

# REAL CHANGE

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SEPT. 27 - OCT. 3, 2006



RAMONA DANNY, THIRD FROM RIGHT, WAS FIRED BY A KING COUNTY CONTRACTOR AFTER TAKING TIME OFF TO SAFEGUARD HER FIVE CHILDREN FROM HER ABUSIVE HUSBAND. NOW DIVORCED, DANNY HAS TAKEN HER EX-EMPLOYER TO THE STATE SUPREME COURT IN AN ATTEMPT TO ENSURE THE JOB SECURITY OF WOMEN IN SIMILAR SITUATIONS. PHOTO BY GINNY BANKS

## Safe at Work

### State Supreme Court could protect jobs of domestic violence survivors

By **CYDNEY GILLIS**  
Staff Reporter

**R**amona Danny is determined to see that what happened to her doesn't happen to other women.

In December 2003, Danny was fired from her job as a scheduler at Laidlaw Transit Services after being granted a two-week leave that summer. She took the leave after her husband had put one of her sons in the hospital by beating him with a shovel.

Danny, 39, used the two weeks to move her five children into a shelter and file charges against her husband — actions, her lawyer now argues in a lawsuit against Laidlaw, that saved the lives of her children and fall well within recognized public policy regarding domestic violence.

Laidlaw disagrees. In a precedent-setting case argued before the Washington State Supreme Court on Sept. 14, the Kansas-based company, which employs 6,000 nationwide and provides dispatch services for King County, insists companies have a right to fire women who take time off to deal with domestic violence.

That's not the reason Laidlaw gave for firing Danny in 2003. The company

says she falsified a time card. But Laidlaw argues that taking a leave for domestic violence is not protected.

If the court were to rule against it, Laidlaw argues, it would turn employers into the functional equivalent of the Department of Social and Health Services by forcing them "to become the gatekeepers of the personal relationships of their employees."

Regardless of the ruling, which is expected in the next few months, the case will set a precedent. In her brief, Danny's lawyer and the Northwest Women's Law Center cite various state laws to show that the aim of public policy is to stop domestic violence. But Laidlaw counters that no law specifically prohibits firing a victim of domestic violence.

"This is a very family-friendly company," says Krisha Newham, a Laidlaw spokesperson. "We support legislation to support victims of domestic violence, but we don't believe the Supreme Court is an appropriate forum to decide the issue."

The actual details of Danny's case will be tried later in federal district court, where she originally filed the lawsuit. The judge sent the case to the

See **COURT**, Continued on Page 12

## Leaving Them Cold

### Union claims Latino carpenters paid poorly at Arctic Hotel

By **ROSETTE ROYALE**  
Staff Reporter

**T**he mint green fliers — bearing the headline "Good Neighbor or Free-loader?" — depict a line drawing of a carpenter hammering a nail into a wall. Behind him, out of his field of vision, a man reminiscent of a villain from the silent-film era oh so delicately picks the carpenter's wallet free of his pocket. In the cutpurse's other hand is a travel bag bulging with money. Stamped on the bag are two words: Arctic Hotel.

Part of a campaign to bring attention to contractors who don't pay their workers standard area wages, the fliers have been put out by the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters. The council is targeting the Arctic Hotel, and its general contractor, A&A Construction and Development Inc. (A&A), in an effort to speak up for poorly paid carpenters on site there, specifically workers who are Latino.

"They've got some immigrant workers there that [A&A is] paying really low wages to," says Cass Prindle, regional director of the council. "We object to that."

The plight of the workers came to light in the beginning of August, says Prindle, when the council conducted a routine visit at the site. It was then that workers confessed to the size of their paychecks.

Lead representative for the council Jimmy Motta, who conducted the visit, says that he asked a pair of Latino workers what they were being paid. "One says \$11 [an hour]," Motta, who speaks Spanish, recalls, "One says \$10."

The prevailing wage for a journeyman carpenter in King County is \$41.30. An apprentice earns 60 percent of a journeyman's wage. A recent report entitled The Washington Job Gap states that a living hourly wage for a single person in King County is \$11.16.

But the conversation was cut short, says Motta, when the on-site boss passed by while he was talking to the workers.

See **ARCTIC**, Continued on Page 12

## THE HAVES HAVE IT

While the poor are trying to find the money to eat, the uber-rich amass fortunes that grow fatter.

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## TROLLEY POP

Good news, Westlake Ave. biz owners: now you can "sponsor" a streetcar. Too bad it might set you back \$50K.

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## RUMMY PUNCH

A mock trial puts Donald Rumsfeld on the stand, to judge whether the DOD chief is guilty of prisoner abuses.

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## GO TO SEED

Rainier Valley apartment dwellers take complaints of needed repairs to Southeast Effective Development.

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## RON GARDE

Even though his father may have skirted the issues, the ultra-liberal Ron Reagan doesn't mince words.

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# Yachts, Jewelry, Stock Options — and Food Stamps

More indications that the gap between the haves and the have-nots is insupportably large

**Mother Jones reports that the net worth of the Forbes 400 richest Americans rose from a mere \$221 billion in 1985 to \$1.3 trillion 20 years later. That's more than the gross domestic product of Canada.**

By RAP LEWIS  
Contributing Writer

**O**ur object here is to give our readers some sense of the criminal and growing gap in wealth between those who have and those who have not. Regrettably, we can't present the picture without using a good many statistics. Kindly strap yourselves in for the ride.

At one end of the income spectrum, we've got the super-rich, the 1.4 million families who comprise the top 1 percent of the U.S. population. In the ten years 1994-2004, their income, including capital gains, increased by an inflation-adjusted 54 percent, according to a study by economists Thomas Piketty and Emanuel Saez. For the remaining 99 percent, the increase over those years was a modest 12 percent.

How are the captains of capitalism doing? The AFL-CIO reports that the average pay for chief executive officers at Standard & Poor's top 500 companies is now 430 times the pay of the average worker. That's three times the ratio in 1980.

What are these wealthy folks doing with all their money? First of all, they're not giving it to charity. In 2003, those with income over \$1 million gave a miserly 3.6 percent to charitable causes. And in 2004, of every five estates of \$1 million or more, nearly four — 78.1 percent — set aside nothing for charity at death.

Instead, the rich are lavishing their wealth on high-end real estate, yachts, and expensive jewelry, reports Anna Bernasek in *The New York Times*. Bernasek says that "the high-end market...in the United States nearly doubled in the last three years, to 930,000 households."

The expansion of the super-rich sector has spawned a sheaf of costly magazines. Don't look for them in your dentist's office.

One such magazine, *ShowBoats International*, is focused on the market for mega-yachts and the array of luxury goods the yacht owners consider their rightful entitlement. This glossy rag recently sponsored a three-day event that attracted 400 yacht owners to Monaco to check out the latest in Ferraris and fine jewelry.

Meanwhile, back in Reality City, the percentage of Americans who have spent a year or more below the federal poverty level rose from 13 percent in the 1980s to 36 percent in the 1990s, the *New York Times* reports. The latest figures, cited by the *Times*, show 37 million Americans living below the poverty line, which is currently a beggarly \$19,157 for a family of four.

Then there are the "near poor," those whose incomes fall between \$19,157 and double that figure, or \$38,314. Fifty-four million men, women, and children find themselves in that group.

Back to our wealthy friends. Jim Hightower notes that the richest 1 percent of Americans own 33.4 percent of all U.S. wealth — more than the bottom 90 percent, who own only 30.4 percent.

*Mother Jones* reports that the net worth of the Forbes 400 richest Americans rose from a mere \$221 billion in 1985 to \$1.3 trillion 20 years later. That's more than the gross domestic product of Canada.

Meanwhile, 25.7 million Americans were on food stamps in 2005 — an increase of 49 percent in five years.

And the federal minimum wage has been frozen at \$5.15 an hour since 1998.

Since it peaked in 1968, its buying power has fallen 49 percent. If it had risen at the same rate as CEO compensation, our minimum wage would be \$23.03 an hour today.

Meanwhile, capitalism purrs along, crooked as ever, or maybe more so. *The New York Times* says more than 2,000 companies are using back-dated stock options to sweeten the pay packages of their executives.

We conclude with a brief rogue's gallery of some of the poster children for executive greed:

Richard Fairbank, chairman and CEO of Capitol One, your friendly credit-card issuer: He was recently given new stock options valued at more than \$18 million, after he had "earned" \$249.3 million last year by exercising previously issued options.

Edward Whitacre, CEO of AT&T: He was paid \$85 million over the last five years, even as shareholder returns on AT&T stock fell 40 percent.

Lee R. Raymond, former CEO of Exxon Mobil: He retired last year with a compensation package of \$140 million, including cash, stock, options, and a pension plan. And he's entitled to still more stock, options, and long-term compensation worth at least another \$258 million. Total: \$398 million.

Henry McKinnell, chairman and CEO of Pfizer, the world's richest pharmaceutical company: Even though Pfizer stock has lost 43 percent of its value since he became its CEO in 2001, he has already received \$65 million in salary, bonus, restricted stock, and incentive pay.

Michael D. Eisner, former head of Disney. No Mickey Mouse benefits for him. He got a record payout upon retirement: \$550 million. ■

Rap Lewis is a staff writer for the "Retiree Advocate," the newsletter of the Puget Sound Alliance for Retired Americans, a labor-affiliated organization of retirees working for social and economic justice for all. This article was reprinted with permission from the group's Sept. edition. To contact the Alliance, call (206)448-9646 or email pscsc@qwest.net.



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Real Change exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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# Change

**F**eeding the hungry may sound noble, but Bonnie Baker keeps 325 meal programs running smoothly with some down-and-dirty logistics.

As the membership manager of Northwest Harvest, the state's largest privately financed resource for food for the hungry, Baker trains food banks that distribute her organization's victuals in how to manage volunteers, market themselves, and make friends in high places.

Food banks need not just grocery baggers but boardmembers and pro bono lawyers, she says. "We need the same skills that other small businesses need — only we need them for free."

Hunger is afflicting seniors, low-wage workers, and people in rural areas, and Northwest Harvest's private funding means folks can satisfy their families' hunger without signing papers, showing paystubs, or proving you live nearby.

Giving out food is worthwhile work — but part of Baker's job is to remind eager do-gooders to work smart.

"When people call and say they want to start a food bank, I try to discourage it. Many times they're calling right across the street from one they didn't know was there."

—Adam Hyla



BONNIE BAKER, getting food banks' organizational ducks in a row. Photo by TERRY DIVYAK

## A Streetcar Name for Hire

Area businesses asked to "sponsor" trolley operations

By **CYDNEY GILLIS**  
Staff Reporter

Estimates from last year pegged the streetcar's first two years of operation at \$3.2 million from mid-2007 to mid-2009.

**L**ast year, the city of Seattle sent them a giant tax bill to build the \$49 million South Lake Union streetcar line. This year, it will ask business owners along Westlake Avenue to kick in just a little bit more to pay for the line's operation — say, \$20,000 a year?

That's the tentative price a company might pay to sponsor, or put its name on, one of 11 stations that will dot the streetcar's 1.3-mile line, which will run from downtown to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and the hub of labs, offices, and condos that billionaire Paul Allen is building on 60 acres of property that his company, Vulcan, owns in the area.

For \$50,000 — again, tentative — the Streetcar Partnership Program will let a company "brand" a whole streetcar by putting its logo on the outside and signage inside the door. Riders would also hear a recorded message. For example: "Welcome to the Vulcan Streetcar."

At least, the city is sure hoping that Vulcan, the Hutch, Pemco, Westlake Center, and other major interests pony up for sponsorships. In order not to use general funds, the city is committed to raising two-thirds of the streetcar's initial two-year operating budget from sponsors, along with selling ads in retail and dining brochures that will promote businesses along the route.

Estimates from last year pegged the streetcar's first two years of operation at \$3.2 million from mid-2007 to mid-2009. That means Kim Nunes, the partnership program's manager within the Seattle Department of Transportation, must sell roughly \$2.2 million in sponsorships — primarily

to the same businesses that were hit last year with a special streetcar tax levied by the city.

Nunes is just getting under way with the program and stresses that the proposed pricing is only a starting point for figuring out what companies are willing to pay for, which could include a whole streetcar being "wrapped" in a company message — a prospect Nunes says she'd like to avoid if she can.

In the two meetings she's had so far with staff at the Hutch and developers at 2200 Westlake (a Vulcan development that includes a hotel and a Whole Foods grocery store), she describes positive reactions — though no commitments.

"They've been great conversations," Nunes says, "but there hasn't been any formal feedback in terms of sponsorships or cost."

She says her goal is to get underwriters to sign up for five-year contracts, with station sponsorships starting at \$20,000 and ranging up to \$40,000 a year, based on how much car traffic passes a given stop. Stations nearer Westlake Center, for example, would command higher prices.

The program is modeled, in part, on the Portland streetcar. Kay Dannen, the sponsorship program manager there, says private support has been strong, though she notes that about 20 percent of Portland's stations have no underwriter.

Still, in the six years since the line first opened, she says, sponsorships have doubled from \$125,000 to \$250,000 a year. That's about one-eighth of the funds Nunes must raise in Seattle.

"We're considering sponsoring the station in front of the [Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research] center," says Dean Forbes, the Hutch's media relations manager. But, "We have to look at what the city is asking for a sponsorship and whether that's something we want to pay for."

At Pande Cameron, a rug shop on the corner of Westlake Avenue and Harrison Street, owner Charles Andonian is quick with his answer.

"We were already assessed \$28,000, and we're not happy about it," Andonian says of the special streetcar tax. "I don't have any more money. I've shelled it all out." ■

## Just Heard...

### Bye bye, Buju?

The reason LGBT activists are asking Neumos to cancel its scheduled Sept. 27 performance of dancehall singer Buju Banton is clear: Banton, in song and word, has called for shooting gay people in the head. And pouring acid on them. And setting them on fire.

It was in a 1992 song, entitled "Boom Bye-Bye," that Banton requested an Uzi to shoot "di batty boy," a derogatory Jamaican term for gay men. Since then, his concerts have drawn protests nearly everywhere he's performed. One more protest is planned to greet the performer prior to his 9 p.m. appearance at the venue in Capitol Hill, home to a large segment of the city's LGBT residents.

Activists — concerned with the potential actions of concertgoers who may share Banton's views — are asking those opposed to his appearance to contact Neumos, as well as elected officials.

—Rosette Royale

### Waiting for the impact

Now that the estimate for replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a tunnel has jumped to as much as \$5.5 billion, Mayor Nickels will need every penny he can scrape together.

That's where impact fees come in. Before the estimates jumped, the mayor had already asked the Department of Planning and Development to create city legislation that would allow the city to start charging developers per-foot impact fees to pay for public open space.

If all goes as planned, the new fees would provide \$80 million to help pay for a walkway that's planned on top of the tunnel from Alaskan Way to the Pike Place Market.

"It would be used to provide public space in the area," says John Rahaim, the city's planning director. "It's not for the tunnel per se but what happens on top."

Seattle currently has an incentive program that allows developers to build higher if they contribute to an affordable housing fund or provide public space. But the program is voluntary, says Rahaim. Involuntary impact fees for open space would be new, but it will be late this year or early next, he says, before the City Council sees the legislation.

—Cydney Gillis

### Back in the neighborhood

SHA's new plan for completing Rainier Vista puts 60 additional units of public housing for the city's poorest in the redeveloping garden community. That's a change that pleases watchdogs on the project's Citizen Review Committee, which feared the housing authority would disperse more public housing into southeast Seattle.

—Adam Hyla

Portland's iconic bookstore, Powell's, sponsors one of the Pearl District's streetcars. Photo courtesy Kay Dannen



# Grim Rummy

## Secretary of Defense stands for mock trial on deadly serious charges

By KEVIN HIMEDA  
Contributing Writer

"War Is Peace" (Donald Rumsfeld), Feb. 11, 2006, a limited-edition offset litho reprinted with permission of guerilla artist Robbie Conal (www.robbeiconal.com). A different Rumsfeld likeness graces Seattle during the Oct. 7 mock trial.

In response to prisoner abuses at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay, a party has been arranged for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and everyone is invited: the judge, the jury, and perhaps even the executioner.

Angered by U.S. treatment of detainees in the War on Terrorism and condemning many of the interrogation tactics used among the estimated 9,000 detainees held worldwide as torture, human rights activists will be hosting a mock trial of Rumsfeld at Seattle University Sat., Oct. 7.

"It's going to be a combination of trial and forum," says Fred Capestany,

one of the lead organizers for the event and a self-described stay-at-home dad. "There's going to be a dramatized version of a trial, so we'll have people playing as Rumsfeld, the judge and others, former detainees telling their stories, and speakers talking out in between segments."

As part of efforts to disrupt terrorist plots and financial networks, the CIA and military have used interrogation tactics such as disrupting sleep patterns, exposing prisoners to hot and cold, bright lights, and loud music. Detainees have described being forced to assume painful positions, having their heads dunked in water until they believed they were about to drown, and being beaten.

"To me, torture is any kind of physical or emotional pain to elicit information," Capestany says. "It doesn't have to be physical."

Capestany describes becoming "infuriated" when he learned what was happening in detention prisons. "I've always been interested in civil rights," he says. "I've read about slavery, internment camps in World War II, and I vowed that if something like that happened again, I would do something about it."

Capestany says information extracted during torture is largely useless to the military and CIA. "You can get a prisoner to say whatever you want them to say, because they'll say anything to get the pain to stop."

"There are many reputable former officers, such as Colin Powell and John McCain, who are adamant that torture is unreliable and does not work," he explains, pointing out that the Army Field Manual states there are better methods than torture.

Capestany says prisoners need to be held to the same rights that American

citizens have under the Constitution. "I'm sure some of the detainees deserve the worst, but the problem is, how do we know which ones? The majority of them are actually innocent. So there has to be due process to determine who needs to be there and who doesn't."

The event will come almost one year after another mock trial of Rumsfeld, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, and former CIA Director George Tenet. As part of the Call for Justice Weekend organized by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, more than 500 people attended and watched as the defendants were pronounced guilty.

"It was that event that inspired me to organize another trial," Capestany says.

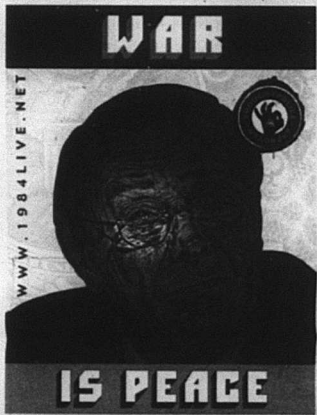
The trial will include speakers such as Jennifer Harbury, author of *Truth, Torture, and the American Way*, Pramila Jayapal, director of Hate Free Zone Washington, and Ron Slye, professor at the Seattle University School of Law. They will urge the closure of all "torture camps," the need to grant due process rights to all detainees, and the prosecution of war crimes.

Capestany doesn't believe their goals will become reality anytime soon.

"We're not naive," he says. "Accountability sometimes takes decades, but I hope we'll get more people to understand that we've got to stop abusing these guys. It's un-American, and none of us would stand for the same treatment." ■

### [Event]

*The Trial of Donald Rumsfeld*, Sat., Oct. 7 at 7 p.m. in Pigott Auditorium on Seattle University's campus, 901 - 12th Ave. Free - donations requested. For more information, visit [www.rumsfeldtrial.org](http://www.rumsfeldtrial.org).



## Short Takes

### Budget: credit is due

A meeting with Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels and a list of requests paid off for Julia Sterkovsky, head of the Seattle Human Services Coalition.

Sterkovsky says many of the group's suggestions, like an inflationary increase to social-service agencies without which "it's literally impossible to provide the same level of services," she says, made it into the 2007-08 budget proposal that Nickels released on Monday.

Also a plus, says Sterkovsky: There's an extra \$700,000 to maintain the capacity of city homeless shelters, even as it expands housing in accordance with the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness. And the mayor has included nearly \$1.4 million to make up for anticipated losses in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding next year.

CDBG is the primary federal source of shelter assistance to low-income families and individuals. Making up for its loss "is a serious commitment, and one where the mayor isn't taking credit," says Sterkovsky, "but a lot of credit is due."

The mayor's budget proposal increases emergency and transitional services spending by 8.5 percent, to \$20.3 million in 2007. But there are cuts: notably, to city-paid advocacy by human service providers like the Meals Partnership Coalition, and to the Pioneer Square hygiene facility for homeless people run by the Compass Center. The hygiene facility got \$152,000 last year, and budget documents state that that award won't be repeated.

The Seattle Human Services Coalition holds a community forum on the budget Mon., Oct. 2. Sterkovsky says there's still work to be done by the City Council, which reviews, amends, and approves the mayor's proposal — mostly in health care, meals programs, and legal aid for domestic-violence advocates. "There are a number of things that still need to be done," she says, "but the mayor took a very good first stab at it."

Nickels kicked off the city's budget-writing season by acknowledging homeless veterans' needs. Speaking at Benaroya Hall on Sept. 21, four days before releasing his 2008 budget proposal, Nickels put forth a \$3 million bid for rent assistance, counseling, and permanent housing for 30 to 40 vets.

In a press statement, Office of Housing director Adrienne Quinn said the city's commitment to chronically homeless vets will prevent costly stays in other institutions. "In the long run, this type of investment is more humane and more cost-effective than paying for these same individuals to cycle in and out of Harborview, the sobering center, or jail," she stated.

In the same statement, the mayor also threw down a challenge to suburban cities in King County, which he asserted devote much less tax money to homelessness than Seattle's \$42 per capita. Bellevue spends \$11 per capita; Kirkland and Redmond, less than \$5.

—Adam Hyla

For more information on the Oct. 2 budget forum, turn to the First things First action alert on page 11.

### Braam stoker

The state continues to struggle with living up to the terms of the Braam lawsuit and a settlement that the Department of Social and Health Services signed to improve foster care.

Earlier this month, the Braam Oversight Panel, which was created to ensure the settlement's 32 action steps are met, issued a review of the state's second try at a compliance plan. This time around, the panel declared that the Children's Administration had completed eight action steps and accepted compliance plans for 11 others.

But the panel again rejected the state's effort in three major areas — reducing caseloads, making monthly visits to children, and giving foster parents time off.

The Children's Administration is already in the process of hiring 207 new case workers, says settlement manager Deborah Purse, who adds it's a matter of needing more time rather than more money to reach compliance.

"We are considering what to do next," Purse says. In the meantime, the Braam lawyers are considering whether or not to take the state back to court.

—Cydney Gillis



### The Cheney Gang's All Here

LIKENESSES OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZZA RICE CROSSED THE BRIDGE TO INDIAN ISLAND, NEAR PORT TOWNSEND, WHERE 35 ANTIWAR PROTESTERS WERE ARRESTED FOR BLOCKING THE ENTRANCE TO THE ISLAND'S NAVAL WEAPONS DEPOT ON SAT., SEPT. 23. PHOTO BY ELLIOT STOLLER

# Deferred Maintenance

Residents unite to press SE Seattle landlord for security, maintenance

By **BILLY JOYCE**  
Contributing Writer

"She said, 'You pay or you out.' I said why? I say I want it explained.

How can you charge? She said I don't want any more talking."

—*Shamso Basal, resident of Lake Washington Apartments, talking of a management company employee*

**B**arbara Bohn, 60, gives a tour of her home, Building 21 of the Lake Washington Apartments in Rainier Beach, where she has lived for more than four years. She poses for a picture in front of the broken window that hangs above her doorway. She stops to Vanna White the exposed wires in the wall of a hallway. She points to the porchlight she says has been out for seven months. She opens and closes the door that's been gutted of its locks to demonstrate how anyone can get into her building.

"I don't feel secure here anymore," she says.

The newly formed Lake Washington ACORN Tenant Union met with management company AF Evans and the building's owner, Southeast Effective Development (SEED), on Sept. 8 to present them with a list of grievances. This list included: "Security guards not doing job, racism from management, need interpreters at office, doors not secure, and lighting (lack of, most lights don't work)."

Shamso Basal, 32, emigrated from Somalia to the U.S. in 1996. She has lived at the Lake Washington Apartments for two years. Basal is a charter member of the Lake Washington ACORN Tenant Union and acts as the group's treasurer. She recounted how AF Evans management refused to explain new charges on her monthly bill, and how they threatened to evict her.

"She said, 'You pay or you out.' I said why? I say I want it explained. How can you charge? She said I don't want any more talking."

When asked about maintenance procedures, AF Evans Vice President Debbie Weber says that filing a work order, getting authorization for entry, and repairing whatever needs to be repaired "usually [happens] within 24 to 48 hours" of the initial complaint.

Speaking about Bohn's building, Weber says, "If a window has been broken, if there is exposed wiring, my hope would be that we would have found those issues ourselves and addressed those in a timely manner."

Weber checked on Building 21 later and called back to say that a replacement window had been ordered, the wiring was being taken care of, and the doors were being looked at. She said, "Unfortunately, the doors are routinely broken" and mentioned, "In that particular building we had an eviction that week, and they did not go peaceably."

"If the residents do not get the response that they need from the site staff, then they're going to go to Brett Stevens; if Brett Stevens does not give them satisfaction, they come to me. I am the last stop," said Weber.

Stevens, in one year as the AF Evans Seattle Property Manager, has received only one call. Weber has never received a call from a Lake Washington resident.

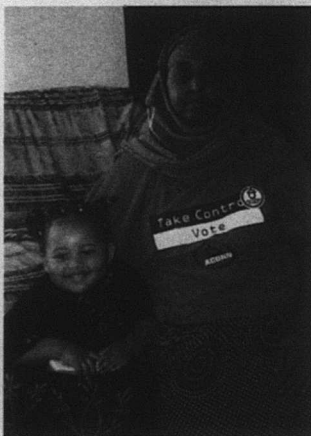
Nearly two weeks after the Sept. 8 meeting, Bohn says she's noticed that management had beefed up security. "I see the security guards a little bit more often during the day, walking around," she says, "But as far as maintenance goes, they haven't done anything."

AF Evans and SEED attempted to meet with the charter members of the tenants' union on Fri., Sept. 22. ACORN advised the charter members to decline, because they wanted the meeting to be open to all members of the union, not just the charters.

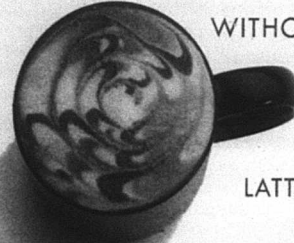
Despite the failed meeting, AF Evans President Jennifer Borland says, "We're going to communicate regularly with the residents, respond as best we can to their needs. To the extent that we can, we want to give them a comfortable home environment."

"There are approximately 1,500 individuals that live on that site. You spoke to five of them," says Weber. "There's a great many people that we're receiving very positive feedback from." ■

*Shamso Basal wants more responsive management at Rainier Beach's Lake Washington Apartments, where she's lived for two years. Photo by Mark Sullo*




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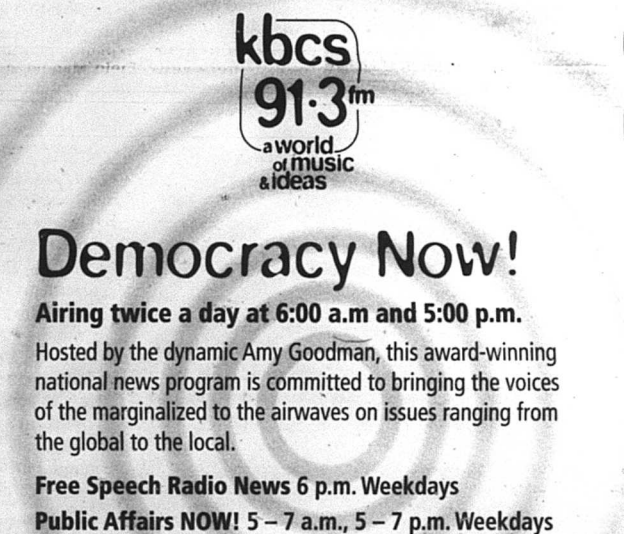
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# A Culture of Life for the Living

Ron Reagan on stem cell research, challenging the right, and more

By ROBIN LINDLEY  
Contributing Writer

"[President Bush is] very immature. He said, 'Bring it on' to the insurgency in Iraq, [but] he's not in harm's way. It's other people's children getting blown up and shot."

Somewhat ironically, Ron Reagan, a son of conservative icon and former President Ronald Reagan, is an outspoken foe of the right. Before the 2000 election, he called George W. Bush "an empty suit," and in 2003, on *Salon.com*, said, "My father crapped bigger ones than George [W.] Bush." He's especially troubled by the influence of the religious right on politics now. In a 2004 eulogy, he described his father as "unabashedly religious," but added that "he never made the mistake of so many politicians of wearing his faith on his sleeve to gain political advantage."

Reagan is also a tireless advocate for federal funding for embryonic stem cell research. At the 2004 Democratic National Convention, he said, "Surely we can distinguish between undifferentiated cells multiplying in a tissue culture and a living, breathing person."

Reagan has been uniformly praised as a thoughtful and reflective commentator with unshakably courtly manners on KIRO Radio's *The Ron Reagan Show* (weekdays noon to 1 p.m., 710-AM). He also has hosted or reported for *Connected: Coast to Coast* and *Hardball with Chris Matthews*, as well as ABC's *20/20* and *Good Morning America*. His writing has appeared in *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Playboy*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Esquire*, and *Interview*, among others. He has lived in Seattle with his wife since 1994.

Reagan recently discussed his support for federal funding of embryonic stem cell research, the hope for the research, the right-wing war on science and truth, and more.

**Real Change:** You and your mother worked for passage of the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, then Congress passed it, and President Bush vetoed it.

**Ron Reagan:** We were disappointed by the veto, but not surprised. Mr. Bush staked



Two Rons don't make a right: Ron Upshaw of KIRO Radio's *Ron & Don* show clowns around with Ron Reagan. Photo by Ken Dean

out his position, and there's no compromise with a position that [the research] amounts to murder. Oddly enough, the hypocrisy of the position is apparent when IVF [in vitro fertilization] clinics throw out half a million early-stage embryos, and you don't hear outrage from the White House. Apparently that's not murder, just spring-cleaning.

**RC:** And public opinion overwhelmingly supports the research.

**Reagan:** Yes. Seventy percent of the public wants federal funding for embryonic stem cell research, and the majority of Congress clearly supports this. But the President said, "No, I'm going with my religious right constituency. Karl Rove tells me I ought." People from the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation [said] Rove was very up front about the political calculation. If we go along with you, we'll lose votes, but if we stand firm with the President's nonsensical policy, we'll gain votes. That's a shameful attitude on this issue [of

human life [from] people who talk about a culture of life. If you're going to have a culture of life, you ought to start with the living.

**RC:** Can you talk about the hope for embryonic stem cell lines?

**Reagan:** Virtually all credible scientists will tell you that embryonic stem cells hold more hope for cures than adult lines because they can become any tissues of the body and can be keyed to a particular person's DNA to decrease the likelihood of tissue rejection. You'll be able to use your own body as a repair kit for yourself by using one of your cells to generate embryonic stem cells.

One exciting [development] involves regeneration of spinal cord nerves. *60 Minutes* reported on a rat that could not move its hind legs because of a severed spinal cord. Embryonic stem cells repaired the spinal cord damage [by] re-growing neural networks of major muscle groups. After a short period, the rat began to walk. When a human being can even lift a finger after treatment, this stalling political game is over.

**RC:** And stem cells can treat other disorders?

**Reagan:** Diabetes, of course. Pancreatic cells don't produce insulin in a diabetic. Healthy pancreatic cells could be created using embryonic stem cells. Likewise, with Parkinson's disease, you could replace the neural cells with healthy ones that produce dopamine, and tremors

will stop. But we need to proceed with [research], and that requires federal money because private money follows federal money. This will happen no matter what Mr. Bush and Republicans think, but they're slowing it down and people are suffering.

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### Continued from Previous Page

**RC:** Why does the religious right object to this research?

**Reagan:** [For the religious right] an embryo is a human being. But [embryos] are unfeeling, unknowing, undifferentiated cells. They have tremendous potential, but at this very early stage, they're not a fetus, and not even an embryo, but a pre-embryo or a conceptus. But [say] embryos and the religious right hollers, and they're an important constituency to the White House and Republicans.

**RC:** Did your father's illness spark your interest in cell research?

**Reagan:** It wasn't my father's illness. Alzheimer's will probably not be amenable to stem cell therapy, at least initially. I was interested in stem cells from the first time I read about them. It's such an obvious good thing. We can regenerate all the cells of our body using stem cells like a repair kit? That's fascinating.

But when Mr. Bush took office, I realized our government was going to stand in the way. I became offended not just for the people suffering, but because this Administration distorts science and dismisses its own scientific advisors for political reasons. We see it with global warming. NASA's leading climate scientist, Dr. James Hansen, who the administration is trying to shut up, just said we have about 10 years before warming becomes unstoppable, where nothing we do can stop it.

**RC:** The administration has often replaced scientists and experts for political reasons.

**Reagan:** There's a lot of cronyism. Brownie [FEMA Director Michael Brown] is someone who was in a job he shouldn't have been in. His boss, Michael Chertoff [Secretary of Homeland Security], is another example. Dr. Susan Woods, a leading scientist with the FDA, quit over the Plan B [contraceptive] drug which FDA scientists and their advisory panels overwhelmingly recommended for over-the-counter sale to any woman at any age. This [recommendation] was dismissed because the religious right [sees] Plan B as an abortion pill. More than that, they don't like the idea that this could allow someone to have sex without consequences. They held this up for years. Meanwhile, 12-year-old girls raped by their stepfathers are denied access to emergency contraception.

**RC:** In 2000 you called Bush an empty suit hand-picked by special interests.

**Reagan:** He was. Wealthy Republicans approached

Mr. Bush two years into his first term as governor of Texas to run for President. It was his first elective office and largely a ceremonial post. What they saw in George W. Bush was an empty vessel, someone they could fill with whatever neo-con madness they wanted and trot out as a front man. He had no foreign policy experience, and given the world at the dawn of the 21st century, that's a dangerous person to put into office. He was unqualified coming in, and he'll

**"I've never belonged to any political party and have no intention of joining. I'm certainly not going to become a Republican, but I'm not inclined to become a Democrat either, especially since the Democrats have shown such an inability to stand up to the Republicans."**

be unqualified going out. It's been a horrendous Presidency, a disaster for this country. He is [also] an incurious and terribly insecure man, and a rather belligerent man.

**RC:** Where do you see Bush's belligerence?

**Reagan:** You see it at press conferences all the time. He doesn't like to be challenged, but that's the job when you're President. And it's the job of the media to ask you tough questions. If things aren't going well in a war you started, you can expect to be called on the carpet, and you better get used to that. But he gets defensive, the anger rising, the elbow up on the podium, that squinty look. He's very immature. He said, "Bring it on" to the insurgency in Iraq, [but] he's not in harm's way. It's other people's children getting blown up and shot.

**RC:** And while our soldiers in Iraq witness horrible maiming and death daily, Vice President Cheney said shooting his friend in the face was one of his worst experiences.

**Reagan:** Yes. Cheney couldn't respond to the shooting for days. What does he think these kids in Iraq feel when they rocket a building and discover a bunch of dead women and children? Imagine how they feel. The Cheney incident was revealing. This is a delusional man who cannot take responsibility for what he's

done. Why did it take so many days for him to say, "I blew it. I fired my shotgun when I shouldn't have. It was a terrible accident"? That's what a grown-up does. What's his problem?

**RC:** What would your father think of the Republican Party now?

**Reagan:** I don't as a rule talk about what my father would think, because I can't say for sure. People on the other side of the issues try to. I don't care much for

to do. My father and I used to argue all the time at the dinner table since I was a kid. I hardly give it a second thought. My father had his politics. I've got mine.

**RC:** Are you a Democrat?

**Reagan:** I've never belonged to any political party and have no intention of joining. I'm certainly not going to become a Republican, but I'm not inclined to become a Democrat either, especially since the Democrats have shown such an inability to stand up to the Republicans. They've rolled over for too long. They knew better on the war on Iraq. Forget about whether there were WMDs. The idea that Iraq presented "a grave and gathering danger," as President Bush put it, was absurd on its face, and [the Democrats] had to know that, yet they went along [for fear of] being labeled traitors.

**RC:** What can average citizens do to improve the political situation?

**Reagan:** Voting is the most important thing. Only between 50 and 60 percent of people vote in presidential elections, let alone midterm elections, and that's not good enough. There are people [in other countries] who line up to vote while the shooting's still going on at 90 percent or so, and that ought to shame us to do better. So get out and vote. ■

that because he can't speak for himself. My sense is that he would be disturbed by what's going on in the Republican Party, and I'm sure he'd be disturbed by a Congress [that's] done nothing. They've twiddled around with nonsense issues like flag burning [while] the Middle East burns, and they're not doing anything about it.

**RC:** Your father is the embodiment of conservative values, so how did you become a major voice for progressive causes?

**Reagan:** It's a hard question to answer. My father always taught us to think for ourselves, and that's what I've tried

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Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse  
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## Caught in Iraq's Unraveling

Although Rory Stewart insists that *The Prince of Marshes* is simply a personal memoir, he is an invaluable witness to the gradual unraveling of the Coalition Provisional Authority that dictated terms from inside the Green Zone.

**The Prince of the Marshes: And Other Occupational Hazards of a Year in Iraq**

By Rory Stewart  
Harcourt, 2006  
Hardcover, 416 pages, \$25

Review by JOHN SISCOE  
Contributing Writer

Rory Stewart, who looks about 19 years old but is in his early 30s, reminds one at first of those fearless and half-mad British explorers of the 19th century, but he is saner and wiser than any of them.

Born to Scottish parents in Hong Kong, Stewart grew up in Malaysia, graduated from Eton and Oxford, was an infantry officer in Britain's Black Watch battalion, and served as a diplomat in Indonesia and Yugoslavia. During the winter of 2001-2002, when still in his 20s, he walked across war-torn Afghanistan armed with little more than his language skills, a stout stick, and a toothless dog. Stewart's account of this journey, *The Places In Between*, is thrilling, moving and wonderfully funny.

In 2003 Stewart, "keen and available", volunteered to serve in the civil administration of occupied Iraq. He became the deputy governor of the impoverished province of Maysan, charged not only with repairing the

shattered infrastructure but also with creating a modern secular democracy with free-market values and a pro-western outlook. *The Prince of the Marshes*, Stewart's memoir of his year in Iraq, is a vivid and unsparing record of events that began with such high hopes, only to end in frustration and chaos.

Although Stewart insists that his book is simply a personal memoir, he is an invaluable witness to the gradual unraveling of the Coalition Provisional Authority that dictated terms from inside the Green Zone. He also indicates, without fingerpointing or blamefinding, some of the reasons for that unraveling. For no matter how many schools the CPA repaired, how many roads it built, or how many employment programs it launched, it failed to win the confidence and trust of the Iraqi people. The ideology that Ambassador Bremer and his subordinates sought to introduce to Iraq proved to have little to do with the actual needs and desires of most Iraqis.

Both in Maysan and Dhi Qar, where Stewart was later stationed, the work done to repair the infrastructure counted for nothing because the Iraqis had ceased to trust the CPA's motives and values. It is telling that when Stewart hears of the outrages of Abu Ghraib, he is disgusted and ashamed, while his

Iraqi acquaintances barely bother to shrug. In their eyes, this was precisely the behavior they had come to expect from their erstwhile saviors.

*The Prince of the Marshes* is a taut, well-paced narrative, with tense and even harrowing scenes. Stewart is an astute observer, and the reader encounters a gallery of fascinating, complex individuals. The "Prince" of the title, Karim Mahood Hattab, is one such example. He is a revered warrior and agent provocateur, violent, duplicitous and dangerous. And yet he is also a man of honor, capable of wisdom and generosity. The people the reader meets in this book have many aspects, conflicting and even comical, but they are always human beings. It is the particular and the individual that interests the author, not grand designs and social theories.

Stewart lives in Kabul where he has set up The Turquoise Mountain Foundation, which seeks to help the Afghans restore a historic district of their capital. The foundation also runs a school that teaches the traditional Afghan arts of calligraphy, illumination painting, woodworking, masonry, and ceramics. The optimistic practicality of such a project exemplifies its founder. More than anyone, he knows it could end in an instant, but figures it is worth the try. ■

John Siscoe owns and operates Globe Books in Pioneer Square.

### A Story about the Projects

My studio apartment is twice the size as my transitional room, a large yard and private mailbox. Nice!

What I didn't tell was: from the moment I was moving in the kids were breaking into my space. I have complained about someone else that has a key to my doors, unlocking them off and on making me very nervous.

"Children" pace back and forth by my place all day and night, mentioning my "case" constantly. They throw trash in my yard and make strange sounds at all hours (mainly birdcalls).

I've had one attempted and one actual break-in. I lost a wallet and under \$5.00 in cash. Both were arrested.

Untold items have been give to me by these persons, is what they say. I don't know any of them or have anything from any of them. Francis House is where I get most of my free stuff.

Both my new doggie and I are old and not feeling up to par a lot of the time. She does bless me tremendously.

Everyone is "helping" me.

Neighborhood House really is.

Jesus guided me to Yesler Terrace and I know He is going to give me and my doggie a wonderful future here.

I just haven't gotten to know the people here yet.

At least they haven't hung me on a tree, like Jesus, who was completely sinless.

—CAROL LENO



# Mend It Like Beckham



Adventures  
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning

I wouldn't care about the Homeless World Cup except for the fact that it might in some way have a positive impact on homelessness.

As of this Monday morning, Sept. 24, the Homeless World (Soccer) Cup has gotten under way in Cape Town, South Africa. It will continue through Saturday. If you have a fast connection and the right plug-in you can watch it live at [www.homelessworldcup.org](http://www.homelessworldcup.org).

For those of you who don't have a fast connection, I'll describe it for you now. There are people on a field kicking a ball from one end to the other. Some of the people are trying to kick it to the right side into a kind of netted-enclosure-like-thing guarded by somebody. The others are trying to kick the same ball (hence the contest!) the other way, to where there is another person guarding another netted-enclosure-like-thing. There's also the voice of a guy telling you about it while it's happening. Some scores so far: two, zero; 10, one. Yes, 10! Blame the Hong Kong defense.

How can a World Cup be Homeless? The answer is that homelessness is a part of the eligibility requirements for this particular annual event. The rules state precisely that players in the Homeless World Cup must a) be male or female and at least 16 years of age at the time of the tournament and b) have been homeless at some point after the previous year's World Cup OR make their living as a streetpaper vendor OR be asylum seekers (who have neither positive asylum status nor working permit). No, I don't know why they have the restriction to male or female. It's not my fault; I'm just the messenger here.

The first Homeless World Cup was held in 2003 in Graz, Austria, near Arnold Schwarzenegger's boyhood home. The idea for it sprang into the heads of a couple of directors of street papers meeting in a bar during a conference of the International Network of Street Papers. Meeting in bars can result in that sort of thing. Usually the

next day it's all forgotten, though. This time they actually went through with it. This year there are teams representing 48 countries scheduled to play, and it's been reported by the *Associated Press* that there are nearly 500 players in attendance, presumably including substitutes.

The actual quote from the *Associated Press* article speaks of "nearly 500 drug addicts, alcoholics, orphans, and vagrants" kicking the event off. This is where I really got interested.

I mean, as I have said often enough before, my interest in spectator sport is pretty much limited to watching women's singles figure skating when my internet porn connection is down. So I wouldn't care about the Homeless World Cup except for the fact that it might in some way have a positive impact on homelessness.

It's just fascinating to me that when some people see a person kick a ball around as part of an organized sports match, they feel differently about that person. I ascribe it to trust.

Trust is a quality that you don't hear enough about these days. It's the thing homeless people need the next most, after decent sleep and physical safety. If people so don't trust you that they don't let you interact with them at all, not even to say hello, it's impossible to even start to earn any trust from them. The Homeless World Cup is a sustained interaction that can enable the participants to earn some trust.

Most of the news stories about the Homeless World Cup focus on the benefit to the players in "getting their lives together." The *Associated Press* story I mentioned gushes about how 94 percent of last year's players report "a new motivation in life," whatever that means, and then says that 38 percent now have regular jobs. That's great, but it misses the story.

The real story isn't the players; it's the relationship between the players and the spectators; it's the trust. Let's see how the same AP reporter describes the current players a week from now. If there's a change, that would be the news. ■

# The Things She Carried



Bus Chick,  
Transit  
Authority

Carla Saulter

Then there was that legendary trip a couple of Thanksgivings ago, when I rode the #3 with a still-warm fried turkey.

Got something to say about public transportation in Seattle? E-mail Bus Chick at [buschick@gmail.com](mailto:buschick@gmail.com) or visit [blog.seattlepi.nwsources.com/buschick](http://blog.seattlepi.nwsources.com/buschick).

For some reason I have yet to understand, my husband, Adam, has entirely too much change. Everywhere the man goes, change follows. It is in his pants pockets, in his coat pockets, in his bus-nerd bag. If you're ever short bus fare, search the cushions of a couch he has recently sat on; you're sure to find at least a couple of trips' worth. And don't get me started on his (former) bedroom. His spare-change jar filled up at least a year ago, subsequently overflowing onto his nightstand and into his most recent ad-hoc container, a plastic bag on the floor.

Last Thursday, to prevent this change from overflowing its way into our current bedroom, I offered to take it to the free coin-counting machine at the credit union near my office. The plan was to stop there on my way to work, which would have been an unremarkable errand — except that I am a bus chick, and the change I offered to carry weighed almost 35 pounds. Despite Adam's warnings, I carried the money in my backpack, along with my laptop and other bus chick necessities, for the entire 15-mile (two buses plus a very long walk) trip. Fortunately, I managed to remain upright for the journey, and I was rewarded at its end. The change added up to \$360. I think I'll use it to buy Adam an extra-large piggy bank.

Of course, a 35-pound backpack full of change is far from the oddest thing I've carried on the bus. Last month, I carried my wedding dress home on the #27, to the dismay of the clerk at the fancy shop that made it. On Easter Sunday, dressed in my Easter best, I boarded the bus to my mother's church carrying both the bus chick bag (you never know when you'll need your laptop) and an additional duffel that contained my roller blades and wrist guards (for the post-church family recreation activities, of course). And then there was that legendary trip a couple of Thanksgivings ago, when I rode the #3 with a still-warm fried turkey (more about that in November).

At least I'm not the only one. Today there was a kid playing an (unplugged) electric bass on the #48. Back in August (also on the #48), I sat behind a man balancing an entire case of Wild Turkey on his lap. A bus chick I met at a birthday party last Tuesday saw a guy get on downtown with a surfboard. And of course, my fellow passengers ride with all kinds of pets. Dogs — especially guide dogs — are the most common, but I've seen my share of cats and even a few birds. Once, on my way to a bar on Capitol Hill, I saw a rabbit perched on its owner's shoulder. How many of the folks who travel by car can say the same? ■



Sat., Sept. 2, 3:10 p.m., City Hall

**Park.** An officer in King County Courthouse was using surveillance equipment to monitor activity in City Hall Park. He observed a transient Black male aged 31 at the benches near the northeast section of the park. The suspect was known to the officer as a crack addict and was known to sell crack to pay for his habit. He observed the man stand up from the bench where he had been seated and walk in a circle — he had his hand open in order to show people what was in his palm. The officer saw maybe four to five pieces of a white substance he suspected to be crack cocaine, and requested two officers in the park arrest the suspect. He gave them the man's location and description, and they made contact. As suspect was being placed under arrest, he dropped the suspected crack to the ground. It was recovered and field-tested positive for cocaine, as did a glass pipe recovered from the pocket of the suspect. He was arrested and booked into King County Jail for violation of the Uniform Substance Control Act.

Sat., Sept. 2, 11:06 p.m., 700 block Queen Anne Ave N.

Officers responded to investigate a possible assault call. Witness had called 911 to report that a man had just entered his business and had been shot. While en route to the scene, radio updated that the suspect had a green laser light on the gun and was possibly across the street from the listed address in an apartment building. On arrival, the officer noted a green laser light coming from the fifth floor of the apartment building north of Roy St., and placed a spotlight on what he thought was the window. He called for extra units and then exited the building and contacted the victim. Victim, a homeless Native American male aged 39, stated he had been walking along the sidewalk when he noticed a green light pointed at him. He immediately felt a sharp stinging sensation on his left hand and noticed blood. He then entered the business and told the owner he had been shot. The officer noticed blood on the victim's hand and saw what appeared to be an entrance wound. It appeared he had been shot with a pellet gun. Seattle Fire responded to the scene and called AMR to transport victim to Harborview for treatment. Containment was set up around the apartment building. During this time several citizens in the area, who stated that the green light had been seen for around two weeks approached officers. After talking to the building manager, officers determined which apartments the shots had come from. They attempted to contact the occupants but were unable to. They obtained a passkey and gained access to the apartment but were unable to locate any suspects or weapons. They gave the manager a case number, and he stated he would advise the tenants of the circumstances when they returned.

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



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**October 14th, 2006**

5:30 pm Grand Hyatt Seattle  
721 Pine St. Seattle 98101

## Letters

editor@realchangenews.org

### Platform Blues

Dear *Real Change*,

Every election year we hear candidates spew their political party platforms. There is a difference between the Democratic, Republican, and Independent Party Platforms. However, are those differences real or on paper only? Do those differences have any meaning to you or me?

Republicans boast about abortion being immoral, while Democrats boast of it as freedom of choice. As for you and I, how does an elected official's viewpoint about abortion affect our property taxes. How did their viewpoint affect Congress's decision to support the President's decision to go to war against Iraq?

Republicans boast about wanting smaller federal government. Since 1945, we have had 34 years of Republican presidents and 27 years of Democratic presidents. During the 34 years with a Republican at the helm in the White House, has the size of federal government decreased? No! Regardless of who is in the White House, the size of the federal government continues to grow. Maybe we should take into consideration the population, and over the years has the percentage of federal government employees versus

the population increased or decreased? Citizens, ask your congressman for the answer to that question, they certainly should know and most assuredly they would be willing to provide you with a truthful answer.

As a casual observer it appears to me that political party platforms have absolutely no meaning when it comes to the important issues facing the citizens of this country. Might I suggest that all political parties now base their platforms around issues that are important to this country's citizens? They should stop making platforms around issues that divide the American Public and issues that have nothing to do with what is done when it comes to making policies that affect us all. Why not try the following? What is your party's stand on increasing the National Debt, which has already surpassed \$8 trillion? What is your party's stand on balancing the budget? What is your party's stand on illegal immigration? What is your party's platform on repaying the debt that is owed to the Social Security Trust Fund? Exactly what is your party platform on the war in Iraq?

**Charlie Peters**  
Seattle, WA

*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](mailto:editor@realchangenews.org).

## Found Object

The raccoon looks soft as a kid glove  
along the roadside as if it had been sleeping  
with its striped tail bowing on its prayer rug.

I wish I had fur so soft and beautiful as this  
dusky fur and could steal away with such a coat,  
cosmic looking as the great spiral nebula.

For its resting place looks peaceful as though  
it was making its way for the gully so full of glowing  
clematis that it could take off its mask for once.

—MICHAEL MAGEE

## CLASSIFIED

### Opportunity

**YWCA mobile screening** for uninsured and low-income women, Sat., Sept. 30, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Freedom Church, 9601 35th Ave. SW.

**Engineer-led tour** of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement Project. Sat., Oct. 14, RSVP by Fri., Oct. 6 to [viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov).

### Employment

**Administrative Assistant** - Full Time. The Homelessness Project. Successful transitional housing program for families. Serious work, fun office. Committed to diversity. 525-1213 x3333 [www.thpinfo.org](http://www.thpinfo.org)

*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

### Saturday 9/30

Pulled from its scheduled *Discovery Channel* time slot, the documentary *The Conspiracy of Silence* exposes a tight network of religious leaders and politicians who routinely fly children to Washington, D.C., for sex acts, orgies, and after-parties with politicians. 1:30 p.m., Seattle Public Library Northeast Branch, 6801 35th Ave. NE.

### Sunday 10/1

Ballard's Third Annual Sustainability Festival features scores of workshops, classes, and demonstrations to provide fun and easy ways to build new sustainable skills, including biodiesel, solar solutions, green building, rain barrels, and more. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., Ballard Commons Park, 5701 22nd Ave. NW. Info: [www.sustainableballard.org](http://www.sustainableballard.org).

### Tuesday 10/3

Fairness and Factions in Health is the opening panel discussion in the series "A Just Cause: Bringing Health Care to All." Experts in law, social work, anthropology, and justice will discuss issues of access, culture, trade, finance, and regulation and the effect on the health of all people. 7 p.m., University of Washington, Kane Hall.

### Wednesday 10/4

Ian Bremmer, president of Eurasia Group, the world's largest political risk consultant group, discusses the behavior of nations and their impact on U.S. foreign policy. Why does North Korea invite military conflict when it cannot possibly win? Why is India surprisingly stable? What is the future of Israel's democracy? Bremmer unites world politics and mathematics to show how a nation's stability is connected to its openness. Tickets \$5. 7:30 p.m. Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave.

Ana Castillo, poet, novelist, and essayist, reads from and discusses her book *How I Became a Genre Jumper*. Castillo's daring, experimental voices have led her to emerge as the leading writer of the Chicana experience. 6:30 p.m., University of Washington, Kane Hall 130.

### Thursday 10/5

Ron Chisom delivers the keynote speech at the Fremont Public Association's Annual Cultural Awareness Week. Chisom has organized tenants, cane cutters, and poor people throughout the South for more than 30 years, and he has led countless workshops around the country on community organizing and undoing racism. 10 a.m., Fremont Public Association, 1501 N. 45th St.

A nationwide protest, The World Can't Wait!, is a united objection to the Bush Administration featuring



speakers, music, poetry, debate, and visual representations of war, torture, Hurricane Katrina, theocracy, and the future. 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., University of Washington, Red Square. Info: [www.worldcantwait.org](http://www.worldcantwait.org).

### Friday 10/6

Immigration Rights: Fighting for the Future of the Northwest is a community panel discussion on the recent publicity of immigration policy. Speakers will touch on the

deeper and less discussed issues of livable wages, funding cuts to public programs, and economic insecurity. Panelists include Juan Gonzalez, co-host of Democracy Now!, and Alan Jenkins, executive director of The Opportunity Agenda. Tickets \$15. 4:30 p.m., McCaw Hall, 321 Mercer St.

### Until Sunday 10/8

A narrative play for puppets and actors based on the novel *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, by Thornton Wilder, follows Brother Juniper, a friar who witnessed a tragic bridge collapse and sets out to investigate the lives of those who died in the collapse. Hoping to discover a cosmic reason for their death, he delves into philosophical questions of evil. Tickets — Thursday pay-what-you-can, other days \$20. Thurs.-Sat. 7:30 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m., Richard Hugo House, 1634 11th Ave. Info: [www.hughohouse.org](http://www.hughohouse.org).

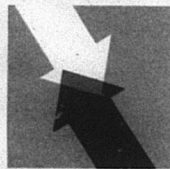
## Director's Corner



This year, *Real Change* is giving our 2006 Change Agent award for "visionary organizing and exceptional effectiveness" to the Committee for General Amnesty and Social Justice (Comité Pro-Aministia General y Justicia Social) for their extraordinary work in mobilizing for the landmark immigrant marches earlier this year, and the vision they have shown since in building toward a more unified progressive community. Last year, this prestigious award went to Statewide Poverty Action Network for a grassroots get-out-the-vote campaign that may have made all the difference in the amazingly tight 2004 State Governor's race.

As we enter this fall's critical election cycle, it is clear that immigration is being used as a wedge issue by the right. Due to taxation and economic policies that primarily benefit the most wealthy, inequality in the United States has only deepened. Rather than uniting against a common enemy, however, many Americans have been distracted by an immigration debate that scapegoats poor people of color while exacerbating existing racial divisions. Additionally, the tightening of state election laws across the country to ostensibly prevent illegal voting by non-citizens will disenfranchise low-income voters who are unable to meet heightened identification standards. We applaud the Comité's local leadership, and look forward to supporting their work in coming years.

The 2006 Change Agent Award will be presented at our "Rising Up on Common Ground" 12th Annual breakfast celebration on Oct. 25. For more information, go to [www.realchangenews.org](http://www.realchangenews.org).



## First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

### A Just City Looks After Its Hungry

**Issue:** Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels made his budget recommendations to the City Council on Monday. In many ways his budget sets smart priorities—increasing human services funding overall. But the budget also contains some cuts and some missed opportunities for investment that would make a real difference. One cut that the City Council should restore is \$52,000 for the Meals Partnership Coalition.

**Background:** The City of Seattle provides about \$200,000 a year to a few community-based organizations to do advocacy and coalition building work that benefits low-income residents and families in Seattle. Year after year, these programs are at risk of being cut, because Seattle leaders don't consider them "direct" services. Programs like the Meals Partnership Coalition are extremely effective, however, in making other government funds stretch much further than they would without this coordination. For example, since 2002, Food Resources and the Meals Partnership Coalition have coordinated more than \$884,000 of bulk purchases of thousands of pounds of food each year from state and federal funding. Bulk purchasing has resulted in being able to buy 30 percent more food that goes directly to hungry people in Seattle.

MPC came into existence because Seattle & King County meal providers saw the need for support services, such as food and safety nutrition education, technical assistance, and advocacy on behalf of those they serve, in order to sustain their anti-hunger work in the community. Through the massive Boeing layoffs in the '80s, the recession of the early '90s, and the dot-com bust at the turn of the century, meals providers watched as their lines grew, but the resources available to feed them dwindled. The lack of these resources and the support services weakened the network of meal providers and their ability to effectively distribute safe and nutritious meals to our most needy residents throughout Seattle & King County.

The coalition has been instrumental in establishing and changing policy regarding food safety and nutritional guidelines and engaging the greater community to proactively work on hunger issues.

**Action:** Contact Seattle City councilmembers and ask them to restore funding for the Meal Partnership Coalition that the Mayor cut from the 2007-08 budget.

- Sally Clark: [Sally.clark@seattle.gov](mailto:Sally.clark@seattle.gov) 684-8802
- Jan Drago: [Jan.drago@seattle.gov](mailto:Jan.drago@seattle.gov) 684-8801
- Nick Licata: [Nick.licata@seattle.gov](mailto:Nick.licata@seattle.gov) 684-8803
- Peter Steinbrueck: [Peter.steinbrueck@seattle.gov](mailto:Peter.steinbrueck@seattle.gov) 684-8804
- Richard McIver: [Richard.mciver@seattle.gov](mailto:Richard.mciver@seattle.gov) 684-8800
- David Della: [David.della@seattle.gov](mailto:David.della@seattle.gov) 684-8806
- Jean Godden: [Jean.godden@seattle.gov](mailto:Jean.godden@seattle.gov) 684-8807
- Richard Conlin: [Richard.conlin@seattle.gov](mailto:Richard.conlin@seattle.gov) 684-8805
- Tom Rasmussen: [Tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov](mailto:Tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov) 684-8808

For more information, contact the Meals Partnership Coalition at [www.mealspartnership.org](http://www.mealspartnership.org) or (206)325-5145.

To learn more about the city budget, come to a community forum and resource fair on Oct. 2, from 5:30-8:30 p.m. (program begins at 6:30) at the Laurent Clerc Hall, 1609 - 19th Ave., at Pine. Then, speak out at a hearing on the budget. Two are scheduled; the first starts at 5:30 p.m. Wed., Oct. 11, in City Council chambers on the second floor of 600 Fourth Ave.

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

COURT, Continued from Page 1

state Supreme Court to resolve the question of whether public policy prevents a firing related to domestic violence.

Danny, who is Polynesian, started working for Laidlaw as a driver in 1997 and says she got great performance reviews before moving up to a managerial position in 2002.

She says her husband had mentally abused her for years, telling her she was at fault for everything. But it wasn't until he started acting out physically, Danny says, that she was forced out of her denial.

"Women love their children and the idea of being married," she says, "so you try to keep up and hope things will get better, even though you know the situation is wrong."

By August 2003, the situation had become so wrong that Danny asked Laidlaw for time off to move her children out of the home. Her supervisor refused, but, after Danny's 13-year-old son ended up in the hospital on Aug. 20, he granted a two-week leave.

Shortly after the leave, Danny says, she was demoted. She filed a discrimination charge with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights and, two months later, was fired.

"I'm still in shock. I was a good worker. I loved what I was doing," says Danny, who now has a similar job with a different company.

She and her family spent four months in a shelter and now live in an apartment. Her now ex-husband spent time in jail for the beating.

The lawsuit, she says, is just an outgrowth of what she had to go through to file her discrimination charge and get her unemployment benefits, which were denied at first, even though state law guarantees benefits to victims of domestic violence whether they are fired or leave a job.

"I had a hard enough time admitting I was in a domestic violence situation," Danny says. "Once I was able to accept that, I guess everything else had to happen — I had to take care of the kids."

"If this helps someone else," she says, "I've served my purpose, not just for my own kids, but somebody else's kids as well." ■

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ARCTIC, Continued from Page 1

During a subsequent visit in early September, Motta says, the workers were hesitant to speak to him. The wages the immigrant workers indicated they were earning are of concern to the council, he says, since the pay rate goes against the council's belief that all carpenters should earn area standards. Bringing in \$10 or \$11 hourly makes it tough for the workers to survive, he says.

"These people have kids and families, and then they have to go to the [Department of Social and Health Services]," says Motta. "This is the reason we're passing out these fliers, to let people know."

A call to the Spokane-based A&A went unreturned. So too did a request for comment from a representative of Arctic Hotel, LLC, which bought the hotel for \$5.1 million from the city in 2005.

Located on the corner of Third and Cherry, the nine-story structure was built in 1917, the resultant dream of profiteers

of the Klondike Gold Rush who were looking for a private club in which they could chill out in style. Known to most Seattleites for its 29 walrus heads projecting from the third-floor exterior, the Arctic Club was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. Current renovation on the Arctic, which looks to turn the building into a 117-room hotel, is slated for completion next summer. Early estimates put costs at \$9 million.

While the council is a union that represents close to 27,000 carpenters, drywallers, piledrivers, and others, Motta says the flier campaign is not about getting A&A to become union. It's about two things: reminding the company that it shouldn't be able to choose whether or not it can pay area standards to its workers, and informing the Arctic Club of its contractor's practices, he says.

"Regardless of their skin color, regardless of their nationality," says Motta, "these workers should all be able to get living wages." ■

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