

YOUR VENDOR BUYS THIS PAPER FOR 35¢ AND KEEPS ALL THE PROCEEDS.

PLEASE PURCHASE FROM BADGED VENDORS ONLY.

WWW.REALCHANGENEWS.ORG

DEC. 21 - 27, 2005

ISSUES • INSIGHT • IMPACT



WHEN DISASTER STRIKES, VOLUNTEER HAM RADIO OPERATOR BILL DOCKSTADER KEEPS THE CITY'S EMERGENCY-RESPONSE PERSONNEL IN TOUCH WITH WHAT'S GOING ON. PHOTO BY LUKE MCGUFF.

Radio Activity

During a disaster, ham operators fill gaps in emergency-response system

By JUSTIN ELLIS
Contributing Writer

February 21, 2001 was like any other workday for Bill Dockstader. Then the Nisqually Earthquake hit. Dockstader made sure his coworkers were o.k. and then, he says, "I went down to the parking garage and got into my truck."

Dockstader is deputy director of Seattle's Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS), a volunteer team of amateur radio operators who are prepared to mobilize — in Dockstader's case, to head for the city's Emergency Operations Center — in the event that a disaster knocks out other forms of communication that police, fire, and other emergency workers usually rely upon. That day, there were 75 ACS volunteers on the air within minutes of the quake.

Operated by licensed hobbyists well-versed in communications protocol, ham radio is a valuable asset because it remains usable when other forms of communication are out. In

the Nisqually quake, for example, cell phone service was down for about an hour. The cell phone companies sell service to more people than the system can handle. This isn't a problem — except when everyone gets on their phones at once.

"Ham radio can be broken down into the simplest forms of communication," says Dockstader. It also allows "a small percentage of the population to provide an enormous amount of communication."

Volunteer George Boswell got into ham radio when his dad bought him a six-millimeter transistor in 1962. He got his license a year later. Though he now has a career with Boeing, amateur radio remains his hobby. What got him hooked was "the idea of having a microphone in my hand, and being able to contact someone else around the world."

Boswell first heard about ACS from one of their regular Monday night "nets" — a controlled talk on the air. ACS conducts nets twice a week, on Monday

See HAM, Continued on Page 12

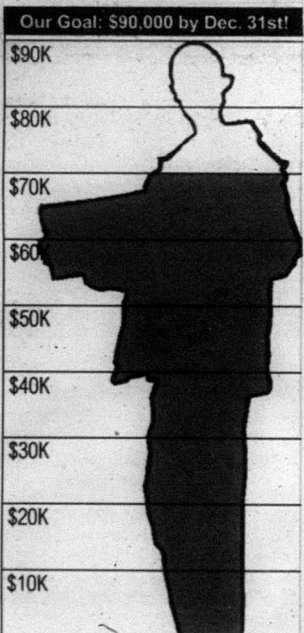
Back to the Chopping Block

Public school closures reconsidered

By DONNA STEFANIK
Contributing Writer

School closures are still an option for the Seattle School District, according to the preliminary report released on Dec. 8 by a citizen education panel. Which schools might be shuttered remains to be seen.

See SCHOOLS, Continued on Page 12



[Please Donate]

With two weeks left to our holiday fund drive, we've raised \$69,852 in reader support. Thank you to our generous supporters! We need your help to get to that last \$20,148 we need to end the year on solid ground. When you support *Real Change*, you support opportunity and dignity for the poor, powerful advocacy on the issues you care about, and quality alternative journalism. Please go to realchangenews.org or use the coupon on page 12 to give today.

This Issue

The third of seven new poems from

Sherman Alexie

page 5

ONE YEAR LATER

Nearly twelve months after the tsunami struck, hundreds of thousands are still homeless.

PAGE 3

GIMME SHELTER

Shelter advocates lament a city funding decision that shuttles funds to transitional housing.

PAGE 4

NEVER AGAIN

Humanitarian Ruth Messinger says claims to end genocide haven't stopped the deaths in Darfur.

PAGE 6

Change Agent.....	3
Just Heard.....	3
Short Takes.....	4
Arts.....	8
Dr. Wes.....	9
Street Watch.....	9
Letters.....	10
Poetry.....	7, 9, 10
Calendar.....	11
Director's Corner.....	11
First things First.....	11

Under the Cable

Proposed 10-Year Cable Deal Pays Lip Service to Arts and Culture

By JONATHAN LAWSON
Guest Writer

In fact, it's difficult to name a single area in which this proposed franchise represents a real improvement over the last one, at least as far as Seattle cable customers are concerned.

Comcast, on the other hand, is setting new records with its staggering profits. It's our loss that they're not sharing the wealth.

Local government's attention to the arts has helped make Seattle a great place to live — from the construction of new libraries to Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels' support for community wireless internet and our vibrant music scene. It's unfortunate, then, that city officials are passing up a once-in-a-decade opportunity to provide meaningful support for community-produced television. Instead, they may soon cut funding at a time when the demand for alternative media voices is on the rise.

Last week, the city's Office of Cable Communications released details of its proposed cable franchise deal with Comcast. The contract sets the terms by which the cable giant will provide service to most Seattle neighborhoods for the next 10 years. Negotiated behind closed doors over a year-long process, the franchise renewal outlines the public benefits Comcast must provide in return for their extremely lucrative monopoly. Prominent among these benefits are our local, noncommercial cable channels, including the government-run Seattle Channel and the community-programmed station SCAN.

As a community soapbox, SCAN is a mixed bag. Viewers can find high-quality public affairs and interview programs and local performing-arts showcases, as well as hours of sermonizing, self-indulgent "Wayne's World" wannabes and, yes, late-night amateur porn. For years, SCAN's main problem has been its inability to meet the community's demand for access to video production and programming. The paucity of airtime forces SCAN to operate a ruthless seasonal program-

ming lottery — limiting every show's ability to develop an audience.

In the city's proposed contract, the Mayor's office calls for new content requirements for SCAN aimed at increasing programming "predictability," quality, and more local arts and cultural programming. These are strangely superfluous mandates, in that nobody among SCAN's audience, programmers, or staff would disagree with them.

Adding injury to insult, these new mandates will come without any of the funding needed to implement them. The obvious way to improve SCAN's quality would be to increase the station's meager annual budget and allow it to expand onto a second channel. Instead, the city's proposed new cable contract would cut SCAN's budget by \$150,000 a year, then funnel arts funding towards the government-controlled Seattle Channel.

The Seattle Channel's primary task is to increase government accountability by broadcasting City Council meetings, School Board proceedings and the like. However, city officials have shifted the channel's content towards arts and culture channel, arguably encroaching upon SCAN's mission. Seattle Channel's budget is nearly three times as large as SCAN's, and programming choices are made by city managers rather than community producers. Cultural programming tends toward high-budget productions and out-of-town performers rather than local creative projects.

Under the Mayor's plans, the cultural offerings on the Seattle Channel may become more neutered and less accountable. In a separate agreement, Comcast will buy a \$5 million "sponsorship" on Seattle Channel cultural programs. This deal — which will place Comcast branding on

the air alongside our local government coverage — will discourage the channel from airing programs which might be unpalatable to the corporate sponsor.

Community television is just one topic covered by the new franchise proposal. Here's a sampling of additional public benefits Seattle will not receive over the next 10 years:

- A living wage and the guaranteed right to organize for Comcast's local employees
- Cablecasts of local community and minority-owned radio stations
- "A la carte" cable choice, allowing customers to pay only for channels they want
- Enhanced customer-service guarantees
- Room for expansion of local noncommercial programming (Seattle gives up several unused channels, which Comcast can now use commercially.)

In fact, it's difficult to name a single area in which this proposed franchise represents a real improvement over the last one. Comcast, on the other hand, is setting new records with its staggering profits.

In the first months of 2006, the City Council is required to hold hearings on the proposed contract. This will be the only opportunity to hear about and weigh in on the deal. Concerned residents need to contact City Council members now. Let them know that the best way to support local arts and culture is through community institutions, not high-budget boutique projects handpicked by the Mayor's office and endorsed by Comcast. And tell them that you oppose commercialization of our city government cable channel. Visit www.reclaimthemedial.org to send an email message today. ■

Jonathan Lawson is executive director of Reclaim the Media, which advocates for a free and diverse press, community access to communications tools and technology, and media policy that serves the public interest.



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. <http://www.realchangenews.org>. Email realchange@speakeasy.org. ISSN 1085-729X



Who Is Real Change?

Board of Directors

Don Brown (President), Faith Wilder (VP), Mandy Levenberg (VP), Anne Bailey (Treasurer), Maria Sanders (Secretary), Wes Browning, Stephan Fjeldstad, Margaret Koe, Rebecca Kavoussi, Gabriela Quintana, Jolo Tran, Erica Wiley

Advisory Board

Affiliations listed for identification purposes only: Sherman Alexie, Poet, Writer, Filmmaker; Nancy Amidei, UW School of Social Work; Kenan Black, Media Consultant; David Bloom, Rauschenbusch Center for Spirit and Actor; Kari Connor, Wogodoody; Walt Crowley, HistoryLink; Darrell Dent, Community Health Plan of Washington; Lynne Dodson, Jobs with Justice; John Fox, Seattle Displacement Coalition; Larry Gossett, King County Councilmember, Dist. 10; Jon Gould, Children's Alliance; Andy Himes, Poetry in Wartime; Bill Hobson, Downtown Emergency Service Center; Naomi Ishisaka, Colors NW; Sally Kinney, Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness; Paul Loeb, Writer, Meizhu Lui, United for a Fair Economy; Sarah Luthens, SEAMEC/Allyship.org; Roberto Maestas, El Centro de la Raza; Paola Maranon, Children's Alliance; Joe Martin, Pike Market Medical Clinic; Vince Matulis, United Way of King County; Al Poole, City of Seattle Survival Services; Tisha Reedy, Richard Hugo House; Aiko Schaefer, Statewide Poverty Action Network; K.L. Shannon, Rural Disparity Project; Bob Siegal, National Lawyers Guild/Center for Social Justice; Rick Simonson, Elliott Bay Book Co.; Pat Simpson, Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness; Hilary Stern, CASA Latina; Robby Stern, WA State Labor Council;

Peter Steinbrueck, Seattle City Council; Silja Toivi, journalist/essayist; Jim Theofelis, Mockingbird Society; Marilyn Watkins, Economic Opportunity Institute; Bruce Wirth, KBCS; Alice Woldt, WA Association of Churches

Staff

Executive Director
Timothy Harris
Director of Advocacy and Organizing
Rachael Myers
Editor
Adam Hyla
Staff Reporters
Cydny Gillis, Rosette Royale
Production Manager
Rosette Royale
Director of Operations
Israel Boyer
Director of Development
Anne Townsend
Outreach Coordinator
Craig Kirkpatrick
Volunteer Coordinator and Office Manager
Brooke Kemper
Vendor Services
Robert Hansen, Margaret Koe

Advertising Sales Representative

Candi Wilvang

Interns

Kwami Nyamide, Desiree Stark, Aleah Tiam, Patrick Barredo

Editorial Committee

Artis, Mary Andrews, Wes Browning, Stan Burriss, Marrie Condit, Anita Freeman, José Ornelas

Contributing Writers

Maria Antonova, Amy Besunder, Dena Burke, Tom Cogbill, J. Jacob Edel, Justin Ellis, Kimberly Ervin, Jess Grant, Lester Gray, Austin Haskell, Jessica Knapp, Megan Lee, Robin Lindley, Emma Quinn, Amy Roe, Donna Stefanik, Diana Wurm

Photographers, Graphic Artists

Ginny Banks, Rob Casey, Terry Divyak, Tom Douglas, Sean Ellingson, Suzanna Finley, George Hickey, Sherry Loeser, Luke McGuff, Justin Mills, Jude O'Reilly, Katia Roberts, Elliot Stoller, Mark Sullo

Volunteers This Issue

Artis, Douglas Blair, Tige DeCoster, Sandra Enger, Suzanna Finley, Susanne Forham, Casey Fortenberry, Nadine Gioia, Sally Kinney, Brianna Morgan, Loretta Piazzi, Dean Ritz



Change Agent

Nancy Phokayasupatt, sole proprietor of Thai Siam, could easily get caught up in the many challenges of running a small business. Her bustling Ballard restaurant is open seven days a week. Downtime is practically nonexistent. But Phokayasupatt's tight schedule is no match for her generous nature. In fact, when others are taking a holiday, she's busy cooking up a feast for those in need.

For the past 18 years, Phokayasupatt has provided free and festive meals on Christmas day, when more than 150 people dine at her establishment and another 400 have dinners delivered to their homes. Her staff volunteers their time to make it all happen.

"I think it's important that people share what they have," she says. "I can provide good food. If we combine our individual resources, we can create a strong community."

For additional information about the Dec. 25 dinner, call (206)784-5465 between 2 and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

—Amy Besunder



NANCY PHOKAYASUPATT, feeding the notion of share and share alike. Photo by TERRY DIVYAK.

Living in Limbo

Red Cross reports 75,000 tsunami victims still live in "intolerable" conditions

By ADAM FERGUSON
Street News Service

In the Indonesian province of Aceh — where the tsunami made more than 400,000 people homeless — only around 2,000 of the required 185,000 houses have been built.

Almost a year has passed since the world's deadliest tsunami struck 11 countries on the Indian Ocean, yet for millions in the region, time stands still. Overwhelmed by the sheer number of people still desperate for aid, and a lack of decent infrastructure, aid agencies admit they are now facing a massive administrative bottleneck.

The essentials of life, such as clean drinking water and basic shelter, have been largely restored, but aid agencies find themselves under growing pressure to provide more concrete examples of progress — namely, housing. After all, the global community pledged an unprecedented \$11 billion to survivors of the tsunami, which killed more than 216,000 people.

But predictions that everyone would be settled in permanent homes in time for the rainy season, which began around October, have not been realized. In the Indonesian province of Aceh — where the tsunami made more than 400,000 people homeless — only around 2,000 of the required 185,000 houses have been built.

"There is definitely impatience — and we are impatient, too," says Johan Schaar of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent. "But we also have to be sure that this impatience doesn't lead us into making shortcuts that we will regret."

Stories abound of new houses being demolished because they were poorly built or badly sited. In the early days of the relief effort in India, speedily erected but poorly designed shelters made of corrugated iron became sweltering ovens in the heat.

International organizations such as the Red Cross and Oxfam have been successful largely because they rely on local offices with local aid

workers who are in tune with the needs of their communities. But consultation takes time.

"One of the most crucial aspects to recovery is to have everybody's engagement in deciding what their community needs, and then physically helping to build it," says Jo Hall, tsunami manager for Care Australia.

Through "cash-for-work" programs — such as environmental cleanups and road building — Hall says aid agencies are providing locals with much-needed income and a stake in their future. But for tens of thousands of people still living in makeshift refugee camps, that future isn't arriving fast enough.

The United Nations reports that around 75,000 people are living in "intolerable" conditions in tents and shacks that have deteriorated badly over the past year. Others are in barrack-style shelters — which have also become degraded and unsanitary — and around 250,000 are living with host families on stretched resources.

The UN's long-term goal is to provide permanent housing for all tsunami survivors before the 2006 rainy season. It expects that between 15,000 and 30,000 houses will be completed by the end of 2005.

In the meantime, the Red Cross and UN are working to get people into more solid transitional shelters. Some 20,000 prefabricated, steel-framed units, as well as around 37,000 high-quality tents, are currently being dispensed to those in need. As conditions in the camps become increasingly squalid, averting a health crisis is crucial. Indonesia has already suffered a minor outbreak of polio, a disease absent for more than a decade.

Schaar believes the current push to improve the lives of people in transitional shelters should have started earlier and that there was too much optimism about building permanent structures. He points to the long recovery process after other large natural disasters, such as the Kobe earthquake in Japan.

"I think we — and I'm talking about all the agencies here — underestimated the time it would take for permanent houses to be erected." ■

Reprinted from *The Big Issue* in Australia.

Just Heard...

Flu's Dues

King County councilmembers recently voted to cough up \$5.9 million to combat a potential influenza outbreak.

Given the unanimous green light by the council, the allocation will fund a three-pronged effort: the purchase of antivirals for front-line health care practitioners and high-risk (i.e., immuno-suppressed, elderly) individuals; the creation of an outreach and information plan; and a strategy to deal with potentially large numbers of people who might need medical assistance.

Executive Ron Sims served up that near-exact amount to the council last fall for just such a measure and, with its decision, the ball is back in Sims' court. He now has to construct a comprehensive response plan, as well as clarify the decision-making process should such a pandemic arise. He's being asked to supply the council with a status report by mid-Jan., while turning in the complete plan for approval in March.

Coming Together

Local Methodists, allied with gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered activists, plan to use the darkness of the year's longest night to bring an important message to light: they support an inclusive church, not one that rules to bar church membership to people because of their sexuality.

Billed as "Lament, Witness, and Protest," the Winter Solstice services will provide an opportunity for both groups to gather in prayer around a message of tolerance within the United Methodist church. The evening, sponsored by Pacific Northwest Reconciling Ministries Network, is fueled by a recent Methodist high court decision in favor of a Virginia pastor who refused a gay man church membership.

Rev. Katie M Ladd, pastor of Woodland Park United Methodist Church, says that as churches speak of peace during the Christmas season, it's important to "offer people a place where inclusion can be found."

Services will occur in two Washington locales: Seattle First United Methodist Church, 811 Fifth Ave. and Tacoma First United Methodist Church, 423 Martin Luther King Way. The Dec. 21 services begin 7 p.m. at each respective church.

—Rosette Royale

Post-election depression

The resignation of Seattle City Councilmember Jim Compton to study Romania's emerging democracy demonstrates democracy's shortcomings locally. Two months after four of the council's nine members held onto their seats in the most expensive campaign season in Seattle history, the incumbents, not the people, get to pick the new blood. Hey, anyone else want to leave? Then please time your move so the voters can replace you.

—Adam Hyla

It's All in the Timing

Shelter providers alarmed by city funding decision

By ADAM HYLIA
Editor

Housing is the answer — but shelter on a cold night is the next best thing.
Photo by Sherry Loeser.

The coalition of social-service advocates, government agencies, and charitable foundations that are backing the countywide 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness stood its first test of faith this month — when the City of Seattle announced next year's funding for the area's network of emergency shelters.

Invoking the new plan, the city's Human Services Department has

decided to shift \$400,000 of the \$6.2 million in funding from shelters to transitional housing.

The move alarmed shelter providers and other advocates, who have noted that the city's jumping the gun on the plan's measured march from "managing" homelessness via shelters to solving it, through affordable housing. Bob Goetschius, director of the St. Martin De Porres shelter near Safeco Field, says the \$72,000 cut his program is sustaining means he may have to shut people out one night a week.

Home to 150 men, St. Martin serves mostly the "chronic" (i.e., adults whose problems with addiction or mental illness have trapped them in homelessness).

Shelters may get extra funding through a subsequent process in January. Human Services director Patricia McInturff has said the mayor won't see homeless people turned out.

"The mayor's made a really strong commitment that we won't lose shelter beds in 2006," she says. The City Council approved an extra \$350,000 to make up for any loss of shelter due to the funding decisions — and "if that isn't enough, we'll find something more."

Advocates and shelter providers say the real problem with the city's

announcement isn't the money itself — it's the premature timing.

The 10-Year Plan forecasts that local service providers will lower the bar to transitional housing. That day's still a way's off. So, says Humberto Alvarez, director of housing services at Fremont Public Association, the newly funded housing will perpetuate "a type of creaming: you take people who are better able to transition out."

Though endorsed by electeds from the city and county, the plan itself has no real authority, and funders are at liberty to make their own funding decisions. The plan's committees are working up suggestions for when funding shifts should be made.

The 10-Year Plan is a broad effort; McInturff and Alvarez both hold leadership roles on separate committees. Staff coordinator Bill Block says the committee has adopted a policy of neutrality when its members disagree. "I don't think being a voice on one side or the other is building the unified coalition that we need to move forward," he says. Whether the committee itself gets input into local government's funding decisions "is a factor of whether it builds trust among all its members. When you're working in a coalition, you don't do that by demand." ■

Bob Goetschius, director of the St. Martin De Porres shelter near Safeco Field, says the \$72,000 cut his program is sustaining means he may have to shut people out one night a week.

Short Takes

King County to consider MLK logo

The third time may be the charm in the long effort to change King County's logo to its now-official namesake, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. County councilmember Larry Gossett has proposed a five-year, \$600,000 phase-in of a new logo with King's likeness on it.

What's unclear is whether the copyright owners of King's likeness, the family-run King Center in Atlanta, will consider a governmental entity using the image to be a non-commercial use.

Councilmember Jane Hogue (R-Kirkland) zeroed in on that point at a Dec. 6 meeting, noting the difference between the use of the image county property (like letterhead or a government vehicle) and its appearance at a promotional event, like on a banner during a performance of Cirque Du Soleil at the county-owned Marymoor Park.

Gossett says he'll speak with an intellectual property rights lawyer. "It could get a little tricky, but I'm confident with the way [the ordinance] can be defended."

Washington state law also protects a famous person's image from commercial use for 75 years after their deaths, according to county-legal advisor Jim Brewer.

King County was named by the Oregon Territorial Legislature in 1852 after Vice President William Rufus DeVane King, a slave owner from Alabama who died of tuberculosis the next year. In 1986, the county council passed a resolution expressing its wish to be renamed to honor the murdered leader of the Civil Rights movement — an act

that can only be done by state government. State Senator Adam Kline (D — South Seattle) passed a resolution this spring officially recognizing the county's will, and Gov. Christine Gregoire signed the re-commemoration in April.

What's in a logo? Plenty, says Gossett, who refers to the current county coat of arms as "imperial."

"I can't think of a more powerful symbol for our government than someone who always advocated loving each other and working together in a way that benefits everyone, particularly the poorest and most disadvantaged."

—Adam Hylia

SHA sued over door decor

Tenants have sued the Seattle Housing Authority over a no-postering rule that could set a national precedent for free speech in public housing.

On Dec. 1, the Residents Action Council, an elected body that represents SHA's more than 15,000 tenants, filed a lawsuit in King County Superior Court over a new property rule that tenants say is unconstitutional. The provision would prevent residents of SHA apartments and houses from putting any signs or notices on the outside of their front doors.

In September, after tenants raised objections, the agency dropped an earlier version of the rule that would have prohibited signs in windows. But, starting Dec. 1, SHA has told tenants it will evict anyone who doesn't sign a new lease that includes Rule 42, which prohibits signs on tenant doors.

SHA spokesperson Virginia Felton says the agency doesn't want clutter in its common areas — a critical phrase for the judge to define in the case. In the lawsuit, attorney Eric Dunn of the Northwest Justice Project argues that tenancies include the front door — and that government can't take away rights for the sake of aesthetics.

Dunn's argument is based in part on an Ohio case — *City of Ladue vs. Gilleo* — in which a court ruled against a city and its attempt to restrict homeowners' yard signs. That ruling may not extend to government-owned apartments.

"SHA feels like the outside of tenant doors is government property," Dunn says. But "The whole reason they're not willing to rent the outside of the door is to limit the tenants' ability to engage in free speech on their doors."

While the two sides prepare for a hearing date, which Dunn expects in January or February, the Seattle Housing Authority has agreed not to evict current tenants who don't abide by Rule 42.

—Cydney Gillis

Living Small

On Friday, Dec. 16, eight prototypes of an ambitious plan to provide small-scale housing for homeless people were revealed at City Hall. Designed by architecture professor of UW Jim Nicholls and his team of grad students, and assisted by Seattle City Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck, the project is designed to accommodate a great many people in as little space as possible.

The facilities would be comprised of many units, each one with the basic essentials to support a proper living (bathroom, kitchen, etc.). The small unit size of 150 to 250 square feet would reduce the property and construction costs. This will make the individual living quarters small, but very affordable, says Nicholls: "It will help those who can no longer afford to get into housing in Seattle."

The team, however, stress the importance of maintaining the residents' dignity. One way of accomplishing this is to provide them with many job opportunities, though what kind are still under discussion. Growing and selling spices to the local restaurants seemed to be one of the most promising. Making clothes or shoes was also under discussion. "We want to create a real livable place," Nicholls says.

The team of grad students, 10 in all, are just a quarter away from graduating; and though they are required to have hands-on experience, working on behalf of the homeless was their choice.

The students designed the buildings to fit a parking lot in Belltown — a neighborhood that once had lots of affordable housing — off Third Ave. and Wall St. According to Nicholls, the disappearance of Belltown's cheap apartments has put many onto the streets, making it an ideal location.

The prototypes that were unveiled included computer-generated images of what they might look like and physical models of each unit large enough to hold furniture.

As for the best, all Nicholls had to say was that "none of them are 'Give a gold ribbon to this one and let's build it,'" but all were "very good and implementable ideas."

—Austin Haskell

Our Fathers

Other-Father, I lost you the same year
That I lost my blood father. I loved him
For thirty years, then loved and pitied him
For six more. Other-Father, I loved you

Because of your poems, though you stopped
Writing them years ago to write novels
Instead. Or was your choice to write novels
Not a choice at all? Maybe the poems, those

Little tramps, hopped the last train heading out
Of Missoula. Did you stop writing poems
Because they hurt too much? Or did the poems
Vanish like face cards in the nimble hands

Of a magician? At night, did you weep
For the poems? Did you pray for their return?
I don't know, but I prayed that you'd return
To poems. How many prayers go unanswered?

Most of them, most of them. Other-Father,
I always thought of you as a poet
Kidnapped by a novelist, a poet
In forced exile, in absentia,

A poet who would someday write a poem
Again. But, Jim, the poems died when you died
Only five months after my father died
Dead fathers. Dead poems. Dead fathers. Dead poems.

Other-Father, my blood father was not
A great man, but he was a good father.
No, I'm lying, I'm lying. My father
Was too drunk to be a good man, too drunk

To be a good father. But he was kind,
Yes, he was kind, and he never left me
When he was sober, he never left me
When he was sober. O, Other-Father,

My blood father is gone and gone and gone,
But I want him back and I want him back.
I want to write the poem to bring him back.
I want to write the poem to resurrect you

So you can write the poem to resurrect him.
I want my fathers! I want my fathers!
Fathers of poem! Fathers of blood! Fathers
Of absence, of pity, of love, of prayer!

O, Stupid God, hear my prayer! O, Angry
God, hear my prayer! Vengeful God, hear my prayer!
O, Mercy God, Loving God, hear my prayer!
Forgive my contradictions! O, father,

Let me be a better man than you were!
Let me be a better fatherfatherfather
To my sons, let my sons be good fathers
To their sons and sons and sons and sons and—

Wait. Stop. Listen. My fathers died this year.
I will not see them again. I can't sleep
Because grief doesn't need sleep. I can't sleep
Because my fathers might return to me.

Listen. Can you hear my fathers? Fathers,
Can you hear me calling? Father, father,
Father, father, father, father, father,
Father, father, father, father, father?

Copyright © 2005 Sherman Alexie. All rights reserved.

Let Real Change be part of your success
Reach 40,000 socially concerned readers while giving back
to the community.
Real Change ad rates are competitive and affordable.
Check us out at www.realchangenews.org,
or call 441-3247 x202



PorchLight

Community services of
the Seattle Housing Authority

907 N.W. Ballard Way, Suite 200
Tuesday to Friday: 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
206-239-1500
www.seattlehousing.org

Visit us to learn about and apply for:

- Low Income Public Housing
- Seattle Senior Housing Program
- Other affordable housing

TAKE METRO BUS # 13 OR # 28 FROM DOWNTOWN SEATTLE

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



Democracy Now!

Airing twice a day at 6:00 a.m and 5:00 p.m.

Hosted by the dynamic Amy Goodman, this award-winning national news program is committed to bringing the voices of the marginalized to the airwaves on issues ranging from the global to the local.

Free Speech Radio News 6 p.m. Weekdays

Public Affairs NOW! 5 - 7 a.m., 5 - 7 p.m. Weekdays

alternative news

Listener-Supported
Non-commercial Radio from Bellevue Community College

Studio (425) 564-2424

Office (425) 564-2427

email: kbcsc@ctc.edu

www.kbcsc.fm

Nightmare Not Over

In Sudan, genocidal violence and displacement continues, and the American Jewish World Service wants you to help end it

By **TIMOTHY HARRIS**
Staff Writer

"The planes come first and they bomb the villages. Now, just so we're all clear, nobody has airplanes except the government of Sudan. And bombing is not what you or I mean by bombing. It means dropping car chassis, old refrigerators, broken generators and air conditioners. Anything big enough to smash down buildings."

Ruth W. Messenger is the executive director of American Jewish World Service, a humanitarian organization providing support to grassroots social change projects throughout the world. She was recently in Seattle to speak about the relief effort in Darfur, Sudan, and to build political support for a more effective response to the violence. "The expression 'Never again,'" Messenger has said, "cannot be reserved only for Jews." She has traveled twice in the past two years to refugee camps in Darfur and Chad, and is a leader in the interfaith effort to end the genocide.

Real Change: Amnesty International has reported that over the last three years in Darfur, more than 400,000 people died from violence, disease and starvation. Another 2.5 million have been displaced. Those are really huge numbers. Can you try to tell us what they represent?

Ruth Messenger: These people were small subsistence farmers in villages of 200 to 800. The villages are straw thatch huts. People lived there, they grew food there — not easy to see how they grew much food, but they grew food — and they had a number of animals; they were food sufficient. They had tribal identities and they saw themselves as being in the home of their tribe. "Darfur" actually means "the home of the Fur tribe."

No matter which of the camps you're in, when you ask people to tell you what happened, they tell you almost the same story. They all describe coordinated attacks on their villages coming both from the air and from the Janjaweed militia.

The planes come first and they bomb the villages. Now, just so we're all clear, nobody has airplanes except the government of Sudan. And bombing is not what you or I mean by bombing. It means dropping car chassis, old refrigerators, broken generators and air conditioners. Anything big enough to smash down buildings.

And then people see Janjaweed. Janjaweed is the name for the militia, and if you ask, it means either "men on horseback" or "evil men on horseback" in Arabic. Everybody describes the Janjaweed as yelling ethnic slogans on their way through these villages, routing people out. Killing a certain number of men and children. Killing their livestock and the farm animals. Raping and killing women.

In the early years, they would stuff carcasses in the wells to poison the water supply. And then, of course, everyone who's still alive leaves the town. There's no town left, and they're terrified for their lives. They don't have to kill everybody. They just have to convince people to leave. Then they usually burn the town down.

It's a very, very bad situation, and it's very distressing to have any of these elements that are saying "It's a little less bad now." One of the reasons that it's "less bad" is that there aren't any villages left to burn.

RC: What is the distinction between the rebel groups and the Janjaweed,

and why is their government supporting this?

Messenger: The situation is, without any question, getting murkier and murkier. Because it's not just one rebel group, there are two or three, and they're all arguing with each other. Most of these farmers have absolutely nothing to do with the rebel groups that are in their territory, and nobody thinks that they do.

The question I can't answer is, "What is the government motive here?" It's hard to believe that they want the land. Sudanese law says that if the land is not occupied for a year it reverts to the government, and there's some speculation that there's oil. The people that I know tell me that they can't imagine there's any oil in west Darfur, but if there is, it's poor grade and hard to extract.

So then you have to imagine that they — and this is guesswork — that they are using this to pur-



Ruth Messenger holding an infant while in Darfur last August. The infant's twin sister received medical assistance at a clinic partially funded by American Jewish World Service. Photo courtesy American Jewish World Service.

Treat others with justice and respect. How you treat others will be how they treat you.

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

Ask anyone about a Domini Fund, and they'll tell you about our mutual funds.

Call 1-800-530-5321
or visit www.domini.com

Domini
SOCIAL INVESTMENTS™
Investing For Good™

You should consider the Domini Funds' investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. Obtain a copy of the Funds' current prospectus for complete information on these and other topics, by calling 1-800-530-5321 or online at www.domini.com. Please read it carefully before investing or sending money. DSI, Investments Services LLC, Distributor. 10/04



Continued from Previous Page

sue a broader ethnic-based agenda. Everyone involved in this genocide is Muslim, but Janjaweed and the government are Arab-identified and increasingly Islamist. These six million Darfur residents are Muslim but think of themselves as African and tribal. And therefore their commitment to Islam is of a very different order.

RC: I've read that aid workers are in such danger that there's a possibility that major agencies might begin to pull out.

from the government of Sudan and the United Nations is only authorized to make the roads safe and protect the transmission of goods and the lives of the aid workers.

It's totally inadequate because they don't have a mandate to protect civilians, and there aren't enough of them. They're in an area the size of Texas. You need between 15 and 20,000 troops on the ground. People need to understand that only a larger peacekeeping force with a broader mandate could possibly be effective, as opposed to an actual military action.

used to be stronger. It was going to be the "Darfur Genocide and Accountability Act," and it was stronger and tougher on the sanctions. But there's been serious organized effort both by bipartisan members of the House and the Senate to get this passed, and by the administration to stop it from getting passed. Because it would really put Congress on record as saying our government needs to call for more sanctions. It calls for a no-fly zone and for freezing of tax assets. It also includes increasing troop strength and expanding that way. So it passed the Senate just before the last budget vote, but then the House took out the \$50 million that was appropriated for union troops.

We need to push our representatives in the House to support this. To put us on record would be pushing the White House to act on these principles. I want to give credit every place I go to Sam Brownback, a conservative right-wing senator from Kansas who's the leader of the fight on Darfur. I was in the Deputy Secretary of State's office with the national spokesperson for the Evangelical church. There were about 12 of us there talking about our groups and our positions and the change we want to see — he was by far the most eloquent. So I'm glad we have some bedfellows here that are helping to make a difference.

RC: What are two or three things people can do to take action?

Messinger: Well, I think the most important thing is for people to understand that almost anything they do — contributing money, going to a demonstration, writing or calling their congressman, calling the White House — is increasing the pressure to end this genocide. So the first thing is, anything makes a difference. Don't listen to the dimensions of the problem and decide there's nothing you can do.

Nobody I know now is hugely optimistic about refugees and displaced persons returning home. I don't want anybody to sort of imagine making two phone calls to the White House means two million people go back to their towns. Because their towns aren't there.

The question is, are we going to just leave people in camps with inadequate services until they start dying? We all know exactly what's going to happen: more and more people are going to die. They're going to die from all sorts of consequences of violence. The only question is why we're not doing anything. ■

[Resource]

Want to tell the White House to stand for stability in Darfur? Here's your chance. Dial [202] 456-1111 to let Bush know what you think. You can also register a pledge to save Darfur here: darfurcalls.org



A WOMAN CARRIES A MALNOURISHED CHILD TO A CLINIC FUNDED IN PART BY THE AJWS. COURTESY OF RUTH MESSINGER/AMERICAN JEWISH WORLD SERVICE.

Messinger: That's the scariest thing. The government has, in several instances, captured aid workers and held them. They've allowed aid workers to be placed in jeopardy by various rebel groups. In a couple of instances, they've threatened major organizations with expulsion from the country.

The United Nations is so concerned about the increases in the violence that they have said that it should remove all non-essential staff from north Darfur. Other aid organizations might decide to remove their staffs from places where the UN has. If that happens, there won't be enough food, clean water, or health care.

The saving grace is that in none of these camps has there, to date, been a major epidemic. But frankly, there's no reason why there shouldn't be. At some point in the next year, the world is going to read that X hundred thousand children died in camps in Darfur.

RC: The military response by the African Union is something like 7,000 troops? Why isn't the international community more directly involved?

Messinger: I wouldn't call it a military response. Whether there should or shouldn't be a military response is a good question. But this is a minimalist peacekeeping operation. The African union presence

RC: It's been a year and a half since Colin Powell first used the "genocide" word to describe the conflict. Why have major powers been so reluctant to intervene?

Messinger: The good news is that this is the first genocide that the United States has called a genocide while it was going on. But how we can label something genocide and then just leave it on the "to do" list? What I would most like to see Bush do is say that this is the first genocide of the 21st century. Say we're all committed to "never again." And exert the level of leadership that will involve going to the United Nations and asking for a resolution similar to the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act.

RC: Tell me more about that.

Messinger: Well, the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act, like all legislation,

View

Embracing the sea through a chain-linked cage
The setting sun passes shadow cross my face
Steel pole bar blocks the beaming light
As she sets
Behind the mountain
Casting worldless night

—SHANNON HALE

Executive Gift Service

Go ahead, Avoid the crowds, Malls, Parking, and the Traffic.

I have the PERFECT Gift Giving Solution for the busy executive, (no lines, no stress, NO KIDDING!) for clients, employees, fam-

ily, friends and anyone else you can think of.

Take advantage of my Executive Gift Service and maximize your time and budget while selecting quality gifts with these fabulous Executive Perks:



- Free Gift Wrapping
- Free Delivery
- Free \$10 Gift certificates included with each gift.
- 100% satisfaction guarantee

- Shipping Service: I will save you a trip to the Post office and make sure that your packages are safely shipped*

*Customer responsible for all shipping charges

Joyce Townsend 206-352-7472
joyce@townsendseattle.net

REAL CHANGE BOOTDRIVE

BEFORE  **AFTER** 

"MY BOOTS WERE GREAT! THEY SAVED MY FEET AND KEPT ME GOING ALL WINTER."

SUSAN KELLEY
REAL CHANGE VENDOR

DONATE CLEAN NEW OR USED BOOTS AT THE REAL CHANGE OFFICE TO HELP KEEP OUR VENDORS WARM, DRY, AND PROSTITUTE-FREE THROUGH THE WINTER MONTHS.

REAL CHANGE OFFICE - 2124 SECOND AVE.
MON. - FRI.: 9AM - 6PM
SATURDAY: 10AM - 4PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL CRAIG AT: (415) 247-6414 ext. 214
craig@realchange.org

Everything that Rises Must Converge

A Short History of Nearly Everything
Bill Bryson
 Broadway Books, 2003
 Paperback, 560 pages, \$15.95

By **JOHN SISCOE**
 Contributing Writer

Bill Bryson is well-known as a writer of travel books. They are amiable, witty and entertaining, and they sell by the truckload. Being a writer, he is also interested in words, and he has written two useful and unpretentious books on language. That said, you wouldn't think of him writing a history of science, but he has done so, and it's a remarkable achievement. Here's Bryson, describing how the idea came to him:

"I was on a long flight across the Pacific, staring idly out the window at the moonlit ocean, when it occurred to me with a certain uncomfortable forcefulness that I didn't know the first thing about the only planet I was ever going to live on."

Armed with this awareness of his ignorance, Bryson would spend the

next three years researching and writing *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. He was ably assisted by a small army of fact-checkers, and the book is surprisingly free of errors. You might find some of his interpretations dubious — but then so does Bryson, who is always forthright in admitting where his knowledge ends and speculation begins. This is not just a mark of his honesty as a writer, it emerges as one of the important themes of the book.

Bryson is a storyteller who knows how to entertain and hold an audience. His breezy manner may charm or grate, depending on your own likes and dislikes, but there is no denying its effectiveness. Bryson's intended audience is as wide as he can make it, and his own curiosity and enthusiasm is contagious. As any good teacher will tell you, if you're flat and dry and dull, you'll never get your material across. That's never a worry with Bryson, who is a master of his craft. If you ever find yourself in the unenviable situation of having to teach an introductory course in the history of science, fear no more — you have found your textbook.

But it's not all fireworks and hoopla. With seeming casualness but with calm purpose (he hasn't a moment to waste) Bryson rambles through varied and complex disciplines — astronomy, paleontology, physics, geology, chemistry, biology — and the vast storehouse of knowledge they hold, though an even vaster realm is still beyond their reach.

For, as Bryson periodically reminds us, the history of science is no cavalcade of progress toward a certain destination. The discoveries of science are always partial, provisional, and under constant revision. And any answer in science that's worth anything is not an endpoint but an open gateway to new questions. And for those readers who want to learn more, *A Short History's* extensive biography is an excellent place to start.

A word of warning: this book has just been reissued in an illustrated hardback for the Christmas trade. It's fine in its way, but not really necessary. If you have that much money to spend, you're better off buying two copies of the paperback: one to read yourself, and one to give to a friend. ■

If you ever find yourself in the unenviable situation of having to teach an introductory course in the history of science, fear no more — you have found your textbook.

John Siscoe is the owner of Globe Books in Seattle's Pioneer Square. He can be reached at johnsiscoe@zipcon.net.

Trans Poses

Transamerica
 Written and Directed by **Duncan Tucker**
Breakfast on Pluto
 Directed by **Neil Jordan**

By **LESTER GRAY**
 Arts Editor

Soon to be released, both *Breakfast on Pluto* and *Transamerica* feature transgender protagonists. Another two films, the recently released *Rent* and the upcoming *The World's Fastest Indian* do likewise in supporting roles. Is it politically correct to even take note?

In the comedy *Transamerica*, Bree (Desperate Housewives' Felicity Huffman), a politically conservative transsexual, has the physiology of a man yet passes as an everyday woman. Pulling double duty as a waitress and telemarketer in Los Angeles, she squirrels away the necessary sum for SRS—Sexual Reassignment Surgery.

This finishing touch to a makeover of voice, carriage, and psychology is forestalled when she receives a call from a teenage boy, looking for a dad he has never met. Busted for male prostitution in New York, 17-year-old Toby (Kevin Zegers) has no one to pay his bail.

This love child from what Bree considers a past life and gender is the last thing she wants to deal with. Only when her therapist, whose signature is required for the deeply desired operation, threatens to withhold her consent, does she agree to confront the issue of her unexpected parenthood.

Dipping into her SRS fund, "dad" flies cross-country to rescue her son who at first takes Bree for a do-gooder from a church group. The upshot is a road trip back to California, which runs Bree's femininity and the new relationship through a gauntlet of situations.

Transamerica is warm, funny and almost a family film. Huffman, a woman portraying a man attempting to be a woman, creates a vulnerable, comically awkward, but never clownish character who wears a battleworn and well-earned dignity.

In *Breakfast on Pluto*, which takes place in wee Tyreelin, Ireland, Cillian Murphy plays Patrick, an orphaned lad (another love child), who was abandoned on the church steps as a baby. A local woman takes him in and 10 years later,

much to her dismay, walks in on the young man admiring himself in his foster sister's dress and makeup.

A teenager in a small provincial community, Patrick defiantly reinvents himself as "Kitten." Indefatigably fey, she fends off any reality that does not fit into her construct with nimble and playful impertinence. Recognizing the limits of this charade in her home town, she sets off to let Kitten and the world discover each other.

Locked in a perennial performance mode, she tries on a number of situations, all of which land her, appropriately enough, onstage in turn as a singer, a magician's assistant, and an imaginary character in a children's fantasy park: an ongoing crucible of identities.

Kitten and Bree, opposites, are both looking for a fit. Cillian Murphy brings us a rich character of intensity and improvisation, while Ms. Huffman portrays a personality of careful design and measure. Compelling performances both. But to be convincing is not necessarily to be true.

At issue here are two (as far as we know) straight actors playing transsexuals. This has been the case with gay roles in mainstream films for some time. Can thespians so easily ingest the psyches of a viciously marginalized community?

The real possibility here is with life increasingly imitating art and art imitating whatever it feels like, the affectations of emerging transgenders spawn capriciously in a screenwriter's imagination — which, in cruel irony, makes them mainstream. ■

Breakfast on Pluto opens on December 23. *Transamerica* opens on January 20.

Patrick, also known as Kitten, is played Cillian Murphy in *Breakfast on Pluto*.

At issue here are two (as far as we know) straight actors playing transsexuals. This has been the case with gay roles in mainstream films for some time.





Adventures
in Irony

Dr. Wes Browning

Let's say once upon a time there was a country — we'll call it Democratia — where it was against the law for people to eavesdrop on citizens but the country's leaders wanted to know what the people were saying all the time anyway.

Democrats want an investigation.

Okay, let's see if this makes a stitch of sense! Let's say once upon a time there was a country — we'll call it Democratia — where it was against the law for people to eavesdrop on citizens but the country's leaders wanted to know what the people were saying all the time anyway. So what they did was something very very clever. It was so clever that if Stalin were alive to see it, he would say, in Russian, "Damn, these guys are good!"

First, they arranged for the wiretapping of all their citizens' phone calls, or at least all of their phones that in any way involved international transmissions. Those included not only phone calls meant to be received in other countries, but also phone calls that use satellites, because "space is international territory." How did they arrange to do this, since routine wiretapping was illegal in Democratia? Easy! They asked their friends to do it for them, in return for them doing it for their friends. By "friends" I mean "other allied countries." "We aren't wiretapping our own citizens," they said. "Our friends are!" "We're just wiretapping our friends' citizens. What's wrong with that?"

To be even safer from criticism, the leaders of Democratia made sure their friends didn't actually listen in to their own citizens' conversations — that would be wrong. Instead they had their friends use supercomputers to do the listening.

The supercomputers had voice-recognition capabilities far in advance of anything you can get for a PC, and they could record all the millions of calls being made at any instant and transcribe them to computer text-files in real-time, 24/7. Then the computers could scan the texts for keywords that would indicate whether or not

Spy in the Ointment

George Bush has just admitted that he's authorized eavesdropping without a search warrant on Americans at least 30 times since September 11, 2001, each time for 45 days. Now

people were saying things that the Democratian leaders might want to know about, and all those calls could be flagged for later listening.

Computers would do the transcriptions and scanning, not people. So the Democratia leaders could honestly say that "no one," "not anybody," was eavesdropping on their citizens, not even their foreign friends.

Of course, if the computers flagged a call as having suspicious content — like, say, if it was made by a member of Greenpeace, or mentioned the president of Democratia, or if the words "drug" and "buy" were used in the same sentence, as in "I have to go out to the DRUGstore to BUY deodorant for my smelly dad, so I'll call you back later," then the proper authorities could be notified. And then actual legal warrants could be obtained from on-call, easy, slutty, judges. Often this could be done within minutes, even before the calls in question had ended.

It's like this. Suppose the police come to your door and say, "We'd like to search your house, but we don't have a search warrant." So you, fearing they'd find your stash of politically incorrect midget-on-stuffed-animal porn, say, "No." So they say, "Okay, then, step aside while this robot here rolls through your front door and through your entire house, and transmits images of everything in digitized form to a remote super computer which could spot the real Spock at a Star Trek convention. Then if the computer reports back that any white powder is visible anywhere in your house — like flour, or talcum — we can have a warrant faxed by satellite to our van waiting at the curb over here, and THEN we will search you."

Would that seem like a fair way to sidestep your Constitutional rights? Well, that's essentially what the ECHELON system, set up by Democratia (these United States, duh!) has done routinely with your phone calls at least since the Clinton administration, and the Democrats knew it at the time.

We should impeach everybody in both parties, simultaneously. ■

To Feel as Though

To feel as though
your whole life has
been nothing but departures,
Separations, and
recurring loneliness can
make you begin to
see the world in
an extremely
Fragmented manner. When always
you have been watching
your loved ones disappear
in the distance—if
they come around
say "goodbye" to you
at all—you
could begin to
view life as nothing
more than broken and
scattered images,
somehow associated, but in
no way connected, so
it would seem, is
the life
Experience of many an
individual we read about.

-DAVID TROTTER



Thurs., Dec. 1, 11:52 a.m., Third Ave.

Officers responded to a report of a suicide threat. The subject, a transient white male aged 49, was with his caseworker at the DESC, and was talking about harming himself. The caseworker stated that the subject came into her office upset and said he wanted to kill himself. He suffers from major depression, and she stated that this is the worst she has ever seen him. His last doctor visit was June, and he had been prescribed Wellbutrin. Officers spoke with the man, who was visibly upset — during their discussion he stated several times that he wished he wouldn't wake up in the morning, and said that he wished someone would kill him so he could take the big sleep. He stated that his mother had died a while ago, but he couldn't get over it. He was transported to Harborview Medical Center for a mental health evaluation.

Thurs., Dec. 1, 3:30 p.m., 500 Block S.

Jackson. Suspect, a transient Hispanic male aged 50, was contacted, as he was about to urinate on a building. During the investigation officers discovered that he had an outstanding warrant. The warrant was verified, and he was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Fri., Dec. 2, 10:16 a.m., Alaska USA

Credit Union, Seattle. Victim, a white male aged 34, is homeless, but gets his Social Security check deposited directly into his AUCU bank account. According to the bank's records the suspect — a female not known to the victim — opened a new AUCU bank account last week in Alaska. Today, all the money in the victim's account was transferred to the new account in Alaska, and withdrawn. Victim discovered the theft when he was not able to withdraw funds from his account.

Fri., Dec. 2, 2:45 p.m., Department of Corrections, Virginia St.

Suspect, a transient Black female aged 58, reported to the DOC offices on Virginia St. She admitted to her DOC officer that she had used a controlled substance: cocaine. She had also failed to report on Nov. 30. A detainer was issued, Seattle Police were called, and the suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Sat., Dec. 3, 6:08 p.m., Monaco Hotel, Fourth Ave.

Complainant called to report a transient Black male, aged 38, sleeping on the loading dock of the hotel. Officers arrived and located the man, still sleeping on the dock. Complainant stated that the police had previously trespassed the suspect from the premises a few weeks ago. Suspect was transferred to the precinct, and his trespass card was located. Complainant stated that the man had been an ongoing problem for several years, becoming violent and assaultive when asked to move along. He was issued a new trespass card, and was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

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

Member

Your own hand
falls.
It's not meant
as a shadow—
as
something
small.
It
offers you.

—STAN BURRISS

Letters
editor@realchangenews.org

**Tough old coots with
tough old roots**

Dear *Real Change*,
As a consulting arborist and tree care company owner, I have been following the issues around tree management at Occidental Park for many years. It is my opinion that the Parks Department plan should not be considered as war on the trees and war on the homeless [Just Heard, Dec. 7-13].

The tree canopy is very dense. In fact, it is too dense for the overall health of the entire stand of trees. Many of the trees that have been proposed for removal are those that

long ago lost the competitive battle with neighboring trees. One of the plan's goals is to increase the light that enters the park through the tree canopies, making this a better environment for all park users. London Plane trees are some of the toughest in the world and have attained their large size because they are well adapted to the soil and site conditions, and have received almost daily growing season watering through the cobblestones as Parks employees wash down the surface. Removing and replacing the cobblestones with pavers will remove some roots, but this will not kill or seriously impair the trees. I buy a copy of *Real Change* almost every week, and I wanted a different opinion on the plan for Occidental Park to get out there.

John Hushagen
Owner, **Seattle Tree Preservation, Inc.**

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.



**Green Lake
Preschool &
Childcare Center**
a child-centered learning environment
6350 East Green Lake Way North, Seattle, WA 98103
Anne Kelly, Director Phone 206-525-7877
NAEYC accredited, for further information please visit
www.greenlakepreschool.org

Discrimination?
CALL US!

**Seattle Office
for Civil Rights**

(206) 684-4500
(TTY) (206) 684-4503

www.seattle.gov/civilrights

Free, fair, and impartial services

City of Seattle Greg Nickels, Mayor


We All Belong!
Housing
Contracting
Employment
Public Accommodations

SUPPORT REAL CHANGE

with a tax-deductible donation of your
used car, boat or RV.

for more information, call
1-800-390-4018

Easy and
Convenient.

WITHOUT DOUBT, THE MOST
SOCIALY RESPONSIBLE
LATTÉ YOU'LL EVER DRINK.

When can a delicious latté help Seattle youth get off the streets and begin to lead healthy, productive lives? When you order it from a FareStart Café providing on-the-job experience for our Barista Training and Education Program. If one latté does all that, imagine the power of a sandwich and pastry.

www.farestart.org
FareStart Library Café, Seattle Central Library, 1000 4th Ave.
FareStart Café at 2100, 2100 24th Ave. S., Rainier Valley.
Buy a pastry or sandwich, get a free coffee (expires 3/31/06).

FARESTART
Great Coffee. Better Lives.

CLASSIFIED

Volunteer
Meet someone new... Volunteer Chore Services is looking for volunteers to assist low-income elders and adults with disabilities with household chores and yard work. The program is flexible; volunteers choose the time and location. Make a new friend while helping someone remain independent. For more information call Volunteer Chore Services, a program of Catholic Community Services, at 1-888-649-6580 or email vc@ccsww.org.

Make a New Year's Resolution you can Keep! Volunteer to help an elder or adult, living with a disability, with housework, yard work, cooking, or transportation. Help once a week, twice a month — it's up to you! You choose day/time/location.

Opportunity
Stress-Free Holiday Shopping. This season, get fabulous gifts for everyone on your list...all from the comfort of home. Just call me or visit my Website. You'll find pampering products, fragrances, and more at your convenience! **Joyce Townsend**, Mary Kay Independent Beauty Consultant. www.MaryKay.com/Jtownsend1976. 206-352-7472.

Employment
Shelter Case Manager #5-1205 Great opportunity at YWCA downtown Seattle, provide case mgmt to women out of corrections; exp. req. with criminal justice system in King Co. See www.ywcaworks.org for details. Apply to hr@ywcaworks.org or attn: M. Tschurwald, 1118 Fifth Ave., Seattle, 98101. EOE.

Crisis Intervention Specialists - YWCA Angeline's Center for Homeless Women. Use your skills to make a difference for homeless women in downtown Seattle: \$11.00-11.50/hr + bans. Full-time and On-call, variety of day/night shifts available See www.ywcaworks.org for details. Send resume to hr@ywcaworks.org, or #5-1201, attn: N. Daiker, 2024 Third Ave., Seattle, 98121. EOE

Recreation
Emerald Spokes LLC, "powered by the people." Fun for all ages! Seattle's first and only 4-wheel pedi-cab. Events-Parties-Tours-Exercise. For reservations or advertising contact Candis: (206)FUEL-H2O, that's 383-5426. www.emeraldspokes.com.

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

Calendar

This Week's Top Ten

Thursday 12/22

Internationally recognized guitarist and composer Andre Feriante blends classical and Spanish musical styles to create a unique and inspiring experience. The Italian-born composer has performed across the globe and studied under classical guitarist Andres Segovia of Madrid. 5:30 p.m., Seattle Art Museum, 100 University St., www.seattleartmuseum.org

Through Friday 12/23

Spoofing the quirks of Christmas and Seattle, including Macy's, Steve Pool, and Dale Chihuly, **Forbidden Xmas** is a wickedly fun-filled alternative to other holiday traditions. Tickets \$25 and up. Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday 7:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday 8 p.m., The Empty Space Theater, 3509 Fremont Avenue N.

Through Saturday 12/24

Adapted from David Sedaris' witty, sardonic, and unpredictable story of working as an elf in Macy's, *The SantaLand Diaries* pierces the Christmas spirit, revealing the absurdity of our holiday pursuits. Tickets \$20 general, \$12 students, \$16 seniors. Thurs. - Sat. 9 p.m., Sunday 7:30 p.m., Seattle Public Theater, 7312 W. Greenlake Dr. N., www.seattlepublictheater.org

The roof-raising *Black Nativity: A Gospel Song Play* encompasses electrifying musical performances by Seattle's Gospel Queen Pastor Patrinn Wright, resonant observations by the Reverend Dr. Samuel B. McKinney, and the beautiful poetry of Langston Hughes. Tickets \$30 students and seniors, \$15 children 16 and under, \$42 general. Wednesday 12:30 and 7:30 p.m., Thurs. and Mon. 2 and 7:30 p.m., Fri. 2 and 8 p.m., Sat. 4 p.m., Intiman Playhouse, 201 Mercer St., www.intiman.org

Tuesday 12/27

The World Peace Through Law Section presents a talk titled *Year-End Round-Up of Human Rights*. What has been accomplished and what still remains? Noon, Offices of the Washington State Bar Association, 2101 4th Ave., Suite 400.

Wednesday 12/28

The hit ensemble *Pink Martini*, a combination of Cuban dance orchestra,

Brazilian street marching band, and Japanese film noir, performs its multi-lingual repertoire. Tickets \$25 and up. 8 p.m., The Paramount Theater, 911 Pine St., www.theparamount.com

Through Friday 12/30

The Women Painters of Washington was founded in 1930 to help women overcome the barriers they face in the artistic world and to help them realize their full potential. The group now celebrates its growth and achievements with its 75th anniversary exhibition. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Bank of America Tower, 701 Fifth Ave.

Through Saturday 12/31

Betty Bastai's *Whispers and Cries*, an exhibition of mixed-media drawings, has two series: the Forensic and the Maps. The Forensic surveys the theme of psychological injuries caused by language, and the text is lightly written in pencil to suggest "whispers." The Maps intertwines visual elements and uses bold text that "cries." Mon. - Fri. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m., Sat. - Sun. noon-5, Richard Hugo House, 1634 11th Ave.



A special candlelight vigil will honor and recall the lives of homeless people who have died this year either from the elements or from violence. The National Day of Remembrance for Homeless People is a reminder to strive for affordable housing and living wages. 4 p.m., Westlake Park, 401 Pine St.

Drawing upon their rich culture and history, 19 artists have come together for the exhibit *Fusing Traditions: Transformations in Glass* by Native American Artists. Their works shows continuity with the past in design and reflections on contemporary convictions. \$8 general, \$6.50 seniors, \$5 students and youth, 10 a.m. - 5p.m., University of Washington, Burke Museum, 17th Ave. NE and NE 45th St.

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

WASHINGTON CASH

A non-profit providing microloans and business development training for business owners with low-income.

Congratulations recent loan recipient

Matthew Combs

North Sound Professional Research

"Providing Peace of Mind"

425-267-9070

rspr.inc@verizon.net

Visit

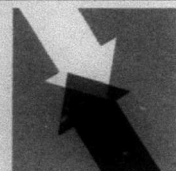
www.washingtoncash.org

for info about upcoming programs or to donate

Director's Corner



The holidays are a time when we at *Real Change* see the best in people. The small acts of extraordinary kindness that vendors see year round become almost commonplace. We are reminded that *Real Change* is much more than a newspaper. We are an extended, inclusive community of people who care for each other, regardless of our superficial differences. One of the things we hear from the vendors a lot this time of year is that they don't really sell *Real Change* for the money. It's not that the income and the holiday tips don't matter. They do. We all need to live. But that's not what gets our vendors up and out in the morning. What matters most is the people. One elderly vendor told me earlier this month that if it wasn't for her customers, she might as well have died a long time ago. It's the small talk and the many casual kindnesses that create a sense of belonging, community, and place. To be homeless, too often, is to be without these things that most of us take for granted. We have just two weeks left to our year-end fund drive and still need to raise over \$20,000 to end the year on solid ground. When you support *Real Change*, you support opportunity and dignity for the poor, powerful advocacy on the issues you care about, and quality alternative journalism. Please go to realchangenews.org or use the coupon on page 12 to support our work today.



First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

Stop Brazil's Homeless Murders Now

Issue: The International Network of Street Papers (INSP) demands that Brazil investigate domestic human rights abuses before joining the United Nations Security Council.

Background: In recognition of Human Rights Day (which was on December 10), INSP is demanding the Brazilian government fully investigate a two-night killing spree in Sao Paulo that left seven homeless people dead and nine others seriously injured.

In light of Brazilian President Lula's application for a seat at the UN Security Council, non-government organizations and human rights activists in Brazil are furious about their government's failure to address these crimes committed against their homeless population last year.

"There is just no willingness from Government or engagement from our justice system to solve these crimes," said Luciano Rocco, Director of Ocas, the Sao Paulo street paper. "How could a country appeal for a seat at the UN Security Council if it does not respect human rights? To have any effect on the international arena, we should count on the efforts of every streetpaper reader to write to their deputies and governments to raise the debate in their countries about the total disrespect of human rights in Brazil."

As originally reported to the INSP in August 2004, the attacks occurred when all the victims were sleeping, with a single hammer blow to the head. Yet 16 months on, no one has been charged with the assaults despite evidence of police involvement in the murders.

Last month, Sao Paulo Judge Richard Francisco Chequini refused to arrest five suspected policemen, calling the evidence in the case "suspicious." The Public Ministry (the independent authority which exists to monitor the state) sought to introduce eyewitness testimony implicating the officers, but Judge Chequini refused to hear the witness' testimony.

Following the judge's decision, more than 200 people gathered in front of the Sao Paulo court to protest, but police prevented the demonstrators from using loudspeakers.

Representatives from Amnesty International are speaking out. Eleanor White, program director for Amnesty in Wales, explains: "Amnesty is concerned about extra-judicial executions in Brazil. Sometimes these situations amount to "social cleansing" and often directly involve farmer and active police officers. Homeless people, like everybody, have economic, social, and cultural rights. They should be treated with respect, not used as scapegoats for the social problems of a city."

Action: In a mark of global solidarity, INSP is reaching out to readers of its 55 member publications sold by homeless people in 28 countries as well as human rights groups around the world to join the campaign. It hopes to harness the voice of street paper workers, vendors, readers, and people of conscience around the world to call for the Brazilian government to carry out an independent investigation and for justice to prevail.

To sign onto the INSP Petition, go to www.street-papers.org and click on INSP Campaigns.

To learn more about the killings in Brazil, go to the INSP's Street News story: www.streetnewsservice.org/story.html?StoryID=19140.

HAM, Continued from Page 1

Saturday nights, to keep volunteers in touch and in practice. They also hold meetings once a month.

Overseen by the city's Division of Emergency Management, there are three main components to the process of communication that takes place in the event of disaster. People known as "runners" take information from their neighborhoods to the nearest of the city's 25 community centers, where ham operators are set up. The hams send information along to the Emergency Operations Center, the headquarters of the local disaster-response effort.

Seattle is split into six zones, each with about 20 radio volunteers and a team leader — but "we need a lot more people," says Boswell. Ideally, the city would have up to 260 volunteers to fill out all shifts, but recruitment "can be difficult when you consider that people need to be trained," he adds. Volunteers must also pay a \$30 training fee. According to Dockstader, there are 2,000 to 3,000 licensed ham radio operators in the Seattle area. In a recent recruiting effort, approximately 70 of them expressed an interest. Despite the recruiting difficulty, Boswell doesn't believe that hams are

a dying breed — even in the age of the internet. He points out that there is ham radio equipment set up on the space station.

ACS volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds, from actors to retirees, and range in age from 20 to 87 years old. Most members are active on the air on a regular basis. Most ACS volunteers have careers so they have to work out with their bosses and coworker that they may need to drop what they are doing in the event of an emergency and provide communications for Seattle's response and recovery efforts.

Dockstader says that ACS volunteers are well aware of their responsibilities. "We tell our members that they have to take care of their families first," he says.

Then they report to their stations. ■

[More info]

It is relatively easy to get a ham radio license, since the requirement to know Morse Code has been dropped. A person can get a license — valid for 10 years — at any age, but ACS requires volunteers to be adults. Read more online: www.seattle.gov/eoc/acs/default.htm.

SCHOOLS, Continued from Page 1

The Community Advisory Committee for Investing in Educational Excellence (CACIEE), appointed last July by district Superintendent Raj Manhas, is working to find solutions that improve the financial and academic status of the district. Manhas made recommendations of his own last spring, targeting several schools for closure, which set off protests and demonstrations across the district. He then created the CACIEE to involve the community in the process. The 14-member committee includes business, education, and civil leaders.

Recommendations, if adopted, would be implemented in the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years. In addition to school closures, other measures suggested for financial improvement include charging some parents for transportation costs and revamping the real estate holdings of the district.

Possible academic changes include financing that would ensure six class periods for all high-school students and expand music programs district-wide. A final report is due on Feb. 10, which will include details on how to balance the district's finances with the new academic programs suggested.

Don Alexander, a long-time education advocate in the Black community, agrees that some changes are needed in the district's policies but puts little stock in the CACIEE's recommendations. "Not only do I think [the com-

mittee's] a farce, I think it's a fraud," Alexander says. "There are no 'us,' he says, "there is only 'them.'" Alexander says that the committee has "no commonality" with the public.

However, Alexander says he supports closing some schools if there is an excess of space. "The message last year was not 'Don't close schools,' it was 'Don't close THOSE schools.'" He says he fears that this time around, closure recommendations will favor the elite.

Barry Dorsey, principal at Martin Luther King Elementary, a Central District school slated for closure by Manhas last spring, says he and his staff don't dwell on the possibility it will be on the new list.

"We have poured ourselves into the students that we have," he says, but "it's kind of out of our hands."

MLK Elementary has one of the lowest enrollments of any district school. But this year it began a new K-1 Montessori program which was so well-received that Dorsey hopes to add a second grade next year. Dorsey said he's working closely with the district in the hopes it will see the potential of the school.

"Good things are happening. If we go down, we're going to go down, and people will say, "Wow, their students were doing so well," he says. ■

[Resource]

The CACIEE continues to seek public comment. Its website is www.seattle-schools.org/area/committeeforexc/index.dxml.



MLK ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL BARRY DORSEY DOESN'T DWELL ON THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE CENTRAL DISTRICT SCHOOL WILL AGAIN BE ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK. PHOTO BY ELLIOT STOLLER.

eyes ON FREMONT

UNIQUE AFFORDABLE EYEWEAR

Friendly, Skilled Staff
On Site Lab
Eye Exams
Student Discounts

4254 Fremont Ave. N.
Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 634-3375

...old you the paper works. So does Real Change.

I Support Real Change. Here's what I can do:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$35 Other _____

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