking lot.

Gillum and his cousin were handcuffed while police called for a canine unit to sniff for narcotics. There were none, but the dog went wild. Gillum says officers put them against a car — shotguns trained — pulled their shirts over their heads, dropped their pants, and spread their buttocks for a flashlight inspection.

"This was in the middle of a parking lot, the store parking lot," Gillum, the father of two, says. "When it was all over, the Black cop — it was one Black cop, all the rest were white — said, 'I'm going to tell you all straight what it is — it's y'all's skin color.'"

Gillum believes the police are telling other Blacks what the two heard next: "Go back where you came from."

That's exactly what he did. Gillum returned to Seattle, where his wife, Latrice, has gotten a house near White Center through the King County Housing Authority. Though he was born and raised in New Orleans, and his wife wants to go back, Gillum shakes his head at the idea.

Their jobs as a hospital floor waxer and hotel maid are gone. Back in New Orleans, Gillum saw the inside of the rental house in Uptown where the couple lived with their two children — Zion, 3, and Zinaya, 1. Gillum says it looked like the end of a washing machine cycle covered in brown muck. Except for a few photographs, the Gillums have lost everything.

And Latrice, also 22, has already arranged for child care so she can take a one-year course in hotel and tourism management that she's signed up for at Highline Community College.

Latrice and the kids came on a bus in mid-September to stay with a girlfriend who lives in Federal Way. After weeks of phoning for help, she says the King County Housing Authority came up with a plan: In October, the agency put her and about seven other Katrina families in the old Park Lake Homes housing development. The houses were empty because

See COMFORT, Continued on Page 12

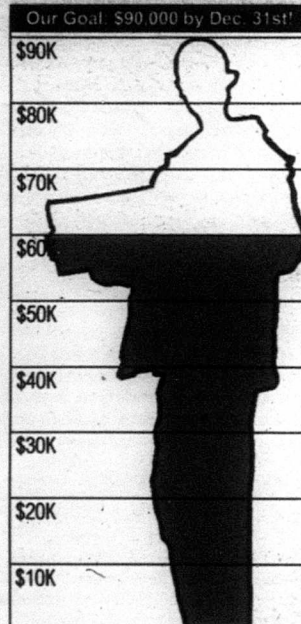
ICE'd

*Five raid sends more than 100
immigrants back to Mexico*

By ROSETTE ROYALE
Staff Reporter

In Mexico, Nov. 2, or All Soul's Day, marks the end of the country's Day of the Dead celebrations. But in Fife, Nov. 2, 2005 commemorated a less joyous occasion. That was when a raid on a warehouse by immigration officials led to the arrest and subsequent deportation of 106 undocumented workers, the vast majority of whom were from Mexico.

See ICE'd, Continued on Page 12



[Support the Holiday Fund Drive]

Supporters came through last week in a big way, donating a total of \$7,175 and bringing us two-thirds of the way to our yearend goal. Our holiday fund drive total now stands at **\$59,852**. A huge **Thank You** goes out to everyone who has helped so far. Our readers make the work we do possible. Please donate at realchangenews.org or use the page 12 coupon to support our work today.

This Issue

The first of
seven new poems
from

Sherman
Alexie
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GLUE DIFFER

"Replacements Needed" posters,
adhered with glue, are deemed
illegal and in need of removal.

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DRUG WAR

Advocates for drug reform
debate with enforcement officials
over prohibitory tactics.

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FOOLED ERRAND

Author Mark Crispin Miller finds a
snoot-full of evidence showing the
2004 election was stolen.

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Bulletproof Party

War-made millionaires: have they no sense of decency?

By SARAH ANDERSON
Guest Writer

The ratio between defense CEO pay and that of a military general has doubled during this period, from 12-to-1 to 23-to-1. The defense CEOs make 160 times the pay of an army private in combat.

Over the past few months, I've gotten all kinds of flak from CEOs who were the subject of a report I co-authored about executive pay among defense contractors. Jack London of CACI International, whose employees interrogated prisoners at Abu Ghraib, denounced what I wrote as "shameful" and "ignorant." A United Technologies official accused me (falsely) of slander.

But the man who got the worst skewering was silent. David H. Brooks, CEO of bulletproof vest maker DHB Industries, earned \$70 million in 2004, 13,349 percent more than his pre-9/11 compensation, according to "Executive Excess," co-published by the Institute for Policy Studies and United for a Fair Economy. Brooks sold company stock worth about \$186 million last year, spooking investors who drove DHB's share price from more than \$22 to as low as \$6.50.

Shareholders were mighty ticked, but what makes Brooks' war windfalls particularly obscene is that the equipment which boosted his fortunes appears not to work very well. In May 2005, the US Marines recalled more than 5,000 DHB armored vests after questions were raised about their effectiveness in stopping 9mm bullets. In November, the Marines and Army announced a recall of an additional 18,000 DHB vests.

Hearing nothing from DHB's PR team in response to media coverage of the report, I thought Mr. Brooks might be cowering in shame. Instead, I now find out that he was busy planning a party. And not just any party.

The *New York Daily News* estimates that the bat mitzvah party Brooks threw for his daughter over the weekend cost an estimated \$10 million. Virtually every musician that you might guess would appeal to a 50-something Long Island CEO was flown in by private jet: Aerosmith, Tom Petty, the Eagles' Don Henley and Joe Walsh (who performed with Fleetwood Mac's Stevie Nicks,) and Kenny G. As a likely concession to his daughter's tastes, Brooks also booked 50 Cent, DJ AM (Nicole Richie's fiancée) and rap diva Ciara.

According to *Daily News* gossip columnist Lloyd Grove, Brooks was so pumped for Aerosmith that he changed his wardrobe for their performance from a "black-leather, metal-studded suit—accessorized with biker-chic necklace chains and diamonds from Chrome Hearts jewelers—into a hot-pink suede version of the same lovely outfit." The CEO then reportedly mounted the stage, clowning with Steven Tyler and insisted that his teenage nephew be permitted to sit in on drums.

Gallivanting with celebrities no doubt does wonders to relieve the mind of unpleasant matters. And Brooks has plenty to ponder. Under investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission for financial wrongdoing, he also faces a number of investor class action lawsuits for fraud and insider trading. On top of the Marine recall, DHB had to settle a lawsuit in April with the New York Police Department and the Southern States Police Benevolent Association by replacing an estimated 2,609 potentially defective pieces of body armor. DHB stock, already in the

tank, has slumped even further, to about \$4.

Grotesque as it may be, Brooks' blowout is merely one of the more visible symbols of rampant war profiteering in the post-9/11 era. Our study showed that defense contractor CEOs received raises on average of 200 percent between 2001 and 2004, compared to only 7 percent for average large company CEOs.

Compared to the pay of those on the front lines of the war, the gap has grown even faster. The ratio between defense CEO pay and that of a military general has doubled during this period, from 12-to-1 to 23-to-1. The defense CEOs make 160 times the pay of an army private in combat.

Americans haven't always been so blasé about war profiteering. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt famously said: "I don't want to see a single war millionaire created in the United States as a result of this world disaster."

FDR's strong feelings about war profiteering were shared by his successor, Harry Truman. As a Senator, Truman had traveled around the country going from one defense industry factory to another to investigate charges that executives were reaping unfair rewards. He later formed an investigative committee that saved billions in military costs. Imagine if Truman and FDR were alive today what they might have to say about Brooks' extravaganza.

Two and a half years into this war, the costs are painfully clear. The U.S. death toll alone is more than 2,000 and rising fast. The bill for taxpayers is more than \$200 billion and growing. The damage to Americans' image in the world is immeasurable. But one man has had a helluva party. ■

Sarah Anderson is a Fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies (www.ipsdc.org) and the co-author of *Field Guide to the Global Economy* (New Press, 2005) and *Executive Excess*.



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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Change Agent

The chance to study abroad is generally only an option for the wealthy and privileged. Kristin Hayden, executive director of OneWorld Now!, would like to see that change.

Hayden's experience as an exchange student in Apartheid South Africa inspired her to develop a two-year afterschool program targeted at low-income and minority students that focuses on developing global relations and cultural understanding. Participants study a relevant foreign language, learn leadership skills, and are advised on scholarships for international education opportunities.

Hayden believes the ability to communicate across cultural barriers is crucial for tomorrow's leaders. Developing that ability requires a hands-on approach.

"We have so much to learn from each other and our world at large," says Hayden. "I would love to see study abroad institutionalized: to see a shift in America to valuing international education. This is the only way we can truly prepare our youth for the 21st century."

—Amy E. Besunder



KRISTIN HAYDEN, helping low-income and minority students find their place in the global village.

Poster Riled

Creator of "Replacement Needed" told to clear illegal posters

By ROSETTE ROYALE
Staff Reporter

For some 15 months now, Capitol Hill residents have been witness to an ever-changing poster campaign: bearing the simple text "Replacements Needed," the posters depict graphic images of a war-ravaged Iraq augmented with a running tally of dead U.S. and Iraqi military personnel.

But in the past few weeks, what seems to be needed as much as replacements is the removal of those very same posters.

Thomas Hays, creator of the Replacements Needed campaign, was issued a Street Use Warning by the Department of Transportation (DOT) on Nov. 21. The warning states the posters must be removed by Dec. 1 because they were "installed illegally using glue" — or Hays will suffer penalties of up to \$500 a day and/or criminal penalties.

Hays contends he has no plans to remove the posters for one simple reason: "I didn't put them up," says Hays.

While Hays concedes that, in the early days of the campaign, he did adorn utility poles in Capitol Hill, he says it's no longer his modus operandi. The use of staples and tape to affix the posters was hypocritical, he realized: how could he honestly critique a war driven by petroleum profits by using products that are petroleum-based? Hays says he was also short on time while attending Seattle Central Community College. So Hays says he made

the posters available on his website www.replacementsneeded.com.

On the site, he says he allows the statistically updated posters to be downloaded; he also provides a recipe for wheat paste, a petroleum-free alternative. Armed with those tools, he invites people to sheet the streets, but with an advisory not to break local poster laws. Hays says he can't remember when he last postered. "Unless someone has witnessed me doing something," maintains Hays, "I don't see what the DOT has got."

What the DOT has got is a city ordinance outlining the do's and don'ts of posterage. The ordinance instructs any potential paper-pasters "don't use glue" to hang posters.

The second thing the DOT has is a citizen complaint. Rich Richmire, manager for street use for the DOT, says that his department received an email complaining of illegally adhered posters. Due to staff size, Richmire says the DOT sends an inspector to enforce the rule only when the city hears from someone. Says Richmire, "this kind of an issue takes a lot of time away from higher-priority issues."

Recalling only one other poster complaint in the past year, Richmire says that those issued a warning are given a small grace period to correct the situation. If the posters remain, he says the city can send a maintenance crew to do the work and charge the offender for the trouble.

But Hays has his own work to do. He's preparing to go to Evergreen College, in Olympia, in January. Removing posters he contends were put up by others is not something he thinks he should do. He finds any enforcement of the warning a waste of taxpayer dollars.

And speaking of dollars, on the off-chance he will be fined, Hays says he's looking into creating a legal defense fund. If taken to court, he has plans to arrive in a Captain America uniform with a shield constructed from the First Amendment. The outfit, he knows, may make people think he's being silly, but he says the costume would speak to the fact that he feels his rights are being violated. "And if that's what it takes," maintains Hays, "that's what it takes." ■

Getting heat for sheeting streets: Thomas Hays, right, and friends. Photo by Katia Roberts.



Just Heard...

Trees go to court

The people for saving the trees in Occidental Park haven't given up.

On Nov. 21, the citizens opposing the city's plan to cut down 17 of the 60 trees in Pioneer Square's historic park took their case to Superior Court — an appeal to an earlier decision against them by the City Hearing Examiner.

Among other issues, the citizens, led by Pioneer Square business owners Bif Brigman and Elle Tracy, argue that the city's plan (which includes cutting down the trees, removing the pergola, and replacing the cobblestones with impervious pavers) is likely to kill the remaining trees — an issue the city's Department of Neighborhoods dismissed with a Declaration of Non-Significance.

Brigman and Tracy's attorney, Jim Klausner, says a hearing has been set six months from now. In theory, he says, the city can't do anything to the trees until then.

Drunk shuffle

Legislation that would restrict the sale of wine and beer in certain neighborhoods is on its way to the Seattle City Council.

On Tuesday, the council's Housing and Human Services Committee passed a bill that calls for the State Liquor Control Board to put mandatory restrictions on alcohol sales in downtown Seattle, the Central District, Capitol Hill, the International District, Belltown, Lower Queen Anne and the University District. The aim of the bill, which the council is set to vote on Dec. 12, is to cut down public drunkenness. Craig Montgomery of the Pioneer Square Community Association says a voluntary program in his neighborhood did just that.

Councilmember Richard McIver, who voted no on the measure, isn't convinced. "This legislation will not solve the issue," McIver says, "and, in fact, may simply relocate it to other neighborhoods."

—Cydney Gillis

Self-congratulations in order

A pat on the back to Real Change director of operations Israel Bayer, whose work with the Portland sister-paper street roots is paying off.

Street roots received a \$2,500 grant last month from the Oregon Community Foundation, honoring Bayer's "work to develop and stabilize" the community newspaper sold by Portland's homeless.

Bayer became director in 2003, bumping the paper to biweekly publication and adopting a professionally designed news-forward look (which helped inspire Real Change's makeover last winter). Circulation doubled. What was once a mediocre newspaper is now "a driving force for social justice in Portland," says Bayer, who began working at Real Change in July.

—Adam Hylo

Drug Debate Goes On

Usually disagreeing, reformers and officials both prize treatment, education

By TOM COGBILL
Contributing Writer

"There's plenty to criticize in our current approach. But you need to have thought out the details. Nobody knows what would happen if the state were to hand out heroin and hard drugs."

— Dan Satterberg, King County Prosecutor chief of staff

Can America's longstanding love-hate relationship with addictive substances be defused by drastic reform of current drug laws? That's the \$20 billion question — about what the U.S. government spends annually on the War on Drugs.

Nearly 200 reform advocates met in Seattle Dec. 1-2 to discuss issues and strategies for dismantling the present "prohibition" approach to problematic drugs. Speaker after speaker decried the bankruptcy of the policy, which relies heavily on imprisonment as a deterrent, and on interdiction and eradication (which take up two-thirds of the overall budget). About 70 percent of inmates are serving drug convictions; yet, as Dan Satterberg, chief of staff for the King County Prosecutor, noted, "No one believes we can incarcerate our way out of the problem."

"If we took the money spent poisoning fields abroad and spent it on treatment here, it would be far more useful," says former federal prosecutor Kate Pflaumer. "Criminal enforcement is not working, and there needs to be a big, open debate about that."

Echoing the overall tone of the conference, retired Seattle Police Chief Norm Stamper declared, "The drug war is causing more harm than good. We are creating much more dangerous, unhealthy communities by

leaving the drug trade in the hands of the underworld." Stamper favors full legalization of all drugs.

Privately, many law enforcement professionals acknowledge a certain futility in trying to uphold present laws. Others are convinced that any softening of them will only lead to greater damage to communities and users.

"We've seen the conference's proposals and feel they are out of touch with reality," says Jeff Eig, spokesperson for the local Drug Enforcement Administration. "It's completely away from the situation on the ground and going in the wrong direction."

Dave Rodriguez, local head of a federal program called the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, concurs that "law enforcement by itself won't solve the problem. You need good prevention and treatment programs." However, he adds, "Legalization misses the whole concept of what addiction is about and what drives people to become addicts. It's a fallacy that flies in the face of common sense. Treatment programs tell us that law enforcement is a necessary first intervention in the user's life."

Satterberg said he appeared at the conference to dispel some misperceptions. "A lot of people come to these conferences without knowing how our current system has evolved. The state of Washington has made significant progress in reducing our reliance on prison. Treatment is the answer."

Rodriguez points to the success of drug courts and deferred prosecution. "This is a sensible solution, because many addicts need supervised and coerced treatment" — something that could not happen without the threat of incarceration.

While nearly everyone agrees more should be spent on education and treatment, reform advocates claim a certain percentage of the population gets addicted to drugs no matter what. These people can be managed most effectively by "medicalizing" their addiction: providing inexpensive, pharmaceutical dosing of their drugs in a hygienic environment with treatment and social services available upon demand. The idea is to expose addiction as a serious risk to health and social status and thus deflate the glamorous image young people often have of prohibited substances.

DEA's Eig doesn't buy it. "We have to be sending a clear message to our young people that drug use is unacceptable."

"I commend [the conference] for discussing the topic," says Satterberg. "There's plenty to criticize in our current approach. But you need to have thought out the details. Nobody knows what would happen if the state were to hand out heroin and hard drugs. There's lots of rhetoric, but it's not an academic matter. It's a real [bad] deal for people who lose their families." ■

Short Takes

Death may be homicide

When a homeless woman died on Thanksgiving Day, the cause of death at the time was thought to have been accidental. But now, two weeks after her body was discovered in the residue of an extinguished fire, police are investigating whether the woman was murdered.

That woman had a name: Davina Garrison.

It was the body of Garrison, 42, of Navajo descent, that was found near a building on Alaskan Way S., close to S. King St. The fire department was called to that location on Nov. 24 in response to what was perceived to be a small rubbish fire. When the fire was put out, the fire department realized there was a body. Initial beliefs that fire alone caused Garrison's death are now being put on hold.

"After the ME [medical examiner] did an autopsy, they determined there was reason to believe it was a suspicious death," says Debra Brown, who handles media relations for the police. Brown says that, to her understanding, an initial autopsy showed potential head trauma.

A spokesperson for the ME's office says that until toxicology screening test results are returned — which can take up to six weeks — the office won't be able to rule on the cause of death.

Jim Burns, executive director of the Chief Seattle Club, which was frequented by Garrison, says the death has been particularly hard on the Native community who gathers there. The last time she was seen at the Club, says Burns, was the day

before her death, when she showed up with an unidentified non-Native man. She had come in to collect money the Club was holding for her, remembers Burns. "It wasn't a good sign," she says.

As the investigation continues, Burns says the Chief Seattle Club will remember Garrison today, Dec. 7, with a memorial for Garrison that begins at 8 a.m.

"Anyone with information pertaining to the investigation is asked to call (206) 684-5550.

— Rosette Royale

Union Steamed

Starbucks cares so much for its "partners" — the name it calls the people who pull espresso — that it doesn't want them to join a union.

That's the position of Seattle's world-renowned coffee company, which faces charges from the National Labor Relations Board in the wake of a union organizing drive this summer in New York City by the Industrial Workers of the World.

The NLRB has charged 15 Starbucks officials with anti-union activity. The IWW says that includes firing one union member, giving another a bad performance review because of her union membership, and sending another home for wearing a union pin.

Starbucks, which now owns or licenses 9,671 stores worldwide and had nearly half a billion in profit in the fiscal year that just ended Oct. 2, says the charges are only allegations, which the company intends to defend in a hearing Feb. 7.

In the meantime, "We firmly believe that our

progressive, positive work environment, coupled with our outstanding compensation and benefits, make unions unnecessary at Starbucks," says Audrey Lincoff, vice president of Starbucks' global media relations. "We believe we do not need a third party to act on behalf of our partners."

— Cydney Gillis

Housing boost

Rising land costs are one of the greatest challenges to creating new affordable housing, says Seattle city councilmember Tom Rasmussen. At a meeting of

the council's Housing, Human Services, and Health Committee on Tuesday, Rasmussen proposed that the city partner with the Triprofit Enterprise Community Partners to create an Affordable Housing Site Acquisition Program.

Under the proposal, Enterprise would assist the city in creating a program to make as much as \$50 million available to acquire land for affordable housing. The specific cost, location, and size of the proposed project would be determined in March.

The nonprofit Housing Development Consortium estimates that the cost of building a multi-unit residential project in King County will have increased from \$200,000 in 2005 to around \$300,000 in 2020. The HDC also estimates that in the year 2020, the demand for affordable housing in King County will have swelled by 52,000 new low-income households — 34 percent of whom will be working poor.

— Emily Page

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When Asked What I Think About Indian Reservations, I Remember A Deer Story

Children, have you ever heard a deer scream
After its back legs and spine have been crushed
Beneath the wheels of a logging truck?
That scream is the sound of our grief

After our failed fathers have been crushed.
In Heaven, our dads are still drunk and broke.
Children, you must laugh at the sound of grief,
And at deer bleeding to death on the road,

And at heaven and fathers all drunk and broke,
Or you will become that deer, torn in half,
Screaming and bleeding to death on the road.
Children, you must escape your bloody past,

Or you will become that deer, torn in half
By the engine it did not understand.
Children, you must escape your bloody past.
Your dead daddy is a dangerous man,

He is the engine you can't understand.
He will steal your food, heat, water, and air.
Your dead daddy is a dangerous man
Who wants all of your grief, but not your prayers.

Grief is your dad's food, heat, water, and air,
And he will feast for years and never quit,
And will demand more grief, but never prayers,
Because he thinks "Prayers don't guarantee shit."

Faithless, he will feast for years and never quit.
He's like the wheels of a logging truck,
Cruel, crushing, and covered with blood and shit.
And you, lonely children, are deer and crushed,

So scream and bleed your way along the road,
Until your lungs, heart, and veins are empty
Of grief, and deny your father's ghost
His last chance to be your warrior-thief.

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Fooled? Proof

Critic Mark Crispin Miller documents how a theocratic movement stole the 2004 election

Interview by ROSETTE ROYALE
Staff Reporter

"At the risk of being accused of hyperbole, [the Conyers Report] is the most important congressional report in our history, because it cuts right to the heart of the matter: do we have [free] elections, or not? If we don't have free elections, we have no other rights. That's the lynchpin right there."

"Fool me once," George Bush eloquently informed a Nashville audience, "shame on — shame on you. Fool me — you can't get fooled again."

Since Bush bungled the "Fool me once" aphorism back in 2002, critics and comedians have pounced on his words as yet one more example of, well, a leader sorely lacking in intelligence. But in the hands of author Mark Crispin Miller, those words take on a less humorous shine: they refer not to the president's mental prowess, but, instead, to a sad plight little understood by the majority of American voters in 2004. If you ask Miller, we've been fooled. Again.

But how? And by whom? Miller, a professor at New York University, goes to great lengths to show precisely how, and by whom, voters were disenfranchised in his recently released *Fooled Again: How the Right Stole the 2004 Election & Why They'll Steal the Next One Too (Unless We Stop Them)* (Basic Books, \$24.95.) Therein, Miller recounts scores of instances where thousands (millions?) of voters were denied the power of the ballot, thanks to the orchestrations of what he sees as a burgeoning theocratic movement within the Republican Party. Compounding the situation, he says, is the mainstream media's willful reluctance to inform voters how such a movement degrades democracy.

Spelled out on the page, the preponderance of evidence he provides nearly pummels you into submission. But spoken in person, as was the case when Miller stopped by *Real Change* during a Seattle visit, the evidence is enough to make you walk to Washington, D.C and start raising Cain.

Real Change: How do you think mainstream media missed this scandal?

Mark Crispin Miller: They didn't want to see it. The mainstream media in this country [have] long since given up on its constitutional duty to inform the people about what its government is up to. There's an element of willful blindness, I think. And denial. The establishment press really doesn't want to deal with scandals that are too big. This scandal is just too big. It's about as big as it gets.

RC: So let's take one part of this scandal, the Conyers Report, which lists instances of voters being disenfranchised. Can we talk about what that report is and how it got missed?

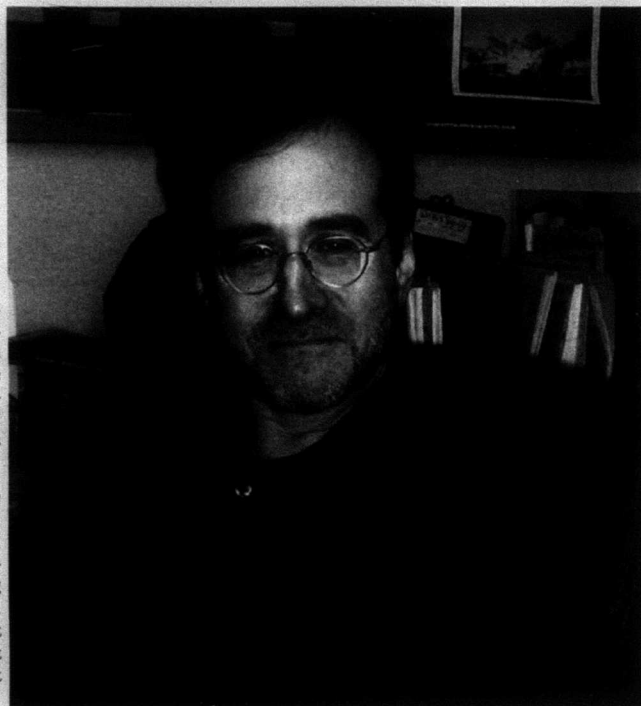
Miller: Just after the election, John Conyers, a Michigan Democrat who is the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, got tens of thousands of calls from citizens complaining that they had been prevented from voting. He got so many that he felt it was his obligation to devote a judiciary committee hearing into the question of what happened in Ohio, 'cause that's where most of the complaints came from.

Conyers' committee conducted extensive hearings on the ground in Ohio and then in Washington. They found evidence of rampant election fraud in Ohio before, on, and after Election Day, including what appears to have been a deliberate undersupply of voting ma-

chines to Black and student regions so that those people had to wait in line for hours and hours, and often couldn't vote at all; voting machines that turned a surprising number of Kerry votes into Bush votes, which is something that happened in 10 other states as well; intimidation by an outfit called the Mighty Texas Strike Force that had been sent by the party into Ohio to harass minority would-be voters. Then, after the election, there was a brazen attempt to subvert the recount.

At the risk of being accused of hyperbole, this is the most important congressional report in our history, because it cuts right to the heart of the matter: do we have [free] elections, or not? If we don't have free elections, we

Author and critic Mark Crispin Miller, who recounts, in *Fooled Again*, rampant evidence of 2004 Election fraud. Photo by Rosette Royale.



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Continued from Previous Page

have no other rights. That's the lynchpin right there.

The report was to be released on Jan. 5, the day before Congress's official recording of the electoral vote counts from every state. There was also the added drama of [Sen.] Barbara Boxer [D-CA] agreeing to be the one senator who would stand up with the representatives from Ohio and say, "Yes, this challenge is a worthy one." The press barely reported the fact that this study had been written. And it was further suppressed by the fact that the Republicans actually forbid the Government Printing Office to print copies, which is illegal. So, in my book, I tell this whole story of that document. I found more stuff in my book that the Conyers people didn't know about, but that's just an indication of how rampant fraud was.

RC: How does theocracy play into election fraud?

Miller: The movement to disenfranchise the American people was the work of an ardent theocratic faction of the Republican Party, which basically now dominates the party. This is a movement that wants to dominate the world religiously. This helps us understand why the government has taken the position it has on so many issues: AIDS, sex education, women's health, the environment, even the war in Iraq — which, to an extent not understood by the American people yet, is a religious war. The Republican Party is actually at odds with itself right now: there were a lot of prominent Republicans who urged people not to vote for Bush. So this is not about one party versus another, it's not about liberals versus conservatives. It's about a profoundly anti-democratic faith-based movement trying to subvert American democracy.

I regard the Democrats as part of the problem, because of their timidity, because of their readiness to dismiss the

evidence of voter fraud. The Democrats are not sufficiently zealous in defending our freedoms here. But this is not a partisan issue. This is about the very nature of the American experiment.

RC: One of the things you go into is Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill: you talk about how the theocratic movement was becoming evident there.

Miller: I was trying to shed light on a paranoid mentality that's constantly accusing its victims of planning to do the things that it is itself doing to those victims: projection. It's a neurotic tendency. I think it's behind all hate movements.

I believe Clarence Thomas's addition to the Supreme Court was a real blow against voting rights. But it's his way of looking at his own ordeal that I thought was striking, because everything he said about Anita Hill was true of himself. Everything he accused her side of doing, his side was doing to her. And it worked, in the short run, because the country was more sympathetic to him than her.

But I go from Clarence Thomas to Tom DeLay, who was also an ardent antidemocrat, whose current legal troubles have everything to do with fixing elections. For years, the Republicans have been screaming and yelling about Democratic theft of votes. Meanwhile, the actual victims of such fraud, the Democrats, are saying nothing about it. We have to keep an eye on a general trend in this country towards the disenfranchisement of Democratic voters.

RC: How?

Miller: I wrote [the book] precisely to throw down the gauntlet to the press, to the Democrats, to say, "You don't think there's at least enough evidence here to warrant an investigation?" The only way in which the press and the Democrats will pay attention to this issue is if people relentlessly force them to do it. And one way to do it is to say

it's not a Democratic issue, because the Democrats won't help. Did you hear about my controversy with Kerry?

RC: No, I didn't.

Miller: Friday before last [Oct. 28,] I met him. It was a fundraiser in New York. I got myself invited to the cocktail party before this dinner because I wanted to give him this book. I met with him for 10 minutes, said, "You were robbed." He said, "I know, I know."

He complained about how his colleagues on the Hill won't go there, won't discuss it with him. I said, "I think you should look into last year's election, you should look into the need for electoral reform. The country needs you to do this." He said, "Well, I don't know if I can be the one to do it because of the sour grapes factor." I said, "All right, I understand that, but just think about it." I felt this was really amazing: it's great that he now sees that it's been stolen. Then my book tour started.

I found that when I mentioned this thing about Kerry — because there's no sense that this was an off-the-record conversation — my audiences would be angry: "What took him so long?" Then I was on Amy Goodman's show [Democracy Now on NPR] last Friday morning [Nov. 4.] I was debating with [writer] Mark Hertsgaard, who wrote a piece in this latest *Mother Jones* trying to chew holes in the argument that [the election] was stolen. I told him about Kerry. Hertsgaard said, "Wow, this is major news." After the show, this was all over the Internet. A few hours later, the website www.rauastory.com contacted Kerry's office to ask for a statement in response to what I'd said.

[Kerry's office] categorically denied the conversation had taken place.

Now what does this mean? It means, first of all, that Kerry is a vain and gutless person who is concerned more about his image than he is about the republic.

RC: You're really gonna say that?

Miller: Yeah. But that's secondary. It's not about him, you know? We focus too much on personalities. The issue is much bigger than that. But I think I now understand how it is that other tyrannies have come to power, and a lot of the best people around just kind of sit there, let it happen, claim it isn't really happening, and anyone who claims it is happening is an alarmist and an extremist. The fact that the Democrats won't say this is extremely troubling to me, because it shows that they've completely lost touch with our best revolutionary tradition.

RC: So what are we supposed to do?

Miller: Let's make sure that this story of the election gets told. Let's make sure it resonates. When you get a snoot-full of what went down last year, you realize we live in somewhat of a Banana Republic now. It's not a functioning democracy.

RC: Are you disheartened?

Miller: No. If I were disheartened, I wouldn't have written the book. To tell you the truth, I find the book purging, because it makes clear to my satisfaction that we did not elect this guy. The American people did not and would not support a regime like this one. ■

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Following Saint Paul

Mountains Beyond Mountains
By Tracy Kidder
Random House, 2004
Paperback, 336 pages, \$14.95

By PAULA MATHIEU
Contributing Writer

At a time when good news seems more than a scarcity, a story like *Mountains Beyond Mountains* reminds us that individual people can and do make positive changes in the world.

When I picked up *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, I was expecting to read a hagiography—an idealized portrait of a saint. In choosing Paul Farmer, Tracy Kidder certainly had a subject who could withstand a bit of saintly description. Farmer is a doctor, Harvard professor, infectious-disease specialist, anthropologist, prolific writer, and recipient of a MacArthur genius grant. He works almost nonstop treating infectious diseases in places of the world that often see little of the world-class medicine he offers.

Farmer spends much of his busy life in Haiti, often walking half a day or more over rocky terrain just to treat one patient. *Zamni Lasante* (Creole for *Partners in Health*) is the name of the state-of-the-art medical compound he established in Cange, an extremely poor and arid section of Haiti. Even the best parts of Haiti are economically devastated, but none more so than the dry regions to which peasants fled after a U.S.-built dam project flooded river-side communities in order to bring water and power to U.S. agribusiness and the small number of elites in Port-au-Prince. In this rugged and inhospitable place, *Zamni Lasante* offers medical treatment to anyone needing it.

Certainly there is enough in the book to suspect that Farmer may in fact be a saint. He's almost nauseatingly tireless in his crusade to fund and deliver health care to those most needing it. He berates himself if a patient dies in his absence, always fearing he could do more. He donates most of his Harvard salary to *Partners in Health* and sees his wife and child in stopovers between crusading trips around the world.

Farmer is part Florence Nightingale, part Atticus Finch, part Hawkeye Pierce, and part Huck Finn. He cares for patients, fights for the rights of people to receive healthcare, bucks the logic of bureaucracy that limits health treatments to the poor, and journeys around the world in his quest. Farmer is not the child of privilege, but a kid with an unconventional working-class family who lived on a bus and a boat and always worked additional jobs to bring in money.

Luckily, however, Kidder never lets his portrayal of Farmer stray too deeply into sainthood. He includes a healthy dose of his own first-person questioning and reflection about this man. Kidder gets exhausted and impatient literally chasing Farmer around the world. He also portrays the prickly, hardheaded side of Farmer, as well as moments of humor and self-deprecation about Farmer's larger-than-life reputation.

At the Boston offices of *Partners in Health*, Kidder makes the following observation:

"On one visit, in a new employee's office, I saw a sign taped to a wall which read, 'If Paul is the model, we're golden.' When you looked closely, though, you saw that the word golden was written on a strip of paper. Lift up the strip and you saw that the original read, 'If Paul is the model, we're fucked.'"

This statement means that Farmer's life should not be a manual for others to follow but proof that "seemingly intractable problems could be solved." Kidder quotes one of Farmer's colleagues, who says "Paul is a model of what should be done. He's not a model for how it has to be done."

Kidder is a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer who seemed to turn his life inside out trying to keep up with Farmer long enough to write his story. Keeping up wasn't easy and took many years and many forms: long arduous climbs in rocky sections of Haiti to treat patients, long forays through the complexities of tuberculosis treatments, and long flights to places like Russia, France, or Peru, for a medical visit, a health conference, or a brief visit with family. Just the vast amount of medical, historical, and political information Kidder had to digest and represent in order to tell Farmer's story makes this book worth the read. At a time when good news seems more than a scarcity, a story like Farmer's reminds us that individual people can and do make positive changes in the world. ■

[Resource]
Information about *Partners in Health* can be found at www.pih.org

Fantastical Inklings

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Opens Dec. 9 at various locations

By LESTER GRAY
Arts Editor

The last few years have proven propitious for the Inklings, a select group of writers associated with Oxford University in the '30s and '40s. Even as fondly as these scribes held themselves, they could not have anticipated the scope of their current popularity.

J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis are the best known members of this gifted roundtable. Their works, already fantasy classics, have now received the imprimatur of mainstream culture: adaptation by Hollywood.

Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the first installment of which hit theaters in 2001, exceeded the expectations of both audiences and underwriters. Their Inklings cousin, Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, now takes its turn in the spotlight.

The story opens in World War II England, with urban centers under siege by German bombing and the population traumatized. As a precaution, children are sent to the countryside.

Such is the fate of the Pevensie siblings: two boys and two girls who find themselves boarded at an eccentric professor's spacious manor. The more than ample square footage is inversely proportional to the distractions within, the most available source of entertainment being one's imagination.

In a game of hide-and-seek, an effort to transcend thumb-twiddling, Lucy the youngest Pevensie retreats into a wardrobe only to find herself in a mysterious winter landscape. Eventually all of the siblings make this journey through the closet portal, arriving in the land of Narnia among mythical fauns, talking animals, and a war between good and evil.

At first the situation is disconcerting for our young adventurers; their arrival is not only expected but central to a prophecy in which evil, currently exerting a hold on Narnia, is confronted.

In contrast to *The Lord of the Rings*, *Narnia* is a more familiar fantasy, especially to those in touch with the conscience of childhood—a world where the line between good and bad is unclouded and you're the hero who saves the day. In Narnia, the voice of the heart trumps the solutions of rationality.

Ignore the media regarding the degree to which this is a Christian message. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* has delighted and enriched generations of children at bedtime, regardless of denomination. The screenplay is true to its essence. Director Adam Adamson's job is to simply retell the story of a great storyteller. Much to his credit and our pleasure, that is exactly what he does.

Henri Langlois: *Phantom of the Cinematheque*
Dec. 9-11 at the Northwest Film Forum

Henri Langlois was the best type of artist: one who invents his own medium and excels in it. It was 24/7 performance art through which Langlois introduced the public to the true value of film. His legendary screenings often extended into the next morning. Langlois co-founded the world's first film archive, the Cinematheque Francaise.

At a time when films were seen as mere commercial product with limited shelf life, he singlehandedly saved tens of thousands of films from destruction, even risking his life to hide prints from the Nazis during the occupation. He recognized like no one else the historical significance of these images. *Langlois* is an intriguing documentary about a larger-than-life personality, a central but unsung figure in the history of film. ■

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Adventures
in Irony

Dr. Wes Browning

Words and names do matter. Otherwise we wouldn't have these squabbles over the choice between "liberal" and "progressive."



Rose isn't a Rose isn't a Rose...

Either William Shakespeare or someone calling himself that put the following words into the mouth of what had probably been a real teenage girl of Verona, Italy, who had died in 1303: "What's in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other word would smell as sweet."

What a crock!

First, as someone would have said if anyone had heard it, "If a rose grows in the forest and there's no one there to smell it, does it smell?" More to the point, if we all were to start referring to roses as "fertilizer," people might stop smelling them altogether, so roses wouldn't smell. Ergo, roses wouldn't smell sweet. Therefore, the statement was a crock.

Second, Juliet is talking to Romeo Montague and her whole point is that the name "Montague" means nothing, so far as she's concerned. Well, so far as the rest of us are concerned, "Montague," in the play, means unusually wealthy Jerry Springer-fodder. All money, no class. And, what do you know, but Romeo goes and proves he's a genuine Montague, deserving of a Darwin Award by killing himself because he supposes his 14-year-old wife did, after not bothering to get a medical opinion.

Recently a *Real Change* Board Member said she didn't like to use the word "activist." Instead, she preferred "advocate." Would an activist by any other name be as activating? No! But if you call them "advocates," from the Latin for "speaker-outers," then, before you know it, they stop activating, they even stop being active. They become couch potatoes who now and then speak out. Don't ask me how I know that. Note that I'm not saying that being a couch potato is a bad thing.

Words and names do matter. Otherwise we wouldn't have these squabbles over the choice between "liberal" and "progressive." If you're progressive, you're going somewhere. But if you're liberal,

you're headed along a particular path that people set forth upon long ago, to let knowledge liberate. So the word "liberal" provides a compass heading for your progression. Like the man said, you don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind is blowing. You need a wet finger and a compass.

Here's another example. Rev. Jerry Falwell has started a campaign to use a range of tactics, including boycotts and legal action, to force governments and major retail chains to use the word "Christmas," rather than losing the Christ connection by talking about the Holidays, or the Holiday Season. For example, Falwell would have folks boycott Wal-Mart unless Wal-Mart forces its Jewish employees to greet you with "Merry Christmas."

From what I have said here and elsewhere you will know that I heartily sympathize with Rev. Falwell and his fellow practitioners of the heavily oppressed religion of 95 percent of Americans, because whether the name "Christmas" is used really does matter.

It's mattered ever since the beginning, back to the Fourth Century After Christ, when Pope Julius called December 25 Jesus' Birthday even though everyone knew Jesus wasn't born in December, just so it would no longer be called "Hooray the Sun is Returning to Us Day," as it had been.

But in the late 1800s, Christmas was forced to change from simply being Christ's Pretend Birthday. This began precisely when Congress said Christmas would be a federal holiday, granting most federal employees the day off.

Naming a holiday a "federal holiday" changes it. Congress can't establish any religion, not even the oppressed religion Christianity to which almost all congressmen, who write all our laws, profess to belong and practice devotedly. Therefore when Congress names Christmas a "federal holiday," it also begins to take the Christ and the Mass out of the meaning of it.

So until Congress reverses itself, Season's Greetings to all and remember there's less than 18 shopping days to Last Federal Day Off of the Year Day. ■



REAL-LIFE ANSWERS TO YOUR LEGAL HASSLES

My girlfriend left me and now she won't let me see my child. 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.

If you do not have a paternity affidavit, you need to file a traditional paternity action with the court. A paternity action is a court case in which you ask the court to determine who is the legal father of the child. If genetic testing confirms that you are the father, or if you declare in a sworn court affidavit that you are the father and the mother also swears that there are no other possible fathers, the court will generally make a legal finding that you are the father and enter an order stating officially that you are the child's legal father and that paternity has been established. The court can also enter a parenting plan as part of a paternity case.

If you are the mother and there is no paternity affidavit, you may also file a petition to establish

paternity in order to obtain a parenting plan for your child. If you believe another man might be the father of your child, you will have to name that man in your petition.

If you are a man who has filed a paternity action and either the court or the results of a genetic test determine that you are not the biological father, you most likely will not have any rights to see the child. However, if you have been acting as the child's father for many years, the court may make an exception and grant you parental rights and visitation with the child. This depends on how old the child is, whether you can prove that you have in fact acted as the child's father for a significant period of the child's life, and whether or not the child's biological father is also asking to be established as the legal father of the child. ■

For information on paternity affidavits and parenting plan petitions: www.washingtonlawhelp.org or www.courts.wa.gov/forms/ or www1.dshs.wa.gov/dcs/parents.shtml. For more information on parenting disputes and paternity actions, contact: Northwest Justice Project for information on legal services for non-criminal matters: www.nwjustice.org or 206-464-1519 or 1-888-201-1014.

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? Email: atji@seattleu.edu.



Fri., Nov. 18, 4:45 p.m., Pike Place Market.

Officers on patrol observed the suspect in the Pike Place Market lower level, by the shops. Suspect, a transient Native American male, aged 48, is known to the officers and had been trespassed from the market for one year in May. He was interviewed and released; police request criminal trespass charges.

Fri., Nov. 18, 5:08 p.m., Bell St.

Officers in the 400 block of Bell contacted the suspect, a transient Asian female aged 35. They knew her from previous contacts, and had seen her loitering in the area since they started their shift. A name check revealed an outstanding warrant for prostitution. While the warrant was being verified, the manager of the Franklin Apartments approached officers on Fourth Ave. He stated that the suspect had been inside his apartment building without permission, and had also been observed urinating in the alley behind the apartments. He requested that she be trespassed from the property. A trespass card was filled out for her, and the warrant was verified. She was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Fri., Nov. 18, 7:45 p.m., First Avenue

/ South Washington St. Mid-Town Community Ambassadors observed the suspects, two transient white males aged 45 and 40, lying on the sidewalk and blocking pedestrian traffic. The Ambassadors rode their bicycles up to the suspects and explained the Seattle Sit/Lie Ordinance to them, stating that the suspects were in violation of this code as they were blocking pedestrian traffic. The Ambassadors state that the suspects had both been warned about this before. Both suspects cursed at the Ambassadors, and the first suspect stood up and urinated on the sidewalk a few feet to the west of them. The Ambassadors retreated to the southeast corner of 1st and Washington, and the suspects began to harass them. They were intimidated by this, and called 911. Officers arrived and observed pedestrians having to walk around the legs, several backpacks and guitar of the suspects. Both men are familiar to officers for past violations of the Sit/Lie Ordinance, and they were arrested and booked into King County Jail for pedestrian interference and harassment.

Mon., Nov. 21, 12:38 a.m., Cruise West, 3rd Ave.

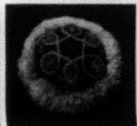
Officers observed the suspects writing/drawing on the windows of Cruise West with a large permanent red marker. Upon contact one of the suspects, a transient white female aged 17, was found to be a minor. She had no legal guardian or relatives in the state. Her companion, a transient white male aged 28, was also arrested for identification purposes. He was interviewed and released. The female minor was also arrested and transferred to the Spruce Street 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.

P.S.K. (the beginning)

(Portland street kid)
Spanking on the square
Ain't going nowhere
Nobody cares
I've grown out my hair
I look familiar
But not recognized
My old name is known
I've been idolized inside
Little Ice Angel is harder to say
than Tragedy Ane was any day
I'm back on the tweek
and Shadow makes me weak
I've missed it out here
And now I'm back
Casper said I would
I told her that was whack.

-LIA J. WILSON



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Letters

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Fircrest: bedevilment?

Dear Real Change,

In response to the opinion piece by Mark Stroh and Sean Barrett ("A New Frontier for Civil Rights: Close Fircrest and End Segregation of People with Disabilities," Nov. 23), the writers employ the usual rhetoric about institutional care being bad and ignore the fact that parents and guardians want their family members to stay there because they get good care. That level of care is not available in the community as of yet — especially for the very severely disabled whose needs are so well met at Fircrest: To discharge these very vulnerable people out of a nationally recognized nursing home into the community without the same level of care would be a violation of their civil rights.

Jeanne Marie Shepard

Dear Real Change,

Mark Stroh and Sean Barrett have a number of points that deserve a response. One of those points is their claim that labor unions are advocating for jobs over the best interests of our most vulnerable citizens.

The unionized staff members I know at Fircrest and other residential habilitation centers provide excellent care for developmentally disabled clients, and they do an excellent job of advocating for what is in the best interest of those clients. The real issue is that Stroh and Barrett simply represent a different group of employees: those who support themselves by caring for DD clients living in the community.

Mr. Stroh's organization, Washington Protection and Advocacy Systems, is staffed by attorneys who make their living by either keeping DD clients in the community or by moving them out of RHCs. Yet they seem to ignore the problems that develop in the community. I have talked to members of two families who say that WPAS has offered no assistance whatsoever when their clients encountered problems while living in the community.

The RHCs are a godsend. They avoid the problems that develop when DD clients live in the community, and I know from personal experience. My brother lived at an RHC near Spokane. I was totally comfortable having him there — even though I lived 300 miles away — because he received excellent care, and he was in an environment free of the pitfalls so common in the community. I would not have moved him for anything in the world.

Judi Gibbs

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.

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Calendar

This Week's Top Ten

Friday 12/9

In observance of **International Human Rights Day**, Dr. Stephen Zunes, professor of International Studies, will speak on the application of international law in Palestine, Iraq, Tibet, and elsewhere. With the war on terrorism and the war in Iraq, the body of international law is faced with new challenges of definition, relevance, and authority. Suggested donation \$10. 7 p.m., University Heights Center, Room 209, 5031 University Way NE. Info: (206)285-2154.

Fifteen thousand children, five times the victims of the World Trade Center attacks, die each day of hunger. *Silent Killer: The Unfinished Campaign Against Hunger* documents the scientific attempts to create productive agriculture in Kenya and the leaders of Rome's Zero Hunger program. The film shows that we can end hunger, but first we must make a commitment to doing so. 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Place. Info: wfnfp@bridgings.org.



As one of the few meal providers that serve meals outside, **Operation Sack Lunch** is a last resort program for those who are unable or unwilling to frequent Seattle's indoor meals programs. Quality meals are served without judgment, offering nutrition and dignity to some of the poorest people in Seattle. You can support their work this Saturday, Dec. 10, at 7 p.m. at a Benaroya Hall benefit concert by musician founder Beverly Graham and friends. Tickets are \$25. Details at opsacklunch.org.

Frustrated with the portrayals of Afghanistan as only Osama Bin Laden's training camp, Seattle artist Gazelle Samizay traveled there and documented her experience. Her photography exhibition shows the similarities between Americans and Afghans and creates an understanding between the two distant countries. Through Sat., Dec. 17, Mon.-Fri. 1-7 p.m., 911 Media Arts Center, 402 9th Avenue N.

Saturday 12/10

The Vegetarian Holiday Bazaar celebrates the season with Fair Trade items, vegan holiday foods, family-friendly games, and natural baby products. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Phinney Neighborhood Association, 6532 Phinney Ave.

Sunday 12/11

Children's author and illustrator Sara Anderson shares her new book *A Day at the Market* about the historic Pike

Place Market. Proceeds from the book benefit Page Ahead Children's Literacy Program. 2 p.m., University Book Store, 4326 University Way NE.

Through Sunday 12/11

When soon-to-be college graduate Clarice tells her mother she is pregnant and plans to seek an abortion, the peace of her modern-day New Orleans family unravels. *Kitchen* is a gripping play about contemporary dilemmas, dark secrets, and reconciliation. Tickets \$15 and up. 7:30 p.m. Thurs.-Sat., 3 p.m. Sun., Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, 104 17th Ave. S. (206)736-8027.

Monday 12/12

Short Stories Live! with Jane Jones and Myra Platt, co-artistic directors of Book-It Repertory Theatre, present a holiday program of wonderful stories, including Grace Paley's "The Loudest Voice," a humorous tale of a young Jewish girl struggling with Christmas-time. Tickets \$13

and up. 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave.

Lopez Island photographer Steve Horn began traveling to the Balkans in 1970. His book, *Pictures Without Borders: Bosnia Revisited*, is a powerful portrayal of the country emerging from the horrors of war. 7:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Co., 101 S. Main St.

Tuesday 12/13

Laura Veirs, Danny O'Keefe, Wayne Horvitz, Jim Page, and other Seattle musicians featured on the CD *Songs for Shelter* perform at a release party benefiting homeless services of the Fremont Public Association. Tickets \$20. 7 p.m., The Triple Door, 216 Union St.

Calendar compiled by Dena Burke. Have a suggestion for an event? Email it to calendar@realchangejournal.org.

Director's Corner

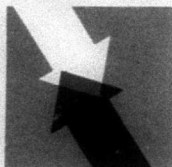


Over the last few weeks, we've been talking about what it will take to oppose the radical free-market, militarist, and authoritarian forces that threaten to undermine democracy in America. Cornel West calls for a grassroots response of Socratic questioning, prophetic witness, and tragicomic hope.

The last of these is perhaps the most intangible but important of the three. West describes tragicomic hope as the sort of unquenchable life energy that one finds in blues and jazz, art forms that Kurt Vonnegut recently described as the one reason the rest of the world doesn't hate us entirely.

At a certain level, we just need to have faith that the forces of life will overcome those of death, despite all evidence to the contrary. We need to side with the indomitable joy of life itself against despair.

This is something different from optimism. Simple optimism buries its head in the sand and ignores reality. Changing history takes more than having a positive attitude. Radical hope understands our past and the vast human capacity for evil, but also acknowledges the innate goodness in all of us. Radical hope asserts that we are capable of justice, and that when we create community, anything is possible.



First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

Protect the Human Rights of Workers!

Issue: Join Washington State Jobs With Justice, the Washington State Labor Council, and others in celebrating International Human Rights Day by supporting the Employee Free Choice Act.

Background: On Dec. 10, 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which calls upon all nations to protect human rights — including the right to organize unions. U.S. employers consistently violate these basic human rights 57 years later, according to a Human Rights Watch report.

Under the National Labor Relations Act, workers have the right to express their views on unions, to talk with their coworkers about a union, to wear union buttons, to attend union meetings, and to decide for themselves whether they want union representation, without interference by the employer.

More than 57 million workers in America say they would form a union tomorrow to improve their lives — if they could. But many simply can't, because of obstacles their employers and our government put in their way.

When workers seek to organize a union — whether at a construction site or in an office, hospital, or manufacturing plant — their bosses almost always obstruct their efforts through threats and harassment. Some employers even fire workers for trying to form unions, which is against the law.

There is another way. Workers need a new law. Over 245 U.S. Representatives and Senators respect our human rights by promoting the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). The act would strengthen protections for workers' freedom to choose by requiring employers to recognize a union after a majority of workers sign cards authorizing union representation. It also would provide for mediation and arbitration of first-contract disputes and authorize stronger penalties for violation of the law when workers seek to form a union. All of Washington state's congressional Democrats have signed on to the bill. Fourteen more supporters are needed to force House leadership to bring the bill to a vote.

Action: Contact your representative and let him or her know you support the right to organize. Ask Reps. Dave Reichert, Cathy McMorris, and Doc Hastings to support the Act. Thank Reps. Jay Inslee, Rick Larsen, Brian Baird, Norm Dicks, Jim McDermott, and Adam Smith and urge them to be even more vocal. For more information or to take action online, visit: www.unionvoice.org/wsjiw

If you want to do even more, and have some fun while you're at it, consider participating in Human Rights day activities on Sat., Dec. 10, beginning at noon.

Puyallup: Leafleting and caroling at the South Hill Mall; Free food and Holiday Party beforehand at the Best Western Hotel (620 South Hill Park Drive, Puyallup)

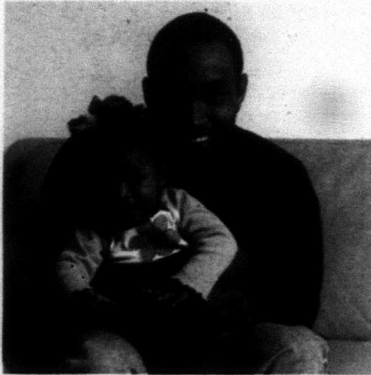
King County: Leafleting, caroling, musical skits and theatrics around Rep. Dave Reichert's district (East & South King County); Meet for free food and caroling practice beforehand in Bellevue (First Congregational Church, 725 108th Ave. NE) or Auburn (UFCW Local 81 Hall, 960 E. Main St.)

For more information about the events, contact Washington State Jobs With Justice at (206)441-4969.

COMFORT, Continued from Page 1

they will be torn down next summer as part of a new, mixed-income development called Greenbridge that's currently under construction.

This week, Reginald expects to start a job with one of Greenbridge's contractors — good news for a family that's been living on food stamps, \$40 a week in unemployment, and help from family members, who are now scattered across the nation.



REGINALD GILLUM WITH HIS DAUGHTER ZINAYA
SEATED ON THE SOFA DONATED BY MACY'S.
PHOTO BY SHERRY LOESER.

He's still waiting for the \$2,000 the Federal Emergency Management Agency owes him in immediate assistance. Latrice got her check but says every call to FEMA has been a run-around to get more housing aid.

"I'm just kind of numb to the situation," Reginald says. "But it's not like it's going to be too big of a setback. I still have my health, I still have my family, and everybody's doing all right, so all I can do is move on from here." ■

ICE'd, Continued from Page 1

Conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the raid occurred at the warehouses of the Regal Logistics Corporation. ICE began investigating whether undocumented workers may have been on the premises of Regal Logistics after an audit of the recent hiring practices of Phoenix Staffing, LLC. Regal Logistics had employed Phoenix Staffing as a temporary hiring agency.

During the raid, 106 workers without proper worker documentation were discovered by ICE, processed, and given the option to agree to voluntary deportation proceedings. All but two of those discovered hailed from Mexico.

And while the spiriting away of more than 100 people seems easy enough to track, little else is known for certain.

Maru Villalpando, coordinator of the ESL program at St. James Cathedral, says she's been trying to piece together information from details she's heard from those present. "I got a call around

10 a.m.," Villalpando recalls. From that, and other phone conversations, Villalpando says she's trying to create a picture of what transpired.

Four buses arrived at 8 a.m., Villalpando says she was informed, with those identified as being undocumented arrested and placed in the vehicles. While the workers were being arrested, Villalpando says there were accounts of Regal Logistics officials laughing. She says some of the workers were single mothers who weren't allowed to contact their children upon

arrest; other workers were not given lunch. Another report claims a lawyer was present who sought to charge \$500 for those looking for legal assistance. But these reports, she admits, cannot be verified. "We didn't have access to [the workers,] but someone did," says Villalpando.

Those who did have access to the workers, however, are either mum or offering very little information.

Numerous phone calls and an email to Regal Logistics were not answered by press time. There is no phone listing for Phoenix Staffing in Fife, or in the nearby environs. Information from the WA secretary of state's website shows the registered agent for Phoenix Staffing listed as Garry Neeves, with a Fife address. Regal Logistics' corporate headquarters just happens to share the same address.

"You want to know what's troubling about this situation? They're targeting Latinos. This is racial profiling; I've yet to hear of them raiding undocumented Canadians."

**— Magdalena "Leno" Rose-Avila,
executive director of the Northwest
Immigrant Project**

Virginia Kice, spokeswoman for ICE, says that as there is an ongoing investigation, "we can't comment" on the specifics. Kice was willing to provide on a few small details, however.

She says that all but two of the 106 immigrants have been sent back to their home coun-

tries. The duo still in the United States, says Kice, hail from Samoa, and will soon be sent home via an airline operated by U. S. Marshals. "And the taxpayer pays the cost," says Kice. She says she knows nothing about improper treatment of detainees or an on-site attorney trying to obtain clients.

The raid and the confusing particulars around it do not sit well with Magdalena "Leno" Rose-Avila, executive director of the Northwest Immigrant Project. "You want to know what's troubling about this situation?" he asks rhetorically. "They're targeting Latinos. This is racial profiling; I've yet to hear of them raiding undocumented Canadians."

Rose-Avila says word of the raid has gotten out to the Latino community through Spanish-speaking radio stations, but for the most part, the story has been missed by the general media. Events such as these, he says, make immigrants less likely to work with law enforcement officials when they truly need help, not to mention how such raids affects families.

Says Rose-Avila, "Wholesale raids like this are bad for the community." ■

[Resource]

An event cosponsored by numerous organizations will speak to issues of importance to the immigrant Latino community. The event will take place on Sun, Dec. 11, at 2 p.m., at the Community Center in Burien, 425 SW 144 St. Call (206)382-4511 or (206)321-7862. The event will be in Spanish.

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Mockingbird Times



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December 2005

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak Out Across the Nation

Volume V, Issue 13

Visit us online at www.mockingbirdsociety.org or call 206-323-KIDS (5437)

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"It's My Life" in Washington, D.C.

JACOB HARRISON

On November 12th, Jim, Najja, Dietra (all of Mockingbird Society) and Degale (of Treehouse) flew to Baltimore, MD for the annual Casey Family "It's My Life" conference. I had never been anywhere on the East Coast before, so I spent a lot of time on the flight wondering what was ahead. We arrived at about 6 pm that night and I was in shock from seeing such a large number of black people dressed nicely and running things. I just don't see that here in Seattle and it made me wonder why. I got up to my room and decided I needed to recap what I just saw. Eventually, I calmed down and fell asleep.

The next morning, I had the best breakfast in my life. I ate a buffet of fresh smoked salmon, eggs, sausages, hashbrowns and biscuits with gravy. The service at our hotel was terrific. After breakfast, we all settled in the car and headed for Washington D.C. It was roughly an hour from Baltimore. Our first stop was the famous White House, home of a current president (who I won't comment on). It wasn't as big as I thought and my curiosities about security were quickly answered when I saw a whole bunch of men in all black

with guns rise on the roof. I'll never question the safety of the White House again.

Our next stop was the Vietnam Memorial and it was sad to all the people's names on the wall that died. My great grandpa was one of them. Then we visited the Lincoln Memorial, which I had for so long wanted to see. I got to step upon those same steps and see the exact setting that Dr. Martin Luther King gave his infamous "I Have A Dream" speech in. I plan on being there again many more times. We visited the Washington Monument then drove back to the hotel for some sleep. I had a long, serious two days ahead of me.

Monday, I woke up and attended the first workshop on my schedule, "Foster Youth Education". I was upset to see the shocking statistics of high school graduation Blacks are at the bottom of the list with 51%. It gets worse. When it comes to Black kids in foster care, only 31% graduate. I was also shocked when I heard the teacher say she visited Seattle and named Rainier Beach High School as the worst



Jacob, Najja, Courtney (Mockingbird Society) and Degale (Treehouse) in front of the White House.

academic school she'd seen in the country. I was really angry when I left that session. My second class was called "Choose Your Friends Don't Let Them Choose You." That class was the most inspiring class of all. The teacher was an ex-gangbanger and he told the class all the stories about when he was getting into

D.C. CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

The Fight for Gay Adoption

MISTY LOU
COOK



Something happened to me after I saw the movie "We Are Dad". I had realizations. I had real, unmistakably heartfelt epiphanies that I haven't been able to put into words until right now. I nearly cried, screamed, laughed, shouted and whispered to my neighbor when it hit me that gay people aren't legally able to adopt. Queer (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited, etc.) people, no matter how great, famous, loving, caring, smart or able cannot legally adopt, except in four states: California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Vermont. These four states "explicitly permit joint adoption by lesbian and gay couples." (1) This does not mean there is not hope. As a matter of fact, "in some states joint adoption by lesbian and gay couples is, at least in certain parts of the state, almost routine even though there is no court decision or statute specifically allowing it. For example, Oregon falls into this category." (2)

In the movie and real-life documentary "We Are Dad", two gay white men adopted 4 black and 2 white children, all with AIDS or HIV + from birth. The family was essentially under the state of Florida's microscope, because the two dads were gay and the state of Florida has very strict bans on gay adoption, but the family proved to be strong, loving and healthy, and the two dads built a home for their kids. I was in awe of how close the family was, and how funny their inter-

actions were at some points. Every child had their individuality, and they were respected and loved for who they were. "We Are Dad" was a heart-warming, wonderful and very educational movie that brought new perspective to why queer people should be able to marry and adopt. It proved, without a doubt, that healthy, happy and loving families could and can be raised by queer people.

"We Are Dad" also brought up a lot of emotion for me. I know, from working at the Mockingbird Times and from being on and off the streets since I was 14, that there are so many children suffering from neglect in the foster care system and wanting nothing more than a safe, happy, healthy and loving home. Half of the kids I met on the streets were running away from abusive foster families, the other half were either kicked out for being queer, neglected or running away from a variety of abuses as well. I realized that there are so many thousands of safe, happy and healthy queer couples out there who want nothing more than to raise a family-to adopt children, but aren't legally able to. This movie brought new perspective to me, especially in regards to why it's important that queer people be legally allowed to adopt.

Being able to marry, adopt or have children is a civil right, like voting is a civil right. Women and black people in this country couldn't vote for hundreds of years, because they were deemed unequal. These people fought for their rights because they knew in their minds and hearts that they were as equal as a male or a white person, and they deserved their civil rights. There were many courageous people who fought for their rights and they will forever be written into history as heroes of their time, because they followed their heart and did what was right. Rosa Parks, Frederick

Douglass and Harriet Tubman are some of these people. The U.S Constitution, written in 1780, begins with a "Declaration of Rights", and states that "All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness." (3)

What was the intent of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution? It seems this country's forefathers were writing up guidelines for an ideal utopia; one where people are free to speak their minds and express themselves. An interesting aspect of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution is the time period it was written in ... slavery was still prominent in the late 1700's, and yet they dreamt of "safety and happiness". Perhaps they were ahead of their time and were not ready to put their full theory into practice, and perhaps we're still learning how to turn this utopia, where everyone is equal and has rights, into reality. It makes sense that people fear what they do not understand; the white settlers did not understand the Native American way of living or the black people that they enslaved, but it did not mean that blacks and Native Americans were bad, unequal or "sinful". If we try to understand each other, then we can stop fearing and hurting one another.

The Florida Gay Adoption Ban, which is the most strict adoption ban in the United States, was based on fear. A woman named Anita Bryant led a notoriously homophobic campaign in the late 1970's called "Save Our

ADOPTION CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Letter from the Editor

JIM
THEOFELIS



Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays: It seems amazing that another year comes to a close which is always a time for reflection and introspection. Mockingbird Society has experienced a remarkable year of growth and achievements that fill us with pride as well as inspiration to continue our work on behalf of the children, adolescents and families we serve. We are especially proud of the young people who have worked in the Youth LEAD program which includes the *Mockingbird Times*, ASK-Y and our Speakers Panel. We continue to received feedback from around the country that *Mockingbird Times* is a quality newspaper full of the type of insight and wisdom that can only come from youth. It is very gratifying that many of our youth reporters have moved on to secure employment in the private industry and/or enrolling in higher education programs. ASK-Y and our Speakers Panel have been instrumental toward increasing positive public policy and public awareness

regarding the issues facing children and youth who are homeless or in the foster care system. Youth recognize their own personal growth and confidence through their participation in the public speaking associated with ASK-Y and our Speakers Panel.

The Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) is set to expand throughout King County and continues to receive attention from across the nation as a promising practice that stabilizes children in placements, allows siblings to live together, improves educational outcomes and retains and recruits foster/kinship parents. Indeed this has been a remarkable year of growth and achievement for the Mockingbird Society and we are appreciative of your support. As you decide on the recipient of your holiday giving I hope you will consider the Mockingbird Society. I believe we are deserving of your support and I believe our results demonstrate this is so. In closing I wish each of you the best of the holiday season and in particular send my heartfelt blessings to the children and youth who find themselves away from their families.

Jim Theofelis

Jim Theofelis

jim@mockingbirdsociety.org



Mockingbird Staff work on gingerbread houses.



Teresa and Jacob getting serious about their creations.



Jim sharing holiday love with Astrid.



Jim and Ros with their house, keeping Astrid's hands away.

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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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

Casey Family Program: It's My Life Conference; Children's Alliance; Chris Marsh, Attorney; Patricia Gray; Herbert & Anne Theofelis; Margaret-Ann & Mark LeRoy; Downtown Emergency Service Center; Janis Avery; David Eifert; Lisa Taylor; Northwest Children's Fund; Valerie Ramisch; Anne McBride; Corine Knudsen; James & Rosemarie Flaherty; Paul G. Allen Family Foundation

Mockingbird Society's 3rd Annual Auction and Fundraiser: We Believe We Can Fly

Thursday, March 30, 2006

6-9 pm

Wine, hor d'oeuvres and dessert

Silent and live auction
Premiere of the Mockingbird
Society documentary,
A Place to Sing

At the Broadway
Performance Hall
1625 Broadway
Seattle, WA 98122

Tickets are \$35 and may be
purchased in advance or at
the door.

D.C. CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

trouble and how he found a way out. His words of advice were electrifying. I took another class about transforming from adolescents to adults and realized how lucky I am. Most kids out there that are in foster care have it way worse than me. I couldn't believe all the stories I was hearing about kids just getting beat and raped by their foster parents. I felt so terrible and even more so angry. No kid should ever have to go through any of that. Some of the kids I was talking to were telling me how great it felt to get away from home to come to the conference.

Tuesday was the day Najja, Courtney, Dietra and myself presented the Youth LEAD (Leadership Education/ Employment Advocacy Development) program here at Mockingbird Society. I read my Permanency article and stole a bunch of hearts apparently. After our presentation, we left for the airport to start the long journey back home. While I thought about how nice it was going to be to get home, I also thought about the kids I met that are going right back home to bad situations with their caretakers. I just wish that everyone could be treated like children instead of useless adults. It did feel good to be home.

Mockingbird Society celebrates the holidays with a gingerbread house making party. Come enjoy the scents of our gingerbread lane!

MEET OUR STAFF

Executive Director

Jim Theofelis

Youth LEAD Coordinator

Najja Morris

Operations Manager

Ros Ghan

Public Relations

Darcie Gray

Executive Assistant

Lauren Frederick

Americorps Member

Dietra Clayton

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Ashley Grant, Jomica Henderson, Echo Speed, Larishica Asher, Terasa Asher, Jacob Harrison, Anthony Guess

Contributing Writers

Leona, Alicia Morris, Starcia Ague, James Milner, Brett Horejsi

Volunteers

Patricia Gray, Anna Trombley

The Importance of Donating

COURTNEY
KONIEZKO



I know that when I was homeless, living on the streets of Seattle, one of the things that sucked the most was sleeping in the snow. I had one thin blanket that I was sharing with another person and it was not enough. I remember it was too cold to stay asleep and the other person and I kept waking up looking at each other in frozen misery. Being cold-to-the-bone is one of the worst things a person can experience and still when I get cold I remember the streets.

Homeless people need blankets, warm clothing, beanies and gloves, hygiene kits with things like travel size tooth-

paste and floss, vouchers to warm places to hang out in or go eat at like movie theatres and fast food restaurants, sweatshirts with hoods are always appreciated, socks and underwear, and those hand warmer things that you take camping where you press the dot and they bring heat for a couple of hours.

When I became older I realized that it was better to give than to receive and didn't want anything quite as much. The greedy side of me still screams hrm, a Tempur-pedic bed would be nice, more shoes, more boots (I am a shoe fiend!) I don't need those things though. It's amazing, the feeling I get from giving. I like watching people's faces light up because they got something they loved.

If you can't give someone a home, give them what they need to survive until they can get a home. Volunteer your time serving a holiday meal or donate the below items.

Drop-in-centers are places where homeless youth can go to get clothes, a warm meal, showers, and other services that move them towards healing and self-sufficiency. These are important places to donate to in the holiday season because they help homeless youth survive on the streets and give them a Christmas they otherwise wouldn't have.

University District Youth Center

4516 15th Ave. N.E. Seattle, WA 98105
(206) 526-2992
Contact Person Rick King x17

Holiday Donation List:

- Gift cards (Safeway, Bartell Drugs, Fred Meyer, University Book Store, Tower Records)
- Pre-paid phone cards
- Battery-operated travel alarm clocks & flashlights
- Hooded sweatshirts
- Bus tokens (Packs of ten \$1.25 tokens)
- Packs of AA batteries
- Sleeping bags & Backpacks (Dark colors preferred)
- New underwear and white tube socks
- African American hair products
- Journals, notebooks, and day-timers
- Disposable food serving supplies (Plates, bowls, plastic forks/spoons/knives)

The Orion Multi-Service Center

1020 Virginia St Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 622-5555
Contact Person Jaesa Papillon

Holiday Donation List:

- Gift cards (shoe stores, grocery stores, restaurants, clothing places)
- Movie passes
- Bus passes
- Sleeping bags
- Blankets
- Socks and underwear
- Beanies and gloves
- Portable food (peanut butter crackers, fruit cups, etc.)

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. For more info and to check us out, go to www.mockingbirdsociety.org.

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.

ADOPTION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Children" (4), which was aimed at repealing a gay rights law in Miami, Florida. Those seeds of fear bloomed into massive quantities of homophobia which eventually led to a ban restricting all queer people from adopting children. The main reason why Bryant said gays shouldn't adopt is because she believed that all gay people were child molesters. Her prejudice and fear of gay people led to a law that prevents gay people from adopting and building families and that Gay Adoption Ban in Florida is still in effect to this day.

Steve and Roger, the two dads from the movie-documentary "We Are Dad", are very affected by Florida's Gay Adoption Ban and are currently in a battle to keep their kids. Frank and Tracy, the two eldest children they raised since infancy, were recently taken away from Steve and Roger by the state of Florida and placed in new "homes". Bert, their third child, is in constant danger of being taken away from his family because queer people still aren't legally allowed to adopt in the state of Florida. Bert commented on this in the documentary, "We Are Dad". He said, with much heartfelt confusion and pain, "It's illegal to adopt kids if you are gay".

Holiday Events In Seattle

COURTNEY KONIEZKO

Meals

New Horizons Holiday Party for homeless youth 22 and under. There will be a hot meal and stockings filled with goodies. Located at 2709 3rd Ave. Seattle, WA 98121 (3rd and Cedar). Takes place on December 13th, 2005, starts at 6:30pm.

Teen Feed Holiday Party for homeless youth age 25 and under, December 14th. Party will take place in the University District, location and time to be determined at a later date. For more information call Laura Pritchard at (206) 632-1635 or talk to other street youth in the district.

Youth Care Orion Multi-Service Center holiday dinner for homeless youth age 19 and under. 2:30-4:30pm, December 25th Christmas Day. Located at 1020 Virginia St. Seattle, WA 98101. (206) 622-5555

Roots Young Adult Shelter Christmas Meal offers a multi-course restaurant-quality, hot meal at 6:30pm, Friday for anyone in need. Will provide extra Christmas food items on F, December 23, 2005. 1415 NE 43rd St. University Temple United Methodist Church Seattle, WA 98105.

Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets Christmas Meal. Provides a family-style holiday meal for eligible parents and youth. Call to register and for the service location, dates and hours. For more information call (206) 726-8500 x1 1814 Summit Ave, Seattle, WA 98122

Parties

Family & Adult Service Center Children's Christmas Party Coordinates a party with food and gifts for individuals who are homeless, ages 18 and younger, and their parents or guardians; 9:30-11:30am, Sa, Dec. 17, 2005. For more info call (206) 441-8405 2013 3rd Ave, Seattle, WA 98121.

Renton Area Youth and Family Services - West Hill Family Enrichment Center Holiday Party. Offers a holiday party for low-income families at 10am, Saturday, Dec. 17, 2005. Party includes music, snacks, photos with Santa, door prizes, etc. For more information call (206) 772-2050 Located at 12704 76th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98178.

Seattle Parks and Recreation - Miller Community Center Holiday Party with Gifts. Hosts a holiday party from 6-8pm, Friday, Dec. 16, 2005, for registered low-income families and youth living in the Capitol Hill, Central District, etc. For more information call (206) 684-4753. Located at 330 19th Ave E, Seattle, WA 98112.

Salvation Army - William Booth Center Christmas Day Dinner. Serves a free Christmas Day dinner to anyone in need from noon-2pm, Sunday, Dec. 25, 2005. There will be holiday music and prize giveaways. For more info call (206) 621-0145. Located at 811 Maynard Ave S, Seattle, WA 98134.

Leona's Story

LEONA

I grew up in the foster care system all of my life. It's been a difficult experience. After I aged out, I was on my own, but luckily I already knew of some resources that have been helping me out, in the past and in the present.

Ever since I aged out, I've been in and out of jail and on and off the streets. I've had a hard time trying to maintain a decent job, as well as housing. I'm always on the move. I don't stay in one place for too long. I'm used to this, because I was constantly moving in foster care, from one home to another. This effected my education, which created gaps. It also got me in the habit of keeping to myself. I still have a hard time opening up to people, and I also have difficulty in communicating with other people like my friends or significant other. I tend to keep a lot of things bottled up, which stresses me

out so much. Not only do I have a hard time accepting new changes, but I tend to be very insecure of myself. I carry myself very well, from what I'm told by most of my friends.

Letting go is another main thing I have had a hard time dealing with. When I say "letting go," what I mean is I don't like separating from my friends or family. I know that if I don't learn to let go of things or to let go of closeness, then it'll just slowly tear me down. So letting go isn't always easy for me, but after letting go, my load or burden seems to be lighter.

I always have a hard time because of what I've been through in the past, but eventually I know things will work out. Hopefully, sharing my experiences with the foster care system will help others.

Steve and Roger have already been plaintiffs for two years in an ongoing American Civil Liberties Union federal lawsuit challenging Florida's gay adoption ban and are in danger of losing Bert, a child they raised since infancy. Half of the proceeds made from the movie-documentary "We Are Dad" goes to Steve and Roger, and towards their fight to keep their children and be able to legally adopt in the state of Florida.

November was National Adoption Month, so write in and tell us, tell your legislators or your Florida State Governor or whomever what you think about gay adoption and why. Is hate a family value?

Should Steve and Roger be able to keep their children? Is a ban restricting all queer people from adopting children helping or hurting children in the foster care system? Let us know what you think. Letting people know where you stand on gay adoption could save a life, enhance a childhood or just make you feel better.

- (1,2) http://www.letthemstay.com/big-pic_parenting_couples.html
- (3) http://www.pbs.org/georgewashington/classroom/theory1_2.html
- (4) <http://letthemstay.com/lawsuit.html>

Creative Corner

Life

STARCIA AGUE

Hurt, pain and confusion,
Is what I used to feel,
Now that I know Jesus
I feel like I am so alive and real
God has planted a seed in me,
And now I know where my life is heading
and my destiny
Though I still have hardships and
struggles,
All I have to do is hold on to his word and
cuddle,
When I'm having a bad day
God is there to be my best friend and
always has the right thing to say
Growing up I didn't get much love or
affection,
But now god is leading my life and will
not lead me the wrong direction

Chantelle

STARCIA AGUE

Bay girl you mean the world to me,
Even though life is tough right now I
hope you learn that's not the way it has
to be,
I feel like I let you down so much,
I miss your cute little baby touch,
I had no guidance in life growing up,
Look, the same things happening to you
and I have no control which really sucks,
I look at your pictures often,
And wonder if our mothers' heart will
ever soften,
Getting locked up was the best thing that
ever happened to me,
Even though it has been hard for other
people to see
I have done everything in my power to
change my old ways from who I use to be,
Now my goal in life is to succeed,
Please know one day I'm going to be
there,
And you can count on me
Together we're gonna make it just you
and me....

A dead man's Heart

JAMES MILNER

I'm a dead man with a dead heart
Not willing to let the die come, but to go because of someone that once helped me feel
alive and someone who helped someone remember what and who I should stay alive
for
But now a lot of the time I feel everything but emotion of happiness I am a dead man
Or if not I feel dead there's no ending to my sorrow besides the times... I love her
And at that time I don't know if she believes it or even if the feeling is still mutual.
I always seem to feel alone in this world against millions and I know I won't make it
out.
So I pray for his will to happen and want the worst to come
But I want and pray for so much and get nothing this is a dead man talking.

Untitled

Brett Horejsi

This is for all the people who have died
Drunk driving and suicide
This is all the people who wanted attention
Do you still want to cause tension for things you haven't mentioned?
This is for all the people who have died
Old age and genocide
This is for all the people raped and beaten
Worthless pedophiles and not so good cretins
This is for the people gone and dead
Never known and left unsaid
This is for the people died in battle
Shot and slaughtered in the midst of battle
This is for the people this is for the people
This is for the people shown up and battered
Still broken and still shattered
This is for the people gambling their lives away
Lost money their hopes and dreams
This is for the people that braved harsh words
Resorted to knife and struck and struck their veins chords
This is for the people left alone in a storm
All alone by themselves all alone
This is for the people this is for the people
This is for the people feeling oppressed
You're not alone get it off your chest
This is for the people offered a life
But only took the knife
This is for the people still here still empowered
Still lost still a coward
This is for the people who believed in lies
Listened and only to cry
This is for the people watching life through tunnel vision
Still cut their skin with pure precision
This is for the people feeling mixed emotions
Not knowing to care or to give full devotion
This is for the people judged
Too soon too early not given a chance
this is for the people who thought life was a joke
and took life for granted though it was funny
This is for the people this is for the people

Mockingbird Represents on Youth Legislative Youth Advisory Council

JAMICA HENDERSON

This weekend I had the opportunity to participate in the first meeting of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council. It was held in Olympia on December 2nd and 3rd. There are 22 members on this council and I am proud to be one of them. We are a group of young people from all over Washington state who want to see positive changes happen for young people. One of the important things that this group does is read over bills that are already written or if necessary, come up with new ones that we feel would be more beneficial.

Our mission statement is: As the Washington State Legislative Youth Advisory Council we strive to be a voice for youth; examine issues of importance to Washington youth and vocalize concern to legislators and we also promote youth participation in state and municipal governments as well as foster long lasting relationships between state legislators, adults, and young people.

I will keep the Mockingbird readers up-to-date with our next activities. Get ready for a new change and stay tuned for more details regarding our 2006 Advocacy Day!

Don't forget February 2nd is advocacy training, and February 3rd is Youth Advocacy Day! This year we are advocating for HB 2002, which would extend services to age 21 for youth who want to stay in care and go to school.



Jamica with fellow youth legislators at the first legislative weekend.

I Am a 19 Year Old Street Kid

ALICIA MORRIS

I am a 19 year old street kid. I have been homeless on my own in Seattle for 2 years on and off now. Over all I have been homeless for 4 and a half years. My passion in life is writing. I work for UDYC's Zine project in the U-District in Seattle, so I'm excited to get a chance to write for the Mockingbird Times (hopefully they'll accept this piece of writing.)

I was homeless with my twin sister but she has now left for Job Corps, so I am alone for the first time ever. I've never experienced true loneliness until the last 2 months. I had no idea what it was like. It must be so hard for all the people that don't have a twin. I've become so independent in such a short time.

I sleep in the Roots Shelter. From 9pm to 8 am they allow young street kids to sleep there. I don't know what I would do without it. The streets of Seattle are no place to be. Drugs are everywhere. This is a place of drugs, sex and alcohol. Take a good innocent kid, like I used to be, and

put them on the street for 9-12 months, maybe less, and you will see their lives change for the worst.

I love my street family, they are my closest friends on the streets. I would die for them. But the streets will wear you down. I wander the streets through rain, storm and shine. I'm out there with no place to escape the cold. Sometimes I would just go to the park but it sucks when you can really feel yourself getting sick and there is absolutely no warm place to go and you have no choice but to sit there and get sick. Plus medicine is not easy to come by. Yeah, that really sucks.

I have one thing left that I still have from my youth. The most precious possession I have; my virginity. The last of my innocence. I guard it well.

Basically I have reached a dead end in my life. I have my G.E.D. and I always have some random job. I really can't stand being homeless and having no job. Where is the productiveness?! My parents were

not fortunate enough to be able to take care of my sister and I, so off to the streets we went.

I have reached the realization that if I want to have a normal life (not homeless) and if I ever want to be a successful adult then I need to get away from the streets. Away from my friends, whom I love to death, and away from the drugs. It will pull you down once you've gotten off the streets if you continue to have the drugs and homeless people as your surroundings. It just sucks you into this black hole called homelessness.

I never did hardcore drugs, like heroin or cocaine or meth, so my body is not addicted to anything. It doesn't depend on a drug to function normally. But a lot of kids out here are not so fortunate. All it takes is one hit and you can be addicted. For these homeless kids it will be so much harder for them to get off the streets. Their bodies depend on these drugs. They can not even think clearly if they are sober.

But to have a normal life the first step is to get away from the drugs. After that....well, I don't know because I'm not there yet. I'm leaving in one week to Job Corps. I'm.... well to be honest I'm terrified. Homelessness is the only lifestyle I have ever lived. I'm so excited to have a bed to sleep in and to be able to shower easily and to cook and eat the food that you choose, not what is given by teen feeds. These are the things most people take advantage of. But I know there is another way of life out there with no drugs and the drama of homelessness. I will write back to the Mockingbird when I am in Job Corps and explain what it's like and if I made a good decision. Maybe this can be a small project I can do for all the homeless kids out there. I will be a living example if Job Corps is good or not for the street kids. I'll get back to you guys with info. In a little while. Sincerely, Alicia Morris. trixelina@yahoo.com