

REAL

VOL. 13 NO. 25

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JUNE 14 - 20, 2006

ISSUES • INSIGHT • IMPACT

High-Rise High Roller

Real estate mogul throws money behind move to end estate tax

By ROSETTE ROYALE
Staff Reporter

Friends come, friends go, and some friends, they give you money. And if you're in support of a proposed state initiative to dump the estate tax, then it's easy to consider Seattle resident Martin Selig a good friend, seeing as how he's coughed up \$137,500 for the cause.

Public disclosure records from June 2 reveal that Selig, a local real estate mogul for close to 20 years, has donated that amount to the Committee to Abolish WA State Estate Tax, the force behind Initiative 920. If passed, I-920 would overturn a graduated tax on estates with a taxable income of \$2 million or more.

Selig's financial backing of I-920, which began in fits and starts, commenced in mid-March, when he handed over a \$5,000 donation. A little more than a month later, he matched that amount. With a third donation by early May, Selig had lined I-920's coffers with \$17,500.

Then, in mid-May, the weight and rate of the donations changed: Selig started handing over more money more often. Twenty thousand dollars here, \$30,000 there, until, in the course of three weeks, he'd donated another \$120,000, pushing him to his current total of \$137,500. Thus far, Selig is the initiative's largest financial backer. (Second in line? John N. Nordstrom, who, as of April 22, has donated \$50,000.)

When Selig was called for a comment, a secretary in his office said that he is out of the country and that no one else could speak on his behalf.

The state Department of Revenue estimates that this year, 210 Washington families have estates valued at \$2 million or more and thus are likely to feel the pinch of the current tax. Estates where farms or timberland make up at least 50 percent of the estimated value

See ESTATE, Continued on Page 12



MERCER ISLAND AIRLINE PILOT BOB BAKER IS HEAD OF INITIATIVE 946, WHICH WOULD REQUIRE WASHINGTONIANS TO SUPPLY PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP BEFORE GETTING GOVERNMENT SERVICES. PHOTO BY SUZANNA FINLEY.

Law and Order

I-946's champion says it's not about race

By CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

The first thing to know about Bob Baker is that he sees himself as a patriot. He's a father and Sunday school teacher who quotes Thomas Jefferson on vigilance being the price of freedom and James Madison on the privilege of citizenship.

The second thing to know about the amiable Mercer Island resident is that he's a Minuteman. He's always packing a 40-caliber Heckler & Koch — a semi-automatic pistol typically carried by police — and joins about 30 to 40 of his fellow self-appointed border watchdogs for occasional weekend and month-long camp-outs at 22 posts along the Canadian border.

Because of his odd hours as a fill-in Alaska Airlines pilot, says Baker, 53, "I'm usually the night guy. It's cool because I get to use NVGs — night vision goggles. You can just see everything."

But, "I'm not going to go out and shoot people," he says. "We have ROE, rules of engagement. [If] I see a guy coming across, all I'm doing when I'm there is observe and report. I have a cell phone, I have a radio, I have a signal flare. All I'm doing is saying, 'Border Patrol, come and look at this guy.'"

See BAKER, Continued on Page 4

The summer FUND DRIVE ain't happenin' without you PLEASE HELP (see page 2)

AIN'T NO WAY

It takes donors like you to keep our presses rolling. Without your help, the ink never hits the page.

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KEEP ON TRUCKIN'

Non-union truckers, a good portion of whom are immigrant owner operators, want the Port to play nice

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AGE OF THE GAME

After Bush skips national aging council, seniors decide they aren't ready to retire their fighting spirit

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BREAKING CAMP

Seattleite Mary Matsuda Gruening said, interred during WWII examines the horrors faced by Japanese-Americans

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You Move Us

Without you, Real Change ain't happening. Support the summer fund drive

Without you, our newspaper would publish every other week, at best. We would not have the resources for grassroots organizing. We would not be able to adequately support the needs of our vendors. With your support, we are strong, effective, and growing.

By TIMOTHY HARRIS
Executive Director

It's just two weeks into our June/July fund drive and frankly, we're getting a little worried. So far, we have raised less than \$3,000 toward our \$80,000 goal. While we've barely begun to actively fundraise, the early returns don't look so good. We need your help. Now.

Maybe you're thinking that \$80,000 is a very big number, and that your donation won't matter. Last year, we reached our fundraising goal during both the summer and winter drives, for a total of \$150,000, and we did so one donation at a time. Some of you were able to give \$10, and your support mattered. Others can afford \$100, and that helps too. Some of us can give \$1,000 or even \$10,000. All of us together, doing what we can, will make sure that *Real Change* continues to thrive.

You know that our work makes a difference. Our vendors, vendor staff, news staff, and organizing staff work together to meet immediate human needs while we help build a movement for social justice. That takes resources.

More than 250 vendors each month count on *Real Change* for work with dignity. Weekly publication and improvements in our newsroom have made our vendors prouder than ever to sell *Real Change*. Thanks to caring readers like you, our vendors are out there succeeding every day.

Real Change covers the issues with passion and accuracy, and brings you local news that you're not likely to see elsewhere. We produce quality advocacy journalism that gives you the information you need to help make a better world. This year, *Real Change* won journalism awards from the Western Washington Society of Profes-

sional Journalists and the International Network of Street Papers. Since 1998, our circulation has doubled to 11,000 copies sold each week.

Our 2006 reader survey paints a picture of a program that is valued and loved. While survey cards are still pouring in — with more than 600 surveys already received — early results are very encouraging. Most say that our content has "improved significantly." Here are some typical comments:

- I really appreciate the opportunities for my vendors to earn money while keeping the public informed. I feel comfortable giving to your folks.
- I feel like I have a relationship with my vendor. She is the same as a barista or mail carrier, someone I see regularly and depend on. Great work.
- It's a visible grassroots effort. I applaud the vision and journalism.
- *Real Change* is the only newspaper in Seattle worth reading.
- I see a positive effect in our city. Keep it up.
- *Real Change* is a clear voice in the wilderness.
- We need you.
- I look forward to the new issue each week. I'm glad to help support the community.
- Thank you for not being afraid to print what should be printed.
- You give hope to the hopeless — something to be damn proud of.

Real Change, as you know, is more than a newspaper. We are an organizing project that, with the help of our activist readership, has a real impact. This spring, we weighed in on the downtown zoning issue and beat the entrenched, deep-pocketed, downtown interests through the power of grassroots organizing. We made downtown development a popular issue and generated more than 500 emails

and 200 postcards to City Council. As a result, developers who will grow wealthy from greater density will pay twice the subsidy for affordable housing than was recommended in the Mayor's plan. This will mean tens of millions in new money to house the working poor.

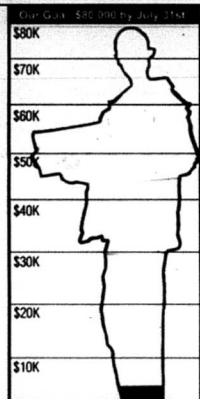
Over the years, *Real Change* has built our activist base of readers to more than 2,500 people who receive our email alerts and take action on critical poverty issues. You can add your name by going to our website at realchangenews.org and completing a very simple form.

Real Change depends on reader support for over 40 percent of our budget. Without you, our newspaper would publish every other week, at best. We would not have the resources for grassroots organizing. We would not be able to adequately support the needs of our vendors. With your support, we are strong, effective, and growing.

We need your help now during this summer fund drive. Your gift supports organizing, quality journalism, and opportunity for the very poor. Please give. ■

[Donate Now]

In the first two weeks of our fund drive we are just \$3,010 toward our \$80,000 July 31st goal. Please ensure that *Real Change* continues to offer opportunity, quality journalism, and effective advocacy for years to come by making a secure gift at www.realchangenews.org or sending a check to *Real Change*, 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121.



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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 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.

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Change Agent

June Schumaker has been involved in peace-related activism her entire life. The 86-year-old Burien resident even joined the Peace Corps, serving for two years in Liberia after retiring from 33 years of teaching the first grade at Highline Elementary.

Since then, she's been gardening, along with practicing some basic mathematics.

When traveling past her house, located on a busy Burien street, passersby are able to view the number of United States soldiers killed in the Iraq War.

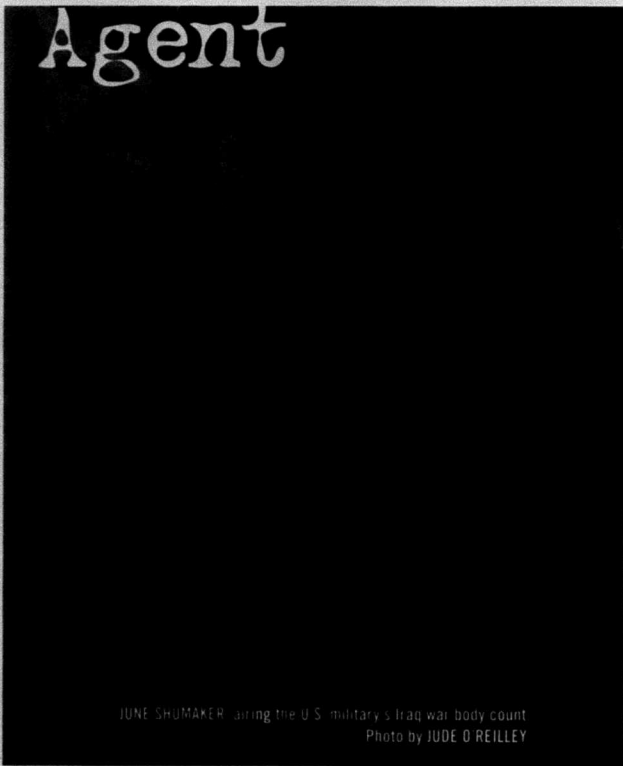
Schumaker says she started her count, which was up to 2,489 last week, "somewhere in the 900s." The visual reminder was inspired by a friend with a similar window on a less-traveled Burien road.

"Several people have asked me [about it] but most people know what it is," she says.

Once, a bouquet of flowers was left for her as a thank-you gift. Another time, a man driving past in his car stopped, saying, "I just need to give you a hug for doing this."

Schumaker remains vigilant, checking the updated body count once, sometimes more, daily.

—Liz Miller



JUNE SCHUMAKER, during the U.S. military's Iraq war body count
Photo by JUDE O REILLEY

The Big Payback

Immigrant owner-operator truckers want fair play at Port

By ADAM HYLIA
Editor

Angry at the sudden firing of one of their own, a few dozen truck drivers refused to return to work on Jan. 26. And despite management's promises to the contrary, the non-union workers have been paying for their one-day wildcat strike ever since.

It's harder and harder to make a living driving the short-haul routes from the Port of Seattle to waiting trains or other depots for Pacer International, says Tesfaye Gudeta, who — like all the company's "owner-operators" — is paid by the job, not the hour.

"It's hard to take only \$500 to the family" — about half what he made before Pacer's re-employment actions, says Gudeta, who has driven for the company for half of his six-year career.

The four months of harassment was joined on Tuesday with an early-morning visit by labor activists to Pacer's Seattle offices. Thirty marchers, many from seagoing and waterfront unions like the Masters, Mates and Pilots and the ILWU, descended on Pacer's south Seattle office, blowing whistles, waving signs, and chanting, "Pacer, Pacer, Shame on You!" Coordinated by Washington State Jobs

with Justice, the crowd was there to deliver missives from the lawyers of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, who are representing the aggrieved truckers. One letter, addressed to the local office manager, demanded that "all drivers be restored

to their work schedules and work arrangements" and "be made whole for all retaliation and discrimination that has occurred."

Since they're technically owner-operators, the truckers can't air their complaints before the National Labor Relations Board. They're also hampered by their relative newness to the U.S.: most, says Gudeta, are immigrants like him, less likely to know their rights.

The workers thought they had what they termed a "morally binding" verbal agreement with Pacer's management that they'd suffer no ill harm if they came back on the job.

Gudeta and some of his colleagues came to the management after what the workers say was a baseless dismissal of one of their own. "What happened to him could happen to us," he remembers telling management, "so what is our safety?" He says Pacer representative Dan Chairbank promised no re-employment. But the workers say they happened anyway. An April 19 letter to the president and vice-president of operations at Pacer's Los Angeles headquarters signed by 20 owner-operators gives a blow-by-blow chronology of how the office manager abolished seniority rules, ordered truckers to stand idle, and punished some for breaking rules while letting others' transgressions slide — all with the intention of pinching the pocketbooks of those who had struck.

The letter also notes that the competitive environment of subcontracting leads some workers to frequently make "bogus complaints" about others — leading to disciplinary meetings that eat up working hours. Such false accusations are "designed to blame us and therefore take short-cut assignments at our expense."

Most other short-haul brokers in the area are no better than Pacer, says Gudeta — they too reign over immigrant workers with fear. If anyone complains about mistreatment, says Gudeta, the response at the employers he's been with is "If you don't like it, you can go."

A spokesperson for Pacer could not be reached about the Tuesday morning action. ■

Teamsters organizer Bob Blanchet, center right, wants some nicer behavior from Pacer. Photo by Adam Hylia.



Just Heard...

Outside and without

The free soup line outside First Hill's First Presbyterian Church will close up in January, and there will be no place to move it to. So ends the city-sanctioned outdoor meals program. So say city officials charged two years ago with relocating the program and who found the search too exhausting to resume.

What about the empty stomachs of the 300 to 500 people who line up for those meals each day? "I don't think you can sustain the argument that it's not necessary," says Compass Center director Rick Friedhoff, who's been asked to draft a letter to Mayor Greg Nickels about the meals program's demise. Operation Sack Lunch, the chief provider of those meals, has called on the city to open its new office plaza — a move not in keeping with the hide-'em-away stance of Nickels, who recently floated for a walk-up window for the hungry.

Only stay

Tent City 4's legal representation is filing a motion to stay the judgment of King County Superior Court judge Charles Mertel, who on Friday said the eastside encampment had violated an agreement with the City of Woodinville when it lighted upon a church's property within city limits.

Pro-bono attorney Sean Russel says the State Court of Appeals should grant a stay until it has time to hear an appeal of Judge Mertel's ruling, which gave the campers until this Saturday, June 17, to move on. The camp's organizers are considering any offers for a substitute space that come along, they say — but as of Tuesday, nothing had.

—Adam Hylia

Crimes of quality

The Seattle City Council passed funding Tuesday for a pilot version of the Civil Streets public-safety initiative that Council President Nick Licata has been pushing for since last year ("On the Beat," May 17).

A first for Seattle, the legislation, co-sponsored by Tom Rasmussen, chair of the council's Human Services Committee, will pay for outreach workers who will connect offenders to treatment or other services in so-called "quality of life" crimes involving drugs, alcohol or mental illness in three areas of Seattle — downtown, Miller Park, and Rainier Beach.

By helping offenders get treatment, housing or job-search services, the idea is they won't end up back in jail, which is more costly than services. Miller Park and Rainier Beach will get an immediate \$240,000 for their pilot programs, with \$120,000 going to the downtown effort this summer.

"It's an innovative program," Licata says, "that will help tackle the root causes of crime."

—Cydney Gillis

BAKER, Continued from Page 1

Baker is the man behind Protect Washington Now and Initiative 946, which would strip illegal immigrants of certain state assistance and penalize state workers who knowingly provide aid.

"I'm for immigration. That's not what this is about," says Baker, a retired "Top Gun" Air Force pilot who moved from California three years ago. "We should have an immigration system that brings people into our country and makes them productive members of our society [who] speak English, assimilate, and become nothing more and nothing less than Americans."

Baker says most of the illegal crossings up north are made by drug smugglers, not people seeking jobs, as thousands do from Mexico each year. They cross into states such as Arizona, where the Minuteman Project and an initiative similar to Baker's got their start.

Protect Washington Now is a spinoff of Protect America Now, which formed in Arizona after Proposition 200 passed in 2004. PAN's founder, Kathy McKee, wrote I-946 a check for \$200, which was the campaign's first monetary contribution. But Baker says he doesn't intend to take any more out-of-state money — something that his opponents at From Hate to Hope, an immigrants advocacy coalition, worry he'll do at the last minute to help pass I-946 in November.

Between now and then, Baker must gather nearly 225,000 valid signatures by July 7 to get I-946 on the ballot. So far, he says roughly 40,000 signatures have been gathered by an all-volunteer operation of 550 people, all of whom Baker says clamored to get petitions once they heard about the initiative.

Martin Ringhofer, a Moses Lake resident who is working with Baker, failed to get a similar initiative (I-343) on the ballot last year. Through May 10, the state's Public Disclosure Commission lists a total of only \$2,280 in contributions to this year's initiative, which opponents point out would affect every low-income resident who applies for state assistance by making them show a passport or certified birth certificate to prove citizenship.

Baker says Washington's Mexican nationals — estimated at more than half a million — have access to \$360 million in state benefits. According to the Department of Social and Health Services, the total is around \$145 million and goes to programs such as emergency medical aid, pregnancy care, and child care for low-income children.

Baker acknowledges Mexican nationals pay taxes but says it doesn't cover what they use in services. "They're being paid a sub-living wage,

so the rest of us taxpayers are paying for the rest of their living: their children's education, their health care [and] babysitting," he says.

He insists that I-946 is not racist, that it's merely intended to stop law-breakers — a label that Paul Lawrence, an attorney working with From Hate to Hope, rejects.

"The whole notion of criminalizing a person because of their immigration status seems terribly wrong," Lawrence says. "This is just a punitive effort to go after a segment of the population that needs our support."

Baker says his activism on the issue began after serving six months on a federal grand jury in Los Angeles, where many of the felony cases involved repeat deportations of Mexican nationals.

"[The Mexican nationals are] being paid a sub-living wage, so the rest of us taxpayers are paying for the rest of their living: their children's education, their health care [and] babysitting."

— Bob Baker

"I'm talking about armed robbery," Baker says. "They don't serve any jail time, they get deported to Mexico to the city of their choice, and they don't serve any jail time in Mexico. So, literally, the next day they can come

back across the border.

"One guy, it was his fifth deportation in about six years," he says. "He gets up on the stand and he says very arrogantly, 'Yes, I do not see my family for a while, so I commit a felony so I get to go home for free.' And I mean, I almost jumped out of the box and strangled him right there on the spot." ■

DOLLAR BILL

I dropped a dollar bill
on the sidewalk
hoping someone poor
might find it
"Good luck"
as I kicked it good-bye

Looking around me
under the starlit sky
I noticed two people
a block or so away
who looked to me to be
in quite sufficient pay.

"I hope they don't see it!
I hope they don't see it!"

As I strolled on along
I looked back to see
the woman bending over
where the dollar would be.
"Isn't it fun to find money?" I said,
when they soon passed me by.
She said, "Oh! You saw it too?"
I said, "I dropped it"
She said, "So did I."
She said "So did I."
We don't need it,
felt guilty to keep it,
so we just passed it by."
So she just passed it by . . .
Maybe you found it
and had breakfast the next day
I just mean to say
All money is not pay.

True story.

— ARTIS
JUNE, 1977

VENICE BEACH, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Short Takes

On the level

Having heard comments from South Park residents at a public meeting last month, the EPA is planning to release a decision document for an interim cleanup of PCBs from the Duwamish Waterway's Terminal 117.

Ravi Sanga, EPA's project manager for the site, says the document, which could be released as early as June 14, hews close to the plan presented at the meeting. PCB levels within the top two feet of soil will still be brought down to 10 parts per million (ppm), says Sanga, with the soil below two feet maintaining levels of 25 ppm. The proposed levels represent a significant drop in the current levels: the Port of Seattle determined that at two locales on site, PCB levels soared as high as 4,500 and 9,200 ppm.

The state has set the default PCB safe level in residential areas at 1 ppm; for industrial areas, that safe level jumps to 10 ppm. Terminal 117, an industrial site that was the former home to Malarkey Asphalt Co., sits directly upon the Duwamish, in the ethnically diverse South Park neighborhood.

The Port will be in charge of the interim cleanup, which will involve the excavation of and backfill of 16,000 tons of soil. The backfilled soil will be topped with asphalt. The EPA will oversee the work of the Port, which is scheduled to take place this fall to the tune of \$6 million.

Most of the comments at the meeting, says Sanga, centered on future land use of the site. A potential use voiced by the city, he says, focused on turning the site into a park. "The [PCB] level that they're going for," says Sanga, "this does cover a park."

But BJ Cummings, coordinator for the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, says that the EPA needs to do a risk assessment to determine that currently proposed levels are acceptable for the site. The EPA, she claims, hasn't performed the

necessary tests. "Basically," says Cummings, "the EPA is saying it's okay for South Park to have a higher cancer risk than the rest of the state."

Now it's up to the Port, she says, to approve or even amend the EPA's decision. Cummings says her group will ask the Port to consider an expanded cleanup.

"The Port Commission," says Cummings, "is our next focus."

The Port will vote on the EPA decision document on June 27 at 1 p.m., when it meets at Sea-Tac Airport.

— Rosette Royale

Eyman a-Cryin'

Political rabble-rouser Tim Eyman failed to secure by Tuesday, June 6, the 112,000 signatures needed by his organization (Let the Voters Decide) to challenge House Bill 2661 on this fall's ballot.

The proposed initiative, Referendum 65, is the latest of Eyman's attempts to create citizen-driven law in the state of Washington. It would have challenged the inclusion of sexual orientation to statewide housing anti-discrimination legislation, which was signed into law by Governor Christine Gregoire on Jan. 31, 2006.

The state's religious right was backing Eyman, with a "Referendum Sunday" that sought to secure, two days before the petition deadline, enough signatures to put R-65 onto the ballot. It is believed that more than 5,000 churches participated in the event.

Coupled with Eyman's own efforts, it still was not enough. Eyman fell short, in the end only gathering 105,000 signatures of support.

— Liz Miller

Getting Even

Slighted seniors spread the word, demand changes

By LYDIA DePILLIS
Contributing Writer

"I'm 86 years old, and I'm ready for a 20-year fight if you are."

— Will Parry, president of the Puget Sound Alliance for Retired Americans

When Steve Kofahl advised a room full of retirees to avoid getting a parking ticket because they would need that \$35 when they fell into the doughnut hole, he was only partially joking.

Kofahl, president of American Federation of Government Employees Local 3937, was referring to the coverage gap in the federal prescription drug benefit that forces middle-income Medicare beneficiaries to pay for most or all of their prescriptions. That shortfall, along with a host of other problems faced by aging Americans, was discussed at a public forum organized by the Washington Alliance for Retired Americans at the Seattle Labor Temple on June 10.

Most conversation, however, centered around the fallout from an event in Washington D.C. six months ago: the White House Conference on Aging, where 1,200 delegates gathered to make policy recommendations on issues of importance to the elderly. American presidents have attended the once-a-decade conference since the first was called by Harry Truman in 1950 — until last December, when President Bush chose instead to speak to a gated retirement community in suburban Virginia about his prescription drug plan.

His absence, although covered lightly in the national media, did not go over well with those in the aging community who still managed to find out. Delegates complained of other abuses: all resolutions were pre-written by the conference's policy committee, using more general language than what they had submitted in the months before.

"I'm really disgusted with how the White House Conference on Aging was put together, and the way they treated the delegates," said forum attendee Edie Koch, who expressed frustration at reports from those present at the conference. "You go with enthusiasm and hope in your heart that something marvelous is going to happen. It was all pre-programmed."

Kofahl, appointed to attend the conference by Congressman Jay Inslee (D - N. King County), told of facilitators who discouraged debate, rare opportunities to meet with other delegates and discuss resolutions, abrupt procedural changes, and pervasive corporate sponsorship. In addition, he questioned the accuracy of the tabulation of votes on the conference's top 10 resolutions: Social Security came in 11th, despite a widespread concern for the problem among delegates. At the insistence of Kofahl and others, the top 50 resolutions will be delivered to Congressmembers and the White House in early July.

Several speakers praised Gov. Christine Gregoire, who penned a six-page letter to the conference chair in April voicing concerns with how the conference was run and commenting on several of the proposed resolutions. One audience member, JoAnne McGaw, expressed optimism that Gregoire will organize other governors in the way that Seattle's Greg Nickels has led other mayors around sustainability and climate change.

Congressman Jim McDermott also addressed the forum, roundly criticizing the Bush Administration for its failed effort to privatize Social Security.

"Don't think for a minute that they're not still out there, ready to come back and try to do it again next year," he cautioned. "The neocons and this president, they're clearly after us." Mentions of a Democratic takeover of Congress and universal health insurance received loud applause.

One element of the Medicare legislation in particular, Part D, drew fire from forum speakers. Under the new law, which took effect on Jan. 1, Medicare may not negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for lower drug prices, putting a financial strain on many seniors and placing a large burden on the taxpayers, who shoulder 75 percent of the costs. By contrast, the Veterans Administration is allowed to negotiate, securing 40-60 percent lower prices for its five million beneficiaries.

As the forum wound up, it took on the feeling of a pep rally, with stories from those who had trouble obtaining prescriptions under the new plan, and speeches against Medicare privatization. Delegate Will Parry, president of the Puget Sound Alliance for Retired Americans, issued a challenge.

"I'm 86 years old," he said, "and I'm ready for a 20-year fight if you are." ■

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Opening Up

It took Mary Matsuda Gruenewald five decades to confront the Japanese American internment

"For me to recover my freedom has taken my lifetime. I don't want that to happen to other people."

Interview by CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

It wasn't long after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor that Mary Matsuda found herself an enemy combatant in the country where she was born.

On May 16, 1942, the 17-year-old, her older brother, and their immigrant parents left their strawberry farm on Vashon Island with a few suitcases. They were put on a ferry to Seattle, then a train to Pinedale, California — one of 31 camps where more than 110,000 Japanese-Americans were forced to live for three years under an executive presidential order intended to protect the nation.

But from what? It's a question that Mary Matsuda Gruenewald, now 81, began to grapple with 10 years ago when she finally started talking about her experiences in the camps — an exploration that would lead her to write the memoir *Looking Like the Enemy* (New Sage Press, 2005) and reclaim her long-forsaken Japanese heritage, including making the first trip of her life to Japan in April.

Behind the barbed wire of the camps, Matsuda describes the fear and humiliation of the gun towers, the crowded barracks, and the doorless toilets in California's 100-degree heat. Like other families, the Matsudas were later asked to declare their loyalty to the United States — a declaration that sent Matsuda off to train with the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps and her brother off to war as a soldier.

"I realized, At 17, I am a prisoner of war in my own country," Matsuda writes. "The most sobering realization was the U.S. Army and government could do this to American citizens."

Real Change: You didn't start talking about the internment until 10 years ago. Why? What led you to write your book?

Mary Matsuda: In January 1999, I went to this [writing] class. I was one of eight students, and each one had something different — a novel or a short piece on

part of their life. [So] it was a very fertile environment in which to try to write. But the reason I didn't want to write, the reason why I didn't want to talk about it, is because that was a very painful, shameful time of my life. Even though I knew [in my head] I had done nothing wrong to put me in prison, the gut takes over and, coupled with my cultural norms, it was not OK to talk about it. Not only culturally, but I was afraid that if I talked about it, I would start to cry, and if I started to cry, I wouldn't be able to stop. [But] in the writing class, it was OK to talk about it, to cry about it.

RC: What was the worst thing about the camps?

Matsuda: The worst thing was just the whole experience. [In the class] I remember talking about an incident that happened in camp. One night, I had to go to the bathroom, and the bathrooms were in a separate building and you had to go out, so I'd put on my shoes and my coat and left the apartment. [Suddenly] there was a big white light on me. [It] was like being a deer caught in the headlights. I realized immediately the light was coming from one of the searchlights, and I fled back into my [family's] apartment and shut the door and leaned up against it to try and make myself as small as possible.

[Internment] destroyed a lot of the communities, like [Seattle's] Japantown. It's never been the same. [There's] a book called *Strawberry Days* about the first generation of Japanese who came over here and took what is now all of Bellevue. At one time, it was all old-growth

fir trees [that had been logged]. The Japanese farmers came in, blew up the stumps, burned it all, cleared the land, and planted strawberries. The first generation could not become citizens [or own property] because they were Asian, but they could lease land for six years. When the war came, these people came in and made a killing [on the land], and that's where Bellevue is now.



RC: One theme in your book is "Am I Japanese or am I American?" But, while you were in the camps, the U.S. government forced you to choose on a questionnaire that included a loyalty oath. Talk about being asked to serve in the military — question 27 — on the questionnaire — and to disavow the Japanese emperor in question 28.

Matsuda: Question 28 was the trick question, and at the time we didn't realize that it would affect the rest of our lives. For those of us who had never been to Japan, to imply that we might have had some affiliation with the emperor of Japan was really a slap in the face. It was infuriating, especially if you'd been in the military by choice before Pearl Harbor and then been tossed aside. [But for] the older folks, like my parents, because there was a law on the books that said Asians could not become naturalized citizens, they were automatically Japanese citizens. To require them to pledge their allegiance to the United States, which had treated them so badly — they couldn't own property, they couldn't become naturalized citizens, they couldn't vote — to mass evacuate us to these camps as though we were guilty and then require us to pledge, it was utterly insane.

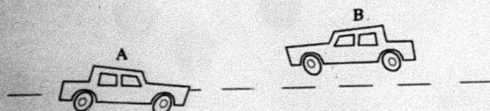
RC: Those who answered the questions with a "no no" — a name they came to be known by — were ostracized by Japanese-Americans as traitors, but you and your brother chose "yes yes." How did that affect your life?

Matsuda: After I went to the internment, I was through with Japan because Japan attacked the United States, and I held Japan responsible for the crisis in my life. To go so far as to marry a white man — talk about the ultimate [cultural] rejection. However, it was in the writing of the book and looking at the many sides of the political and cultural issue, looking at both sides of the loyalty oath and really researching that, not only in

Mary Matsuda Gruenewald, 81, in her Seattle home. Matsuda spent three years in a California internment camp during World War II, and now relates her experience in a book, Looking like the Enemy. Photo by Ginny Banks.

Story Problem 13

Car A leaves work traveling eastbound on the freeway at 60 mph. Car B leaves work traveling westbound on the freeway at 58 mph. If both cars travel at constant speeds, how hopeless do you have to feel to sleep under that freeway?



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Continued from Previous Page

the literature but in my own I heart, that I came to a resolution of that whole issue. We just chose different ways. Because of my choice, [my children] are much more United States-oriented and less Japan-oriented, [so] they have watched me make this 180-degree from being a white American to embracing my Japanese culture.

RC: But the next generation criticized yours — the second generation or "Nisei" — for going along with the imprisonment. Talk about those generational rifts.

Matsuda: Because we did not talk about it, the third generation never understood the conditions that prevailed at the time we were evacuated. Many of them didn't even know that their parents were even encamped. [So] the third generation said, "Well, you went just like sheep to the slaughter." But what they didn't know was that there were armed soldiers; we were behind barbed wires with towers with soldiers with machine guns and some of the internees were killed.

[Plus] the third generation has the benefit of all that the second generation went through. The fellows, like my brother, who went to war, came back and got on the GI bill and became doctors and lawyers and all of these things that people in our generation wanted to be but never could because of the extreme prejudice.

RC: Were you angry after the fact?

Matsuda: No. At the time, I was furious — absolutely, irrationally furious. But my mother and I had some long talks about the effects of anger on one's body. And I thought, "Who am I going to be angry at? How am I going to get even? With

whom?" You can't. The other thing is that, knowingly or not, I commit a sense of offense against other people [all the time], and I'm in need of forgiveness just like everybody is for whatever perceived or unperceived sins [I commit] against others.

And so, in order to be selfish, I will not hold that anger because it doesn't do me any good and it doesn't create any resolution to a problem for which there is no resolution. Except education for the next generation, and I'm working on that [through readings]. I think I have experienced enough of what it means to lose my freedom to say, "Don't let it happen to you."

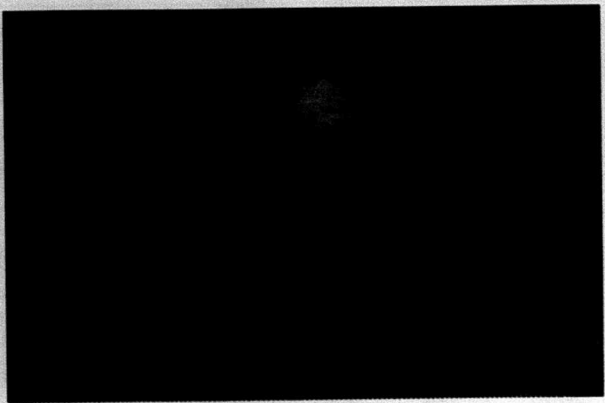
RC: With the Patriot Act and the president eavesdropping on Americans and insisting we tighten the borders, do you see parallels to World War II and the loss of civil liberties, particularly for immigrants?

Matsuda: I see a chilling parallel, and that's why I go out on readings. For adult audiences, I quote Martin Niemöller, who was a German pastor during the rise of the Nazi Party. [She reads:] "In Germany they first they came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew . . . Then they came for me, and by that time there was no one left to speak for me." I think

that's such a powerful statement about why we have to speak up for others.

Even though we're not related by blood, we are related, and I feel strongly about speaking up now because I am so fearful of the deliberate erosion of our freedoms and our rights. There are so many in this country who seem to be so afraid that they are not aware of

what's happening and by the time they wake up — for me to [fully] recover my freedom has taken my lifetime. I don't want that to happen to other people. One of the most precious things we have in this country is our freedom. And if we don't prize it and speak up in defense of it, it will slip away. ■



Paul von Kempf, Jr.

1944-2006

Real Change vendor Paul von Kempf, Jr., passed away June 7 at Harborview. A celebration of his life takes place at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, June 14 at the Greenlake Church, 6350 E. Greenlake Way N. All who knew Paul are invited.

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We the Buyers

Not Buying It: My Year without Shopping

By Judith Levine

Free Press, March 2006

Hardcover, 288 pages, \$25

By LESTER GRAY

Arts Editor

In the annals of self-deprivation, from medieval accounts of mendicant friars to the famous dispatches from Walden Pond, *Not Buying It* stands apart. The book chronicles Judith Levine's efforts to come to terms with the insidious acquisitiveness in which our Western souls are steeped.

In late 2003 Levine and Paul, her partner of 12 years, make a pact. For one full year they will purchase "only the necessities for sustenance, health and business — groceries, insulin for our diabetic cat, toilet paper, Internet access." If this declaration seems to fall short of specific and rigorous language — an iron-clad contract to counter a pathology known to thrive on rationalization — you're right. But this unavoidable wiggle-room, so to speak, is what brings character to Ms. Levine's diary.

In her 50s, Levine makes about \$45,000 a year before taxes and carries an unpaid credit card balance of \$7,500. The couple has two dwellings: her small apartment in New York City and his 1,800 square foot house in Vermont. Liberal and socially conscious, with a few bucks in their pocket, they are simultaneously restrained and indulgent consumers. They employ a subtle calculus through which the im-

morality of a gratuitous acquisition may be mitigated by the redemption of its application. The purchase of top-of-the-line cross-country ski equipment would rank as less of a transgression than a plasma television. Likewise a vacation to South Africa racks up, at least on the karmic credit card, less of a charge than one to Hawaii. These are the rationalizations peculiar to a generation of the privileged yet politically conscious of which Levine is a member.

In late 2003 author Judith Levine and Paul, her partner of 12 years, make a pact. For one full year they will purchase "only the necessities for sustenance, health and business — groceries, insulin for our diabetic cat, toilet paper, Internet access."

The 12-month crucible is to begin on New Year's Day and the mere anticipation of disciplined consumerism sets off a scurry, like smoking a last pack of cigarettes before going cold turkey. On Dec. 29, Judith buys a new pair of "city" snow boots (she already has a "country" set). On Dec. 31, at 10 p.m., Paul is still shopping online.

Accompanying the couple through their classification of what are and are not discretionary purchases allows readers to play along at home in anonymity, as in a TV game show. Movies and DVD rentals do not make the cut; olives are on the bubble, as is styling gel. Paul argues that because he's Italian, wine should be considered a staple. The list of considerations is as endless

as it is humiliating: sponges vs. paper towels, Kleenex vs. toilet tissue (high-quality or scratchy).

Much of Levine's struggles involve her social interactions. How does her self-imposed frugality impact birthday gifts, lunch dates, even casual business meetings at Starbucks? Where does reciprocity fall on the list of necessary expenditures?

Levine is a classically educated, intelligent woman who could have made this into a political comedy, serving herself up as Judith the bourgeois guinea pig stooging Judith the writer. She instead submits her struggle to a more sophisticated and thoughtful analysis — alternately light and reflective.

She discerns that a telling byproduct of her shopping hiatus is boredom. The absence of purchased entertainment — i.e. movies, videos, concerts — leaves a certain gap and Levine astutely identifies and articulates the real problem. "Shopping defeats, or at least circumvents boredom, but not only because it fills idle time. Consumption is an exercise in hope...."

Her introspective digressions are in turn both tedious and enlightening. She takes us from Plato to Camus to Marx in search of a context into which she can place her dilemma. That doesn't happen and while it's honest, it leads to a lack of continuity that could have made her book a bit more comfortable. But perhaps that's the point. Like the spreading epidemic which it is, hyper-consumption defies easy diagnosis and defies the easy, seductive packaging that we, the buyers, find so irresistible. ■

From the Fatherland to the Motherland

Heimat I (1984)

Directed by Edgar Reitz

18 hours

The Boys of Baraka (2005)

Directed by Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady

84 minutes

Both films available on DVD

By LESTER GRAY

Arts Editor

German film director Edgar Reitz, victimized by unfavorable reviews of his film *The Tailor of Ulm*, had retired to an island, leaving his chosen profession of moviemaking behind. While on what would turn out to be a hiatus, he viewed the PBS miniseries *Holocaust*. Finding it a flawed history of the German people, he was compelled to produce what amounts to a chronicle of modern Germany, from the end of World War I to the present. Critics of *Heimat* have accused Reitz of a less-than-comprehensive and selective focus. In *Heimat I*, which takes us into the 1950s, little to no mention of the Holocaust is made. While this is curious, Reitz certainly does not suggest these events did not happen, and the viewer certainly gets very concrete references to the anti-Semitism of the times.

What some call the longest movie ever made (the BBC and German television ran it as a mini-series) and others call a television series, *Heimat I* weighs in at a hefty 18 hours. It imparts its history by following the lives of the Simon family and their fellow villagers in rural Germany who, with little discernment, seem to generally lean with the prevailing political winds, fascist or otherwise.

Despite its questionable exclusion, *Heimat* lends valuable insight into the pre-World War II German psyche and the seductive appeal of the Third Reich. In many ways the film serves as a stronger indictment of the citizenry than those celebrated for their often more caricatured depictions of the country's villainy.

The Boys of Baraka delivers a considerable broadside to the nature vs. nurture debate as it applies to race, crime, and education. It embarrasses the discussion. It lays waste to all the inaccuracies, nuanced and direct, about the capabilities of African-American children.

Standing in front of an entering class of middle-schoolers, a teacher bluntly lays out the available choices facing them, as Black men in the city of Baltimore. They will end up in prison, dead, or in a graduation gown. Only 25 percent reach this latter goal.

In 2001, the Baraka project selected 20 teenage boys from the Baltimore projects to be educated in Kenya, away from the harsh conditions and distractions found in their homes, neighborhoods, and classrooms. *The Boys of Baraka* provides an excellent chronicle of this effort, allowing us to bear witness to a wonderful, albeit painful, process as these youngsters emerge from their social and intellectual cocoons.

The DVD version of the film features an interview with Bill Cosby, who finds the conditions facing the young men in the film reminiscent of his own childhood. His comments remind us that quite contrary to the insurmountable task that it is often considered to be, the rescue of the hearts, minds, and intellects in our inner cities is well within our reach. ■



Adventures
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning

I was motivated to ask, "What's the most magical thing ever in all of our lives?" The answer I gave myself was, "Volition."

Magic, Mushroomed

As many of you know, I am not currently homeless. I am in a 52-unit DESC building very similar to the one DESC, the Downtown Emergency Service Center, is proposing to create in Rainier Valley, and it really ticks me off to hear

that some residents out there think people like me wouldn't make good enough neighbors. So I bet you think that I, director of Rant Central, will write about that.

Ha! Fooled you. No, I chose to take my blood pressure meds early this morning, and focus my thoughts on sweet things like baby bunnies, adult bunnies, pretty flowers, and dead Eyman initiatives. And with my thoughts so cleansed and cheerified, I chose to use the remainder of my space to cherish the magic.

I was inspired to do this when DESC workers delivered a brand new "Magic Chef" refrigerator to the woman who drew me to my housing, Anitra "Co-Conspirator" Freeman, and she said, "What's magic about it? It's not even energy-efficient! Doesn't DESC know they're wasting power and money by buying cheap energy-inefficient refrigerators?"

Poor, poor, jaded Anitra does not see the magic! Here she has a box that sucks invisible stuff out of the wall and turns it into coldness! You don't have to feed it ice to keep the inside cold! In fact if you give it water it will turn it, magically, into ice!

There is so much magic in our lives. Our running water for example. We have a cold stream and a hot stream in our apartments! Right inside our apartments! Next, to our toilets!

Thinking about these things made the weird neurons in my head (the ones in the back) zap my amygdala, or so it felt. I was motivated to ask, "What's the most magical thing ever in all of our lives?"

The answer I gave myself was, "Volition." I didn't have to give myself that answer; I did it anyway, because I WANTED to. Isn't that amazing?

People can make choices, then tell themselves — tell their own dumb bodies — to do what they decide, and their dumb bodies do it! Like magic! It goes on all the time every day, week after week, year after year!

I'll give some examples. I'll give you a second to contemplate baby bunnies before reading them.

Right. Lt. Ehren Watada became a Lieutenant of his own free will, by enlisting in the Army in 2003, by some accounts AFTER the Iraq War started. Now, by his own free will, he is ready to go to prison for refusing to join in that war. And he probably WILL go to prison! Volition: magic!

Here's another example: The United States Senate consented overwhelmingly (89-2) to the United Nations Charter in the summer of 1945, making the U.N. Charter a part of U.S. law. Since then there has been only sporadic and relatively insignificant popular protest of that action. So it can safely be said that the vast majority of the current populace of the U.S. either agrees that the U.N. Charter should be U.S. law, or is too apathetic to give a damn one way or another. Volition: magic!

Of course, that means that it is "our" choice, the freely-willed choice of this vast majority, that preemptive wars be illegal. Our government signed it in 1945, and we have since, as a people, freely consented to it! We're enlisted! When does the warmaker go to prison? Volition: magic!

One more example. Pharmacists on the Washington State Pharmacy Board want to give pharmacists in the state the power to refuse lawfully prescribed medicines, when they feel like it, one at a time, just by referring patients to another pharmacist, who could also refer them to another, and another — effectively depriving the patients of THEIR power to make the moral choice themselves, and violating the principle, "my body, my choice, you bastards."

Yo, Pharmacists, you enlisted! If you don't like the duty, you can will yourselves to resign. Volition: magic! ■



Fri., May 26, 12:03 a.m. Lenora Street — Under Viaduct. Officers were working under the Alaskan Way Viaduct by Lenora St., an area known for transients gathering to drink and do drugs. Officers began walking down to the area under the bridge and saw three males, one of whom was holding a lighter in one hand and something in his other hand. Officers approached the suspects and called for an extra unit. They ordered the men to put their hands against the wall. One officer patted down the smoking man — a transient Black male aged 20 — while the other officer questioned the other suspects. The first man was found to have a crack pipe on his person, and a suspected rock of crack cocaine in his hand. All three men gave their IDs, and all names ran clear. The first man was arrested for drug violations, and the other two men were released. Officers warned them that they were now prohibited from the area and should not return. The suspect was transported to the West Precinct and read his Miranda rights. His arresting officers were then informed that other officers at the precinct were undergoing a drug training session, and the suspect was invited to participate, on the understanding that he would be released if he cooperated. He agreed to participate, and while he was in the training session officers tested the suspected rock. It tested positive. When officers were done with the suspect they informed him that he would be receiving some court documents in the mail. They advised him that if he did not respond to these a warrant would be issued for his arrest. Suspect said he understood, and was released from the precinct.

Wed., May 31, 4:30 p.m., Prefontaine Place S. — Prefontaine Building. On May 26, an officer was dispatched to a call of a mentally ill person who was blocking the entry doorway of the Prefontaine Building, and was refusing to move or leave the doorway. The officer arrived to find the subject — a transient white female aged 42 — standing in the doorway of the building. She was yelling and screaming and being very belligerent. She told the officer that she was off her medications, and that she would die without them. She also said that her care provider was the Downtown Emergency Service Center on James St., so she was transported there. The officer found that the office was closed, and no providers were available. He then transported her to Harborview Medical Center for a psychiatric evaluation and treatment. Upon arrival at Harborview, the subject became belligerent and refused treatment. She walked away without being seen by a doctor. During his contact with the subject, the officer barred her from the Prefontaine Building and told her that if she returned she would be arrested. He completed a trespass card for her, but subject refused to sign it. On May 31 he saw the subject again — she was standing in the doorway of the Prefontaine Building. When the officer contacted her he states she was still showing the same symptoms of mental illness. She was arrested and booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass. Officer notes that she is an appropriate candidate for mental health court.

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

If we want to end our transportation nightmare, for example, we can't cling to the past.

Light Rail: a Painful Gain

Last Monday, I reminisced with my friend Aileen about the days when the Madrona Ale House was a corner drugstore, the same corner drugstore that she and her neighborhood playmates

frequented for candy fixes and that I passed every day on the 2 on my way to school. The Madrona of today bears almost no resemblance to the Madrona of our childhoods. So, in the custom of those who witness the transformation of a place they love, we spent the evening waxing poetic about the "good old days," decrying the changes and all those associated with them.

As deeply as I've mourned the losses I've endured as my hometown has grown up (and, unfortunately, out), I understand that change is constant (just ask the Duwamish people). Sometimes, it is even necessary. I am certainly glad I don't face the overt discrimination that my grandparents endured when they moved here in the '30s. And while I sometimes miss the Seattle of my childhood, I know that stagnation is not an option. If we want to end our transportation nightmare, for example, we can't cling to the past. We'll have to make big changes to our current, car-centric infrastructure.

Light rail is one of those necessary changes. Not surprisingly, I absolutely believe that we should build the light rail in Seattle. I would even go so far as to

say we don't have a choice. On a recent tour of Sound Transit's construction of the Rainier Valley, I was able to see the progress up close, and for the most part, I liked what I saw. The heretofore neglected (and far too car-centric) south end stands to benefit greatly from the new train, which will reduce traffic and pollution and improve access to key destinations. Sound Transit is even repaving all of MLK, widening sidewalks and burying power lines while they're at it.

Still, as someone who has fond memories of the "old" Rainier Valley, I am saddened by some of the changes brought about by the construction. Homes have been demolished to make room for tracks and the aforementioned sidewalks. Decades-old trees have been removed, to be replaced by new ones. And, in anticipation of its increased desirability, property values in the neighborhood — one of the few economically diverse neighborhoods left in the city — are rising.

As we build, we must find ways to preserve affordable housing in Rainier Valley — not with one or two token, low-income projects, but with real options for people of all income levels. Light rail or no, Seattle will never have a viable transportation system (to say nothing of a diverse population or nearby farmland or forests) if high housing costs continue to drive middle-class and poor people to freeway-dependent suburbs and exurbs. In our enthusiasm for this long-awaited train, let's not forget why we're building it. ■

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

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I hope you can see my gratitude for your generosity.

—PAUL VON KEMPF, JR. (1944-2006)

RACE AND PLACE

**A People of Color Community
Roundtable on the Impact of Growth
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Saturday, June 24th,

10AM-4PM at Franklin High School,
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Plans are underway for how to best guide our city's growth
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Letters

Janitors: not after the P-I

Dear Real Change,

We are Cascadian Janitors. We are writing in response to the article "Squeaky, Clean: Protestors tell P-I its contracted janitors need affordable health care" [RC May 17].

Many of us have shown that we want the union. We have worn union stickers and purple shirts to work. We have signed petitions, protested, and even went on strike. Some of our co-workers have been too scared because the bosses make us feel that supporting the union is betraying our company. So, some of us testified about the intimidation and threats to the National Labor Relations Board.

Recently, the NLRB finished its investigations and Cascadian had to send a notice to every employee about our right to organize [Just Heard, RC May 31]. We believe this legal victory will help our co-workers be less afraid to support our union.

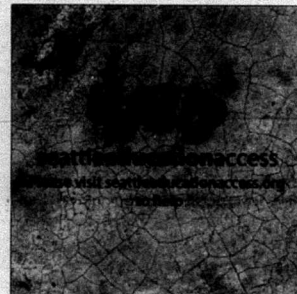
By the way, we do not have a current battle with the Seattle P-I management, which refuses to meet with us, and we don't know why they called police [as told in the May 17 article]. Four Cascadian workers and one of our children came to their office with other union janitors to ask for them to meet with us. We just want to be able to make a better life for ourselves and our children — and we hope that tenants and building owners support us. Cascadian says

it is up to us, but they want to choose how and when we can vote. All we want is Cascadian to respect our choice to join or not join the union through the card check process — a procedure that the majority of janitors in the nation use to decide whether they want a union or not.

Thank you for writing about our struggle. We hope that tenants we clean for and everyone in the community will call our boss Tim Reyhons at (425)264-0474 and tell him that janitors want what 80 percent of the janitors in the Puget Sound have: annual wage increases, employer-paid full family health care and respect in our work.

**Steven Luevano
Elvia Gonzales
Jacinto Vivar
Clarinda Gomez P.
Manuel Aguillon
Martha Cena**

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.



The 9th Annual
**RAINBOW Women's
HEALTH FAIR**

FREE!

**ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE
IS A RIGHT
NOT A PRIVILEGE**

No insurance? No Problem!
Saturday, June 24th

**All Pilgrims
Christian Church
509 10th Ave E
11am - 4pm**

**All LBTQ
Women welcome.**

www.verbenhealth.org
206.323.6540
Free childcare.

Pap, mammograms, massage and more.
Funding provided by HHS Office on Women's Health - Region 10.

YWCA

CLASSIFIED

Opportunity

Ron Young delivers his talk "Religion: Source of Peace or Source of Violence?" June 17, Trinity Episcopal Church, 2301 Hoyt Ave. Info: (425)252-6672.

The Big Buy is a feature length documentary that shows the connections between Tom DeLay, money, and the government. June 14, 7-p.m., Bradford Center, 700 - 108th Ave NE.

Employment

Horse and Carriage Driver Downtown 30-40 hours week? Must have experience with horses. Upbeat and energetic a plus! \$10 - \$15 hourly, possible room and board on our organic farm. Must be dependable with references. Call 425-277-8282 or 206 313-0722 for more info.

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

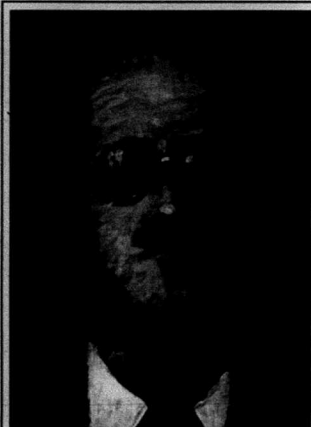
Calendar

This Week's Top Ten

Thursday 06/15

Journalist Anthony Flint's new book, *This Land: The Battle Over Sprawl* argues that despite the small revival of city living, Americans are still spreading into the suburbs with their long commutes, high gas prices, and increased taxes. He presents his analysis of metropolitan growth and deepening land-use problems. Tickets \$5, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave.

The Environmental Education Council screens a double feature: *Exporting Harm* and *Digital Dump*. Both documentaries focus on the dangers of electronic waste and how to alleviate the risks with responsible recycling. Sarah Westervelt from the Basel Action Network, which made the two films, will answer questions and discuss steps for action. 7 p.m., Camp Long, 5200 - 35th Ave. SW.



In celebration of Bloomsday, The Wild Geese Players present a reading from James Joyce's *Ulysses*, from the Cyclops chapter where the mild-mannered everyman Leopold Bloom encounters an opinionated and bigoted citizen. Friday, June 16, 8 p.m., FX McRory's, 419 Occidental Ave. S. Info: www.wildgeeseatlanta.org.

including hip hop, rap, jazz, R&B, and gospel. 12:30-7:30 p.m., Pratt Park, 1800 S Main St. Info: www.june15th.com.

An evening of music and a fundraiser for the Seattle Displacement Coalition features folk music, rebel songs, and political satire. Musicians include the groups Clay Pipe, who play Irish ballads, and Patriot Act, whose lyrics challenge the war, Bush, and Paul Allen and the mayor's plans for South Lake Union. Suggested donation \$20. 7 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church, 6512 - 23rd Ave. NW.

Brothers from Mysore, India, Nagaraj, and Manjunath, take the aesthetics of violin music to new heights by combining technically flawless performances with their training in South Indian classical music. Tickets \$5 and up. 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave.

Sunday 06/18

Arlington Northwest, a nonpartisan memorial to the 2,400-plus U.S. service people who have died in Iraq, hopes to raise awareness about the war in Iraq and the lives it costs. Small crosses and headstones are arranged similarly to the Arlington National Cemetery, each one representing a life. 9 a.m. - 7 p.m., Roxhill Park, 2850 SW Roxbury St. Info: www.westseattleneighborsforpeace.org.

Monday 06/19

Kym Ragusa shares from her childhood of negotiating race and culture: her father is Italian-American and her mother is African American, Chinese, German, and Native American. Her memoir, *The Skin Between Us*, is a poetic narrative of the pains and riches of growing up biracial in New York and the struggle to find a place of belonging. 7:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St.

Saturday 06/17

Juneteenth is a celebration of freedom from slavery and commemorates the enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas, which was the last state to free enslaved African Americans. The festival features a parade, spoken word, and a variety of music,

Director's Corner



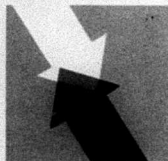
This weekend's "Building the Political Will to End Homelessness" conference, organized by the Church Council of Greater Seattle and the Interfaith Taskforce, was an inspiring call to pursue the vision of a just society.

The results of the past year have been impressive. There is more state money for homelessness prevention and boosted funding for the state Housing Trust Fund. Both King County and Seattle have increased their contribution to ending homelessness as well, and private philanthropy has expanded their efforts. At the same time, everyone also recognizes that this is a Ten Year Plan, and keeping up momentum will be a challenge. Last year's 1,300 new units of housing are just a start toward the long-term goal of 9,000.

Without a sustained grassroots effort — and fundamental changes in federal priorities — efforts to end homelessness will stretch, like the "war against terror," forever into the future. We cannot continue to bankrupt federal government and somehow imagine that there will be resources to stem the tide of poverty. As localities take on an increasing burden as a result of the federal abandonment of the poor, we will inevitably hit a wall.

Still, the organizing that is needed begins here at home, and the past year has been a strong start. You can help to end homelessness, and we'll be here to show you how.

Join our email action alert list by filling out a simple form at www.realchangenews.org.



First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

Woodinville's Lawyers Need a Talking-To

Issue: Last Friday, King County Superior Court Judge Charles Merten ruled in favor of the City of Woodinville, thus evicting Tent City 4 from its current location at Northshore United Church of Christ. The eviction is effective Sat., June 17, leaving the 64 homeless men and women just a week to pack up and move out.

Background: The church plans to appeal the Court's decision on a number of grounds, including that its support for the homeless constitutes a religious obligation and religious practice protected under the U.S. and Washington State Constitutions. The Court's decision has potentially serious implications for the church and Tent City 4, and for all religious institutions seeking to provide emergency support to those in need.

Tent City 4 has repeatedly inspired strong reactions from eastside residents. At each site, there has been strong opposition based more on fear and stereotypes than on any real threat to communities. At the same time, each move has helped build understanding between Tent City's residents and neighbors, and has inspired an outpouring of generosity from church members and many others. Tent City 4's presence on the eastside has helped bring the face of homelessness to communities where it is less visible than in Seattle, but where it exists nonetheless.

It is shameful for the City of Woodinville, one of the wealthiest cities in Washington state, to use public resources to take away safety and community for homeless individuals and go to court to prevent a church from helping its neighbors.

Action: Contact Woodinville City Council members and let them know you disagree with their decision. Even if you don't live in Woodinville, your message will remind them that their decisions aren't going unnoticed throughout the rest of the county.

Please revise and personalize the following sample letter. Time is critical; so please email to cwonwald@ci.woodinville.wa.us. Your message will be automatically copied to each member of the City Council. If you can't email, you can send a letter by US mail to: City Council, City of Woodinville, 17301-133rd Avenue, NE, Woodinville, WA 98072.

Dear Woodinville City Council Members:

I am writing to let you know how disappointed I am by the City Council's decision to evict more than 60 people from Tent City 4. It's shocking to me that public funds are being used to pay lawyers to throw people onto the streets. The City should be working to solve the problems of poverty and homelessness, not making the problems worse by ejecting people from the safe, structured, and self-regulated community offered by Tent City 4 and leaving them to fend for themselves.

Rather than wasting money on lawyers, the City should be cooperating with the church and homeless advocates to help end homelessness so there will be a need for tent cities in the future. I urge you to reverse course and to seek solutions to homelessness and poverty rather than spending taxpayer money to make these problems worse.

For more information or to learn how to volunteer or contribute to the legal defense fund, please contact the Church Council of Greater Seattle at www.thechurchcouncil.org.

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

ESTATE, Continued from Page 1

would be exempt. All of the money generated from the tax goes to the Education Legacy Trust Fund, which works to control class size and supply aid for higher education. For 2006, according to Dept. of Revenue estimates, the estate tax could generate nearly \$40 million.

Selig's present contributions to I-920 mirror financial support he offered to another, rather contentious initiative. Back in 2004, when Seattle voters were asked to re-approve the Seattle Monorail Project, he donated more than \$270,000 to a campaign to topple it. His investment paid off: the project was scrapped.

But coupled with such success, however, are numerous instances where Selig (who is responsible for construction of the Columbia Center, the largest building west of the Mississippi River until 1989) found himself in a seemingly intractable financial bind. In 1997, to name but one example, the IRS placed liens against a number Selig's properties after informing him he had failed to pay federal taxes for three quarters. At the same time, a janitorial company in one of his buildings sought unpaid fees. Another company placed a lien against 21 properties. All told, the government and two companies were asking for \$6.5 million. Selig orchestrated three major loan packages and bailed himself out.

I-920 is the brainchild of former Seattle police officer Dennis Falk, who serves as the committee's chairman and campaign manager. Falk's desire to up-end the state estate tax has been flowing through his blood for 25 years.

It was back in 1981 that Falk and others worked to place an initiative on the ballot that would have aligned the state's estate tax with the federal estate tax credit. He met with success: the initiative passed.

But in February 2005, after a legal challenge, the state Supreme Court abolished the tax. Legislation later that same year approved a newly revised state tax, currently in effect. Falk's push for passage of I-920 is aimed at overturning that revision.

Repeated phone calls to Falk, placed to the committee's office, were not returned.

In order for I-920 to reach the Nov. ballot, Falk will need to garner 224,880 valid signatures to turn over to the Secretary of State's office by July 7. But what may prove harder for Falk than gathering names, however, is trying to explain away a little bit of history attached to his own name.

In 1978, Falk served as co-chair for Save Our Moral Ethics (SOME,) the force behind an initiative that worked to repeal a fair employment and open housing law. Passage of the SOME initiative would have adversely affected some of Seattle's residents: namely, the Emerald City's lesbians and gays. The initiative failed.

Falk has also served as a leader of the John Birch Society, which, while proclaiming on its website to work to "warn against and expose those organized forces who seek to abolish U.S. independence," is widely viewed as an ultra-right wing, ultraconservative group with active chapters in all 50 states. Not everyone is happy with Selig's interest in I-920. George Scarola, legislative director of League of Education Voters, says his group is dismayed by Selig's actions.

"As friends of education, we are just appalled that prominent, wealthy citizens would be taking money opportunities from other people's children to benefit very rich children," says Scarola. "It's nuts." ■

Pink Morning

Go back to sleep
Mother and child

Two buses have passed by the low rent refuge

Your faces speak a pacified security
Knowing I'm going
out to make more mornings come quietly and warm

I feast on the good-bye kiss
until I see you again

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