

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

PLEASE PURCHASE FROM  
BADGED VENDORS ONLY

WWW.REALCHANGENEWS.ORG

MAY 17 - 23, 2006

ISSUES • INSIGHT • IMPACT

## Fox News

**Locals see ulterior motive in  
Mexican presidential visit**

By **CYDNEY GILLIS**  
Staff Reporter

**W**hen Vicente Fox visits Seattle next week, it will be the first trip to Washington state made by any Mexican president.

It may also be the first campaign stop.

Officially speaking, Fox's visit on May 24-25 comes at the invitation of Gov. Christine Gregoire, who plans to discuss economic development with the president of our 10th largest trading partner and chauffeur him to meetings with Boeing, Microsoft, Starbucks and Alaska Airlines.

But with Mexico's presidential election coming up July 2, some leaders in Seattle's Mexican community say it's unlikely Fox is coming here just to discuss planes and software.

After one six-year term, Fox himself cannot run again under Mexican law. But Felipe Calderon, the nominee of Fox's conservative National Action Party (PAN), is running such a close race with a left-leaning opponent that the votes of Mexican nationals in the United States could play a role in keeping PAN — and the job-cutting free-market policies it supports — in power.

At a time when America's grip is slipping on South America and leaders such as Venezuela's Hugo Chavez—who has rejected neoliberal free-trade policies and funded education, health and housing—the stakes in Mexico's election are very high.

"The reason he's coming here is not to do anything for Mexico but to push his party. They want to maintain their control," says activist Juan Bocanegra, who represents the Every Worker's Movement.

Carlos Jimenez, president of Grupo Mexico, an association of Mexican leaders that's arranging some of the events Fox will attend (including a meeting with community leaders on the afternoon of May 24), disagrees that the president's visit is about party politics.

See FOX, Continued on Page 12



## Bullish on Iraq

JANINA PEKAAR WAS ONE OF ABOUT 35 PEOPLE WHO VISITED A CENTRAL DISTRICT ARMY/NAVY RECRUITING STATION ON MOTHER'S DAY, MAY 14, TO CONDEMN THE MILITARY'S MARKETING TO YOUTH OF COLOR AND THE IRAQ WAR. HELEN READ RECITED PIONEERING FEMINIST JULIA WARD HOWE'S 1870 MOTHER'S DAY PROCLAMATION: "OUR SONS SHALL NOT BE TAKEN FROM US TO UNLEARN / ALL THAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TEACH THEM OF CHARITY, MERCY, AND PATIENCE." PHOTO BY ELIOT STOLLER.

## Squeaky, clean

**Protestors tell P-I its contracted janitors need affordable health care**

By **ROSETTE ROYALE**  
Staff Reporter

**"W**hat do we need?" "Health care now!"

The protestors' call and response, repeated at a fever pitch, drifted its way up the elevator shafts of the *Seattle P-I* building. On the third floor, outside the newspaper's glass office doors, three other protestors shouted: "Hey, *P-I*. Tell Cascadian [Building Maintenance] that janitors' kids need health care."

Stepping through the glass doors, *P-I* publisher Roger Oglesby did his best to bypass the protestors. When pressed by the trio on whether he would help the janitors who clean his building acquire low-cost health care, he replied, in a fluster, "Write me a letter." The elevator dinged open. Oglesby stepped inside. The door *shushed* closed behind him.

But SEIU Local 6, who sponsored the May 12 Mother's Day protest, is hoping the latest in a line of yearlong actions will open the doors to janitors

acquiring affordable health care, for themselves and their children.

Specifically, the union is fighting for lower costs for health care for janitors employed by Cascadian Building Management. Cascadian, a non-union corporation, is responsible for the maintenance of the *P-I* building.

According to union organizer Rebecca Saldaña, SEIU Local 6 is targeting the *P-I* because, as the building's largest employer, the newspaper can put pressure on Cascadian to alter its policies. "But the *P-I*," says Saldaña, "their communication has been really closed off."

Downstairs on the second floor, protestors rattled signs, keeping up the chant.

Throughout the Puget Sound region, roughly 200 Cascadian employees clean more than six million square feet of buildings on a nightly basis, generally between the hours of 6 p.m. and 2:30 a.m. Two janitors handle cleaning duties at the *P-I* building.

See JANITORS, Continued on Page 12

## ANTE UP

The city needs to keep police accountability on the table in meeting with Officers Guild.

PAGE 2

## CRUISER CONTROL

The Civil Streets Initiative, a local pilot program, plans to pair law enforcement with social services.

PAGE 3

## BLACK AND GREEN

Watch out Sen. Cantwell: the Green Party has nominated former Black Panther Aaron Dixon.

PAGE 4

## MAJOR IMPACT

Big Easy resident Barbara Major works to ensure reconstruction efforts take care of the people.

PAGE 5

## CON JOB

"Immersion" journalist Sasha Abramsky shows how Bush benefits when ex-cons lose voting rights.

PAGE 8

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| Change Agent       | 3  |
| Just Heard         | 3  |
| Short Takes        | 4  |
| Poetry             | 5  |
| Arts               | 8  |
| Bus Chick          | 9  |
| Dr. Wes            | 9  |
| Street Watch       | 9  |
| Letters            | 10 |
| Calendar           | 11 |
| Director's Corner  | 11 |
| First things First | 11 |

# Know When to Hold 'Em

*Police accountability is not a chip to be gambled away*

Problems with the Seattle Police Department's approach to allegations of officer misconduct are nothing new. Since the WTO in 1999, there have been innumerable public hearings in which community members have testified that they have experienced police misconduct.

By DORRY ELIAS-GARCIA, GYASI ROSS, and  
LISA DUGAARD  
Guest Writers

Later this month, the city of Seattle will begin negotiations with the Seattle Police Officers Guild on a new collective bargaining agreement that will run from 2007-09. In past negotiations with SPOG, the city has agreed to limit its own ability to implement police accountability measures in exchange for monetary and other concessions from the guild. Several years ago, the guild succeeded in limiting the way in which the department could gather data to detect racial profiling by individual officers. In return, apparently, SPOG members compromised on compensation and benefits issues. It is imperative that such concessions on accountability not be made this time around.

Problems with the Seattle Police Department's approach to allegations of officer misconduct are nothing new. Since the WTO in 1999, there have been innumerable public hearings in which community members have testified that they have experienced police misconduct and tried to report it only to have their complaints rebuffed by the Police Department's Office of Professional Accountability. But the times were never right to make use of this testimony, since the hearings occurred after negotiations with the guild had already commenced or had concluded.

Our organizations have called for transparency and accountability in the police contract negotiation process for a long time. For the first time in history, this past April, City Council president Nick Licata convened a public hearing on improving the police accountability system before defining

the city's negotiating agenda or beginning negotiations with SPOG.

That hearing was a welcome development. The question now is whether city negotiators will heed what they heard from the public about needed reforms.

There are several systemic flaws leading to the frequent rejection of valid complaints by SPD's Office of Professional Accountability (OPA), some of which recently have been identified by the three committed civilians serving on the OPA Review Board, the closest thing Seattle has to an actual police review board.

Officers are asked leading questions by OPA investigators during the investigation of the complaint, helping them come to the "right" answer. Complainants' criminal histories have been routinely checked as part of the investigation of the complaint, although such use of crime data likely violates department policy and the law. When officers' accounts diverge from those of civilian witnesses, the civilian accounts are rarely credited. And when officers have violated the rights of a complainant in the course of following departmental policy, the complaint is rejected rather than affirmed, since it would be unfair to discipline the individual officer for doing as he was told. Even in the small number of cases in which complaints from civilians are sustained, the Chief of Police can and frequently does reverse the conclusion of the OPA director, so that no violation is found and/or no discipline imposed.

When the last SPOG contract was being negotiated, the Minority Executive Directors Coalition, the NAACP-Seattle, the Racial Disparity Project, and many other community organizations proposed nine essential reforms to

improve Seattle's police accountability system. Some of those changes may need to be negotiated with the guild, because they would affect working conditions or grounds for discipline of individual officers. However, many of the reforms we called for can be implemented unilaterally by the city, because they are matters of policy not pertaining to officers' working conditions.

Among them is allowing the OPA Review Board to function something like the South African Truth & Reconciliation Commission, which was charged with discerning the facts and validating or rejecting charges of official misconduct, without having any connection to discipline the perpetrators. The Review Board should be able to investigate allegations of misconduct and decide whether a complainant's rights have been violated, regardless of whether any individual officer can or should be disciplined in connection with the violation. To do that, the board needs to have salaried positions with staff — something else the city should implement without negotiation with the Police Guild.

The most important thing the city can do to advance police accountability in the current round of SPOG contract negotiations is to *not negotiate* accountability measures which are non-mandatory bargaining topics (issues unrelated to discipline or working conditions) because those are matters of public policy, not employment contracts. The Mayor and Council can boldly demonstrate that they are not negotiating away our civil rights by proceeding to implement the reforms we have recommended through the legislative process, not at the bargaining table. ■

*Dorry Elias-Garcia is executive director of the Minority Executive Directors Coalition of King County. Gyasi Ross is the Chair on Police Accountability at the Seattle branch of the NAACP. Attorney Lisa Dugaard supervises the Racial Disparity Project at the Defender Association.*



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 StreetWrites peer support group for homeless writers, the Homeless Speakers Bureau, and the First Things First organizing project. All donations support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

#### On the Web at

<http://www.realchange.org>  
Email [rchange@speakeasy.org](mailto: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.



## Who Is Real Change?

### Board of Directors

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

### Advisory Board

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

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

### Staff

Executive Director  
Timothy Harris  
Director of Advocacy and Organizing  
Rachael Myers  
Editor  
Adam Hylla  
Staff Reporters  
Cydney Gillis, Rosette Royale  
Production Manager  
Rosette Royale  
Director of Operations  
Israel Bayer  
Development Associate  
Peter Jabon  
Outreach Coordinator  
Craig Kirkpatrick  
Volunteer Coordinator and Office Manager  
Brooke Kempner  
Vendor Services  
Robert Hansen, Margaret Kae

Advertising Sales Representative  
Candi Wilwang

### Interns

Patrick Barredo, Kwami Nyamide, Patrick Toler, Justine Winnie

### Editorial Committee

Artis, Mary Andrews, Wes Browning, Stan Burriss, Morrie Condit, Anitra Freeman, José Ornelas, F. Roberts, Ruanda

### Contributing Writers

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

### Photographers, Graphic Artists

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

### Volunteers This Issue

Artis, Douglas Blair, Tige DeCoster, Sandra Enger, Susanne Forham, Casey Fortenberry, Nadine Gioia, Brianna Morgan, Loretta Pirozzi, Dean Ritz



# Change Agent

Liahann Bannerman believed so much in Project Lead that she gave up a career in marketing to join the staff at United Way of King County, where she directs the giant volunteer program. "I've been here 10 years, and I've never been bored," she says.

Bannerman graduated from Project Lead, a program started in 1993 as part of a national effort to increase minority involvement in nonprofit organizations. Project Lead teaches participants skills such as fundraising, risk management, and race dialogue in 40 hours of class over the course of a month.

The program has a reputation for producing graduates with a high level of leadership ability. Bannerman says the course is not just a way for people to learn skills, but to connect with and help the community. The classes are taught by professionals from a variety of fields.

"Volunteering is a way for people to get involved in their community," says Bannerman. "When people get involved in their community, they get a different perspective on the issues that affect it."

—Justin Ellis



## On the Beat

**Civil Streets cop-and-caseworker pilot project starts**

By J. JACOB EDEL  
Contributing Writer

"Our goal is to move people from high-risk areas to the services they need."

—Jim McGinnis,  
field supervisor  
for DOC, Seattle

Three Seattle neighborhoods troubled by chronic criminal activity are welcoming a pilot project that tests and documents the efficacy of combining law enforcement agents with social service providers.

Beginning this month, separate but similar programs will operate in the Central District, the downtown core, and Rainier Beach, bringing immediate social services to offenders struggling with homelessness, mental illness, alcoholism, drug addiction, prostitution, and gang membership.

Law enforcement agents from the Seattle Police Department and the Department of Corrections and social service providers from Street Outreach Services, the People of Color Against AIDS Network, and the Metropolitan Improvement District are going to select between 30 and 60 individuals who display a desire to escape their problematic lifestyle and receive the services needed to improve their lives.

"It's like a multi-service program that we're going to put together," says Jim McGinnis, a field supervisor with the Department of Corrections in Seattle. "It'll be a one-stop shop where an individual goes into community court and someone is able to refer them immediately to the services they need, instead of two or three weeks later," McGinnis says.

McGinnis is a part of the Northwest Corrections Initiative (NCI), a program that began eight years ago when the Seattle Police Department and probation officers with the Department of Corrections teamed up to keep track of parolees in an attempt to dissuade them from returning to areas where illicit and criminal activities occur.

"Our goal is to move people from high-risk areas to the services they need," says McGinnis. "One of the things that we hope to do with this initiative that Nick Licata has put forth is to help relieve some of the pressure off the community, the jails, the courts, and the Department of Corrections."

Two years ago, City Councilmember Nick Licata proposed the Civil Streets Initiative, a public safety measure that would provide the funds to reduce minor crimes by linking law enforcement agencies with social service providers. Late last year, wanting more information before deciding whether to put such a proposal before the voters, the council earmarked \$400,000 for a pilot project of the initiative.

Right now, McGinnis says, the NCI contacts about 200 people in the downtown core per day shift, but little to no services are available. The money now makes those services possible.

According to program proposals supplied by Licata's office, the individuals to be selected in the downtown project will be those who contribute to the public perception that downtown Seattle is not a safe place for visitors, tourists, workers, and residents. The target population will have housing, drug and alcohol, or mental health needs, and after individuals are identified by the NCI, SOS outreach workers and MID ambassadors will move them from the streets to the services.

Similarly, the Get Off the Streets program in the Central District is putting police and social workers together on a street patrol that brings services to troubled individuals. Police presence is to protect the service providers and to be a reminder of the consequences of criminal behavior.

The target populations for the downtown and Central District programs are very similar, but in Rainier Beach, the program will be targeting young adults influenced by gang membership.

The service providers and police in Rainier Beach will design individual intervention packages for each interested candidate that reduces the likelihood of participation in future criminal activity. The services made possible may include housing, treatment, education, job training, job placement, licensing assistance, small business counseling, child care, or other services.

One shortfall of the project is that numerous individuals will be assessed while only a limited number will be guaranteed the available services because of the project's small budget. If the end results are promising, it will be up to the City Council to approve the Civil Streets Initiative to continue and expand. ■

## Just Heard...

### The Center cannot fold

No surprises here: The mayor's task force on Seattle Center came out Tuesday in favor of investing \$200 million in KeyArena to keep the Sonics and Storm basketball teams in Seattle.

The group's subcommittee on KeyArena had already announced its support for the remodel, which the task force suggests be paid for with "a combination of public and private sources." New recommendations call for the city to continue providing operating funds (including restoring post-2000 budget cuts and 20 of the 50 maintenance workers who were laid off) and raising capital to redevelop Seattle Center every eight to 10 years, presumably through a levy.

In the short term, that would include razing Memorial Stadium to create a new entrance to the center, perhaps with underground parking, and completely redeveloping the Center House, Fun Forest, Mural Amphitheater, and monorail station.

The report also calls for turning over the mothballed Mercer Arena to the Seattle Opera for office space because it would be too expensive to repair for public use, with a small notation: two of the nine task force members are trustees of the opera. Another, Bill Block, is an investor in the Sonics.

### A win for public voice

Volunteer producers for Seattle's public-access TV station didn't get everything they wanted in the final Comcast franchise agreement, but what they got counts — full funding to keep the doors open and independent voices on the air.

The City Council agreed to up the franchise fee charged on cable subscribers' bills from 3.5 to 4.2 percent, giving SCAN an annual budget of \$700,000 — \$50,000 more than last year's budget and a far cry from a drastic cut of \$200,000 that city staff had originally negotiated with Comcast. The council also endorsed a second public-access channel if, and when, SCAN demonstrates it can raise major funds.

—Cydney Gillis

### Yes time

A six-year-old child from Baquba, Iraq, is coming to a Washington for medical care, brought by a group of local peaceniks joined up with No More Victims, a national organization that has conveyed a handful of Iraqi civilians to hospitals in Philadelphia, Orlando, and Orange County. The groups will hold a Walk for Peace and Healing at Green Lake on May 20 — a toned-down approach in comparison to antiwar rallies, with just a couple of stations for accepting donations. The message, says organizer Marsha Mullins, is "that a child's health is important regardless of how you feel about the war," she says.

—Adam Hyla

# The Green Light

Third-party convention nominates Seattle activist Aaron Dixon

By LAURA PEACH  
Contributing Writer

"We don't want to look like the other parties — we need people who can speak truth to power."

— Green Party member, speaking of Aaron Dixon's Senate nomination

About four dozen Seattle Greens gathered together last Saturday afternoon to form their party platform and nominate a candidate for the Senate.

Two major initiatives were discussed: I-937, a sustainable energy bill, and I-86, the College Not Combat campaign. I-937 would mandate that renewable energy sources be used in all state utilities. By 2020, 15 percent of the power needed to run these facilities would come from wind and solar plants.

"It's really a modest, logical proposal," says Tommy Brooks, the Green Party coordinator for the campaign. "It's a reliable, sustainable measure that benefits the business community and won't cost the taxpayers much of anything." The initiative was unsuccessful three years prior, and several thousand more signatures still need to be collected to put it on the ballot this November.

The College Not Combat campaign is an attempt to restrict military recruiters' use of public spaces. Kate Johnson, a Green who helps organize

the campaign, is hopeful that it will help to galvanize the Green party. "This campaign will sustain our movement from protest to protest, so that people feel like they have something to do between elections."

The most controversy and excitement of the afternoon was centered around the party's nomination of Aaron Dixon as a Senate candidate. Morton Alexander, a Spokane party member, was worried that Dixon's lack of a voting record and legal violations (such as unpaid traffic tickets) were a liability. "We should spare the party from greater embarrassment in the public eye," he said.

Dixon is a prominent community activist who has initiated free school breakfasts, legal aide programs, and a medical clinic, noted party member Jesse Hagopian. "His voting record is similar to the majority of [the] country's."

"I'm disappointed that I have brought this baggage to the campaign, but coming from where I have come from, that could not be helped," said Dixon during his acceptance speech. "I would like to be judged on the things that I have done for people and for this community, and what I will do if elected to the Senate."

The Greens are looking to go after the 50 percent of the country's electorate that isn't voting and provide different candidates. "We don't want to look like the other parties — we need people who can speak truth to power," said one member. During the discussion surrounding Dixon's nomination, members of the party expressed doubts about their party's maturity and questioned their ability to carry out their first Senate campaign. The Greens do not have a presence in every county of Washington state, and membership is limited in most areas. Mason county, for example, has a total of 20 Green party members.

Mike Gillis, the Green's activism coordinator, says that the party has a wide-ranging base, appealing to the working poor, Latinos, Arab Americans, and antiwar activists. "We're not just a one-issue party," he said. "We stand for a lot of big issues and the war is the defining issue right now."

In nominating Dixon, most Greens hoped that this high-profile candidacy will get people to notice the party. "Dixon will appeal to non-voters because he's got a credibility with people," says Gillis. ■

## Short Takes

### Taking input on input

The outcry against the city Parks Department is having an effect of sorts: After various parks advocates held a protest rally at the zoo on Feb. 25, Mayor Greg Nickels wrote a letter to the Park Board of Commissioners asking it to review how it takes public input.

The request is ironic, given that final decisions are up to much-debated Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds and his boss, the mayor. All the same, the Park Board was obliged to take public input on its process last Thursday, along with hearing a Parks Department self-assessment report.

In the report, parks spokesperson Dewey Potter summarized six recent parks controversies — among them, citing a future garage at the zoo and allowing a concert series at Gas Works Park — but cited little error on the department's part, in some cases chiding protesters: "Some people think you shouldn't take a tree down anywhere for any reason," she said of cutting down 17 trees at Occidental Park.

Among ideas for improvement, Potter suggested the Parks Department take public input early in the process before a project gets funding — an idea several speakers endorsed. "Do public involvement before it's funded," Denise Derr told the board. "That's the magic bullet."

"What the Parks Department calls input is merely public relations after the fact," Derr said. "Once a plan is crafted, people are asked to participate in tweaking the plan or find themselves begging for mitigation."

Other suggestions included notifying neighbors of a project within 1,500 feet of a park instead of today's 300 feet, starting meetings at 7 p.m. instead of 6, televising meetings, providing transcripts, and writing project descriptions that describe competing interests in a given project.

The deadline to provide written comment on the Parks Department's public process is May 24. Email: [sandy.brooks@seattle.gov](mailto:sandy.brooks@seattle.gov).

—Cydney Gillis

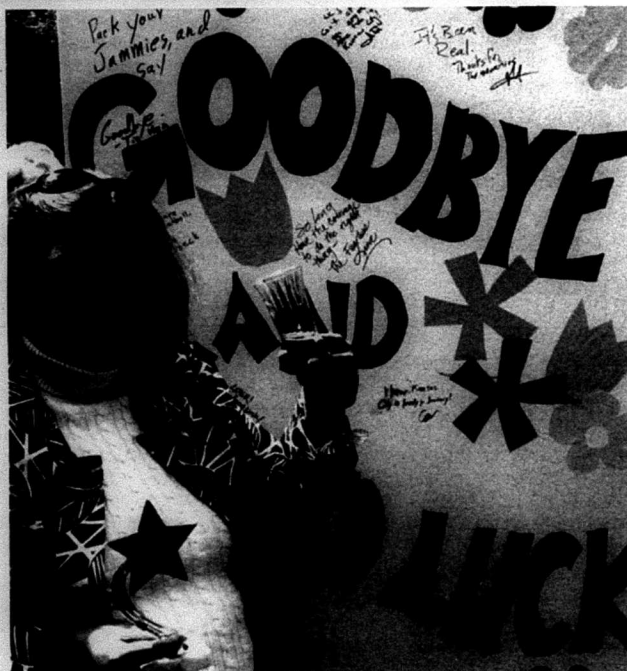
### TC4: a benign move

Tent City 4, the Eastside cousin to Tent City 3, averted homelessness last Friday when a King County Superior Court judge allowed it to return temporarily to Woodinville's Northshore United Church of Christ at the end of its three-month term at a Bellevue church. The city of Woodinville had filed a restraining order against the move, saying that the NUCC, which had sponsored TC4 in 2004, did not have the proper permit to host the 70-person encampment.

A hearing on May 24 will determine whether TC4 can remain at NUCC for the full term, but a source at SHARE/WHEEL expressed confidence that the court will give it the go-ahead, as it has in previous decisions in which sponsoring organizations locked permits. The employee says that, although other churches have the capacity to host, they have been dissuaded by a group of activists concerned about the homeless encampment's effect on neighborhoods. SHARE/WHEEL is in talks with several churches to secure a home for TC4 when it must move again in three months.

"TC4 has demonstrated that they are benign to the community, and to the church as well," said Congregations for the Homeless director Steve Roberts, who noted that the Tent City would be "welcome back in Bellevue next year. They don't impact anyone very much."

—Lydia DePillis



### A fête for the threat

NORTH SEATTLE NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVIST JAN BRUCKER TOASTS THE SONICS' TALK OF LEAVING TOWN AT A MAY 11 GOING-AWAY PARTY FOR THE TEAM. BRUCKER AND A DOZEN ACTIVISTS GATHERED IN FRONT OF CITY HALL WITH CAKE, SPARKLING JUICE, AND A GIANT FAREWELL CARD FOR DELIVERY TO MAYOR GREG NICKELS IN AN IRONIC SIGN THAT THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO SPEND \$220 MILLION THAN ON BUILDING THE TEAM A NEW LUXURY STADIUM. PHOTO BY GINNY BANKS



## Burial at Sea

My grandfather sat for two years on my mother's dresser  
in a square white box  
the kind he had tried to fit us in  
She was using him as a paper weight  
which seemed appropriate  
Perhaps we should do something else with this thing, i suggested.

He had been a navy man  
an Annapolis graduate  
Pearl Harbor survivor  
who had retired to the desert  
another kind of ocean  
without introspection  
It seemed fitting  
he should return to the sea

We rented a boat  
rowed out onto the choppy waters  
my mother, my daughter, the box of ashes  
We sprinkled him on the water  
large flakes like salt and pepper  
My mother read something he would not have understood  
nor i

I cracked a beer and poured a little over the side  
To a right fucking bastard, i said.  
loud enough for my daughter to hear  
who had not known him  
quietly enough so as not to jar my mother  
who prayed solemnly to the sky  
as seagulls shrieked irreverent  
over head

-LARRY CRIST

## See-Yahtlh: The Forgotten Spirit

Remembering the man of Indian Heritage  
Came to me as I stood waiting for a bus  
In Downtown Seattle. He wanted a cigarette,  
"I don't smoke," I replied.  
"No one would talk to me,  
Only you," he said.

Flashbacked to the man of Indian Heritage.  
Would it help to have a Chief of Seattle Day?  
To help the American Indian people.  
To show appreciation for the City of Seattle.  
The Indian People have so many words to say.

The ground I walk on, in Seattle, it only belongs to Indian Spirits & Souls.

-JULIA

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



**PorchLight**  
Community services of  
Seattle Housing Authority

907 NW Ballard Way, Suite 200, Seattle  
Open 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.,  
Tuesday through Friday  
206 239-1507  
[www.seattlehousing.org](http://www.seattlehousing.org)



## Waiting list to open

From **May 15 through May 26** you can enter  
SHA's lottery to try for a spot on the new  
waiting list we are creating for Section 8 housing

To learn more, call **206 239-1674** or visit  
our Web site, [www.seattlehousing.org](http://www.seattlehousing.org)



## Democracy Now!

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

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

**Free Speech Radio News 6 p.m. Weekdays**  
**Public Affairs NOW! 5 - 7 a.m., 5 - 7 p.m. Weekdays**

**alternative  
news**

Studio (425) 564-2424  
Office (425) 564-2427  
email: [kbcs@ctc.edu](mailto:kbcs@ctc.edu)

# Bringing Back the Big Easy

New Orleansian Barbara Major wants to keep the reconstruction accountable to those who've fled

By DENA BURKE  
Contributing Writer

"It's amazing what everybody else expects outside of New Orleans; oftentimes, they say, 'Well, why haven't y'all done that?' I just want to tell [those] people to go fuck themselves because you don't have a clue about what it's like to be in that and see what has happened to my city."

The stories of people huddling in the Super Dome — bodies lying face down in water, mothers weeping for lost children, and the stranded holding help signs on roof tops — filled news headlines for days after Hurricane Katrina. The complete failure of FEMA and the federal government to respond adequately to the disaster brought the face of poverty — especially the racial elements of poverty — to the eyes of every American with a television. No longer could the ghettoization of poverty be denied. Now, nine months later, the news cameras are mostly gone and the debate over rebuilding is mounting.

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to re-create a major American city brings opportunity for both good and bad. There is the opportunity to create better schools, better social services, and heterogeneous neighborhoods. There is also the risk that developers and city officials will leave the poor — especially the African American poor — out of the new city entirely. Who controls the money and the rebuilding will affect not only how the city is reconstructed, but who can and does return.

Barbara Major, a native of New Orleans whose home base is in the St. Thomas Irish Channel neighborhood, put aside the pain of losing everything in Hurricane Katrina to co-chair Mayor C. Ray Nagin's Bring New Orleans Back Commission. A community organizer with more than 20 years of experience, she recently came to Seattle to share her thoughts and experiences as a health care service provider, community organizer, and member of the commission. She also came with the message that the needs of New Orleansians are linked to the social issues that affect all people, including Seattleites.

**Real Change:** What was the end result of the commission?

**Barbara Major:** This humongous report was given to the mayor with recom-

mendations. Some he took, and some he didn't.

**RC:** Did you see the business leaders [on the commission] pushing forward a different agenda?

**Major:** No more than they pushed for before Katrina. The business community pushed their agenda. The white community pushed their agenda, the way they always did. If I thought they were just going to sit there and do the right thing, hell, I wouldn't have gotten on that commission.

**RC:** What is the state of New Orleans right now and the status of the government?

**Major:** Basically, the city is broke, and most of its employees are gone. There are a few folk working with the skeleton crew. The staff is homeless.... These people are working under the same kinds of conditions [as during the Katrina aftermath] — it's amazing what everybody else expects outside of New Orleans; oftentimes, they say, "Well, why haven't y'all done that?" I just want to tell [those] people to go fuck themselves because you don't have a clue about what it's like to be in that and see what has happened to my city. I see people take tremendous abuse, and I know they're living in this shit. They lost everything too, and people are talking about what they are not doing. Also, people don't have the whole story, and I don't think you can. If you haven't seen my city, you still can never get there.

**RC:** Who, right now, is controlling the rebuilding?

**Major:** There is no rebuilding going on. We're not in the recovery phase. There is no money here. There were some contracts let out for debris collection, but there is no real rebuilding going on. What money is being



spent the federal government is controlling right now, and other resources that are supposed to be coming to the city are locked up at the state level right now.

**RC:** What do you think is the biggest hurdle to overcome in New Orleans [for people of color]?

**Major:** I think the biggest hurdle is securing land, ensuring that people have access to it, ensuring that the money is spent to rebuild, and that the people are not only just hired, but that the people actually own businesses that will participate. There needs to be an oversight of resources.

**RC:** What are you doing to make sure that urban planners don't forget about the poor when they rebuild?

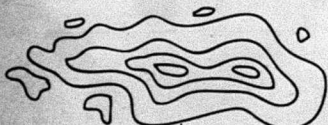
**Major:** As much as everybody else. I ain't no god. I got to deal with the economic development piece. Part of that for us is to ensure that we create a land trust, we get the land, and we create a vehicle for economic development for the African American community. A land trust would ensure that land... could never be used for anything other than low- and moderate-income housing. It is about who controls the land, and how we control those vacant pockets of land.

**RC:** African Americans basically built the culture of New Orleans. Are you worried that the people who built the city will no longer be a part of it?

New Orleans native Barbara Major is part of the Bring New Orleans Back commission. Photo by Terry Divyak.

## Story Problem 7

Suppose the average street puddle is comprised of 17 different hazardous materials - including 3% motor oil, 1.5% radiator fluid and seven strains of bacteria. After stepping in one, how painful is the foot infection you get when you're unable to bathe for days?



SEA helps young adults who survived life on the street and now want to earn a college degree. Once accepted, students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. Please visit [seattleeducationaccess.org](http://seattleeducationaccess.org) to support our scholarship program. **SEA**



## Continued from Previous Page

**Major:** We all worry about that. Some people are determined to be here, some of those music-makers. I want to create a space for those future music-makers, too. So I want that culture, but I don't want a culture of poverty. I want a healthier culture, but New Orleans won't be New Orleans if folk like that are not part of the rebuilding process and not there to guide it. That's what New Orleans is. That's the flavor of the city, that's the juice in the beans. You don't got the people like that, you don't have New Orleans. They think they're going to rebuild it without us? They won't have shit.

**RC:** What do you think is the most just and fair way to rebuild the city?

**Major:** My way of rebuilding? I think that there should be a serious investment in facilitating dialogue with communities around this country, even if it sticks to the major cities. It won't be a quick way of doing it, but it would be a fair way to really [hear] from the people. Create a process to ask the people how do you want your neighborhood rebuilt. That we really push the people to think of something different, because when you're so used to nothing, it's hard for you to imagine what could be.

**RC:** Are you worried that because the communities are dispersed they cannot mobilize?

**Major:** They can't, and that has been immobilizing them. People want to organize, but what we've forgotten is that people still need very basic services right now. How do we help provide services to these families as they are scattered, and at the same time build their ability to challenge the rebuilding process in New Orleans and participate in it?

**RC:** To what will evacuated people come back? Is there a plan?

**Major:** I have no idea. Right now there ain't nowhere to come back to, and nowhere to live. A lot of the people were renters, so your landlord ain't giving you your place back when he could probably gouge [the rent]. So what do you do? We didn't have rent control before. A lot of people want to come back, but that has to be part of that community-driven process to create the process to come back.

**RC:** Have you heard a lot about discrimination against the poor who were evacuated?

**Major:** Absolutely. [There is] a lot of tension because nobody mitigated any relationship. [The evacuated poor] ended up in over-stressed communities whose resources were limited. They [the government] weren't going to be dumping a whole lot more money into those communities.

People keep talking about how Texas got a lot of money. They got some money. We've got to create a process to really help families, that's why [creat-

ing] centers in those cities is real critical: a way that people could connect and connect back to the city. That's going to be real critical to transitioning people back, or to transitioning some people farther away from New Orleans. Until those centers are created, and they're actually set up and offer a variety of services to help, then our people are just out there on their own right now. That's what disturbs me most, and why the main thing for me right now is trying to set up mental health services for children and families.

**RC:** For post-traumatic stress syndrome?

**Major:** Yes, and there was stress before. You're talking about a community that

five to hit my city, with the velocity that Katrina hit my city, my city won't be back for another 50 to 100 years. A lot of people won't come back.

**RC:** What do you think is going to actually happen in the near future?

**Major:** Some money's going to be appropriated, and there's going to be a lot of political fighting around who's going to control that money. If we're lucky, we will create a line of defense as best we can, and continue to fight like we always have. It's a fight — to protect the people, no matter where they are. I understand we ain't going to win everything. ■

## From adoption to geriatrics, court rooms to corporations, Social Workers help.

Sponsored by the National Association of Social Workers Washington State Chapter and the University of Washington School of Social Work  
[www.nasw-wa.org](http://www.nasw-wa.org) • [www.ssw.washington.edu](http://www.ssw.washington.edu)

**Social Workers**  
Help starts here.  
[www.HelpStartsHere.org](http://www.HelpStartsHere.org)

### The Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement Project

#### Get the facts!

##### Come to an open house in your neighborhood

- Get information on the viaduct replacement options
- Give us your feedback on alternatives for construction duration
- Viaduct team members will be on-hand to answer questions

For more information visit:  
[www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct)

For current bus routes visit:  
[tripplanner.metrokc.gov](http://tripplanner.metrokc.gov)

#### Downtown

Monday, May 22  
5:00 to 7:00 pm  
Plymouth Congregational Church  
1217 6th Avenue

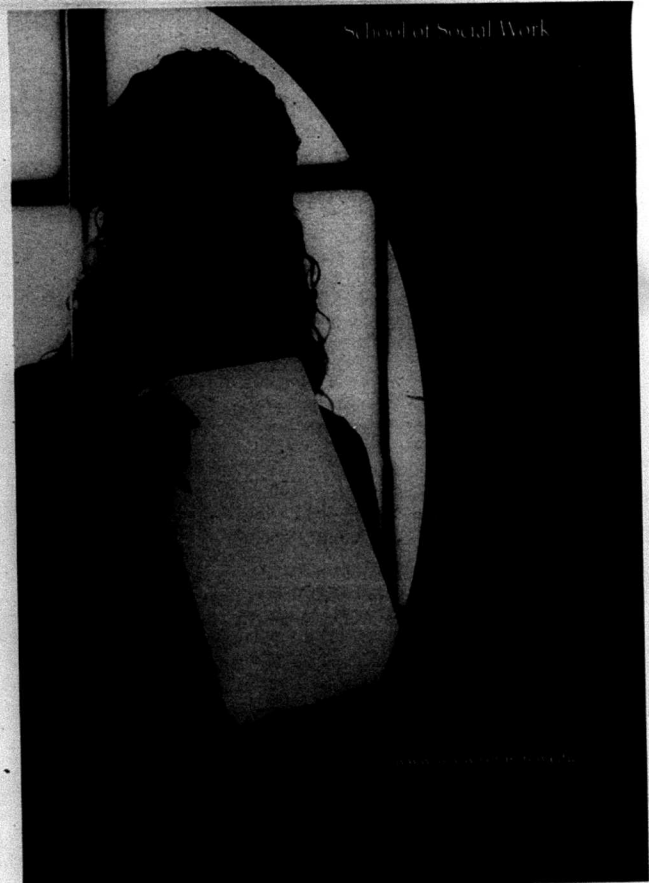
#### West Seattle

Tuesday, May 23  
5:00 to 7:00 pm  
Cooper Elementary School  
1901 SW Genesee Street

#### Ballard

Wednesday, May 24  
5:00 to 7:00 pm  
Ballard Community Center  
6020 28th Avenue NW

**ADA Information:** The meeting site is accessible to persons with disabilities. Accommodations for people with disabilities can be arranged with advance notice by contacting Molly Edmonds at (206) 267-3841 or [EdmondM@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:EdmondM@wsdot.wa.gov). Title VI: WSDOT ensures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin or sex in the provision of benefits and services resulting from its federally assisted programs and activities. For questions regarding WSDOT's Title VI Program, you may contact the Department's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098.



# Opening Up, Beyond Anger and Shame

Sasha Abramsky is one of a small but increasingly influential set of modern-day journalists who have not only been able to identify persistent systems of inequality, but also the legislative and/or social trends that reinforce them continually.

**Conned: How Millions Went to Prison, Lost the Vote, and Helped Send George W. Bush to the White House**  
by **Sasha Abramsky**  
New Press, 2006  
Hardcover, 304 pages, \$25.95

By **SILJA J.A. TALVI**  
Contributing Writer

**C**ruising down the Delta's blues-song-inspiring Highway 61 or through the prophetic-vision-prompting mountain ranges leading into the far more sullen, Mormon-controlled state of Utah, journalist Sasha Abramsky had no problem finding pockets of abject poverty, clusters of trailer homes, gaudy casinos, and ample evidence of communities struggling to stay alive despite the economic odds.

Abramsky's quest for his latest book, *Conned*, was to document the lives and struggles of this nation's most unwanted citizens: the impoverished, adjudicated, imprisoned, and disenfranchised. Finding the statistics and studies to indicate the extent of the problem wasn't a challenge. But getting people to open up about their anger and shame was a hurdle to overcome; opening the doors to real conversation about disenfranchisement involved, by necessity, a willingness to immerse himself in the lives of people unaccustomed to any kind of real interaction with the media.

Abramsky is one of a small but increasingly influential set of mod-

ern-day journalists who have not only been able to identify persistent systems of inequality, but also the legislative and/or social trends that reinforce them continually. Such reporters not only celebrate the grand American tradition of muckraking journalism, but *intentionally* defy the dominant reporting mode of bland and ostensibly "objective" newspaper reportage that asserts each point of view as equal. Known as "immersion" journalists, they are willing and able to dive into the worlds of which they write in order to get to the real root causes of everyday strife and struggle. In doing so, these writers often find the most extraordinary of stories — and personal triumphs — amidst the ostensibly ordinary and mundane.

In *Conned*, Abramsky's challenge was to locate some of the five million disenfranchised American ex-offenders who could articulate their opinions about being deprived of the right to vote, whether temporarily or for the rest of their lives. Many former prisoners were suspicious of his questions; others had already headed back into lives of criminality and wanted to stay there, undisturbed by a reporter's inquiries. The ones who talked destroyed his preconceptions of the disenfranchised masses as largely disinterested in their lack of political power.

Voting mattered for these ex-prisoners "far beyond the realm of the theoretical," as he was to realize in

the course of researching and writing *Conned*. More often than not, Abramsky's sources talked to him "about how depressed, how angry, how disempowered they felt about not being able to vote, to be able to affect their [national and local politics]."

In Montana, Abramsky finds 21-year-old Chereesa, a Cheyenne-Navajo woman, who had done her time on a federal conviction for interstate transportation of marijuana. That Chereesa was merely 18 at the time of her arrest, pled guilty, and did her time didn't matter; her probation officer told her that she had lost her right to vote. "I wanted to vote," Chereesa states. "I'm a public kind of person ... [not being able to vote] made me feel ... like I was bad, like I was not a citizen anymore."

Actually, Montana's laws would have allowed her to regain the right to vote. But miscommunication — or intentional disregard for the law — allowed for this common miscarriage of justice.

In states where the temporary or permanent disenfranchisement of ex-prisoners is on the books, the author finds their impact questionable, at best. What purpose is served by denying people the right to vote? More to the point, what self-respecting Western nation allows for such an obvious transgression of the most basic of democratic principles?

"[T]hese disenfranchisement laws have no place in modern day society," as Abramsky puts it. ■

## [Reading]

Sasha Abramsky will read from *Conned* Sat., May 20, at 2 p.m. at Elliott Bay Book Co., First and Main St. in Pioneer Square.

Silja J.A. Talvi is a member of Real Change's Advisory Board and a senior editor at In These Times, where a different version of this article first appeared. An investigative journalist and essayist with credits in many dozens of publications nationwide, she is at work on a book about women in prison (Seal Press).

## Lost Perdidos

**The Lost City**  
Directed by **Andy Garcia**  
Opens in theaters May 19

By **LESTER GRAY**  
Arts Editor

**T**he *Lost City*, directed by Andy Garcia, is a compromised mishmash of historical drama, star-crossed love, and political spite, with a bit of opaque humor and mysticism thrown in for good measure. Sixteen years in the making, the final version was reached by trimming half of the original script, making you wonder what was taken out and how it might have helped what wasn't.

Garcia, who also plays Fico, the film's protagonist, sought out the novelist Guillermo Cabrera Infante to write the script. Both gentlemen are Cuban émigrés, Garcia departing the country at age five. Once a Fidel supporter, Infante came to feel that he and other intellectuals had been duped by Castro. The film's story, at the tortured service of the writer's political perspective, chronicles the fall of Cuba's dictatorial Batista government through the eyes of an upper-class family.

Fico is the oldest of three Fellove brothers, from a family of Spanish and indigenous decent. At a meeting called by the family patriarch Don Federico (Tomas Milian), the scions confront their father and each other as to the best direction for the country. While the younger two brothers prefer ousting Batista by any means necessary, i.e., revolution,

Fico prefers change through more conventional avenues. As the proverbial fecal matter is already on an inexorable trajectory toward a high-powered fan, their debate is moot. In one of the film's more cogent threads, we observe how these proud and privileged men come to terms with their impotence to affect or even comprehend events that will inalterably change, if not end, their lives.

As the government destabilizes, Fico, a pillar of strength and a man in denial, comes to the aid of victimized friends on both sides of the conflict. When his brother is killed in an attempt to overthrow Batista, he keeps a promise to look after his gorgeous sister-in-law (model Ines Sastre), with whom he falls in love. But mostly he's a guy who loves hobnobbing at his nightclub. For him the revolution, while not unjustified, is an inconvenience.

Serving as Fico's sidekick, sounding board, and most enigmatic element in the script is the unnamed character played by Bill Murray, who appears from nowhere and for no apparent reason. Introduced as a writer, he provides counterpoint to Fico's stolidness, offering non-sequiturs and tension breakers that don't break the tension. For the most part, it feels like Bill Murray playing Bill Murray.

*The Lost City* wanders in and out of the credible. It nonetheless does offer an interesting perspective on the events leading up to the change of regimes in Cuba. From the film alone we might assume the Cuban revolution, to a large degree, was a pissing contest between knee-jerk ideologues, students, and bourgeois liberals competing with each other and the sitting dictatorship; the common folk are seldom seen or referenced. Were it not for some incredible Cuban music and an editor who somehow uses it to mend a disjointed narrative, it's hard to imagine the story having much continuity. Even with that saving effort, at two and one half hours *The Lost City* still feels a bit lost. ■

Were it not for some incredible Cuban music and an editor who somehow uses it to mend a disjointed narrative, it's hard to imagine the story of *The Lost City* having much continuity.

*Fico Fellove (Andy Garcia) "looking after" his brother's widow (Ines Sastre).*





Adventures  
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning



This CILP (the Civilian Inmate Labor Program) calls for the creation, FROM EXISTING UNUSED FACILITIES ON MILITARY BASES, of prison camps to exploit the labor of certain classes of federal prisoners.

Root, notorious subsidiary of Halliburton, was awarded a \$385 million no-bid contingency contract to build a "network" of detention centers, here at home, in the future, for "some kind of mass migrations" or "the rapid development of new programs." Each center would house up to 5,000 detainees.

Allow me to restate that. KBR got handed \$385 million in advance, without public debate, for the creation of a lot of new prison camps for people within the U.S., to all be built in a hurry, and we aren't being told clearly why, or why KBR has to do it instead of the lowest bidder.

My main question, though, is how do you quickly create a "network" of prisons, each holding up to 5,000, for a measly \$385 million, assuming "network" means more than, like, three or four?

Answer: You don't create the prisons from scratch; you establish them where there are already sufficient facilities.

Wait, there's a shortage of housing, right? Yes, in the civilian sector, but there is and long has been a glut of unused military housing in this country. What with the switch to an all-volunteer army and two overseas wars, there's no shortage of barracks in the U.S. In fact the DoD has more bases than it needs.

OK, don't believe that. Believe this: a big, long, unclassified document on the U.S. Army's official website that has been around for over a year, gathering almost no attention, details plans for something entitled the Civilian Inmate Labor Program. This CILP calls for the creation, FROM EXISTING UNUSED FACILITIES ON MILITARY BASES, of prison camps to exploit the labor of

## Forget the NSA. What about CILP?

Why does the government really want our phone records? Let's get conspiracy-theoretic all over this!

Here's a clue. All the fury surrounding NSA's data mining last week pushed another important story off the front pages. Kellogg, Brown, and

certain classes of federal prisoners. The plan specifically rules out paying the prisoners for the labor, so in human language, we're talking SLAVE LABOR CAMPS. As they put it at Auschwitz, *Arbeit macht frei* — nicht!

How much do you think it might cost to set those camps up? I'd guess around \$385 million or so.

According to the web document, some classes of federal prisoners would be "ineligible" for slavery within the Civilian Inmate Labor Program. For instance, sex offenders and drug dealers will not be so fortunate. Who remaining would be eligible?

How about people who wind up in federal custody because of disturbances arising from some kinds of mass migrations or the occasional rapidly developing program?

Gee, what with most of the National Guard off making Iraq free for oil exploitation, if we had even a risk of mass disturbances inside the U.S., we might have to declare martial law and round up and arrest all the potential troublemakers before the disturbances happen. What if there were a bird flu epidemic, making mass quarantines look desirable? What if we tried to send the Mexicans home, and they wouldn't go? What if a Democrat had a clear shot at the White House, for a change?

But how can we round up potential troublemakers if we don't know who they are?

Well, thanks to the NSA, now we can know. We can start with our previously obtained list of known troublemakers, like the Raging Grannies, members of the ACLU, *Real Change* staff, non-royal Saudi Muslims, Democratic Party precinct leaders, Simon Cowell, and such. Combine that with the NSA's call data. Do a little easy network computation, and we can rate every resident of the country on a scale of zero to 10. Zero would mean you're Bush, Cheney, or Rove or close family. Anything over 7.5, say, could mean the Bush administration wouldn't miss you.

If you're the average *Real Change* reader, you'll probably be assigned an 8 or higher. Since you all won't be able to vote from your slave labor camps, you might as well *heil* Jeb as your next Überbush right now and get it over with. ■



### Fri., April 28, 2:22 p.m., Fourth Ave. / Pine St.

A staff member of Western State Hospital in Lakewood contacted an officer at Fourth and Pine and stated he was looking for the subject, a transient white female aged 61 who had escaped from the hospital during a court-ordered treatment. Officer was familiar with the subject from years of contact for mental/drug related problems and had contacted her only an hour prior. He was able to locate her at Fourth and Pike and verified via radio that she was listed as a missing person. Western State requested that she be taken to Harborview mental ward until she could be transported back to Western.

An ambulance was called, and subject was transported to Harborview. The officer met the ambulance at the hospital with an involuntary commitment form, and the woman was accepted into Harborview. She was dirty and looked like she wasn't taking care of herself. She had no money and no means of support — after a short time at Harborview she was transferred back to Western State Hospital.

### Fri., April 28, 5:00 p.m., Westlake Ave N.

Suspect, a transient Black female aged 29, was bothering students at a nearby high school. When contacted by the police, she stated she had multiple mental health diagnoses but had not taken her medication for a month. She said she has been living on "dandelions and herbs" and told ambulance staff she was possessed by the spirit of two Jewish girls. She was transported to Harborview for a mental health evaluation.

### Fri., April 28, 9:40 p.m., Denny Way.

Officers out on patrol were advised by radio that a stolen car had been seen parked in a parking lot at 620 Denny Way, and that the car was occupied. Officers found the suspect, a white female aged 15, inside the car, and it was soon discovered she was a missing juvenile and had been reported as a runaway. Seattle Police radio verified the missing person hit, and the subject was transported to the West Precinct. Officers contacted her father, who said he did not want to pick her up and he didn't want her to come home, as she would only run away again. The subject had no warrants, and no medical/psychological care was needed. As it would not be safe for the police to release the 15-year-old subject out into downtown Seattle on a Friday night, an officer contacted the Spruce Street Youth Center to see if they would house her. He was advised they would, and she was taken there and dropped off. As her father refused to take custody of her, officer wrote an abandoned child report.

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.

Bus Chick,  
Transit  
Authority

Carla Saulter



## Can I ask You Something?

One of the best things about riding the bus is talking to strangers. In my years as a full-time bus chick, I have gotten to know the people I share this city with in a way that would simply not have been possible

from the isolated bubble of a car.

One of the worst things about riding the bus is talking to strangers. As most bus riders know, strangers can be annoying, or boring, or crazy. Strangers sometimes interrupt your-right at the best part of a good book and, no matter how many times you attempt to return to reading, proceed to tell you everything you never wanted to know about boa constrictors or child-proof pill bottles. They sometimes ask for your phone number or give you theirs. (This isn't always a bad thing — I've made several friends on my regular bus routes — but it's all about approach and intention.) Strangers offer you copies of *Awake!* or *Back to Godhead* or ask if you are saved. They ask you to donate to their "hooker funds" (seriously), sign up for *Amway*, or loan them your cell phone for a "quick" call. (Contrary to the assertions of one reader, I do not advocate the borrowing

or loaning of cell phones except in cases of dire emergency.)

Some strangers ask personal questions, and they seem especially fond of asking them of me. With surprising regularity (apparently due to my "unique" appearance), I am subjected to one or more of the following questions during my bus conversations:

Where are you from? [Seattle] No, I mean where are your parents from? [Seattle and Pittsburgh]

What's your nationality? [American]

What's your background? [Let's see...I majored in English...]

What's your last name? [Saulter]

You Creole or something? [Nope. I'm a fan of New Orleans, if that counts.]

Habla español? [Si, un poquito.]

And, the most popular: What are you? [A daughter, a sister, a friend, a writer, a human, a carbon-based life form...]

All those folks should have taken lessons in directness from the man I sat next to on the #4 a couple of weeks ago. Before my butt had fully hit the seat, he asked, "Are you Black or white?"

The answer, for him, and for all others I might encounter on a bus in the future, is: both. ■

Some strangers ask personal questions, and they seem especially fond of asking them of me.

Got something to say about public transportation in Seattle? E-mail Bus Chick at buschick@gmail.com or visit blog.seattlepi.nwsources.com/buschick.

# SUPPORT REAL CHANGE

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

for more information, call

**1-800-390-4018**



**Easy and  
Convenient.**

## Discrimination?

**CALL US!**

### Seattle Office for Civil Rights

(206) 684-4500

(TTY) (206) 684-4503

[www.seattle.gov/civilrights](http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights)

*Free, fair, and impartial services*

City of Seattle

Greg Nickels, Mayor

We All  
Belong!

Housing  
Contracting  
Employment  
Public  
Accommodations

## Realtor "Walks His Talk"



**Craig Brooke-Weiss  
My Realtor...**

*"Went above and beyond."*

*"Listened to me."*

*"Places the needs of  
clients first."*

*Real Estate for  
Real People!*

**Windermere**

Windermere Real Estate / Wind Group, Inc.

Will donate 5% of commission upon closing to Real Change! Call for details.  
[craig@windermere.com](mailto:craig@windermere.com) • [seattle-downtown-realestate.com](http://seattle-downtown-realestate.com)

**Call Craig! • 206-920-7251**

SNOW DAY

## A Walk for Peace and Healing

Saturday, May 20, 1-4 p.m. at Green Lake

[www.walkforpeaceandhealing.org](http://www.walkforpeaceandhealing.org)

## Letters

### Goodwill toward Craig

Dear *Real Change*,

I just wanted to take a minute to say a word about one of your vendors, Craig Skewes. I shop at the 15th Avenue QFC on Capitol Hill and always look forward to seeing Craig out there with his papers. This guy has the most amazing work ethic, is always positive, always honest, and can always be counted on to brighten up my day. I see him standing out there for eight hours a day saying hi, smiling, and just generally rocking our neighborhood. To see him exercise such dignity in the face of

his current situation is a daily source of inspiration for me. Please give this guy some sort of medal or paid day off or something; he is a hardworking man who deserves a lot of credit. You must get a lot of these emails for your different vendors, but I hope you are able to focus on this guy for just a day — I really want this guy to prosper, he's earned it.

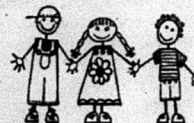
Thanks!

Ian Gray

### The Heron Study (UW Research Study)

Were you in a research study at Detox (RCKC Kent or Seattle)? Were you in a study for HIV and Hep C risk reduction? We want to see you for follow-up visits! You will be compensated in cash for your time.

Please call (206) 568-8227  
or (206) 568-8217



### Green Lake Preschool & Childcare Center

a child-centered learning environment

6350 East Green Lake Way North, Seattle, WA 98103

Anne Kelly, Director Phone 206-525-7877

NAEYC accredited, for further information please visit

[www.greenlakepreschool.org](http://www.greenlakepreschool.org)



**Downtown  
Emergency  
Service Center**  
has housing for

people who are disabled, homeless, and very low-income.

Various eligibility criteria apply to each of our projects.

For more information, please contact the Union Hotel at 587-2460; the Lyon Building at 341-9575; the Kerner-Scott House at 621-7027; the Morrison Hotel at 515-1545; and 1811 Eastlake at 957-0700.



Acoustic Fretted Instruments  
Bought and Sold  
Martin Guitar Dealer  
Books, Strings, Repairs

5210-A Roosevelt Way NE  
Seattle, Washington 98105  
(206) 524-1110

Free parking up to a half-hour  
in the loading zone out front.

[www.folkstoreseattle.com](http://www.folkstoreseattle.com)

**"Self-guided Tours Daily"**

## CLASSIFIED

### Employment

**Women's Shelter Organizer.** Experience with homelessness or the formerly homeless. Understanding of SHARE structure and self management. Adherence to past and present Power Lunch decisions. Compensation \$992/month for 3-month probation period, \$1100/month after 3 months. For more information or to set up an appointment/interview, call the SHARE Office. (206) 448-7889.

**Overflow Logistics Coordinator.** Qualifications: organized and detail oriented, strong problem-solving aptitude. Strong communication skills. WA Driver's License REQUIRED. Ability to think globally and plan proactively. Strong math/calculating skills. Computer literacy A PLUS. Compensation \$992/month for 3-month probation period, \$1100/month after 3 months. For more information or to set up an appointment/interview, call the SHARE Office. (206) 448-7889.

### Information

**Society of Counsel** Representing Accused Persons gives a free clinic on sealing a juvenile record. Wed., May 17, 6 p.m., 1401 E Jefferson St., Suite 200. Info: (206) 616-7168.

**Connections: Queer Issues and Immigration Issues,** an information session on the law and options for same-sex immigrant couples. Tues., May 23, 6 p.m., LGBT Community Center, 1115 E Pike St.

### Opportunity

**FROZEN IRS REFUND?** Did you take an earned income tax credit? Did the IRS "freeze" or keep your refund? If you answered "yes" to both, call *Real Change* reporter Sydney Gillis, 206-441-3247 ext. 209.

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



# Calendar

## This Week's Top Ten

### Wednesday 5/17

The lecture series "The Human Imprint" delves into the relationship between humans and the environment from the perspectives of law, societal institutions, and philosophy. William Rodgers Jr., University of Washington professor, will analyze the creative role of Native Americans in developing environmental law, focusing on examples of fishing restoration in the Everglades and cleanup of the Hawaiian island of Kahoolawe. 7 p.m., University of Washington, Kane Hall 120. Info: (206)543-0540.

### Thursday 5/18

A panel of authors tackles the complex and provocative subject of the depiction of Black love and relationships in literature. Are these depictions realistic? Do they create or reflect society's stereotypes? Participants include Laurinda D. Brown, Edwina Martin-Arnold, Travis Hunter, and more. Tickets \$10. 7 p.m. Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, 104 17th Ave. S.

An evocative exploration of Los Angeles' Asian Pacific Islander working families, the new documentary *Grassroots Rising* weaves together powerful interviews about vulnerability, exploitation, and unsafe working conditions. The innovative workers refuse to be passive victims; instead, they strive for justice through inter-ethnic alliances and community-based campaigns. 7:30 p.m., New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S. Info: (206)722-6057.

### Friday 5/19

The Meaningful Movies screens a double feature in celebration of Bike to Work Day. *Easy Rolling* is a fun look into creative transportations alternatives. *Return of the Scorchers* chronicles the history of the bicycle from its early days, when it was known as "the scorchers" because of its speed, to its use in the U.S. and other countries. 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. Info: [wncfp@bridgings.org](mailto:wncfp@bridgings.org).

*Speaking the Unspeakable: Is the Bush Administration Guilty of War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity?* is a national tour bring-

ing a panel of prominent whistle blowers, eye-witnesses, and victims to give testimony on the nature and scale of the crimes. Speakers include members of the Bush Crimes Commission, former CIA analyst Ray McGovern, journalist Larry Everest, and more. 6:30 p.m., University of Washington, Kane Hall. Info: [www.worldcantwait.net](http://www.worldcantwait.net).



Internationally renowned Japanese-American artist Roger Shimomura speaks on his pop-style work, which exposes the racial and ethnic stereotypes that have infected the historic diversity of our culture. His series *An American Diary* is based on his grandmother's journals that she kept while interned in Camp Minidoka, Idaho, during World War II. Friday, May 19, 7 p.m., Seattle Asian Art Museum, Slimson Auditorium, 1400 E. Prospect St.

### Saturday 5/20

Sasha Abramsky estimates the number of Americans who have lost the ability to vote due to past felony convictions at more than four million. His book, *Conned*, examines the roots of laws that disenfranchises convicts and the erosion of America's democratic ideals. 2 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S Main St.

### Sunday 5/21

There are approximately 300 million chronically hungry children in the world. The United Nations World Food Program's Walk the World raises funds and awareness to end child hunger. 1 p.m., Greenlake Bath House Theater, 7312 W Greenlake Dr. Info: [www.fighthunger.com](http://www.fighthunger.com).

### Tuesday 5/23

Women comprise the majority of voters, college students, and first-time homebuyers. Celinda Lake, leading political strategist for the Democratic Party, and Kellyanne Conway, conservative pollster, show that by creating a united power-base among women, the nation's political, economic, and cultural landscape can change. Tickets \$5. 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave.

Photographer and writer Ann Fessler interviewed more than 100 women who gave up children for adoption, both voluntarily and involuntarily, before legalized abortion. *The Girls Who Went Away* describes the emotional torment and society's heart wrenching treatment of unwed mothers. 7:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St.

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

## Director's Corner

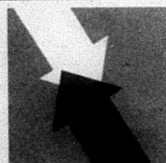


Most of our readers probably don't know that *Real Change* is part of a larger street newspaper movement that includes more than 100 papers in 27 different countries. While these range from the very small and grassroots, like *Change of Heart* in Lawrence, KS, to the very large and professionalized (*The Big Issue*, London), what these papers all have in common is the opportunity they provide to homeless and low-income vendors and their focus on ending poverty around the globe.

*Real Change* is the lead paper in North America, offering an example of what a street newspaper can be: a respected local institution that combines immediate opportunity with a long-range vision for social change. We are a leader in the North American Street Newspaper Association ([www.nasna.org](http://www.nasna.org)) and are working to help other papers be as effective as possible.

This June, NASNA joins the International Network of Street Papers (INSP) as the North American bureau of an increasingly global anti-poverty movement. For the past two years we've collaborated on a jointly operated Street News Service ([www.streetnewsservice.org](http://www.streetnewsservice.org)) that offers quality content to member papers of both organizations. You can learn more about the INSP at [www.streetpapers.com](http://www.streetpapers.com).

The street newspaper concept, which has roots that are now more than 15 years old, continues to mature and expand. We're proud to do our part here in Seattle to keep the global street newspaper movement growing and thriving.



## First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

## Speak Up on Spying

**Issue:** On May 11, *USA Today* reported that the National Security Administration has been secretly collecting records of phone calls from tens of millions of Americans. Most people for whom information is being collected are not suspected of committing any crime.

**Background:** Three major phone companies have been providing the NSA with their customers' data since shortly after September 11, 2001. AT&T, BellSouth, and Verizon have all turned over their records to the NSA. Qwest has refused the government's request for records.

While not acceptable, this program is also not a big surprise from the same administration that is spying on two local peace groups like the American Friends Service Committee and the Raging Grannies, and eavesdropping on international calls without warrants.

The NSA isn't in charge of telecommunication companies, however, and we should expect our private information to be guarded more carefully by private business — especially since customers can vote with their feet and their dollars (and many already have).

The 1986 Electronic Communications Privacy Act prohibits access to such records without consent of the subject, a warrant, or other court order. According to lawsuits against these companies that are already underway, the law doesn't make it illegal for the government to request this information, but it does make it illegal for the phone companies to turn over those records.

**Action:** Visit [www.acu-wa.org](http://www.acu-wa.org) and sign the statement (printed below) to tell AT&T, Verizon, and BellSouth that turning over personal information to the government without a warrant is unacceptable.

"Dear AT&T, Verizon, and BellSouth,

Revelations regarding the Bush administration's illegal and warrantless spying on Americans make it clear that your company is enabling illegal government spying by turning over private details about our telephone calls to the National Security Agency.

As an American consumer, I expect you to treat my personal communications as totally private.

This is my right under the U.S. Constitution. I do not intend to forfeit it, and I don't expect you to forfeit it for me.

I am writing to demand that your company stop participating in the government's illegal spying program.

By helping the government track the calls and communications of millions of ordinary Americans, you are violating not only the law but the trust of the American consumer. And that's just plain wrong.

Please write me at the address below to let me know that you are reconsidering your cooperation with this un-American spying program."

Qwest provides local phone service for about 80 percent of Washington residents. If you are a Qwest customer, consider taking another minute to let the company know that you appreciate their not rolling over when the NSA asked for your private information. You can call Qwest customer service at 800-475-7526 or visit [www.qwest.com](http://www.qwest.com) and click "contact us" for more information about getting your message to the right person.

## FOX, Continued from Page 1

But, out of a population of about 546,000 Mexican nationals in Washington, Jimenez estimates that more than 54,000 of them are registered to vote — a possible reason that Calderon's opponent, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador of the Democratic Revolution Party, is sending a campaign worker to meet with immigrants in Seattle Monday, prior to Fox's visit.

Though Fox's election broke 71 years of often-corrupt rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, many Mexican nationals say the president, once the top executive for Coca-Cola in Mexico, has supported neoliberal trade policies, increasing the dire poverty that drives people across the border in search of jobs.

"I'm not too happy with Fox. He's done some stuff but not enough," says Daniel Anguiano, coordinator for the Casa Latina day worker program, which helps Mexican immigrants get jobs.

"Salaries down there aren't enough to live," Anguiano says. At \$10 a day, "one day of work is not enough to buy a pair of shoes or a change of clothes" for his children.

As a member of the Democratic Revolution Party, Obrador is the best candidate for 90 percent of the people, says Roberto Maestas, director of El Centro de la Raza, "Because he has the courage to stand up and reform economic policies and corruption," including supporting education and more social programs.

In a country where 70 percent of the population makes less than \$100 a

month, Obrador had enjoyed a vast lead over Calderon. Then two things happened: Obrador declined to participate in a televised presidential debate and Calderon's campaign started running commercials painting Obrador as a new Hugo Chavez.

Because Mexico is deeply steeped in Catholic tradition, says Maestas, "Anything you can use to designate someone as leftist, communist or socialist equates to them being anti-religious and repressive."

"You only have to connect Obrador to Hugo Chavez and you automatically connect him to Fidel Castro," Maestas says.

The tactic appears to be working: In late April, a poll of voters showed 35 percent support Obrador and 38 percent are for Calderon, who says he'll deliver jobs — in part, by extending the free-trade policies supported by Fox, who is closely aligned with President Bush.

"People made a big mistake [with Fox]," says day worker Oscar Perez. "And I think the people here made a mistake with Bush." ■

## [Event]

The Mexican presidential campaign heats up in Seattle Monday when Talia Vasquez Alatorre, a representative of PRD candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, visits El Centro de la Raza to get input from Mexican nationals on the conditions that led them to cross the border. May 22, 10:30 a.m., El Centro, 2524 16th Ave. S., Seattle. Info: 329-9442.

WASHINGTON  
CASH

A non-profit providing micro loans & business development training for low-income entrepreneurs. Congratulations loan recipient,

**Roxanne Manly**  
Healing Hands Now  
Specializing in the healing art of reflexology.  
Healinghandsinfo@aol.com  
206 767-1801

for info, programs, or to donate  
[www.washingtoncash.org](http://www.washingtoncash.org)

## JANITORS, Continued from Page 1

Workers for Cascadian are offered a choice between a preferred or non-preferred health care plan. The monthly cost for employees is \$20; for an employee and spouse, it jumps to \$200; for an employee who wants to cover a spouse and child, the cost doubles, to \$400. The starting rate for employees is \$9.50 an hour.

Tim Reyhons, Cascadian president, says the health care plan offered was the best the company can afford. Unions such as SEIU Local 6, he says, can offer better health care rates because of their size. But very few Cascadian employees have voiced concerns about joining a union, he says. "It's up to them if they want to," says Reyhons, "it's not up to us."

The protestors from the third floor joined forces with those on the second. Taking the stairs, the entire group made its way to the ground level, then out the front door.

Outside on the sidewalk, the group of protestors — their numbers just shy of 15 — held a banner facing Elliott Ave. W. Drivers honked their horns. Two police cars pulled up to the curb.

Ken Bunting, associate publisher for the P-I, says law enforcement was called after the protestors were asked to leave but didn't. "A number of newspaper employees felt threatened by the protest," he says.

The officers kept the protestors in their sights. After investigating a coiled rope on the sidewalk they deemed suspicious, the officers returned to their vehicles, driving off. Union reps and janitors persisted calling out their demands.

In contrast to Saldaña's claims of lack of communication, Bunting maintains the P-I has met with janitors and union representatives more than once since the protests began targeting the newspaper last year. (This was the first protest, however, to occur inside the building, he says.) But as a lease holder whose cleaning services are provided by the building, Bunting indicates the newspaper's hands were tied: "We really have very little control over janitorial."

Saldaña says that while Cascadian is ultimately responsible for the treatment of its employees, she believes the P-I could help janitors obtain their goal. "[Cascadian] said if they felt pressure from lessees," says Saldaña, "they would reconsider affordable health care."

Protestors outside passed out fliers to building employees. A few nodded. One raised his fist in salute.

Atop the P-I building, an eagle perched on the newspaper's hallmark globe. On the ground below, the protestors latched on to a new chant:

"We'll be back! We'll be back! We'll be back!" ■

## EYES ON FREMONT

UNIQUE  
AFFORDABLE  
EYEWEAR

Friendly,  
Skilled Staff  
On Site Lab  
Eye Exams  
Student  
Discounts



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

CHUCK  
RINEHART  
Journeyman Carpenter/  
Contractor

Remodels • Repairs • Updating  
Disability Alterations &

Ph (206) 719-8450

Lic. # RINEHC1066MR

## orks. So does Real Change.

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$35 ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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

