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FEBRUARY 8 - 14 2006

CUT AND WASTE

Slicing community clinic funding
will amount to higher health
care costs for all of us.

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VOTING FIGHTS

Ex-cons looking for the power of
the ballot find that debts to the
state hinder their freedom.

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MEAN STREETS

Want to know the worst U.S. cities
to be homeless? Here they are:
the bottom 20.

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LYONS SHARE

Eight years after being caught in
an abortion clinic bombing, nurse
Emily Lyons tells her story.

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Higher Education

ACLU, students say financial aid
shouldn't end over drug convictions

By ROSETTE ROYALE
Staff Reporter

"Wanna smoke a bowl?"
It was an innocent
proposition, one Jennifer
Macone says she assumed would be
appreciated by the "really nice" hotel
manager in Limon, Colo.

After all, Macone, now 26, was
strapped for cash that August evening in
2003, so when the manager offered her
a room at a deep discount, she wanted
to express her gratitude. The manager
politely declined. So Macone turned out
the light and, with her then-six-year old
son by her side, went nighty-night.

Morning arrived. So, too, did Col-
orado's Finest. A search of her room
and car turned up marijuana — "It was
a gram of pot, hardly anything," claims
Macone — and a pipe. Because her son
was with her, the officer forwent arrest
and issued a ticket. Macone was to re-
port to a Colorado court for a hearing
three weeks later. As she was living in
Shoreline at the time, she couldn't af-
ford the return trip. Instead, she phoned
the court to enter a plea. The judge, in
response, gave her an ultimatum: either
plead guilty for possession of a con-
trolled substance or stand charges not
only for possession and paraphernalia
but also child abuse.

Macone was caught off guard: poten-
tially lose custody of her son? She pan-
icked. "So I pleaded guilty," she says.

And while the plea meant she kept
her son, it also meant she lost something
else: namely, financial aid to help pay for
tuition at Shoreline Community College.
Without the \$2,500, Macone had to drop
out. "I just had a few more classes to
take and then go to UW," she recalls, to
pursue a degree in mycology, the study
of fungi, "which never happened."

But what happened to Macone only
fuels the fire of the American Civil Li-
berties Union (ACLU) and their desire
to challenge a federal law — one that



SUDANESE CHILDREN, DISPLACED BY THE GENOCIDE IN DARFUR, WERE GIVEN CRAYONS AND PAPER TO RECOUNT THEIR EXPERIENCES. HERE, A YOUTH NAMED MAHMOUD SHOWS MEN IN GREEN ABDUCTING WOMEN AND GIRLS. A HOUSE BURNS, CENTER, WHILE A HELICOPTER HOVERS ABOVE, UPPER LEFT. PHOTO COURTESY HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH.

What the Children Saw

Darfur's refugee children tell their stories through crayons and paper

By LAURA CRUIKSHANK
Contributing Writer

Since February 2003, approximately
200,000 people living in Darfur, a
large region in Sudan, have been
murdered at the hands of the govern-
ment-allied Arab militia group, the
Janjaweed. Two million people have
been displaced from their homes; more
than half have been driven into camps
in Darfur with very little resources for
survival, and approximately 110,000 are
now living in tent camps beyond the
Sudanese border in Chad.

In 2005, Olivier Bercault, a Human
Rights Watch researcher, undertook a
mission to Chad. He says he wanted to
talk with refugees in order to find out
what was happening in Darfur. When he
began to interview parents living in the
camp, he gave their children crayons,
pencils, pens, and paper to draw with.
Without instruction or prompting, the
children began to draw what they wit-
nessed in their home country.

"And what we witnessed after
that," Bercault says, "was shocking
and powerful."

Some of those drawings are now
an exhibit that has been traveling
around the globe since July.

Seattle is one of five U.S. cities
chosen to host the 27 drawings cre-
ated by the refugee children. They're
displayed at the University of Wash-
ington until Feb. 22.

The pictures are a graphic de-
piction of the atrocities committed
against the people of Darfur by the
Sudanese government and the Janja-
weed. They show bombings, rape, mu-
tilations, shootings, and the burning of
entire villages. Some of the artists are
as young as 8 years old.

Despite the horror these people
are going through, and the urgency
that is needed to save Darfurians from
their own government, nothing in the
State of the Union address by George
W. Bush last Tuesday gave mention to
the genocide in Sudan.

"How do we bring to light the
issues in Darfur?" asked Bercault at

See CONVICTION, Continued on Page 12

See DARFUR, Continued on Page 12

Don't Close the Clinics

Cuts in community health clinic funding mean higher costs — for everyone

By LINDA McVEIGH
Guest Writer

Who pays when the uninsured can't afford their hospital bills? We all do. The uncompensated costs to treat the uninsured at emergency rooms are passed on to people with insurance and taxpayers. In turn, health care costs are driven up even further for both the insured and uninsured.

Each day in our community, thousands of people seek health care for themselves and for their families. But an enormous number of people delay or avoid care when they need it: they are the uninsured. Since 2002 there has been an increase in the number of people without insurance in King County, for a total that now surpasses 150,000.

Thankfully, there are places for them to turn. Anyone in Seattle who is uninsured has likely heard of Country Doctor or the 45th Street Clinic or the Pike Market Medical Clinic. In fact, a lot of Seattleites who do have insurance know of these stellar health clinics that provide high quality health care regardless of patients' ability to pay.

There are community health clinics such as these around the city — from West Seattle to Holly Park, from Georgetown to Greenwood. In fact, there are more than 130 community health clinics around the state, providing health care for people living in rural and urban communities. Community health clinics have a unique model. They provide multiple services — medical, dental, mental health, pharmacy — in one location and help ensure that patients have transportation, translation, disease management, and other critical services they need to be healthy.

This approach has proven to successfully reduce or eliminate persistent health disparities. For example, in states with higher numbers of low-income patients treated by community clinics, health disparities between whites, Blacks, and Hispanics are narrower, and newborns are

healthier. This success is due, in part, to removing the barriers that cause patients to miss out on the single most important element of health care: the primary care visit. Prioritizing accessible primary and preventive care pays off, both in terms of patient health outcomes and cost efficiency. This investment also yields substantial returns to the entire health care system.

Country Doctor Community Clinic has served the Capitol Hill community for 35 years. Over the past four years, the number of uninsured people we serve has grown by 50 percent — those without insurance now account for nearly two-thirds of our patients and represent a broad range of people struggling to get the care they need. It doesn't take a Harvard MBA to understand the difficulty of sustaining a business where so many customers cannot afford to pay the full cost of the services they receive.

In part, the growing uninsured problem in our state is due to decisions made over the past few years by our state legislature to slash health care funding. Since 2002, thousands of children have lost their state insurance coverage as the result of new administrative barriers, and the Basic Health Program was cut by 30,000 slots. The state's Community Health Services grants have provided funding to community clinics to help care for the growing number of uninsured — helping cover the cost of more than 140,000 uninsured clinic visits in 2004. But last year, the clinics took a big hit as legislators decided to cut these grants by \$5 million (22 percent of the program).

It's hard to make sense of a poor decision. With the number of uninsured patients at an all-time high, these funding cuts result in decreased access, increased wait times, reduced staffing

levels, and an increase in uninsured people using the least cost-effective care setting: hospital emergency rooms.

At a community clinic, the average cost per medical encounter — such as a preventative diabetes visit — is \$127. A diabetes-related hospitalization costs nearly \$3,500.

Who pays when the uninsured can't afford their hospital bills? We all do. The uncompensated costs to treat the uninsured at emergency rooms are passed on to people with insurance and taxpayers. In turn, health care costs are driven up even further for both the insured and uninsured. As a result, more people lose coverage, and the whole vicious cycle begins again.

We can do something to help slow this cycle and spend limited dollars more wisely. Until we can find a universal coverage solution, let's make sure that uninsured people can access care in the most appropriate and lowest-cost setting. The shortsighted decision to cut the grants that help support primary care at community health clinics can be corrected this legislative session. With the first budget surplus in five years, our state can afford to restore \$5 million to the program. It's a minimal cost with huge returns. ■

Linda McVeigh is the executive director of Country Doctor Community Health Center (cdchc.org), which provides high-quality, caring, culturally appropriate primary health care regardless of people's ability to pay.

[Take Action]

To raise your voice on the issue, call 1-800-562-6000 and leave a message for Rep. Eileen Cody, chair of the House Health Care Committee, and Rep. Frank Chopp, Speaker of the House. Urge them to protect access to medical and dental care for the uninsured by restoring \$5 million in funding for the Community Health Services program.

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Real Change is published weekly and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. 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 StreetWriters 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.

On the Web at

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

Real Change is a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association, the International Network of Street Papers, and the Greater Seattle Business Association.



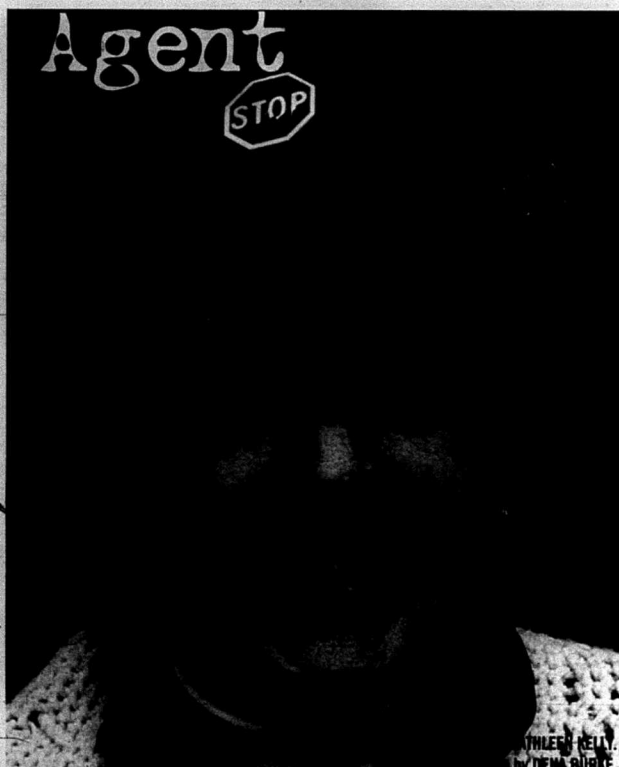
Change

Following in the tradition of wise women elders, the Seattle Raging Grannies rally for peace, justice, and economic equality. Donning oversized hats and outrageous outfits adorned with witty, justice-inspired pins, the women use the unique medium of satirical songs to spread their messages.

The Grannies were started in 1996 by two Canadian grandmothers, Alison Acke and Betty Brightwell. Infuriated about U.S. nuclear submarines entering Canadian waters, they stopped being armchair commentators on the world and took to the streets with their inspiring songs. Chapters began sprouting across North America, and the Seattle Raging Grannies was founded in 1996 by Kathleen Kelly, who was inspired by a group in Vermont. Among their many achievements, the Seattle Grannies sang at the benefit concert for No More Victims, helping to raise money to bring war-wounded Iraqi children to America.

The Grannies believe everyone, young and old, must actively work for peace. As their theme song affirms, "Justice now must rule! So join this gaggle of Grannies! Get up off of your fannies!"

—Dena Burke



Ex-felons Fight for Vote

ACLU court challenge awaits ruling

By CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

"I went in at 17. I've finally gotten my life together, and I'd like to get a clear understanding of what's going on — mainly to make a difference in my son's life."

— Terry L. Shanklin, who, at 40, has a 7-year-old son but has never voted.

While King County continues to figure out how many ex-felons are entitled to vote, Daniel Madison isn't counting on getting the right back any time soon.

Madison is a homeless Seattle man who has served his time for a 1996 assault conviction.

At the time of his sentencing, he was ordered to pay \$583 in restitution and victim fees. After going to the King County Courthouse every month to make a payment of \$15 to \$20, Madison still has a debt of more than \$200 and a load of bureaucratic snarls keeping him from the ballot box.

Madison is not alone. In 2001, the Department of Corrections estimated that 46,500 ex-felons couldn't vote in Washington solely because of a financial debt to the state — a situation that ex-offenders are fighting in Olympia and in court as a blanket disenfranchisement of the poor that's unconstitutional.

The lawsuit's main contention is that the only difference between ex-felons who haven't paid their debt, and those who have and can vote, is wealth. The state's demand for payment, the ACLU argues, is in essence an illegal poll tax.

"When I go to the poll, does the poll worker ask me, 'Are you all paid up on your financial obligations?'" asks Joseph Garcia, head of a Corrections Education program that works with ex-felons at South Seattle Community College.

With the state adding 12 percent interest from the day of sentencing, the loss of voting rights can be permanent for poor people such as Daniel Madison. He is one of five homeless people the American Civil Liberties Union is representing in a Washington lawsuit argued Jan. 20 and awaiting a ruling in King County Superior Court.

"It doesn't matter if you pay \$10 or \$1,000 a month," says Jennifer Shaw, legislative director of ACLU Washington. "It means you're never going to pay it off because you're never going to catch up."

Especially if you get lost in the system, as Madison did. In 1999, according to filings in the lawsuit, Madison notified the Department of Corrections that his mailing address had changed. When his statements stopped arriving from DOC, Madison thought his debt was paid — only to discover much later that he had a warrant for non-payment.

Even if the debt is paid or none was ever owed, says Willie Robinson, co-founder of Seattle's JusticeWorks, an ex-offenders' advocacy group, it's nearly impossible to get voting rights restored — a situation the ACLU says gets worse as incarceration mounts each year in the United States.

In Washington, for example, 32,000 people were released from prison or to parole in 2004, but only 970 ex-felons got certificates of discharge for their debt. The document is required to have voting rights restored.

But few do, Robinson says. That's because an ex-felon's certificate of discharge often gets lost or buried in the circuitous route it must make from the DOC, to the court, to the county clerk, to the county auditor in charge of voting.

A state bill that would have automatically restored the voting rights of ex-felons upon release from prison is already dead this year. But Shaw says two other bills that would reduce the 12 percent interest rate (HB 1359) and create a task force to study ex-felon voting rights (HB 3276) remain active in the legislature.

"I went in at 17," says ex-felon Terry L. Shanklin, who, at 40, has a 7-year-old son but has never voted. "I've finally gotten my life together, and I'd like to get a clear understanding of what's going on — mainly to make a difference in my son's life."

Just Heard...

Chainsaws at Occidental

A legal maneuver has given the Parks Department the go-ahead to cut down 17 of the 60 trees in Pioneer Square's Occidental Park — despite a judge's ruling in favor of a citizens' group fighting the action.

Last week, Superior Court Judge Joan Dubuque stated the citizens are likely to win their lawsuit and granted them a stay, which prohibits the tree-cutting until she can hear the lawsuit in May.

But the judge also ordered the group to put up a \$120,000 bond that the city demanded to cover the cost of delaying construction. The bond was due by the end of Monday. But "We don't have \$120,000 in cash," says Jim Klausner, the group's attorney. The entire bond had to be cash, Klausner says, because bonding agencies refused to front the money.

In effect, lack of money gives the case to the city. Last Thursday, the citizens' group wrote to each City Councilmember pleading for help in getting the mayor to stop the tree-cutting until the hearing. But that doesn't look likely.

"The plan is to proceed with construction, which would include the trees," says Parks spokesperson David Takami. With a contract yet to be signed for the work, he says, "construction wouldn't start for at least three weeks."

Saving Darfur

It's not direct action, but it's a start: A resolution making its way through the state Senate calls on President Bush to try to stop the violence in the western Sudan region of Darfur.

The resolution, Senate Joint Memorial 8030, sponsored by Sen. Adam Kline (D-Seattle), isn't binding but calls attention to the crisis by asking the president and Congress to ensure Sudanese victims get access to humanitarian aid — with or without the help of the Sudanese government, which has supported the killing of an estimated 400,000 Black Sudanese by bands of Arab militias.

Last year, a Seattle-area interfaith group called Save Darfur Washington was unable to get the state pension investment board to sell off stock in companies that do business in the Sudan. But it did get Kline to sponsor the resolution, which is expected to pass the Senate Rules Committee this week.

—Cydney Gillis

Disaster

Health care is again in the crosshairs of the Bush Administration ("Prescription Conscription," Feb. 1), which wants Congress to quell the deficit and cement the tax cuts in its 2007 budget. Bush better make a quick sale: 20 moderate, Republicans bolted from the conservatives on a two-month old spending bill, suggesting that the more time Congress has to analyze the Bush fiscal agenda, the less they can countenance it.

—Adam Hyla

It's Criminal

Homeless advocates compile list of "meanest" U.S. cities

In 2005, most of the 24 cities surveyed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors reported an increase in the requests for emergency shelter, yet an average of 14 percent of overall emergency shelter requests went unmet.

By STREET ROOTS
Portland Streetpaper

Homelessness is getting worse, according to the latest survey of U.S. mayors. And so is the trend to use the criminal justice system to respond to the problem. That's according to the latest report from two homeless advocacy groups on how cities are criminalizing homelessness.

"A Dream Denied: The Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities" was co-authored by the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. Released Jan. 11, the report is an annual tally of local government actions toward people living on the streets.

"The problem of criminalizing homelessness has been around a long, long time, and it's been increasing since the 1980s," says Michael Stoops, acting executive director for the National Coalition for the Homeless in Washington, D.C. "Clearly there is a war on the homeless being waged in downtown America."

"A Dream Denied" documents the top 20 worst offenders in terms of anti-homeless measures in 2005, as well as initiatives in some cities that are more constructive approaches to regarding people living in public spaces.

The National Coalition for the Homeless defines criminalization and

anti-homeless measures as those that target homeless people by making it illegal to perform life-sustaining activities in public. These measures prohibit activities such as sleeping/camping, eating, sitting, and begging in public spaces, usually including criminal penalties for violation of these laws.

Seattle didn't rank, but the report was critical of the city's prohibitions on sitting or lying on public sidewalks and efforts to curb so-called aggressive panhandling.

In 2005, most of the 24 cities surveyed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors reported an increase in the requests for emergency shelter, yet an average of 14 percent of overall emergency shelter requests went unmet. Nearly a third of the shelter requests by homeless families went unmet, according to the mayor's survey.

The top 20 meanest cities were chosen based on the number of anti-homeless laws in the city, the enforcement of those laws and severities of penalties, the general political climate toward homeless people, the city's history of criminalization measures, and the existence of pending legislation. The report's authors also consider local advocates' support for the designation.

Some of the most egregious examples cited by the report are as follows:

Sarasota, Fla.: After two successive Sarasota anti-lodging laws were

overturned by state courts, Sarasota passed a third law banning lodging outdoors. This latest version appears to be explicitly aimed at homeless persons: one of the elements necessary for arrest under the law is that the person "has no other place to live."

Little Rock, Ark.: Homeless people have reported being kicked out of bus stations in Little Rock, even when they had valid bus tickets. Two homeless men reported that officers of the Little Rock Police Department, in separate incidents, had kicked them out of the Little Rock Bus Station, even after showing the police their tickets. In other instances, homeless persons have been told that they could not wait at the bus station "because you are homeless."

Atlanta, Ga.: The City Council passed a comprehensive ban on panhandling in August. A Katrina evacuee who was sleeping in his car with his family was arrested for panhandling at a mall even after he showed police his Louisiana driver's license, car tag, and document proving that he was an evacuee. Finally, the city banned supportive housing for homeless people inside the city limits.

Las Vegas, Nev.: In order to keep homeless individuals out of future parks, the city considered privatizing the parks, enabling owners to kick out unwanted people. Mayor Oscar Good-

See MEANEST, Continued Next Page

Short Takes

Excluding Cal Anderson

No more rest for the weary at Cal Anderson Park. Now that the Parks Department has remodeled the reservoir park, it wants to clear it — and 12 other parks on Capitol Hill and First Hill — of unacceptable activities, such as sleeping overnight.

In response to what a Parks memo calls "several complaint letters" from residents about illegal behavior, including drug dealing, the Parks Department wants to create a new Cal Anderson Parks Exclusion Zone. The zone would include a huge swath of territory, from Miller Playground (at 400 19th E.) to small corner lots such as First Hill Park (at Minor Ave. E. and University St.) and Plymouth Pillars (at Boren Ave. and Pike St.)

The move would allow police officers to issue trespass notices and eject people as they do downtown for drug use, drinking, and camping. A trespass notice in one park would ban a person from all 13 — primarily affecting homeless young people who sleep at Cal Anderson. Parks staff say drug dealing there has already declined.

Parks staff will brief the Board of Park Commissioners on the issue Thursday night, with the board to take an advisory vote on Feb. 23. The final decision is up to Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds. Both meetings will start at 6 p.m. at Parks' headquarters in Denny Park at Dexter Avenue N. and Denny Way.

— Cydney Gillis

Innocence regained

Imagine being sentenced to life in prison for crimes you didn't commit. This was reality for Wilton

Dedge of Cocoa Beach, Fla. In 1982, Dedge was found guilty of sexual battery, aggravated battery, and burglary. In 2004, Dedge's attorneys proved through DNA testing that their client was innocent of the crimes he'd been charged with. Following 22 years of injustice, Dedge became a free man.

On Feb. 9, Dedge and film director Jessica Sanders will host the Seattle premiere of the documentary *After Innocence*, which focuses on the stories of Dedge and six other exonerates.

The event will be held at the Varsity Theatre, located at 4329 University Way N.E. It will run from 7 to 9 p.m.

The idea of making the film came from producer Mark Simon. At the time, Simon was a student at the Innocence Project, a non-profit legal clinic and criminal justice resource center that since 1992 has worked to exonerate prisoners when DNA testing can prove actual innocence.

One of the sponsors of the premiere is the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW). Since 1997, IPNW attorneys, professors, and students have been working to free innocent people in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, and Montana. The IPNW clinic is based out of the University of Washington School of Law, since being formed, IPNW attorneys and students have freed 11 people.

— Jeff Brown

I want you — gone

A local coalition of students has banded together to pass a city-wide initiative banning military recruiters from public schools, colleges, and university campuses — much

like a similar ban passed by San Francisco voters in November.

The "College Not Combat" group met for the first time at Seattle Central Community College last week to discuss the possibility of passing the initiative in Seattle.

Student leaders, who hail from Seattle Central Community College and the University of Washington, say their push to remove recruitment from schools comes from a strong belief that the United States military enjoys a poverty draft: students who cannot afford an education consider signing a contract with the "voluntary" military in exchange

for pay and the possibility of schooling after their service is complete. While the main impetus is to remove Army recruiters from public schools, organizers may also push to increase college funding to subsidize poorer students at area colleges.

If military recruiters are not allowed on the campuses, according to the federal No Child Left Behind law the schools risk losing their federal education funding.

Weekly meetings of the "College Not Combat" group will continue at Seattle Central. To get involved, email katej326@hotmail.com or call (206) 853-5866.

— M. C. Simmel



New Year's Resolution

VIETNAMESE GIRLS DRESSED IN RED GOWNS FOR TET, THE VIETNAMESE NEW YEAR, WHICH WAS CELEBRATED FEB. 4-5 AT SEATTLE CENTER AND FEATURED A LION DANCE AND A SPELLING BEE.

TRADITIONALLY ON TET, CHILDREN SAY WISHES FOR THEIR ELDERNS AND VOW TO BE WELL-BEHAVED. PHOTO BY GINNY BANKS.

Phyllis and Son

Phyllis was fast tracked to widowhood and freedom in a rural project where her only son didn't have claw hammer or connections to get a job in the mines or mercantile trades. Only the Marine Corps recruiter offered a job re-shoeing the horse drawn hearse of American economic history.

—DAVID S. POINTER

Continued from Previous Page

man fervently supported the idea, saying, "I don't want them there.... They think I'm mean now; wait until the homeless try to go over there."

The report shows an increase in the number of laws against panhandling, sitting or lying in certain public areas, and loitering and vagrancy laws. Another trend documented in the report is increased city efforts to target homeless persons indirectly, by placing restrictions on providers serving food in public spaces.

Not everything in the report is negative. The National Coalition for the Homeless praises several cities for their innovative approach to working with people on the streets. In Washington, D.C., for example, the downtown business community created a day center for people who may not have anywhere to go when nighttime shelters are closed. And in Broward County, Fla., a nonprofit outreach agency partnered with the police department to create an outreach team made up of police officers and a formerly homeless civilian outreach worker. ■

Reprinted from Street Roots, Portland, Or. @Street News Service [streetpapers.org].

Top 20 "meanest" cities:

1. Sarasota, FL
2. Lawrence, KS
3. Little Rock, AR
4. Atlanta, GA
5. Las Vegas, NV
6. Dallas, TX
7. Houston, TX
8. San Juan, PR
9. Santa Monica, CA
10. Flagstaff, AZ
11. San Francisco, CA
12. Chicago, IL
13. San Antonio, TX
14. New York City, NY
15. Austin, TX
16. Anchorage, AK
17. Phoenix, AZ
18. Los Angeles, CA
19. St. Louis, MO
20. Pittsburgh, PA



PorchLight



BAYVIEW TOWER

One-bedroom apartments for low-income elderly or disabled people



Accepting applications February 1-28, 2006

Bayview Tower, a high-rise for low-income elderly and disabled people, is located at 4th and Wall in Belltown.

PorchLight Housing Center will temporarily distribute a limited number of applications for the Bayview Tower waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis, starting February 1.

Completed applications must be received by February 28, and applicants must be elderly or disabled to be eligible.

APPLICATIONS ARE LIMITED - APPLY NOW!

PorchLight Housing Center
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What a Bomb Does

Recovered but not fully restored, nurse Emily Lyons educates people about the extremism that nearly took her life

Interview by LAURA PEACH
Contributing Writer

"Society is not just one group of people. It's a multitude of different races and religions and etc. You can't go around acting like there's just one of us; it don't work like that. You don't have to agree on everything, but you're not going to kill somebody because you disagree."
—Emily Lyons

What does it look and feel like to live through a bombing? Emily Lyons knows. She survived a pipe-bomb attack on an abortion clinic, and her memoir graphically conveys the devastating effects of experiencing a violent act of terrorism.

Emily Lyons was Director of Nursing at an abortion clinic in Birmingham, Ala. A bomb was set off outside the clinic on Jan. 29, 1998, killing police officer Robert Sanderson and severely injuring Lyons. She was hospitalized for several months and endured 21 surgeries. Nails and shrapnel were lodged in several parts of her body. She was blinded by a wire in her eye. Her legs were shattered.

Bomber Eric Rudolph was captured in 2003 and convicted of three other incidents, including the attack on the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta. Lyons' sight and her ability to walk were restored. But this woman who had made it her life purpose to care for others now had to be cared for herself.

Extremist acts of violence like Rudolph's continue to afflict abortion clinics across the nation. Less than a year ago, the Kirkland-based Eastside Women's Health was the subject of arson activity. The conflict over abortion threatens the lives of doctors, nurses, and staff who are working to provide women with the health care they need.

Lyons and her husband Jeff were in Seattle for the 33rd anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision. Emily spoke at a rally organized by Aradia Women's Health Center and read from her book *Life's Been a Blast* at Elliott Bay Book Company and Third Place Books. The couple met with *Real Change* to talk about the effects that the bomb has had on their lives.



Real Change: Why did you decide to write a memoir?

Emily Lyons: It's been a collection for years: things Jeff had recorded when I was in the hospital, speeches that I've done. We were trying to put that all together with our past lives: how we got together, how we got apart, then got back together [in our romantic relationship] — the normal person stuff to fit in with what happened to me.

Jeff: I knew that being blind and undergoing so many operations, Emily would have this big void in her life, so part of it was documenting so I could one day tell her what had happened. Something like this, with this much attention, you would just expect a book to come out.

To give you the bottom-line answer, I wanted people to see what a bomb

does. You watch television and it sounds high-tech and it sounds impressive, but when you see what it does to a person, it's not so great anymore. And I think the average person, unless they've been through a war, really has no idea that after somebody heals, this is what they look like — this is what a bomb does.

RC: Being a victim of an extremist's terrorism, how did you feel after the 9/11 attacks?

Emily: My thoughts were: the people who survived, they've got to be burned, they've got to be broken. You know how bad recovery is for that, so I can feel what they're fixing to go through: how hard it is, how painful it is. I look at [what happened to me] and I don't know how it even happened. And as our lives go by each year, I look back

Nurse Emily Lyons, after being pulled from the wreckage of a Birmingham, Ala. abortion clinic bombing in 1998. Provided by the Lyons family.

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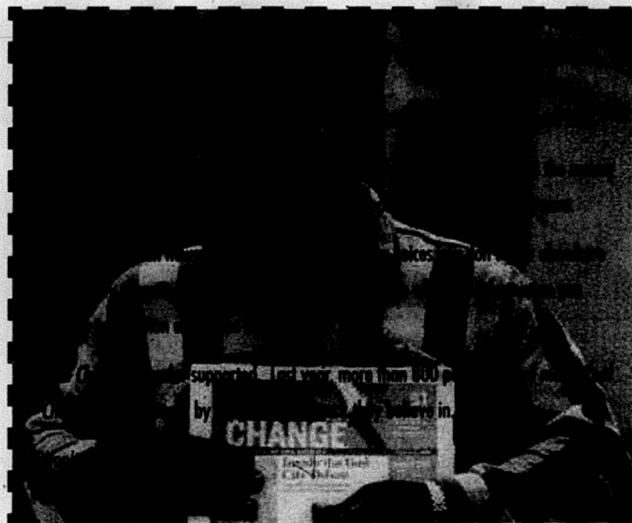
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Continued from Previous Page

and I go — it's all kind of unreal. Yeah, that's me but it just couldn't be.

RC: How do you feel about some of the other people who were hurt by Eric Rudolph?

Emily: Richard Jewell, the one who the FBI had thought was the guilty party to start with, he wasn't physically injured by Rudolph's actions, but he has probably suffered more as a result of it. His life was just really ripped apart by it. There we no apologies, no 'Help to put it back together' kind of thing from the government or whatever.

RC: Describe the advocacy work you have been doing recently. Why did you decide to be so public?

Emily: Well, kind of the reason is that we wanted to let people see what the bomb did. To let them know that there are these people out there who are willing to do this to someone to keep women from choosing the health care they want. It is a war, and seven people in this country have died because of this war. It no different than the war we've really got going on now in another country. It should be treated the same as a [9/11] terrorist attack. It can't just be shoved away in a corner.

RC: What do you think needs to be done to change the perception of the issue, then?

Emily: Education. Start basic — at whatever age someone can comprehend, there should be education for tolerance. Society is not just one group of people. It's a multitude of different races and religions and etc. You can't go around acting like there's just one of us; it don't work like that. You don't have to agree on everything, but you're not going to kill somebody because you disagree.

RC: What do you think about the possibility that *Roe v. Wade* may be overturned?

Emily: I truly believe that that is going to happen. It may not be this year or next year, but they're going to continue to chip away at it like they've been doing, causing more restrictions and limitations along with the anti-choice advocates who are putting so much fear into doctors. So that, in a little bit down the road, a case is going to come up again and the balance is going to change all of that. Thomas, Scalia, and now, Roberts: you know what their views are. You can't tell me that their views are not going to have any bearing.

RC: What do you think should be done to protect the decision?

Emily: I think that states should really have their own laws. Washington state has it: if *Roe* is overturned, Washington

has a law that it's still legal. There's probably half a dozen in the country like that.

RC: What was it like to have your vision taken away?

Emily: If you think about what you do every day, vision is where it all starts. I'm sure a blind person would disagree with me, but I believe that without vision you really cannot do anything. There is nothing to enjoy. I mean, you got sound, but you can't see anything, you can't see the pictures, you can't see the

person next to you. Your concept of colors is nothing. And society is very visually orientated. What you look like determines what someone thinks about you. Our society's not set up for blind people.

RC: How do you feel that your five years of surgery and everything else that you have been through has changed you?

Emily: I look at things differently now; everything is different. I appreciate what I have a lot more. You learn the important things in life. Looks are not everything, and that was a true test in my mind was that no matter how bad I looked over these past few years, those first few months, it didn't matter to [Jeff]. And that to me is an unconditional love. What people say about me: sticks and stones they may break my bones, but the words are not important.

RC: Jeff, what do you think was the hardest thing about supporting Emily throughout this time?

Jeff: There is nothing more rewarding than to take care of the person you care the most about. That's what you're supposed to do. Emily is the person who I want to spend my life with. A lot of the procedures were very painful, and so that's probably the hardest thing, seeing her go through pain.

RC: Emily, you assert that you are a "bombing survivor" instead of a "bombing victim." Why?

Emily: For me, when I think of the word victim, faults come to my mind about this person. And that's not me. You choose what you want after a catastrophe. You can choose to be a victim or you can choose to be a survivor. It's just the way you look at it, and I don't want to be looked at that way. I'm a survivor who will continue to make the best of what I got. ■



SUE LYONS, IN NURSING UNIFORM, PRIOR TO BECOMING CAUGHT IN THE CROSSHAIRS OF THE BATTLE OVER ABORTION. PHOTO COURTESY THE LYONS FAMILY.

Ellen's Good Day

I guess I'll call my mother, even if we never did get along, And my sister and brother too. Though they'll want me To be normal just like they are, and I can't be more than I already am. My brain chemistry's different from theirs. Even if they have problems, I'm the one with the schizophrenia— The one who hears the CIA, the FBI, the trees talking Outside my window.

Here I am in Seattle wandering the streets
Like a poor sucker who never had a home.
As if I were just dropped here in these scruffy clothes,
This disoriented mind.
When in reality I was brought up like most Americans
In a regular house, a row house even, in Flatbush,
With neighbors all around.
Who Mother would call for a cup of sugar
When she'd run out and want to finish a cake before Dad got home.
Dad. He's the one I got it from. My cousin, Jamey, has it too.
Runs in families. I don't know...
Or care.

I need to find a place to eat, a shelter tonight.
I'll be damned if I'll hold up another sign
At the edge of the freeway.
Not today anyway. Seems to be a good one so far.
Probably because I took my meds.
I guess the doctor's right, damn him.
Wish he weren't such a pain in the ass.

Wonder what kind of life he goes home to,
If he ever needed food to eat,
A place to sleep. Wonder...
What time is it?
The shelter should be open soon.
Maybe I'll go to the library,
Wait there,
Find some paper and a pen.
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Draw a picture.
Read.

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Regrets, They've Had a Few

One of Rebecca Brown's characters fixates on a lost lover, "insistently regretting, reliving, whatever-ing, wanting... despite (because of?) (and here's the real shame) the fact that I have a stable, good, decent, solvent, healthy, well-rounded, satisfying — and I really mean that, I am not being ironic — life."

The Last Time I Saw You
By Rebecca Brown
City Lights, 2006
Paperback, 97 pages, \$12.95
Review by ADAM HYLIA
Editor

Regret is the coin of the fictive realm created by Seattle author Rebecca Brown in the 12 stories that comprise *The Last Time I Saw You*. Regret and as part of that, remembrance, and also selective forgetfulness.

Each of the 12 first-person narrators in these shorts is a little twisted: twisted and then fixed into position, with their eyes unblinkingly staring backwards in time. They're speaking, addressing a you that turns out not to be there, or saying how they're unable to speak: how they may appear to be speaking but it's not them, not their words. Lost love is a common theme, or the lost innocence of childhood. They're looking back in anguish at a long procession of misery, or they're looking back in torment at the lost thread of pleasure.

With misery and pleasure being relative, each use the other for a foil: the pleasure lost making for the deeper, present misery. One character fixates on a lost lover, "insistently regretting, reliving, whatever-ing, wanting... despite (because of?) (and here's the real shame) the fact that I have a stable, good, decent, solvent, healthy, well-rounded, satisfying

— and I really mean that, I am not being ironic — life."

In other stories, the recognition of what's been lost comes on like a cold bucket of water. A man or a woman — one of the most intriguing things about Brown's writing is this lack of clarity — perhaps due to the rape fantasies s/he indulges or perhaps because his/her gay-dar is fully attuned, goes to a violent movie with an old girlfriend, Jilly. Or thinks s/he does; then s/he remembers her old friend was attacked by a man not unlike the Hannibal Lecter up on the screen. One minute, Jilly's joyously munching popcorn; the next she's weeping, silent and bloodied. Then she's gone and the theater is empty.

Brown's characters also consciously use memory as the tool of their undoing. One says it's usual to think of obsession as something accidental, unwanted. Not his. He admits, perhaps boasts to an old (and absent) lover that "there are moments when some relatively benign thought of you wafts casually across some outskirts of my brain but rather than merely glance nostalgically... I instead after an heroic labor of picking scratching worrying digging around the scab of it, untaught unleash launch forth what I've been itching to get back to, the one sharp thrust like the poke of a poker, up a hole, thereafter which I, gouged, twist writhe struggle but do not let go. No, rather I invite the jackham-

mer gatling gun tongue swallowing spit flailing furniture breaking seizure that crashes hurtles spews bursts over into me."

Such self-knowledge extends even to the novelist and critic E.M. Forster, who shows up as the subject of a literary expositor in the short "Aspects of the Novel." Forster, we're told by the lecturer (who's also obsessing over someone lost), formulated the difference between the making of fiction and the writing of fact: fiction is the evidence of what happened, plus the author's perceiving of it, minus her ability to fully say what she saw — an "unknown quantity" which "always modifies the effect of the evidence and sometimes transforms it entirely."

Case in point was Forster, cut off from "the most passionate and pleased aspects of himself" by the homophobia of his times: when he was a young man, gay Britons were sentenced to hard labor. He quit writing fiction while still in his prime, and — you guessed it — lives with the regret for the next five decades.

Americans of all sexual orientations are unchained today from the harshest legal fetters. But they're not free, for there must be a reason why Brown's characters have so often lost the ability to speak, or talk to people who aren't there about memories of things past: they can't break out of the hard memories of pleasure or of pain. ■

One Great Big Fight Club

Why We Fight
Directed by Eugene Jarecki
Opens Friday, Feb. 10
By LESTER GRAY
Arts Editor

Preaching to the choir, long belittled as an exercise of dubious efficacy, does not receive its due. Employed as a means of reawakening the once faithful very visibly gone to nod behind the pulpit, it triggers a signal to the back pews that a worthwhile message is at hand.

Whether Eugene Jarecki's *Why We Fight* proves capable of engendering such a ripple is impossible to predict. However, of those who view this cogent work, sculpted by a crack production team, few will emerge unmoved.

The Grand Jury Prize winner from Sundance 2005 seamlessly blends historic footage, scenes of the Iraq war, and interviews with people from soldiers to horse ranchers to think tank associates — all of whose lives directly touch on the current conflict. Jarecki fills the documentary requisite of keeping his constituent parts invigorating

as they collectively posit a larger idea: the role of venality and empire-building in America's decision to go to war.

At the end of his second term in office, President Eisenhower, a World War

II hero and certainly no liberal, warned the country of the dangers of the Military-Industrial Complex. A term he coined himself, it refers to the alliance of the arms industry, the Pentagon, and Congress. His concern was that the dynamic of this relationship would create a juggernaut not easily contained.

Why We Fight sets out to prove Eisenhower's prescience. As much as Jarecki wants this to be an unbiased examination of facts, 40 percent of Americans, who currently believe the Iraq war was and continues to be just, might find his method of scrutiny a bit questionable.

Those citizens would probably not consider the juxtaposition of conversations with U.S. pilots proud of their bombing mission that opened the war with scenes of the civilian dead to be balanced journalism. Indeed, it does leave a certain impression.

They would most likely see the story of Karen Kwiatkowski, an officer stationed in the Pentagon, as an isolated case. She resigns after witnessing neoconservative appointees of the Bush Administration inappropriately shape intelligence.

It is a little harder to challenge the documented connection between Congress and the weapons industry, or the role of voters who demand continued defense contracts, which keep them employed.

Why We Fight argues that the United States economy (that includes all of us) to a large degree depends on war and the industry that supplies the means through which it is waged.

For the most part the information presented in the film is not hard to find: the dots are not that difficult to connect. Jarecki addresses not what's going on without our knowledge, but with our approval and often, explicit consent. ■

Why We Fight argues that the United States economy (that includes all of us) to a large degree depends on war and the industry that supplies the means through which it is waged.

President Eisenhower speaks to the nation about the Military Industrial Complex.



Adventures
in Irony

Dr. Wes Browning



Faced with the urge to sweep its streets of homeless people like so many other cities have done when hosting Super Bowls, Detroit did something finer. It threw Super Bowl parties for them.

and they agree to test their powers by seeing who can first get a jacket, or cloak, off a man on a road. The North Wind, for all his blowing, just succeeds in getting the man to grip the cloak tighter, while the Sun gently warms it off of him.

I've also been thinking a lot lately about the Steelers in the Super Bowl. I'm not talking about Super Bowl XL, the one where they just beat the Seahawks, 21-10. I'm talking about Super Bowl XXX, 10 years ago, when the Pittsburgh Steelers lost to the Dallas Cowboys.

Not being a fan of football, I had no use for that information on the day in January 1996 when the game was played. But because I have to walk about among the normal humans, and because I sometimes have to pass for one of them, I stored the factoid in my brain, in the abbreviated format "Pittsburgh = Losers, XXX."

So two months later when I was writing an April Fool's story about how all the homeless in Seattle had finally got the hint that they were unwelcome here and were using their famous mobility to go elsewhere, I naturally made Pittsburgh their fictitious destination. Naturally, I thought the choice was hilarious, in part because homelessness and Super Bowls and homeless people and Super Bowl losers all have nothing whatsoever to do with one another.

How wrong I was! I should, in fact, have sent all our homeless to Detroit, because those people might have known what to do with them.

Faced with the urge to sweep its streets of homeless people like so many other cities have done when hosting Super Bowls, Detroit did something finer. It threw Super Bowl parties for

Eating from Aesop's Table

I've been thinking about my favorite Aesop's fable. My favorite Aesop's fable, just so you'll all know, is the one that has the North Wind and the Sun arguing about which of them is the most powerful,

them, where they could get together out of the cold and watch the game while eating the same kind of junk food everybody else in the country considers essential to the experience, and making the same kinds of collective noises, etc.

Even though I totally don't get football, I totally understand and appreciate the normal human need to gather for food and to make celebratory and other collective noises. The normal humans really go in for that sort of thing. It's called "community," or some such thing, and it's highly valued. The surprise for a lot of people is (hold on to your hats!) homeless people value it too.

So Detroit's Super Bowl parties were a resounding success. Not only did they save their city a lot of expense by not having to pay a lot of cops overtime to herd people around against their will, but they introduced a lot of people to social services and got folks in the door to sign up for programs that they hadn't even heard of before. Aesop would have said, "I told you so." Aesop, an African slave who lived over 25 centuries ago, could out-wise the average 21st century City Council member, anywhere.

Everyone can learn from Detroit's experience. The missions, for example, just might learn to provide the meal first and invite people to the sermon afterward (I believe Jesus himself did it in that order). Cities and towns that don't want people to panhandle could try to provide attractive alternatives, involving assorted cheese dips and opportunities for loud hooting. Chronic homelessness is not a well-defined term.

That last item doesn't have anything to do with the Aesop's fable, probably, but it's something I want people to learn, so I tossed it in anyway.

The real inspiration for that April Fool's article 10 years ago was the razing of homeless encampments in the Jungle along Beacon Hill — a stupid act of unnecessary, witless force. Let's all learn that witless force is as impractical as it is costly. ■

Bus Chick,
Transit
Authority

Carla Saulter



Every day, I have adventures. Every day, I hear stories. It is these adventures and stories that I intend to share in this column.

Grandma's apartment, the Market, and, in the summer, Seattle Center. I cherished my ability to get around the city without the assistance of an adult, a power rare among my eight-year-old peers. By the time I turned 16, however, a new power beckoned: a form of transportation that was available on demand and did not require an umbrella or an extra pair of gloves.

Seven years ago, I got a job in the suburbs. Rather than subject my beloved city to the impact of a 30-mile round-trip commute, I returned to my bus-riding roots. As an adult rider, I found the same irritations — the heavy bag, the exposure to the elements, the waiting — that had originally driven me (pun intended) to car ownership. But there were also benefits I hadn't previously considered: enforced exercise, extra time to read, reduced expenses. After several months of regular bus commuting, I started riding on the weekends. Soon, I was using my car so rarely that I decided to try living without one. I sold my lovely silver coupe in March of 2003 and have used the bus as my primary form of transportation ever since.

Bus Chick's Manifesto

When I was in third grade, I started riding the Metro bus alone. At first, I was allowed to ride to school only, but eventually my parents extended my privileges to include

So began, dear *Real Change* readers, an experiment that has changed my life so completely that it has become a part of my identity (hence, the name). This doesn't mean it's always fun. I don't like riding on rainy days, when the floor is wet and the windows are fogged up and everybody is in a bad mood. I don't like standing when the bus is crowded. I don't like drivers who ride the brakes. I don't like practical hairstyles or sensible shoes. But those are minor irritations compared to what I've gained — and I'm not just talking about a few extra dollars in my pocket or a slightly eased conscience. What I love about riding the bus, folks, is actually riding the bus.

Every day, I sit by my neighbors. I turn my head to look at beautiful children and plug my ears to block out loud ones. I roll my eyes at young lovers, eavesdrop on married women's gossip, and chuckle at the posturing of teenage boys. Every day, I have adventures. Every day, I hear stories. It is these adventures and stories that I intend to share in this column. My hope is that they will encourage some of you to ride the bus more often, but I will be satisfied if they provide you with a different perspective of your city, and (hopefully) some amusement at my expense. ■

Got a question or comment about public transportation in Seattle? E-mail Bus Chick at buschick@gmail.com.



Thurs., Jan. 19, 7:23 a.m., Plaid

Pantry, Taylor Avenue N. American Medical Response staff contacted 911 requesting that police check on a subject at the Plaid Pantry who had called them wanting to voluntarily commit himself. Officers arrived and found the subject, a transient Black male aged 43, standing in the parking lot at a payphone outside the store. He stated he had called AMR, and said he was thinking about hurting himself. He requested that he be taken to Harborview to talk to a mental health professional, and was transported there via ambulance.

Thurs., Jan. 19, 1:01 a.m., 200 block

Fourth Ave. Officers know subject from previous contacts, and they know that he is active with the Department of Corrections. When officers saw the subject, a transient white male aged 47, in the 200 block of Fourth Ave., they called his DOC officer. He was found to be in non-compliance for failure to report, and was taken into custody. DOC officers responded to the scene and transported the man to the precinct where he was issued a detainer for the parole violation. He was then booked into King County Jail.

Thurs., Jan. 19, 10:59 p.m., S. Washington St.

A transient Black female aged 24 was contacted by officers and was found to be active with the DOC. During the conversation, suspect admitted she had smoked crack cocaine that day and had failed to report to her parole officer. Police contacted her DOC officer, who advised them that she should be arrested. She was booked into King County Jail.

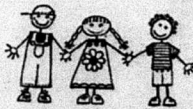
Fri., Jan. 20, 11:57 a.m., 2300 block

Western Ave. Suspect was observed by officers in a group of other people, taking part in suspected drug activity. When the group saw the officers they tried to avoid contact by all leaving in different directions at once. Officers managed to contact the suspect, a transient white male aged 38, and found he had an outstanding extradition warrant out of Oregon. Oregon verified the warrant, and indicated that they were willing to extradite the suspect. Suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Fri., Jan. 20, 2:50 p.m., under the

viaduct, Elliot and Blanchard. Officers were on routine patrol under the Alaskan Way viaduct, which is SDOT property, and is clearly posted "No Loitering, No Trespassing." As they rode into the area they saw two black males, both aged 30, standing next to a concrete support pillar inside a posted area. One of the men appeared to throw a suspected crack pipe into the bushes. Both men were asked for ID, and it was found that the first man, a transient, was under DOC supervision. He 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.



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We bomb and invade Iraq, kill thousands of civilians, arrest thousands more and torture some of those arrested, and leave the country in chaos. All of this, so that we can arrest a dictator who arrested and tortured and killed thousands of civilians?

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit."

Matthew 7:15-19

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Letters

editor@realchange.org

Hatred at home

Dear Real Change,

Thank you for the activist interviews on the neo-nazis ("Part of the Solution," Jan. 25-31). I wanted to say I agree with Real Change director Tim Harris when he said, "I think that the difference between the politics of the National Socialist Movement and the politics of the Republican Party is largely one of degree."

I can easily picture John Bolton writing a secret memo saying that our new policy of increased bombing in Iraq will cost 250,000 innocent Iraqi lives, but we should pursue this policy as it will save American lives. I can also picture this memo becoming public. And, if Bolton were then to be nominated as Secretary of State, it wouldn't stop his nomination at all.

The reason I can picture these events is that they have already happened. Under Bill Clinton, Madeleine Albright famously said that the deaths of half a million Iraqi children were worth the price. This did not produce an outcry. It preceded her nomination as Secretary of State, where she was easily confirmed without a mention of her remark.

I continue to speak out about the 12 years of sanctions beginning with the bombing of Iraq's electrical grid and civilian infrastructure during the 1991 Gulf War. We just passed the 15-year mark of our continual warfare against the Iraqi people.

That said, I'm afraid that a fuller statement would be that the racism implicit in the policies of the Republican and Democratic Parties is one of degree.

Bert Sacks
Seattle

The Color of Council

Dear Real Change,

Predominantly white organizations and entities often claim they lack diversity because they cannot find qualified applicants of color. The Seattle City Council has four white males, two white females, and two men of color. It is clear that the council is lacking in gender and ethnic diversity.

Why then, when presented with an impressive list of qualified women of color applicants, did they choose a white female whose experience does not compare? Could it be that the council is not all that concerned with

ethnic diversity? This appears to be the case with their recent appointment of Sally Clark ("Color Me Comfortable," Feb. 1-7).

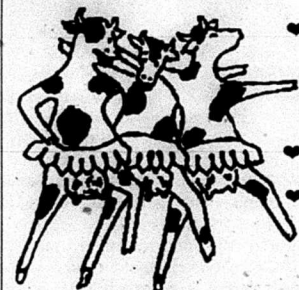
Clark clearly was no match for some of the strong candidates recently snubbed by the council. For example, one woman of color was the director of a city department for over 10 years and was instrumental in bringing the People's Institute to Seattle and beginning the work of local government to address institutionalized racism. The council also passed up an award-winning woman of color who previously served on the council for three terms. They passed up the director of one of the most effective community organizations in the city, who has intimate experience working with city government in an advocacy role. It is clear that these women have the skills necessary to fulfill the position, and the City Council owes us an explanation for choosing Clark.

It appears that Clark was a "safe" choice for councilmembers who may have feared radical change with the appointment of a strong, capable woman of color. Perhaps they thought they could achieve diversity goals because Clark is a lesbian. I'd even go as far as to speculate that choosing Clark was safe because it would stop complaints of reverse discrimination from whites, who were not the majority in the final slate of candidates. Whatever the rationale, her appointment sends a clear message to women of color. And in the next election I sure hope women of color send a clear message to the City Council. I know I sure will.

Yalonda Sindé
Seattle

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

Wednesday 2/8

In the first in a series of partisan-free information series titled *Democracy in Crisis*, David Domke, former journalist and current Associate Professor at the University of Washington, presents his talk "The New Echo Chamber: The State of the American News Media and Why It Matters." Domke, interviewed in the Jan. 18 issue of *Real Change*, has written several articles about the press following 9/11, the War on Terror, and fundamentalism in the White House. 7 p.m., Epiphany Church, 1805 38th Ave. Info: (206)324-2573.

Thursday 2/9

Lester R. Brown, president of the Earth Policy Institute, delivers his talk on globalization in relation to our social and economic well-being. Tickets \$10 members and students, \$15 general. 7 p.m., The Mountaineers, 300 Third Ave. W.

A four-part documentary series, *Slavery and the Making of America*, recognizes the strength, humanity, and dignity of the enslaved by focusing on their lives and memories. 9 p.m., KCTS, check local listings. Info: www.slaveryinamerica.org

Friday 2/10

The Meaningful Movies series screens *Argentina: Hope in Hard Times*. In 2001, Argentina's economy collapsed, yet through the strength of neighbor-to-neighbor unity the people fought off the economic domination of globalization, creating an inspiring democratic recovery. Filmmakers Melissa Young and Mark Dworkin will update us on the changes they documented in their recent visit to the area. 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. Info: wufp@bridgings.org.

Dubbed a classical-urban ambassador, Daniel Bernad Roumain blends genres to create a "sonic vision." His *String Quartet No. 4, Angelou*, a musical portrait of Maya Angelou, received loud applause at its premiere at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center. Tickets \$12 and up. 8 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave. Info: www.dbrmusic.com

Saturday 2/11

Dyke Community Activists offer a lesbian film double-feature. *No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon* follows the two founders of the modern lesbian civil rights movement through six decades, beginning with the fear of discovery and ending with the expectation of equality. *A Knock Out* is a documentary about south London champion boxer Michele Aboro. Despite her spectacular record in the ring of 18 knockouts in 21 fights, her contract was suddenly canceled because of her refusal to pose naked

in magazines and sex up her image. 7:30 p.m., Hearing, Speech, and Deafness Center, 1609 19th Ave.

Sunday 2/12

The 8th Annual Hooshang Afrasiabi Distinguished Lecture in Persian Studies presents "Justice, Purity and Sexuality in Modern Iranian History," by Janet Afary, Associate Professor from Purdue University. A native of Iran, Afary has written many books and articles on women and feminism in Iranian culture. 4 p.m., University of Washington, Kane Hall 120.

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship's monthly gathering focuses on social activism. David Berrian leads a discussion on security and how it taints decisions and practices. 7 p.m., Seattle Buddhist Center, 3315 Beacon Ave. S. Info: www.bpf-seattle.org

Wednesday 2/15

Koren Zailckas' memoir, *Smashed: Story of a Drunken Girlhood*, is a cautionary tale written in poetic prose. Zailckas weaves disturbing statistics into her account of a decade spent struggling with binge drinking, comas, empty sexual encounters, date rape, and suicide. 7 p.m., University Bookstore, 4326 University Way NE.

Director's Corner

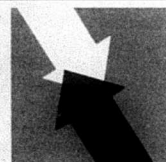


Jim Wallis, the Editor of *Sojourner* magazine and author of the bestselling "God's Politics," was in town this week to talk about religion and social change. Part of his rap is how "the left doesn't get it." Religion has played a huge role in major social movements, he says (think MLK), because that's where you find people who are willing to make commitment to an ideal the center of their lives. Faith = Hope = Action = Social Change. You can bet that the evangelical right gets this.

He decries the "secular fundamentalists" who have little use for their religious allies. What he describes is real. Just this week, an otherwise sensible friend of mine seriously argued that we should stop tolerating religion since it inevitably leads to intolerance.

Part of the problem, obviously, is that the wrong people have gotten the corner on God. We see the strongest commitment and the most effective political mobilization from those who have reduced religion to blind worship of militarism, opposition to abortion, bigotry against sexual minorities, and free market economics. No wonder God has a bad name.

My suspicion is that if the more socially progressive elements of the church woke up to the times we live in and showed a bit more backbone, most of the "left" would come around pretty quickly. We live in a time that is desperate for real moral leadership. There's some mountains that need moving.



First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

Get the money influence out of local politics

Issue: Every year, campaigns get more and more expensive, preventing many qualified candidates from running for office and making it harder to even consider running against an incumbent. The state legislature is currently considering two bills (Senate Bill 6221 and House Bill 1436) that would allow local governments to institute public financing for local political campaigns.

Background: Initiative 134, passed by Washington voters in 1992, currently regulates political contributions and campaign expenditures. It prohibits the use of public funds to finance political campaigns for state or local offices.

Prior to the passage of Initiative 134, some local governments, including Seattle and King County, had ordinances providing public funds for political campaigns for municipal offices. While it wasn't intended to increase the effect of money in politics, the prohibition on using public funds for campaigns does just that.

S.B. 6221/H.B. 1436 would allow local governments to institute public financing programs for local political campaigns. The prohibition on the use of public funds to finance political campaigns for local offices would be eliminated. SB 6221/HB 1436 would be a big step towards removing the corruptive influence of big money at the local level, and ultimately at the state and national levels.

Seattle and King County had public funding programs until I-134 inadvertently prohibited them. The programs were working very well, and Seattle's program had the effect of increasing the number of women and people of color on the City Council

Public funding for campaigns:

- increases the number of candidates seeking office,
- increases contact between voters and the candidates,
- decreases the time a candidate must fundraise,
- and decreases the appearance of impropriety that arises during fundraising.

This is a local control issue, and there is no mandate to implement such a program. The legislation simply allows local government the option. In 2003, candidates for Seattle City Council spent \$1.7 million. Public financing could help level the playing field and take some of the money — and its influence — out of local politics.

Action: Contact your state legislators and ask them to support SB 6221 and HB 1436 without any amendments that would make it harder for local governments to enact public financing programs. Call the Legislative Hotline at 1 (800) 562-6000 or find your legislators' emails at www.leg.wa.gov. For more information contact Washington Public Campaigns at www.washclean.org.

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

CONVICTION, Continued from Page 1

causes students with drug convictions to lose financial aid.

"For students in school, drug convictions are the only infraction for which they are denied aid," says Dominic Holden, who served as steering committee chair for voter initiative I-75, which made marijuana possession the lowest police priority in Seattle in 2003. "Even violent offenders remain eligible for federal assistance."

At issue is a drug provision that has now become part of the Higher Education Act (HEA). Signed into law in 1965, the HEA's purpose was, in part, "to make grants under this title to strengthen community service programs of colleges and universities." Using a potential student's drug convictions against her was nowhere contained within the two-page document.

Then came "The War on Drugs." As a result, in 1998, Congress passed an amendment to the HEA barring those with federal or state drug convictions from receiving federal educational resources. Estimates obtained from the Government Accountability Office by the ACLU reveal that assistance has been denied to more than 175,000 applicants with past drug convictions.

"And this amendment is a reflection of the racial and class disparities inherent in the drug war," notes Holden.

To combat these disparities, the local ACLU is planning to file a class-action suit and, with Holden's assistance, has begun an active recruitment program to find affected students. The ACLU plans to file the federal case in Seattle, which sits in the Ninth District.

The amendment itself imposes strict guidelines. One offense for possession of a controlled substance makes a student ineligible for aid for one year; two possession convictions, two years; three convictions amount to indefinite ineligibility. For those caught selling, a first offense denies aid for two years; two selling convictions and pigs will fly before the feds drop educational assistance in a student's hands. With some states' eligibility

linked to the federal, a federal denial can often equal a state denial.

But a provision nestled into a budget bill just passed by Congress in early February may have given the amendment a little more flexibility. Whereas in the past, current eligibility could be linked to a prior conviction, now, only those students who are presently aid recipients

when convicted of a drug offense will suffer the loss of aid. Past convictions, in a sense, may become moot. The new provision, says Holden, does not change the ACLU's belief that the amendment is unconstitutional.

"It's a feel-good effort on behalf of Congress, to lead people to believe that the drug provision is not harming people," asserts Holden.

Students who have been affected still need to stand up and be counted, he says. "One person coming forward could restore not only their education," says Holden, "but education for millions of people across the country."

Macone has decided to come forward. She says she's aligning herself with the ACLU to overturn the law because a college education, for some, may be the start of a good future.

As for her future, she's decided to forgo a degree in mycology, hoping instead to cultivate a mushroom-growing business in Oregon, where she now lives, and perhaps find ways to educate young people about the environment. But while her love of mushrooms motivates her, she is curious as to why Congress amended the HEA in the first place. Is the government, she wonders, purposely targeting low-income people who want to get an education?

"I don't know if that's their scheme or what," muses Macone, "but I wonder what their motives are." ■

[Class Action]

If you, or someone you know, has been denied financial assistance due to a drug conviction, the ACLU wants to hear from you. Contact them at (206) 624-2184, ext 251 or HEA@aclu-wa.org.



JENNIFER MACONE WAS DENIED FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID DUE TO A DRUG CONVICTION. NOW SHE'S JOINED AN ACLU CLASS-ACTION SUIT TO FIGHT THE LAW. SHE'S PICTURED WITH SON, AUDRIC. PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNIFER MACONE.

DARFUR, Continued from Page 1

the exhibit's opening-night reception. "This expression of human suffering is one that no child should have to witness or experience. Through these pictures, they are asking us to act."

A better understanding of the drawings comes from more information about the complicated conflict, says Bercault.

"Where once this desert was a rich country full of farms and traders, it is now desolate," he says. "The Africans and Arabs are both Muslim, so this is not a religious war; it is a racial war between tribes."

The nomadic Arab herders and the Black farmers once traded cattle and grains; peaceful means of resolving conflict used to work.

But Darfur had been experiencing drought for lengthy periods of time. Competition for resources spurred clashes between the Arabs and the farmers. Lack of good governance and democracy did not encourage peaceful communication. Guns were easily available, and the clashes often became violent. In 1998, the Arab nomads moved their flocks earlier in the year; this was the beginning of the long-term violence.

Amna Ibrahim Ahmed experienced the turmoil firsthand. Recently relocated to Washington from Sudan for school, she's also trying to save her people in Sudan. She says that the conflict escalated in February 2003 when two rebel groups comprised of darker-skinned Sudanese demanded an end to marginalization and sought power within the Arab-ruled government.

"The government sided with the Arab nomads, who organized as the Janjaweed militias," she says, and their acts of ethnic cleansing target civilians of "the same ethnicity as the rebel groups."

Complex as it is, the conflict is universally understood when seen through children's eyes.

"When one artist child was asked why the people in his picture were colorless, he said 'Because they are dead,'" says Bercault. A child describes one of the pictures depicting rape to Bercault: "They [the soldiers] take our mothers and sisters and make them wife."

"A little boy who was given a crayon at the camp in Chad looked at me questioning. His brother told me that he did not know how to draw; he has not been to school. The older boy took the crayon and drew the picture for him," he remembers.

"When I asked the little boy if he had something to add, he said 'Yes — I want to go home.'" ■

REFUGEE AID WORKER OLIVIER BERCAULT ASKED DISPLACED DARFUR CHILDREN TO DRAW WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THEM IN THE ETHNIC CONFLICT THAT'S CONSUMED WESTERN SUDAN. THEIR WORK IS ON DISPLAY ON THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CAMPUS UNTIL FEB. 22. PHOTO BY FRED ABRAHAMS.

[See the drawings]

"The Smallest Witness: the Conflict

in Darfur Through Children's Eyes" is on display in the lobby and on the second floor of UW's Odegaard Library. Admission is free. The library is open 24 hours on weekdays and until 9 p.m. weekends. Cosponsored by Human Rights Watch, the American Jewish Committee, the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center, and Save Darfur Washington State.

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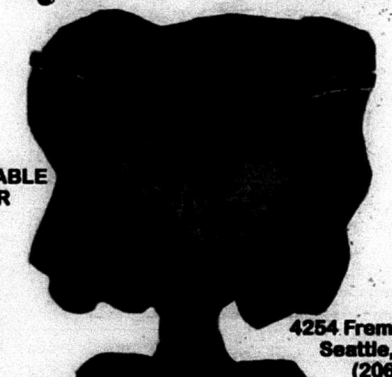
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Volume VI, Issue 2

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Youth Advocacy Day A Success!

MISTY LOU COOK

On Martin Luther King Day, *Mockingbird Times* Reporters, some of the Mockingbird Society and many other Foster Care Youth Advocates went to Olympia to support House Bill 2002 (HB 2002). The room we were all testifying in was packed with advocates, young people, reporters and concerned citizens! This was my first time testifying before Legislators in Olympia, so I felt a lot of adrenaline and anxiety before going up to speak on behalf of youth in the foster care system, yet I also felt empowered by all of that adrenaline and "excess" energy, and my testimony came naturally. Testifying on Martin Luther King Day was very powerful, and a few of us quoted Dr. Martin Luther King while testifying before the House Committee. The general feeling was that this day was a complete success!

Youth Advocacy Training Day was a tremendous success as well, and took place the day before Youth Advocacy Day to prepare young people, advocates and concerned citizens for "the big day". Courtney and I gave a run-down on the history of HB 2002 and where HB 2002 is right now in regards to legislation, there were some really inspiring speakers and there was a lot of free pizza. We all felt more prepared after the speakers broke down what goes on in the House and Senate, how a Bill becomes a Law and who our Legislators are. Training Day bridged the gaps in our education about what goes on during legislation.

Youth Advocacy Day was nothing like I had expected it to be. I envisioned a huge, stuffy room where people were waiting to testify before official Representatives ... but instead, it was laid back and the Legislators came and spoke with us, one group at a time. There were no microphones, but many Senators and House Representatives came into the meeting rooms we were located in and spoke with us, answered our questions, and gave the overall impression of being genuinely concerned with young people and their futures. I hadn't expected these Representatives to be so, well, human, and it was refreshing, uplifting and hopeful for me to see official Representatives relating to young people on a real basis. Representative Ed Murray then invited five of us to come and hang out in his official office. Murray showed us his pictures of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr. and Cal Anderson, whom he personally knew and worked with for years. I learned that Cal Anderson was the first openly gay Legislator in Washington State and that not all Representatives are mean, old or unfair. I also had a unique opportunity to advocate for HB 2002 and speak directly with Ed Murray about how it could have a positive impact on the lives of hundreds of young people annually.

For more information on HB 2002, it's progress in the legislature, and how you can get in touch with your representatives, please refer to the article in last month's *Mockingbird Times*. You may also visit us at www.mockingbirdsociety.org.



Mockingbird Representatives Cassandra Davis, Maleka Taylor, Jacob Harrison, and Anthony Guess pose inside the State Capitol on Advocacy Day



Misty with Representative Ed Murray on Advocacy Day

Remembering Coretta Scott

JAMICA
HENDERSON



Coretta Scott King will always be remembered, not only for her husband's legacy, but for keeping his dream alive after his death. We get to remember Mrs. King for her hard, strong, loving and caring spirit for her culture and her people's struggles. The King children must have always felt special to have parents who made such a difference in not only their lives and future but for the entire world's as well.

After Dr. King passed away Mrs. King stayed strong and committed herself to keeping his "dream" alive. She wrote a book called

"My Life with Martin Luther King Jr." and in 1969 funded the multimillion-dollar Martin Luther King Jr. center in Atlanta, GA. Coretta Scott became really sick after suffering a serious heart attack and a stroke this past August. Due to her stroke, she was unable to attend her husband's celebration in Atlanta two weeks ago. Although, Mrs. King did get to attend an awards dinner with her children a couple of days before she passed.

In her last days of life, she seemed to have a happy heart. She apparently attended the awards ceremony in her wheelchair with a big smile on her face while everyone acknowledged her for the impact she has had on our country's history. Coretta Scott was 78 when she passed away on January 31st 2006. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King have made such a big difference in our society. They will always be remembered for their legacy.

Mockingbird's Tune

MALEKA TAYLOR
LEONA BILL
JAMICA HENDERSON

Mockingbird's Tune
When we sing about the world,
our song is strong;
it can be hard, but fun.
Our song is new.
When you hear our song,
it is a journey.

Our song has a rhythm
like a river: light, laid-back,
smooth like a waterfall.
When we sing about the world,
our song helps people heal
because it opens the truth.
Here we are, united.
We want our snt to enlighten;
it is inspiring, rare, unique.
We are Mockingbird: hear our song.

Letter from the Editor

JIM
THEOFELIS

2006 has started with a flurry of amazing activity for the Mockingbird Society. On February 3rd ASK-Y (Advocates for System Kids and Youth), had our annual legislative Youth Advocacy Day in Olympia. Over 100 youth, advocates, foster parents as well as community and business representatives attended the day long event. It was incredible as several legislators addressed the group and took questions from youth regarding an assortment of topics and issues. However, the primary focus was on HB 2002 and it's companion bill SB 6324 the Foster Youth Achievement Act. Current policy in Washington State is that youth in foster care who have earned a high school diploma/GED and reach age 18 become ineligible for foster care that very day. Many of the horrific outcomes experienced by foster youth including homelessness, incarceration, early parenting and significant poor health have been detailed by quality research of youth aging out of the system. The Foster Youth Achievement Act would allow youth who have earned a high school diploma/GED and managed to overcome major obstacles while in foster care to voluntarily remain

in foster care while attending college or a voc-tech program. Giving young people from foster care the opportunity to continue living with a family they feel connected to while continuing their education is a public policy that is fiscally, socially and spiritually responsible. The Mockingbird Society is proud to have a leadership role and even more proud to stand along side the many organizations and individuals who have participated in this truly important social justice effort.

The Mockingbird Society invites you to our annual fund raiser where we will premier A Place to Sing- a documentary produced by Wild Geese Productions depicting the perspective of youth involved in foster care and Mockingbird Society. We are also fortunate to have Mr. Adam Cornell as our keynote speaker. Adam is a well known prolific speaker and advocate for youth in the foster care system. The Mockingbird Society has made great gains and significant contributions to improving the current and future lives of the children, youth and families involved in foster care and I am hopeful you will help us by attending and contributing to our annual event. For more information contact Darcie Gray at 206-323-5437 or visit www.mockingbirdsociety.org.

 Jim Theofelis
jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

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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 2006 The Mockingbird Society.

A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox

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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

Aaron Dixon; Leon Hendrix; Laury Bryant; Nancy Levine Photography; Peggy Wilkerson; Mazvita Maraire and Semhar Tadesse of Garfield Community Center; Larry Crim; Jen Gátes Daycare; Jim Ott, Seattle-King County Department of Public Health; Mike Ramey; Jeffery Ried and Stephanie Garlicks; Wendy Marlowe; Sarah Henderson; Diane Coyne; Diane STE Marie; David and Marilyn Chelimer; Suzanne Smith; South Seattle Worship Group; PONGO; SCAN.

A special thank you to our sponsors for our 5th Annual Fundraiser and Premier of the Mockingbird Society documentary, A Place to Sing, on March 30, 2006 at the Broadway Performance Hall:

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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.

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MISTY
LOU COOK

It's the year 1865, and you were just emancipated by Abraham Lincoln (1) ... you are no longer a slave in the United States. Legally, you are a free man. However, racists rig the voting system in a way that specifically discriminates against you, the Ku Klux Klan is going out of their way to keep you scared, and you aren't granted any civil rights like other Americans are. You are segregated in schools, you are told to drink from different fountains and you want your freedom promised to you way back in 1865. You are a black American, and in the 1960's, you're wondering why, 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, you still go to segregated schools and have to sit in the back of the bus so that white people can sit up front. You're wondering why you still can't vote, drink from the same fountains and have basic human and civil rights and it's really starting to piss you off. During this time, great historical leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Bob Marley and Rosa Parks were emerging. The Black Panther Party was a key figure in this time. Black America was aching for a change, by any means necessary, and the Black Panthers were at the front line for a lot of those changes that black communities sought. The Black Panthers were calling for equality, justice and freedom for Black Americans, and were willing to fight for it. Welcome to the Civil Rights Movement.

Aaron Dixon grew up in Seattle, WA, in the Central District, and was taught at an early age "the importance of fighting

for social justice" by his parents, relatives and friends (2). Dixon went to school at the University of Washington, and started the first Black Student Union at the UW in the 1960's. At age 19, he was appointed the head of the Black Panther Party in Seattle, the first Black Panther Chapter outside of Oakland, CA. I first met Aaron Dixon in February of 2006, and was taken back by his stoic, honorable presence, which left me in utter awe. I was in the midst of a living legend! I asked Dixon when and why he first became involved with the

and for a lot of young, black Americans, the killing of Martin Luther King Jr. was the last event that lead to them becoming involved in what became known as the Civil Rights Movement. He was watching the Civil Rights Movement unfold, on the streets, in his home, on the television, and had a very strong upbringing in regards to Civil Rights. He had met and marched with Martin Luther King Jr. when he was 13 years old.

There are a lot of misconceptions about the BPP, the first and main one being



Aaron Dixon (Former Leader of the Seattle Black Panther Party) visits with Misty Lou Cook.

Black Panthers, and what the driving forces were for him to join the Black Panther Party (BPP). He told me that there was a series of events that lead to him joining the BPP, but the main driving force was the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. This was a turbulent time for all Americans,

that the BPP was a violent organization. The media and the US Government "painted a picture" of the Black Panther Party as a violent, criminal and even "terrorist" organization, and that lead to assassinations of BPP Members and a bad reputation, to this day. What most people don't know about

the BPP is that they started what Dixon refers to as "Survivor Programs". Did you know that the Black Panther Party started the first Free Medical Clinics, Food Banks, Clothing Programs, Legal Aid Programs, Preventative Medicine Programs and Free Breakfast Programs in Seattle? Did you know that they started a good portion of the free community programs that are still in existence to this day? It's interesting to note that, in the year of 1974, the US Government started giving money to cities for free clinics, legal aid programs and breakfast programs; programs modeled after what the Black Panther Party had been doing for years. How did they fund these programs? Donations from a supportive and grateful community helped the BPP meet the goals of what's called a "Ten Point Program". Dixon explained these goals to me as goals that "could still be applied today". The Black Panther Party was concerned about the availability of decent housing for poor Americans, the lack of food for working class folk, education, health care and police brutality. They started community programs and had ties with the Japanese, Native American and poor white communities, whom they advocated and struggled with. Dixon emphasized that the average member age of the Black Panther Party, when they first started, was 19 years old. Dixon also stressed that the BPP "wasn't about Black Nationalism, it was about INTERNATIONALISM". Dixon told me that, "We showed people that not only did they have a right to exist ... they had a right to exist as a human being with freedom, peace and happiness".

(1) http://www.africanaonline.com/slavery_timeline.htm
(2) http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/aaron_dixon.htm

Make It Happen - The College Experience 2006

Make It Happen is an all expense paid summer program that offers a series of workshops and fun recreational activities, and gives participants the opportunity to experience life on a college campus.

Applicants must be recognized as a dependent youth in Washington State, federal or tribal out-of-home care; either a sophomore, junior or senior in high school or enrolled in or graduated from a GED program; and interested in going to college and earning a college degree.

For more information or applications, go to www.waedfoundation.org/makeithappen, email makeithappen@waedfoundation.org, or call 1-877-655-4097.

Aging Out: An Honest Film

ASHLEY
GRANT



I felt that the film "Aging Out" was a wonderful film that would let the general public know what goes on with kids aging out of foster care into the real world, and also what they have to go through in the process. The film dealt with two foster care children with two different problems that were both aging out.

One of the mentioned people in the film was a young male. The young man I think was a little mentally challenged because of all the changes he went through in his life. It seemed like he really wanted to do right but for some reason he just couldn't. His foster parents were there trying to help but at times (which were the wrong times) they would give up on him. He wanted so bad to be on his own but to the outside world he was not quite ready.

There was also another foster child

mentioned in the film, it was a young girl, also a mommy. She was having problems with trying to get out on her own and basically having no help. She was still in the states' care. In the span of the film she moved an estimated six times. She also had the father of the child who was with her every step of the way. The two of them were trying to do the best thing for them as well as their son, but again to the outside world (people of the system) they weren't ready.

I feel that if these two people I watched had a stable family or a real family they wouldn't have had to go through some of the trials and tribulations they went through. I also feel that if the people appointed to help them were there helping them, they wouldn't have gone down the road they did. However, in the end, they both went for the best; the young male went to rehab in which he was basically doing it on his own (killing two stones at once), and the young mother moved out of state along with the father of her child and is now living on her own and going to school.

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.

Resolving Hurt Feelings

MALEKA
TAYLOR



life. Here are some steps that helped me work towards resolution.

- Come to forgive yourself for the part that you took in the situation.
- Stay calm, you don't want to upset the person you're telling; it can result in more hurt feelings. It's not only what you say but how you say it.
- Speak with clarity and sincerity and express how you feel. Say exactly what's in your heart.
- Be open to any response and/or debate. Remember to stay calm.
- Continue your discussion until you have everything off your chest.

He/she may not see your point of view, its ok, and the important thing is that you're making progress.

Now that you have gotten this far, forgiving is the last step. I believe that forgiveness is ONE key to long term happiness. Although it's not easy forgiving, it's the best way to put it behind you and move on. More than likely, you'll feel better about yourself, be less stressed, and it might even bring you closer to the person who was involved.

"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is an attribute of the strong."

-Mohandas H. Gandhi

Telling someone when they hurt you can be a hard thing to do. It takes a lot of courage and strength. When you love or care about someone, I think it's important to tell them when they hurt your feelings. I also think it's important to forgive.

When someone hurts my feelings, I tend to stuff it in that little pouch in my chest. You all know what happens when you blow too much air into a balloon; it bursts. Well that's what happens when you let hurt feelings continue to hurt; you explode, taking all your anger and emotions out in a manner that is unhealthy for you or the people around you.

Relax, it happens to the best of us. You don't have to feel ashamed or embarrassed to tell someone that they hurt you, it's also part of the forgiving process. Expressing yourself is important for any healthy relationship.

I've experienced and am still experiencing a lot of hurt and it's starting to affect the way I deal with people in my everyday



Creative Corner

SHE EATS
WRITING
SITTING ACROSS FROM HER
BEAUTIFUL SMILE
FULL OF SECRETS
OPEN MOUTH LAUGHS
ESTATIC
WE ATE TOGETHER
WROTE OF GAME
"exquisite corpse"

HER SISTER
A POUNDING MEMORY IN MY HEAD
I REACH FOR HER HAND
only seeing
HER SISTER
rings
ON HER FINGERS

I TRACE THE LINES OF
CALOUSES
ON HANDS
THE HANDS SHE DANCES WITH

I CLOSE MY EYES
AND SEE
HAZEL EYES
WATCHING ME
WATCHING HER
SHE CLOSSES HER EYES
SEEING ME
WATCHING HER

BEAUTIFUL HAIR
bangs
THAT TRACE SO GENTLY
AGAINST HER FACE
capturing me
I TRACE THEM WITH MY FINGERS

SHE SMILES
AND REACHES FOR MY HAND
remembering
HOW SHE CRIED WHEN SHE
READ
THE INK BLOT POETRY
OF MY LIFE
my pain
HER WRITTEN WORDS
WHISPER
HOPE
TO ME

OLIVE SKIN
SHE SMELLS OF MEMORIES
OF CANADA
SOFT WHITE SNOW
WE DROVE THOUGH
ON A FREEWAY
SO LATE
just me and her

CLIMBING UNDER COVERS
VISIONS OF HER
DANCING
SPINNING ON HER HEAD
SHE MOVES TO THE FLOOR
I am alone
IRRITATED BY MY MOVEMENT
THE SMELL OF HER
lingers
IN THE MORNING
SHE IS THERE

LAUGHING WHEN SHE SMILES
she captures me
GIVING HER A FRIENDSHIP
BRACELET
SHE WEARS FOR SO LONG
TILL IT SHRINKS
EVEN STILL
time does not age her

Can I Keep Her?

LANYA NEELEY

I SEE HER WITH OTHERS
SO EXCITED
TO LAUGH WITH HER
THIS TIME NOT WITH ME
does she even see me

THAT SUMMER SPENT
FUMBLING WITH HIM
NOT TRUSTING HER
LIES FORM WITHIN ME
PULLING THE WRETCHED TRUTH
OUT

ON AN EMAIL
COMPROMISING BETWEEN
LOVES
HE WANTS TO BE MINE
can i keep her
WHEN HE HAS GONE
AND SHE IS ALL THAT'S LEFT
TO TEACH ME PATIENCE
WITH TIME
TO TEACH ME
PATIENCE
WITH GOD
TO TEACH ME
PATIENCE
WITH LOVE

HER SISTER
CONSISTANT IN HER FAITH
in me
PRAYS FOR ME
ON THE BUS
WHENEVER
HER HANDS CAN REACH ME
PRAY FOR ME
I SAY
PRAY FORME
I PLEAD
and she does

Definitely Time to "Chill and Spill"

TERESA
ASHER



When I was first handed this book to review, I did not think that it would make me really "Chill and Spill" everything out. At first, I couldn't put down the book put together by Art with Heart (a non profit that helps youth deal with their problems through self-expression) co-written by Steffanie Lorig and Jeanane Jacobs.

The first thought I had about the book was how is this supposed to help me? I thought the book was silly and didn't understand how it was it supposed to help me with any of my problems, like with school, my boyfriend, emotions and physical problems. After the first exercise, "Your Place" (which is where you draw a place where you feel comfortable and secure) I drew my boyfriend's place. I realized that my boyfriend's place was where I could go to feel at "home". The book helped me understand that. My favorite activity was, and still is, "How I See Myself, How I Want to Be Seen". The reason this one made me really like the book was that it helped me understand that it's important to me how people see me and helped me understand how I want to see myself. The book made me think harder about why it mattered to me and helped me put my feelings down on paper.

At first the book was silly, but the book really makes you think about life and becoming mature. It really did help me with my problems and I am amazed by that. I recommend it to everyone that has problems in their life, and everyone has problems in their life, so hey! You can find the book online at www.artwithheart.org.

Black History Month Events

COURTNEY KONIETZKO

Seattle Center Festival Sundiata: African-American Celebration February 18-20 2006 <http://festivalsundiata.org/>

Art from Africa: Long Steps Never Broke a Back: Feb. 7-May 19th, Seattle Art Museum, 100 University St. Suggested admission: \$5-\$7; children under 12 free. Contact the museum for "free days" information; 206-654-3100; www.seartmuseum.org

The Mandinka Kora: Harp music of Sub-Saharan West Africa, presented by Ken Mathis. Takes place at the Maple Valley Library TH Feb 10 at 7 pm and the Auburn Library on SAT Feb 19 at 2pm.

Black to My Roots: Fridays-Saturdays, 7:30 p.m.; Sundays, 3:30 p.m. through February 24th, Rainier Valley Cultural Center, 3515 S. Alaska St. This theater production is composed of 13 monologues and ensemble pieces that focus on African American women and their relationship with their hair. Tickets: \$9.50-\$15.50, 206-325-6500.

Black History Month Concert: February 17, 5:30p.m., Sand Point Community United Methodist Church, 4710 N.E. 70th St. Information: (206) 523-3040.

A Visit With Leon Hendrix

ANTHONY
GUESS



On February 4, Leon Hendrix brother of Jimi Hendrix had a memorial for his mother, which neither he or Jimi had attended when she died on February 2, 1958. He said, the time she had spent with them was short and he never experienced the love that a child should feel from its mother. "But I don't blame her, everyone goes through things when having children." I asked Leon, What is the most important thing about family? He answered, "the one on one relationship that parents should have with their babies is important. Without that they're disconnected from each other." He continued by saying, "Jimi and I loved momma to death, and when I went to go visit my brother at Greenwood Community in Renton WA, I asked were and if anyone knew where my mother was and no one did. I walked over to Jimi's stone and prayed. Later, a guy walked up and said, "are you trying to find your mom" and I said, "Yes". The guy then counted a few steps right and a few left and said, "She should be right here". Leon states now being able to give his mother a headstone, he feels that Jimi is finally at rest and he can finally say he has closure and so does his family. I asked, "In the past ten years what

are you most proud of?" his response was, "recovering from alcoholism and drugs with the help of my family. I needed to end the cycle that my parents started me on, and also accepting Jesus in my life." The house which the Hendrix brothers grew up in is now located in Renton, Washington across from where Jimi and his mother

were buried. The house is now a place of hope and inspiration for unprivileged children seeking music as a creative pathway. Please visit www.leonhendrix.com to see his new CD Keeper of the Flame and to get more information.



Leon Hendrix and Mockingbird Times Reporter Anthony Guess