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NOVEMBER 1 - 7, 2006



LINCOLN ROSE, A PRIDE AT WORK ACTIVIST, CHANTS AS HE IS HANDCUFFED BY POLICE OUTSIDE THE WESTIN HOTEL DOWNTOWN. SEATTLE'S WESTIN WORKERS ARE CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING WITH THE MANAGEMENT TEAM FOR A NEW CONTRACT. STORY, PAGE 4. PHOTO BY JOEL TURNER.

Fashion Victims

Cosmetics' chemicals hurt women's health and habitat

BY CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

workers chat with each other in Vietnamese as they cut hair, wax eyebrows, and paint toenails.

What they don't know is what's in some of the products. One manicure, for example, includes coats of three products — a sticky base, color lacquer and glossy finish — each of which contains dibutyl phthalate, a chemical "plasticizer" that can disrupt the reproductive system. Studies have linked DBP to early puberty in girls, and to boys being born with small penises and collapsed testicles.

And that's just the start. The sticky base? Toluene, a toxic glue. The pink-colored lacquer? Formaldehyde resin, known to cause cancer. Most hair dye contains a form of coal tar, another carcinogen. And dibutyl phthalate hides in perfume and most shampoos, the labels of which call it a "fragrance."

It's a health and environmental problem that the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics has spent four years trying to point out to the public and workers such as those at the Queen Hair Salon who are the most affected — and perhaps the least able to do anything about it.

Toxic ingredients in skin and hair products have a bigger impact on women of color, says Felicia Eaves, a campaign organizer who will speak in Seattle Monday at a public forum on un-

No Comment

Issue of poverty absent from mid-term elections

By MATTHEW BIGG
Reuters

On a boat stranded in a street in New Orleans, two words are scrawled: "No politicians."

It's not clear if the boat is a remnant of Hurricane Katrina, which devastated this city more than a year ago, but the message of the graffiti is unmistakable: Politicians failed to deliver for those who lost their homes in the hurricane.

"They sent boys over there [to Iraq] to fight in a war that never ends. Why didn't they keep the money over here when Americans are suffering?" asked Gwen Brown, 51, whose home in New Orleans was flooded by Katrina.

Hurricane Katrina exposed an underclass of poor Americans to the rest of the world, but poverty has slipped off the agenda in the run-up to midterm congressional elections next month.

"After the hurricane, it was easier for a time [to interest people in poverty], but it is... very hard to maintain national attention unless there is national leadership," says former Democratic senator John Edwards.

Edwards ran for president in 2004 arguing there were two Americas, one for the well-off and another for those who struggle. When that effort failed, he ran for vice president on John Kerry's ticket. He said he has not decided whether to run again in 2008.

Poverty has been a Democratic issue since President Lyndon Johnson declared a "war on poverty" in 1964, but Edwards said Democrats see risks in promoting the issue, fearing they would be painted as big-government spenders.

An illustration of that is Harold Ford, running for the U.S. Senate for Tennessee, who campaigns on reforming health care but also advocates issues attractive to conservative voters such as opposition to gay marriage and cutting taxes.

U.S. civil rights leader Jesse Jackson sees dangers for Democrats who abandon social justice issues to win elections.

"There is a need to have politicians whose positions represent change for the better and not an accommodation with the worst of our status quo," he says.

NO, NO, YES, YES....

Initiatives, propositions, referenda: oh, my. Don't sweat 'em. We give ya the skinny on how to vote.

PAGE 2

STRAFE WAY

In the Rainier Valley, a Safeway supermarket could find itself caught in the cross hairs of gentrification.

PAGE 3

MOPPING MAD

Cleaning up the building that houses the Gates Foundation is dirty work, now that janitors are non-union.

PAGE 4

WHIRLED MUSIC

Blending flamenco, hip hop, and salsa, the Children of the Revolution voice a global perspective.

PAGE 5

BALLOT VOX

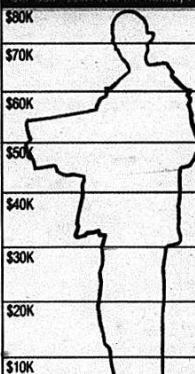
Before casting your vote Nov. 7, why not take a look-see at the candidates' positions on six core issues.

PAGE 6

'Tis the Season

The Holidays are nearly upon us, and with them comes the *Real Change* year-end fund drive. This year, *Real Change* needs to raise \$80,000 in reader support over November and December

Our goal: \$80K over the holidays



to keep our work strong. We get there one donation at a time, and every bit helps. Please visit our website at realchange.news.org or use the coupon on page 12 to make your gift today.

See FASHION, Continued on Page 12

See ELECTION, Continued on Page 12

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

Marching Orders

The Real Change recommendations for the 2006 ballot

By Rachael Myers, Adam Hyla, and the RC Editorial Committee

Here is the Real Change party line on initiatives, referenda, and propositions that matter on the Nov. 7 ballot.

Initiative 920 calls for repeal of the state's estate tax, which is levied, in progressively greater amounts, against inheritors of estates worth more than \$2 million.

The Washington State estate tax is not a death tax. It's a check on heirs' unearned income, which, because of the undemocratic power that wealth imparts, sorely needs checking. An heirs' tax also helps the rich pay back the debt they owe to a civilization that makes fortunes possible. And in Washington, it solely funds public education.

Proponents, the multi-millionaires and would-be heirs of Washington industry, say it's wrong to take hard-earned assets from the children of the deceased. We might care if the children of the deceased had been the ones doing the earning, but they weren't. Nothing in the law prevents people from drawing their children or other intended heirs into their businesses, or giving away the proceeds while they're still breathing.

This debate has been skewed by anti-tax forces away from education and responsibility and toward selfishness. Credit Frank Blethen with turning the Opinion pages of the *Seattle Times* into a hyperbolic cheerleader for the tax's abolition. Show your gratitude. **Vote NO.**

Initiative 933 would require compensation when government regulations inhibit the use or value of private property. This initiative is not about emi-

nent domain; it's about giving private landowners the power to bill the rest of us for damages they *might* do to the environment. It amounts to nothing less than legalized extortion. **Vote NO.**

Initiative 937 is designed to promote renewable energy by requiring Washington utility companies to increase their investment in clean power like wind and solar to 15 percent of their entire energy portfolios by 2020. It's a mandate that clean energy needs to compete against the dirty sources that hurt human health and the environment. **Vote YES.**

King County Proposition 2 is the Public Transportation system 0.1 percent sales tax. A sales tax is not the most progressive way to pay for anything, but transportation needs are growing every year. The measure will make some busses less crowded, more reliable, and will increase the frequency of the most popular routes. Making busses more appealing will get more people out of their cars—and if they don't do that...hello, have you seen *An inconvenient Truth*? **Vote YES.**

City of Seattle Initiative 91: Government funds should be used to pay for more important things than sports stadiums—essentially subsidizing professional sports. It's especially important now that the team has been sold to prevent local elected officials from bending over backward to keep them in Seattle. We don't hate basketball; the Storm is really cool. But if their owners want a new arena, they should pay for it themselves. **Vote YES.**

Referendum 1: The beginning of this sad law contains what purports to be a finding of fact, based on public testimony and "other evidence," that

strip clubs are detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare—evidence that could just as well be used for draconian measures against 7-Elevens and middle schools. For 17 years the city violated the Constitution by renewing an allegedly emergency moratorium on strip clubs over and over again. Finally, a judge told them to cease and desist, and we get this joke of a law. Leave prejudice and rumor out of the Municipal Code. **Vote NO.**

City Charter Amendments 6-16 are mostly technical fixes that the City has to put to the voters; Amendments 8, 9, and 10 change the balance of power over city appointments. Number 8 would require that the directors of the Finance, Parks, and Personnel Departments be reappointed by the Mayor and reconfirmed by the Council every four years. Number 10 would give the Council more power over the appointment process for Seattle Planning Commission members, who advise the city on land use—and as demonstrated during the recent debate over downtown density, the Council may have priorities different from the Mayor, priorities that do better at keeping the city livable for everyone. **Vote YES** on all.

Seattle Prop. 1 would raise an additional \$365 million over nine years. It's aimed at addressing the \$500 million backlog in city transportation maintenance needs and would fund road and bridge repairs, pedestrian safety projects, additional bus hours, and bike lanes and trails. **Vote YES.** ■

[Candidates]
Because of its nonprofit status, Real Change is restricted from taking a position for or against those seeking public office. To read candidates' words on issues that matter, turn to our Voter Guide on pages 6 and 7.

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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.

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

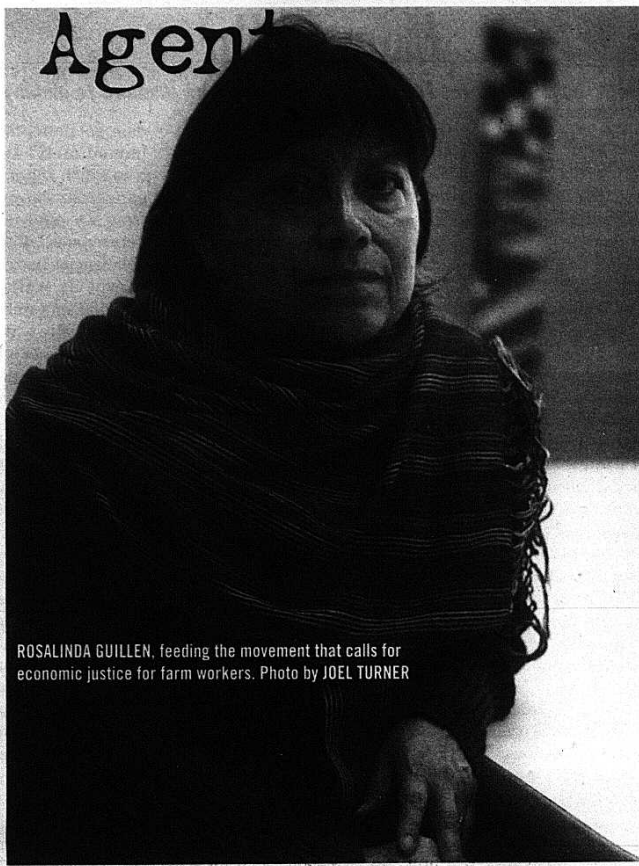
Rosalinda Guillén was 10 when she and her family left her home in Mexico, heading north by car. Three days later, they arrived in La Conner, WA, where her father was to work as foreman of a strawberry farm. She found the experience of leaving all she knew behind traumatizing. "That's why I'm so passionate about immigrant rights," she says.

That passion truly ignited 25 years later, when she rediscovered her Catholic faith. This calling coincided with a knock on her door: it was Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition, asking her to join. Once in, coalition members prodded her to aid farm workers.

In 1995, she helped eastern Washington farm workers obtain a collective bargaining agreement with Chateau Ste. Michelle. She moved to California soon after, putting in eight years with the United Farm Workers. A longing for family drew her back north and, in 2003, she helped resuscitate a dormant pro-Central American organization, renaming it Community to Community. Based in Bellingham, the women-of-color-led group works for, among other things, social justice standards for food.

"You can't have a sustainable food system," says Guillén, "if you don't have farm workers speaking for themselves."

—Rosette Royale



ROSALINDA GUILLEN, feeding the movement that calls for economic justice for farm workers. Photo by JOEL TURNER

In the Neighborhood's Way

Old Safeway in gunights of Rainier Valley "renewal"

By CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

Call it the face of the city's urban renewal effort in Rainier Valley.

There's an old, dowdy Safeway that stands on the corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Way South and South Othello Street in one of Seattle's poorest neighborhoods. If the company doesn't put up money to replace it, it's conceivable that the Seattle Housing Authority could take Safeway's land one day and redevelop it with a different grocer.

It's a possibility that SHA has raised lately in public meetings on whether the city should create a "community renewal agency" with the power of eminent domain in the Rainier Valley.

Rainier Valley business owner Pat Murakami says that was her understanding of early forums she attended on CRA. The housing authority, she says, said "the Safeway store is an example of why we need eminent domain, that Safeway has a filthy store and it needs to be cleaned up."

At 26,000 square feet, the store is less than half the size of Safeway locations at Rainier Beach and the Genessee district, where a nearly new Safeway of 67,000 square feet recently got a "life-style" remodel.

While some customers say the

store is fine, Daniel Scott, a father of three who lives in the area, says it doesn't stock his family's favorite foods and baby products.

"It's really small and outdated," Scott says.

For three years, the housing authority, which has invested more than \$350 million to turn the old Holly Park housing complex into new rows of mixed-income housing called NewHolly, says it's been asking Safeway to invest in a new, mixed-used development that SHA wants to see built or could build itself on the site, which is adjacent to NewHolly and the future Othello light rail station.

At a recent public forum on the community renewal proposal, Andrew Lofton, SHA's deputy executive director, showed the audience slides of what he called the "substandard" old Safeway, along with a rendering of what a new development might look like: a five-story building similar to the one at Mercer Street and Second Avenue West on lower Queen Anne, with a Safeway shown on the ground floor.

"We don't necessarily have to develop it ourselves," Lofton says. "We've been talking to [Safeway] about improving the store as part of a larger development." But, he adds, "There's been slow progress on coming to an agreement on what we might be able to accomplish in partnership there."

Safeway spokeswoman Cherie Myers says there are no plans to remodel the store because it's waiting to see what development light rail brings. Safeway is committed to upgrading its inner-city stores, but, "Until we know about the light rail," she says, "you can't put a bunch of money into that location."

As a local resident who doesn't have a car and has to walk to the store, Scott says there's another reason for this chicken-and-egg standoff.

"It's a poor-ass neighborhood," he says. "I think a lot of people don't complain." ■

Just Heard...

Unsafe Harbor

No one's really sure of the exact level of toxins housed in the soil of Harbor Island's East Waterway. That's why the Port of Seattle, under an administrative order from the Environmental Protection Agency, has consented to launch a comprehensive sediment study of the world's second largest man-made island.

Expected to take three years, the investigation will assess what risks the poisons — a potential combination of PCBs, metals, and pesticides — pose to humans and the environment. Past contamination from a secondary lead smelter, along with the release of hazardous substances from other area industrial operations, caused Harbor Island to be placed on the EPA's National Priorities List in 1993. East Waterway, the site covered under the current study, remains the last operable unit in the Harbor Island Superfund site where no decision on a final cleanup has yet to be made.

—Rosette Royale

Renew yourself

Mount Baker neighborhood activist Pat Murakami has written the Seattle City Council with a budget request aimed at stopping the city from creating a "community renewal agency" with the power to condemn property in Rainier Valley.

Murakami has formed a group called Many Cultures, One Voice to oppose the CRA plan. One way to do that is to get the city to stop paying the contractor at the Southeast District Council who's been holding meetings to solicit community opinions.

"We respectfully request the line item for \$70,000 for the CRA outreach consultant be removed from the proposed budget," Murakami wrote the council. "Outreach to date has been woefully inadequate and has never been objective."

MCOM plans to hold its second meeting Nov. 1, 7 p.m., at the Mount Baker Community Club, 2811 Mount Rainier Dr. S., Seattle. For information, call (206) 478-9038.

Getting the boot?

Redevelopment and gentrification are moving faster than ever in Seattle — something the Seattle Coalition of Anti-Racist Whites takes issue with.

The group plans a panel discussion next week that will look at how the city's low- and middle-income workers are being forced out and what, if anything, people can do about it. Among the topics, speakers will address the decline in the Central District's African-American population, which the city says dropped from 50 percent to 35 percent between 1990 and 2000, and the future development of Yesler Terrace's public housing complex.

The panel takes place Nov. 8, 6 p.m. (starting with a potluck), at the Cascade People's Center, 309 Pontius Ave. N., Seattle. Questions? E-mail delila@riseup.net.

—Cydney Gillis

Shelf life: Gunk in the milk aisle at the Othello Street Safeway in the Rainier Valley, where a "community renewal" agency to redevelop commercial properties is being proposed. Photo by Katia Roberts



Mopped Up

Happy with janitors' benefits, Gates Foundation won't pressure landlord to employ union workers

By ADAM HYLIA
Editor

The Gates Foundation "is trying to save the world ... but the three or four janitors who work in this building they overlook."

—Sergio Salinas,
Local 6 president

The office building at 1551 Eastlake Avenue East is home to the \$31.9 billion Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, one of the world's wealthiest charities. And the workers who clean the place are no longer union.

That's because the building's owner, Alexandria Properties, abruptly canceled its cleaning contract with the unionized company Metropolitan Building Maintenance and went to a non-union contractor at the end of September.

Service Employees International Union representatives, including Sergio Salinas, president of Local 6, which represented the four union workers who cleaned the building, are meeting Friday, Nov. 3, with staff at the Gates Foundation. Salinas says he'll ask the charity to pressure their landlord to oust the non-union contractor and put union workers back on the job.

"They have a say on this issue," Salinas says. The Gates Foundation "is trying to save the world" with its donations, "but the three or four janitors who work in this building they overlook."

Gates policy advisor Monica Harrington says the foundation already exercised all the muscle it plans to. And she downplays the get-together's import.

"I wouldn't characterize it as a meeting," she says. "I would characterize it as having coffee."

She says that when office staff found out new janitors were on the job, they asked Alexandria to ensure workers have health benefits and an "attractive" wage.

"Fundamentally, we believe that a fair wage and benefits package includes family medical, vision, and dental, and we have asked the landlord to ensure that that happens," she says.

Moreover, it's on the Gates dime. "When the question came up about the wage and benefits package, we said, 'We want to augment that package.'"

The health benefits offered by each contractor may differ; SEIU's union workers, however, also get pension benefits. Not to mention workplace representation.

Harrington says the foundation wouldn't stipulate that the workers had to be unionized. "That decision is made by the landlord."

The unionized Metropolitan Building Maintenance manager, Jim Rags-

dale, got notice Sept. 29 that "effective immediately" the contract, which was worth about \$200,000 a year, was canceled. Though the faxed letter from Alexandria cited "reoccurring deficiencies," Ragsdale says no such deficiencies had come up in the course of weekly walk-throughs with the building superintendent.

"Typically, when there's poor performance, you get something in writing," he says. The super "never really confronted me" or divulged that he wanted to end their relationship.

Ragsdale says he was able to reassign the union janitors quickly, so they didn't lose their jobs.

Staff at the non-union Alliance Building Services did not respond to requests for an interview.

Peter Maglia, vice president of Alexandria Properties, would not speak about the circumstances under which his company switched contractors. He did read the following statement:

"The foundation has volunteered to upgrade the janitors' existing benefits at their cost, and we are in the process of carrying out their instructions." ■

Short Takes

Arrests seek to jumpstart labor talks

On the afternoon of Tues., Oct. 24, more than 300 demonstrators walked a picket line in front of the Westin; the double-banded line stretched the length of Fifth Ave. between Stewart and Olive. Organizers in yellow vests paced the block, keeping the picket tight and the crowd vocal. And as planned, 19 demonstrators branched out across Fifth Ave. to block rush-hour traffic. They were handcuffed one by one and led off to police vehicles.

The demonstrators included representatives of the Washington State Labor Council, Pride at Work, the Coalition for Labor Union Women, Seattle Alliance for Good Jobs and Housing for Everyone, and the Lutheran faith community.

Catherine Pottinger, one of the detained demonstrators and an activist with the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, says they were detained in the holding tank at the West Precinct and treated well: "We were out within a half an hour or 45 minutes."

The demonstration was held to re-energize the stalled contract negotiations between UNITE HERE Local 8 and Starwood Hotels management, the Westin's parent company, and to slate Seattle as the next success for the Hotel Workers Rising movement, which strives to forge a middle class from service industry jobs in Canada and the United States.

"It's great that the community comes out and supports us," says Joanne Pilsch, a house attendant at the Westin who says she's concerned with jobs being outsourced.

"I've lost a lot of friends to subcontracting. It's not fair that they give our jobs away to someone else that works for less and has no benefits."

Along with language that strongly prohibits subcontracting, Local 8 wants protection for the Westin's minority workers.

Magdalena Rose-Avila, from Northwest Immigrant Workers Rights Project, told protestors that Local 8 has made sure their contract contains "language that would respect the LGBT community and the immigrant community."

"My goal is to get it [contract negotiation] settled as quickly as possible," says Elizabeth James, the Westin's general manager. James started her hotel career as a cashier.

"We're looking to get a good deal for everybody," she says.

When asked why she thinks UNITE HERE Local 8 and the community would stage a demonstration, she says, "I think there's some frustration on the timing delay of the talks, and I understand that."

She says negotiations have stalled because the Westin's lawyer had medical problems, and prolonged negotiations at the San Francisco Westin have caused talks in Seattle to suffer.

"We're hoping by mid-November, to be finished," says James.

No negotiations have commenced since last Tuesday's demonstration.

In late Sept., workers from 13 hotels in San Francisco ratified new contracts negotiated by UNITE HERE Local 2. More than 2,000 people

protested and more than 350 people were arrested in civil disobedience actions on the road to new contracts.

—Billy Joyce



Escape from WASLtraz

ALPHIE WILY, KAYDY SOURIYA, AND DINORAH FLORES PLAY INCARCERATED STUDENTS DURING A REHEARSAL OF THE WASL HAUNTED HIGH, WHICH TOOK PLACE FRI., OCT. 27, AT THE YOUNGSTOWN CULTURAL ARTS CENTER. THE EVENT, WHICH WAS PART OF THE SEATTLE YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROJECT'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST HIGH STAKES TESTING, PORTRAYED HOW THE WASHINGTON ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING DISADVANTAGES STUDENTS OF COLOR, LOW-INCOME STUDENTS, ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

PHOTO BY JOEL TURNER

Mix and Match

Children of the Revolution finds message of peace, themselves

By DENA BURKE
Contributing Writer

[Listen]
COTR's Eric
Jaeger and
Encarnación play
Flamenco Tues.,
Nov. 7 at the
Capitol Club,
414 E. Pine St.
on Capitol Hill. To
listen to and buy
music, including
their new album
*Life, Love, and
Guantánamo Bay*:
www.cotrmusic.com.

Eight years ago guitarist Eric "El Comanche" Jaeger and vocalist Vassili were telemarketers living in a condemned house on stilts. They began experimenting with music, met Encarnación, a Barcelona-born flamenco dancer and guitarist who like Vassili goes by just one name, and soon the band Children of the Revolution was born. With seven core members who hail from across the globe, the group blends Greek, Middle Eastern, Latin, and Native American sounds to create their own unique songs.

Their performances have the intensity of a rock concert, but feature the diverse styles of flamenco, salsa, R&B, and hip hop. They often share the stage with guest musicians, flamenco and belly dancers, and sometimes a full choir. The band members also make room onstage for each other, diverting from the contemporary trend of bands of instrumentalists with one lead singer.

Their fans have packed the Paramount Theater and Benaroya Hall, and COTR once turned away 2,000 fans from Meany Hall when the building reached maximum capacity.

Jaeger, lead flamenco guitarist, and Vassili collaborate to write the music, and they describe it as writing for an orchestra, because of the wealth of talent and multi-instrumentalists in the group. At their disposal are flamenco and electric guitar, six-string electric violin, electric bass, Middle Eastern and Latin percussion, the ney (an end-blown flute), and the bouzouki, a pear-shaped stringed instrument similar to a mandolin.

With their crowd of eclectic instruments, Jaeger and Vassili strive to create each song as a unique story with its own philosophy. Many of their songs are autobiographical. "Chapter One" tells the struggles, happiness, and unforgettable love found in Vassili's three-year relationship with a woman who was HIV-positive.

While their songs also carry messages of unity and peace, this was not their original goal. It happened as the multi-ethnic and multicultural band members became a family and saw their friendships overcome boundaries.

"It happened organically," explains Jaeger. The act of bringing people together in harmony regardless of country, culture, religion, sexual orientation, or age is "shown in the face of our audience," says Vassili.

With the messages of peace and unity, the band had attempted to avoid major political statements, but in a post-Sept. 11 era, they found that to be nearly impossible.

"We had an Iraqi on stage whose mother was being bombed," says Vassili, speaking of Middle Eastern and Latin percussionist Mustafa "Hoof" Alkhedidary. While they refuse to support a specific political party, they are adamantly in support of human rights.

COTR poetically spoke out against the U.S. overseas detainment with their song "Guantánamo Bay," which includes the lyrics, "Now we're locking up the Muslims just like we did to the Japanese." It has been censored at the occasional concert venue, and some stores have refused to carry their CD. Vassili defends the song as being anything but political. "It's not politics. It's logic," he says.

To expand their fan base, they have embraced the Internet's ability to disperse music. Fans can purchase and

download individual songs and entire albums from their web site, and watch high-quality videos of concerts for free.

They are besieged daily by the insecurities that most struggling artists suffer. "Can I really do this?" Vassili asks himself, but the reaction of the audience, the phone calls, the emails, and the letters from fans makes the daily difference between giving up and going forward. ■

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New Research Studies May Improve Outcomes after Cardiac Arrest

If you have a cardiac arrest in Seattle or King County you can be enrolled in this research study without your prior consent. Researchers in Seattle-King County and 10 other communities across North America are investigating methods to improve survival after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Getting consent for these treatments is not possible when you are unconscious from cardiac arrest, because life-saving therapies must be given immediately. In this study, you could be treated with either a short (30 seconds) or longer (3 minute) period of CPR before your heart rhythm is evaluated and shocked. In addition, you may be treated with a fist-sized device (called an ITD), which is attached to the face mask or breathing tube used to provide breaths during CPR, and acts to increase blood flow. The University of Washington welcomes your feedback on this study. For more information, please visit our website at www.UWheartroc.org, e-mail kcroc@u.washington.edu, or call our cardiac arrest hotline at 206-447-5671, or 1-800-607-2926.

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Vassili, Eric Jaeger, and Encarnación (l-r) are three members of Children of the Revolution, which mixes Latin, R&B, Greek and hip-hop. Photo by Elliot Stoller



Who's for Congress?

Voters Guide: House, Senate candidates speak out on issues that matter

U.S. Senate

Maria Cantwell, the Democratic incumbent:



Health care: "I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Kids First Act to make sure all children in our country have access to needed care. I have also cosponsored bills extending health care coverage to legal immigrants. I fought to restore \$112 million in SCHIP funds for Washington state. These essential funds are covering care for tens of thousands of children."

Predatory lending: "I have worked to protect victims of predatory lending during bankruptcy, and have been a strong advocate of consumer protections and truth-in-advertising rules."

Education: "I went to college on a Pell Grant, and I am fighting Bush administration cuts to student aid. I want to expand and make permanent the college tax deduction, make it easier to save for college, to expand the GI Bill, and help prepare students for higher education."

Jobs: "I helped stop a Republican plan to gut the minimum wage for tip-dependent Washington workers. I support worker training, the right to organize, and investing in development that will provide quality, family-wage jobs for Washington."

Child care: "I have worked to expand Head Start and similar programs, provide tax credits for child care, expand incentives to businesses to provide child care for employees, and increase public funding for child care programs."

Taxes: "I have fought for tax fairness for Washington, passing our first sales tax deduction in two decades, and worked to provide tax help for college saving, child care, health expenses, a more valuable Earned Income Tax Credit, and other important help."

Mike McGavick, the Republican challenger:

Health care: "Today's health care system has too many middlemen who disconnect individuals from making rational healthcare decisions. These decisions should be given back to families through increased competition and choice in the health care marketplace. This will lead to lower overall costs and will allow more uninsured families to afford coverage."

Predatory lending: "It is of vital importance that families who are at risk of being taken advantage of have the information they need to make wise decisions. Therefore, I would support education programs along with policies that would outlaw this predatory practice."

Education: "Education is the great equalizer. The next generation must have the necessary resources to lead our nation to continued success. I have proposed increased student loan forgiveness, especially for individuals who obtain degrees in math and science and then go on to work or teach in these fields. We should fully fund education at all levels."

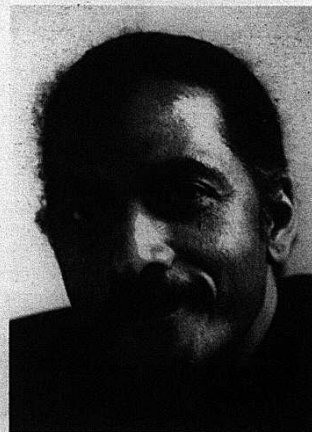
Jobs: "Every American deserves to work and make a living wage. We should increase the nine-year-old federal minimum wage! We should also maintain the low tax policies that have helped expand the economy and create jobs."

Child care: "Early childhood education gives children the resources they need to develop emotionally, physically, and academically. To help our most vulnerable children reach their fullest potential, the government should use successful private programs as case studies to provide programs that incorporate high-quality curriculum, highly qualified teachers, and a high level of parent involvement."

Taxes: "It is my opinion that lower-tax societies compete best. I also believe we can balance the federal budget without raising taxes. I support making the 2003 tax cuts permanent. We can also lower the tax burden on families by repealing the estate tax and ending the marriage penalty."



Aaron Dixon, the Green Party of Washington challenger:



Health care: "As a U.S. Senator I will support legislation, already introduced into the House (HB 1200 and HB 676), to provide every man, woman and child in the nation with complete preventative, acute, and chronic health care coverage. As a U.S. Senator from Washington State, I will support legislation already introduced in the Senate (SB 2772)." [Note: Dixon's response was cut short because it ran over the 50-word limit.]

Predatory lending: "To begin with, we need a cap on interest rates for all lenders in the state of Washington. This is doable at the state level. But more importantly, we need a national minimum wage that allows working people to survive without having to resort to payday loans to begin with."

Education: "The war in Iraq and our other military spending has drained money away from needed domestic spending, and this is a prime example. We need a program that would allow every high school student who wants it a guaranteed two years of college, allowing them to earn an AA degree."

Jobs: "Part of the key is a higher education system, and a national minimum wage, as I spoke of above. But we also need to recognize that the lack of high-wage jobs is a product of globalization and capitalism in its current stage."

Child care: "All families below a certain level of income should have access to free child care, paid for by the Federal government. Although states, including Washington, have some programs in place for certain types of low-income families, it is limited by both amount, type of day care provided, and time limits. More needs to be done."

Taxes: "As a national candidate, I would have no power over the state tax system. At the Federal level however, we need a tax system which is progressive, and rolls back the tax breaks for well-off individuals and large corporations."

How do your would-be representatives feel about Washington's unequal tax system? How would they create living-wage jobs and affordable health care? What would they do to make a college degree feasible to people from every economic class?

While *Real Change's* tax-exempt nonprofit status means we can't endorse or oppose candidates, we can get the word out about their positions. Reprinted on these two pages is seven local candidates' words on six issues that matter: health care, predatory lending, education, jobs, child care, taxes. The Statewide Poverty Action Network distributed the questionnaire, then compiled the responses of the following seven, plus six more Congressional races, plus more than 100 races for state legislature; all are online at www.povertyaction.org.

Candidates had to limit their answers to 50 words each. Those who did not respond to the survey — that's incumbent Rep. Dave Reichert (R-Bellevue), Rep. Jay Inslee (D-Kitsap/N. King/ S. Snohomish County), his opponent Larry Isumael, and Senate candidates Robin Adair and Bruce Guthrie — are not represented here.

Please remember to cast your vote on or before Tues., Nov. 7.

Here are the questions:

Health care: Over 97,000 children in Washington do not have health coverage. What do you propose be done to make sure that all children, including immigrant children, grow up healthy and have access to health care coverage?

Predatory lending: More than three million predatory payday loans with interest rates over 390 percent are issued each year in Washington State. What would you propose to ensure that people receive a fair loan?

Education: People with lower incomes are having a hard time accessing higher education. What would you do to provide more opportunities for people to afford to go to school?

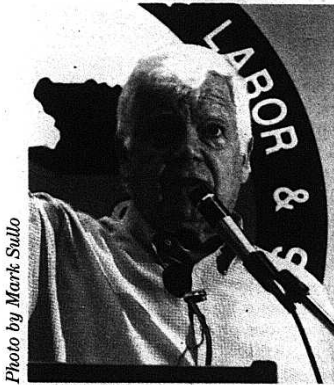
Jobs: Three out of four jobs in Washington State do not pay a wage high enough to support a family. What would you do to ensure that families are able to earn enough to support themselves?

Child care: Studies show that the first five years of childhood learning are critical in a child's emotional, social, and cognitive development. What would you do to ensure that parents with lower incomes have access to affordable, quality child care?

Taxes: On average, poor and low-income families pay 16 percent of their income in taxes, while high-income families pay 4 percent. What changes would you propose to Washington's tax system?

U.S. Congress, 7th District (most of Seattle, Vashon Island)

Jim McDermott,
the Democratic incumbent:



Health care: "I will continue working for a national healthcare system that guarantees universal and permanent health coverage to all regardless of age, medical status, or employment status. Additionally, I will continue to support and seek expansion of programs such as SCHIP (State Children's Health Insurance Program) to provide immediate health coverage to all children."

Predatory lending: "Increased oversight of payday and other predatory loan enterprises, and tough penalties for any institution or individual engaging in predatory loan practices. I also support restitution to those exploited by these practices."

Education: "The federal government should expand Pell grants, scholarships, and other funding to assure meaningful access to higher education for all students. Further, the federal government should partner with state governments whenever possible to enhance the educational opportunity that fosters full participation in the economic and civic life of our society."

Jobs: "Congress should take immediate steps to mitigate the harsh consequences of the Bush Administration's economic policies. Necessary actions include extension of expiring unemployment benefits, restoration of overtime pay, expansion of retraining opportunities for unemployed workers, and an increase in the federal minimum wage unencumbered by tax cuts to wealthy Americans."

Child care: "Parents must have access to high quality, reliable child care. Every child deserves a safe and comfortable learning environment while his/her parent(s) are working. I support childcare assistance to those unable to afford care, improved standards, wages, and working conditions for childcare workers, and better monitoring of childcare facilities."

Taxes: "I favor a progressive system of taxation in which all taxpayers are treated fairly and in which the tax burden does not fall disproportionately upon those of modest and low incomes. I support expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit and retention of the estate tax."

Steve Beren, the Republican challenger:

Health care: "Affordable, accessible health care for children is a high priority. I favor healthcare savings accounts, consumer choice, reliance on free-market solutions, and tax credits for low-income families to help them purchase private coverage."

Predatory lending: "I favor policies that promote the interests of families and oppose usurious lending practices. This is a matter for state legislation in Olympia. As a Federal candidate, I would not have a role in such legislation."

Education: "Congress should amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to its original purpose of aiding only students who otherwise could not afford college. I also favor expanding the allowable contributions to education savings accounts, which earn tax-free interest."

Jobs: "I favor economic policies that create jobs, encourage small businesses, reduce taxes, and strengthen families. Action must be taken to reverse illegal immigration, which depresses wages and forces American citizens into unfair competition for jobs."

Child care: "I support policies that strengthen families and encourage parents to care for their own children, including a generous tax credit for parents with children through age 5. Government-run and government-funded childcare centers are an inferior alternative and pose significant health and psychological risks."

Taxes: "The state tax system is an Olympia matter. On the federal level, I favor major tax reform. The tax cuts should be made permanent. The current tax code should eventually be replaced with some combination of a flat tax and national sales tax, with generous rebates for low-income people."



Linnea Noreen, an independent challenger:



Health care: "Providing universal access to affordable health care is the answer. To that end, I propose legislation that would enable states to pilot programs to cover all residents (Russ Feingold introduced similar legislation this session), by offering plans on a state-by-state, competitive basis."

[Instead of addressing them separately, Noreen chose to respond at length to the other five questions at once.] **Predatory lending, education, jobs, child care, taxes:**

"Most of these issues are addressed with my approach to government: give choice and power to people. Structural reform is needed. TANF, shelters, public housing, and other forms of assistance are merely band-aids to a larger problem: opportunity is not equal for everyone in this country."

I represent a better future: We can create change by giving the recipients of public aid a choice in how those dollars are spent. When people and local communities — not bureaucrats — make decisions, we will bring unprecedented equality and opportunity to every citizen.

For example, why do we put so many arcane rules on public housing? Instead, let's offer housing stamps, just like food stamps. This would enable recipients to receive assistance BEFORE they lose their housing, ensure that anyone who needs help receives it, and allow individuals not only to live wherever they want, but keep receiving benefits as their pay increases. We can implement the same idea with child care by offering child care stamps.

I also support increased funding and tuition assistance for low-income individuals to attend community colleges, as they are the backbone for upward mobility. Second, federal student loans and other tuition assistance programs must be expanded for four-year colleges and universities.

The obvious answer to predatory lending is placing a cap on the interest amount, and ensuring adequate repayment time (at least two weeks). Structurally, however, we also need to change our social service and education system so individuals don't end up needing payday loans in the first place."

U.S. Congress, 8th District (Bellevue, east King County, east Pierce County)

Darcy Burner,
the Democratic challenger:

Health care: "I support increasing system efficiency by reallocating funds currently used to subsidize emergency services to the uninsured to instead provide affordable healthcare coverage for all children, regardless of family income. I would also support expansion of eligibility under the federal SCHIP program to help fund these efforts."

Predatory lending: "Fifteen states have recognized payday lending as a consumer scourge and banned the practice. I support implementing such a ban nationwide. The lending industry should be required to offer lower rates, longer loan periods, and fair repayment plans. Borrowers' right to legal recourse for dispute resolution should be guaranteed."

Education: "I support expanding federal student loan programs and adequately funding them to keep interest rates low. (Reversing cuts made to college loan programs in the 2005 Budget Reconciliation Act would be a good start.) Support services that enable working adults to pursue education (e.g. on-site childcare) must also be strengthened."

Jobs: "I support increasing the federal minimum wage, indexing it to the CPI (like Congressional salaries) and abolishing tip credits for tipped workers. Furthermore, I support expanded access to preventative health care, expanded public transportation options, and progressive taxation to reduce unanticipated financial crises and daily strain on family budgets."

Child care: "Investments in early childhood development are among the most rewarding society can make. I strongly support fully funding and expanding Head Start so that all eligible parents and children have access to this vital program. I also support updating the formula for calculating the federal poverty line to expand eligibility."

Taxes: "As a U.S. representative I would not be able to directly affect Washington's tax system. However, I recognize the regressive nature of our current system. I fully support the best efforts of state leaders to develop a more equitable system that promotes widespread prosperity and smooth functioning of state government." ■



9/11 and Hard Fact

"A political democracy that adopts a war policy without airing critical views in Congress and the media betrays its identity and does not deserve to be regarded as a democratic society."

—Richard Falk

9/11 and American Empire: Intellectuals Speak Out
edited by David Ray Griffin and Peter Dale Scott
Olive Branch Press, 2006
Paperback, 247 pages, \$18

By JOE MARTIN
Contributing Writer

The eleven essays which comprise this urgent work are penned by reputable scholars and scientists. It would perhaps be comforting if these erudite individuals could be written off as crackpots and alarmists, but given their impressive academic credentials, that would be impossible. With meticulous care, Peter Dale Scott, David Ray Griffin, and the nine other learned contributors collectively build an unsettling yet cogent argument: that elements of our own government were complicit in the horrific atrocity of 9/11.

Itching to implement their designs for the military and economic domination of the planet — as well as of outer space — bellicose neocons of the Bush administration yearned for a "new Pearl Harbor" that would stun the American citizenry and open the door for an audacious and unprecedented global power grab. The conflagration of 9/11 proved to be an effective catalyst for the realization of rapacious neocon desires. And it may very well have been an elaborate "false flag" operation.

Simply put, a false flag operation is a surreptitious tactic which employs an act of murderous terror perpetrated secretly by one state and blamed subsequently on another state or countervailing political entity. This is done in order to discredit a perceived enemy, instill

fear in a given population, and garner public support for enhancing a state's security apparatus. In some instances, the provocative act provides the rationale for war. Swiss historian Daniele Ganser's essay provides a shocking synopsis of this "strategy of tension" as it was employed in western Europe after World War II. He describes how various bombings that took place in Italy attributed originally to the Red Brigades were later revealed to have been carried out by individuals and organizations of the neo-fascist Right, sometimes in collusion with the CIA. In any act of this sort, states Ganser, it is crucial that "the secret agents who carried out the crime blame it on a political opponent by removing and planting evidence."

Princeton University's Richard Falk, long a leading authority on international law, contributes an essay in which he expresses his dismay at the somnolence of the American citizenry in light of alarming discrepancies in the official explanations of the 9/11 Commission. He writes, "A political democracy that adopts a war policy without airing critical views in Congress and the media betrays its identity and does not deserve to be regarded as a democratic society." Falk goes on to give credence to the argument for some element of government duplicity in the events of 9/11, and states that deception of the citizenry is fundamental to neocon principles: "Deception is actually required to achieve virtuous leadership in a liberal democracy, because the public cannot be trusted with the truth."

Two essays which deal specifically with some of the hard evidentiary components of the 9/11 disaster are ably written by Stephen Jones and Kevin Ryan. Both men have suffered personally for their outspoken critique of the official perspective. Jones is a professor of physics from Brigham Young University. Although he was not fired, Jones was recently barred from teaching his customary courses at BYU. Ryan, a quality engineer, had been employed as the site manager at Environmental Health Laboratories, a division of Underwriters Laboratories. He concurs with Jones regarding the sloppy science employed by officialdom to explain the incongruous implosion of the Twin Towers. As a result of his public stand, Ryan lost his job.

In order to properly understand what exact physical forces caused the collapse of the WTC buildings, Jones calls for the formation of an "independent, cross-disciplinary, international panel." He states furthermore: "Physics sheds light on the issue that we ignore to our peril as we contemplate the wars that have been, and others that may yet be, justified on the basis of 9/11 and its official interpretation."

Editors Griffin and Scott have performed an invaluable public service in bringing this exigent collection of essays to light. It may very well be one of the most important books published since that day over five years ago that has seemingly propelled America and the world into an abyss of truly terrifying proportions. ■

The Kiss

A roaring highway disconnects
The sandy beach from a bus-stop bench,
Golden youth in springtime flower
From sidewalks home to wasted men:
There ocean air, here city stench;
There sun-bronzed bodies, here old wrecks
Whose luck ran out when pain began
To soak right through each waking hour.

A tunnel burrowing underground
Connects the beach to cityside.
A vagrant sits, all vacant stare,
Waits for a bus—to where, who knows?
Their beach-day done, two lovers glide
From out the tunnel, arms wound round
Her boyfriend stoops to kiss her there.
Each other's waist. The girl's face glows—

His lips seek hers—she suddenly
Breaks free, turns, runs to the homeless one
To stroke his rough gray-whiskered cheek,
To press her lips on his in a kiss.
She slips away like the setting sun—
Just gone, with no apology.
The old man weighs his glimpse of bliss
Against a pain he did not seek.

—KEITH HOLYOAK

Adventures
in Irony



©Dr. Wes Browning

I don't feel like anyone owes me anything for having been homeless. But the fact is, I was used as a whipping post while I was down, by many, many people.

when I do snap everyone thinks there was no warning. In truth there was plenty of warning. There was me calmly saying, over and over again, "This better stop," and there was everybody else calmly ignoring me because I was being so calm and cheerful. Then all of a sudden there was a crazy man in the house.

Sometimes it takes years. About 1983 I became homeless for the second time in my life. I lived out of a '69 Rambler for about eight months while I worked the night shift as a cab driver. I say I lived out of the '69 Rambler because the police, security guards, and vigilantes wouldn't let me actually sleep in said vehicle. Through a twisted logic I can't possibly reconstruct, they deemed me a threat to civil society whenever I locked myself away from them in my car. So I was forced to sleep out in the open where I was constantly subject to harassment. I'm sure I said something at the time to the effect of "This better stop," or "This sucks," or "I'm getting royally steamed," but I don't recall anyone saying, "Oh gee, I guess in that case we'll all have to stop using you as a whipping post."

The whole situation — being homeless — reminded me of little Bobby Lovingcup. "Little Bobby Lovingcup" is not his real name but it's so close that if he reads this he'll know I'm talking about him. Bobby was the son of my parent's best friends. I couldn't stand him when he was sane, but I had to tolerate him because his parents and

The Lovingcup-full

Don't we all have limits? I know I do. The Wellbutrin only works so far, and then Mister Smiley turns into Mister Where's My Baseball Bat?

It takes me a long time to snap. This is a problem for me, or more precisely, for everybody else, because

my parents hung together. Besides, he didn't mean any harm by being a dork — he just was one.

Then the Lovingcups moved to the Big City and one day some other kid who had his own problems threw a rock at Bobby's head and it connected.

A year or so later my parents took me with them to visit the Lovingcups in the Big City, and the four parents sent Bobby and me out together to "play," in order to leave them to their important adult conversation.

Bobby showed me a new game he said he liked to play since getting hit with the rock. It was called "whip" and it consisted of him whipping me repeatedly with a three-foot long branch from a tree. He hit me in the face first, and when I turned away he hit me on my back, oh, once every three seconds or so.

I didn't mention that Bobby was 9, while I was 12 and proportionately bigger, so I could have at any time reached past his switch, grabbed him by the arm, twisted it 'til it came off, and fed it to him. But I had to be nice to Bobby, because Bobby had been hit in the head with a rock, and you don't hurt people who don't know that what they're doing is wrong. So instead of breaking his arm I just took his whip away from him and broke it into 12 3-inch pieces, and went back inside and told his parents to keep him away from me if they liked him intact.

That's how I feel about homelessness. I don't feel like anyone owes me anything for having been homeless. But the fact is, I was used as a whipping post while I was down, by many, many people. I try to tell myself those people didn't know what they were doing was wrong. But I still want all the whips broken.

In Las Vegas, a municipal court struck down as unconstitutional Las Vegas' recently enacted No Feeding the Homeless ordinance.

One less whip, for now. ■



REAL-LIFE ANSWERS TO YOUR LEGAL HASSLES

My partner and I have been getting in a lot of fights and now I am afraid of him. I have tried to end the relationship, but he will not let me. I don't know what to do.

If you are suffering from domestic violence (physical or otherwise) — for example, your partner is frequently jealous or controlling, isolates you from your friends or contact with anyone, is verbally abusive, has a history of battering, threatens you, or uses force during an argument — you can call the 24-hour crisis line at (206) 461-3222 or the statewide hotline at 1 (800) 562-6025. They can give you information on temporary shelters, counseling, planning for what you can do once you leave the shelter, and advice and direction regarding any legal remedies.

According to attorney Kelly Angell at Foster Pepper PLLC, to protect yourself legally, you can file for a free protective order to help you enforce your right to be left alone. You do not need a lawyer, and you can get the forms in district, municipal, and superior courts throughout the state. On it, you must write down specific facts under oath that support the existence of domestic violence. The acts that you describe do not have to be recent acts of domestic violence, so long as you are still afraid of your partner.

Answers are intended for general information only and are not intended to take the place of the advice of your own attorney. Ask a lawyer is in partnership with the Access to Justice Institute at Seattle University and Foster Pepper PLLC. Got questions? E-mail ajji@seattleu.edu.

If you do not have a protective order, you can still contact the police. So long as you and the abuser live or have lived together in the past, have a child together, were or are married, or are related by blood and you suffered physical harm (or feared you might be subject to serious imminent bodily harm) within the four hours before you called the police, the police may arrest the abuser. If the police arrest the abuser, seek shelter or counseling to ensure that you have a plan in place for your safety if the abuser is released.

If you are unable to get a protective order but you would still like a legal document for some protection, you may file an Anti-Harassment Order at a district court. You can apply for this order if you have been seriously alarmed, annoyed, or harassed by a person, including your partner. You must be able to prove that the person's behavior was so threatening that it would cause any reasonable person to suffer serious emotional distress, and that their behavior was intentional or willful and did not serve any legitimate or legal purpose.

For more information on obtaining a protection order or with other general questions, you can contact: Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence: (206) 389-2515 or www.ws-cadv.org or check out the King County Domestic Violence Home Page: www.metrokc.gov/dvinfo/dv1_0.htm.



Fri., Sept. 13, 1:05 p.m., Western Avenue and Battery Street.

Officers on foot patrol in the area were walking towards the southwest corner of Western and Battery. As they approached the corner a small group of people came into view, including suspect one, a transient Hispanic male aged 26, and suspect two, a Black female aged 27. Several members of the group looked up nervously at the officers, and then turned back in the direction they had come from and disappeared from view. As officers followed them around the corner the group quickly split up and left in all directions. Suspects one and two were standing by the curb, and as the light changed they crossed the street and left northbound. After a quick scan of the area officers found a small boggie containing 2.5 oz of crack cocaine, which was recovered. The narcotics were found about 10 feet from where suspect one was standing. Officers re-contacted the two suspects about a half block away, and suspect one gave them permission to check his knapsack. It was found to contain a U.S. Military issue bayonet with an eight-inch fixed blade. Officers request that the man be charged with violation of Seattle Municipal Code 12A.14.080, Unlawful Use of Weapon. Both suspects were then released.

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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Letters

editor@realchangenews.org

Skewed on skaters

Dear Real Change,

I am writing to you in regards to the piece you recently published in *Real Change* entitled "Shredding: Plan for new, smaller skateparks gets resistance" (Oct. 18-24).

Unfortunately, this piece paints a very skeptical and lopsided picture of the skatepark planning process and the feedback the city has received regarding skateparks thus far, which has been overwhelmingly positive.

Mr. Himeda dedicates six paragraphs to a single anti-skatepark crusader, but does not cite comments from one supporting voice. I know for a fact that he spoke to at least one or two skatepark supporters. The meeting he attended was only one of three, and happened to be the only one where there seemed to be a small contingency of the skatepark-weary. The other two meetings, held in South and West Seattle, were full of positive and supportive members of the community who all were very interested in creating a safe and vibrant place for skateboarders to enjoy their sport. However, this article leads one to believe that there is nothing but resistance to the idea of a city-wide skatepark plan. I know this particular reporter is green, but the *Real Change* editorial staff can do, and has done, much better.

It strikes me as odd that a publication which so proudly defends and supports members of our community that are so often pushed aside would deliver such a biased and unfair account of an effort that strives to carve out a place for another group that is often misunderstood and discriminated against. Imagine an article about a meeting where people are complaining about the homeless people sleeping in their parks, drinking, swearing, and exhibiting other antisocial behavior. Then imagine them saying that they don't want these people in their communities: not in their backyards. This is what the skateboarders are facing from a small number of people like Kris Fuller. By presenting these biased and unchecked arguments in such a way that does not allow the reader to digest any opposing viewpoint, I think you have done the skateboarders and their families a great disservice.

Matthew Lee Johnston
West Seattle

Real Change welcomes letters to the editor of up to 250 words in length. Please include name, address, phone number, and email for author verification. Letters should be addressed to: Editor at *Real Change*, 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA, 98121, or emailed to editor@realchangenews.org.

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Real Change's "Rising Up on Common Ground" 12th Anniversary Event raised over \$35,000 to support effective activism, quality alternative journalism, and opportunity for the poor and homeless. A Big Real Change "Thanks!" to our generous corporate sponsors and all who attended.



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VOTE NOVEMBER 7

CLASSIFIED Opportunity

Peace Vigil by the Rainier Valley Neighbors for Peace and Justice, Fri., Nov. 5, 5:30-6:50 p.m., corner of Rainier Ave. S & S McClellan St.

"Waging Peace" features ten workshops on social justice issues. Tickets \$20. Sat., Nov. 4, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Newport Presbyterian Church, 4010 120th Ave. SE Info: (206) 762-1991.

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 11/2

Writer, shopkeeper, and shepherdess Linda Faillace reads from her timely book on agriculture and bureaucratic practices. *Mad Sheep* is the true story of how the USDA destroyed the Faillace family sheep farm with a false claim of mad cow disease. 6 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S Main St.

Friday 11/3

The forum "The Power of Conscience in Saying No to War" is an opportunity to learn about the pain and betrayal experienced by soldiers and their families and how opponents of the War in Iraq can be their allies and supporters. The forum features the film *The Ground Truth: After the Killing Ends*, which shows that whether a soldier supports or opposes war, the violence they endure is insidious and deep. 6:30 p.m., Rainier Unitarian Universalist Center, 835 Yesler Way Info: (206)722-4880.

Saturday 11/4

Activist, poet, novelist, and University of Illinois Professor Rigoberto Gonzalez shares from his moving memoir, *Butterfly Boy*, which poetically recounts his maturing into a self-accepting gay adult. His writing is a beautifully executed portrait of the experience of being gay, Chicano, and poor in the United States. 4:30 p.m., Seattle Public Library, Microsoft Auditorium, 1000 Fourth Ave.

In 2002, construction on the Israeli Security Wall began in the Occupied West Bank. Near large cities, the wall is twice as tall as the Berlin Wall, and most of the prime land for farming and water has fallen on the Israeli side of the wall. The documentary *Palestine Blues* follows the harsh repercussions of the wall on Palestinian families and farmers, and examines the grassroots resistance against it. 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Place N. Info: www.palestineinformation.org.

Sunday 11/5

The One World Crafts Fair fosters human dignity and economic justice with goods from local artisans and cooperatives in developing countries, including candles, clothing, jewelry, handmade toys, and holiday cards. Proceeds ben-

efit the artisans and local programs to end homelessness. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., St. Patrick's Church, 2702 Broadway E. Info: (206)329-2960.

Monday 11/6

The Safe Cosmetics Forum features a panel of speakers on the ingredients



used in cosmetics, the cumulative effects on our health and environment, and what consumers can do to protect themselves. Speakers include the Women's Voices for the Earth and the Breast Cancer Fund. 6 p.m., Glaser Auditorium, Swedish Medical Center, 747 Broadway RSVP: (206)632-1545, mshield@toxicfreelegacy.org.
Lebanese American Anthony Shaid won the Pulitzer Prize for his book, *Night Draws Near: Iraq's People in the Shadow of America's War*. His writing shows the humanity of Iraqis by reporting on their lives outside the Green Zone. He reads from his work at 7 p.m., Kirkland Performance Center, 350 Kirkland Ave.

the Love and Justice Film Series screens the powerful and cathartic film *Scared Sacred*. Award-winning filmmaker Velcrow Ripper sets out on a unique pilgrimage to visit the many "Ground Zeros" of the planet and asks if it is possible to discover hope in the darkest moments of human history. His journey takes him to the minefields of Cambodia, war-torn Afghanistan, and Post-9/11 New York. Sat., Nov. 4, 7 p.m., Queen Anne United Methodist Church, 1606 Fifth Ave. Photo courtesy Velcrow Ripper

Wednesday 11/8

Dontan Greenvald and Yeshuda Shaul share their experiences serving as Israeli soldiers in the West Bank and Hebron in *Breaking the Silence*. The military told them it was self-defense, but the reality these soldiers experienced were "innocent civilians being hurt, kids not going to school because of the curfews, and parents who can't bring food home because they can't go to work." 7 p.m., St. Mark's Cathedral, Bloedel Hall, 1245 10th Ave. E.

Exiled Kenyan novelist, playwright, and poet Ngugi wa Thiong'o is one of the most widely read African writers of our time and a landmark of postcolonial literature. He discusses his latest work, *Wizard of the Crow*, a satirical fable that chronicles despotism and corruption in a fictional land that comes closer to reality with every page. Tickets \$5. 7 p.m., Seattle University, Pigott Auditorium, 901 12th Ave. Info: (206)323-4032.

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

Director's Corner



Many thanks to everyone who helped make our "Rising Up on Common Ground" 12th Anniversary event last week the success that it was. Thanks to our sponsors, the great energy of our table captains, and everyone who came, we were able to raise more than \$35,000 to support our work.

But today is another day, and the end-of-year fundraising campaign is upon us. As we close out 2006, *Real Change* needs to raise \$80,000 in reader support over November and December to keep delivering the weekly alternative journalism, effective activism, and opportunity for poor and homeless people that you have come to expect.

Our reader support allows us to be who we are, and what you need in a weekly community newspaper. Less than 5% of our \$600,000 budget comes from advertising. That means we focus on what matters to our community, and not on generating copy to surround sex and entertainment industry ads. The largest share of our support, and more than 40 percent of our budget, comes from readers like you who value what we do enough to invest in our work.

Every month, more than 250 homeless and very-low income vendors find opportunity and dignity in bringing you a newspaper that matters and makes a difference. Please get our Holiday Campaign off to a strong start by making a donation that matters to you today.



First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

City Budget: Get it in Writing

Issue: The Seattle city budget process is moving along, but now that the hearings are over, and you've already contacted City Council members, it can be a little hard to know what's left to do that will make a difference. One simple thing you can do is to turn your opinion into a letter to the editor that will help educate the public about why people should be the City Council's first priority.

Background: Writing a letter to the editor is a great way to communicate your view to the community and to elected officials who read those letters to get a sense of public opinion. The letters section is one of the most widely read sections of any newspaper. Enough people submitting letters on a particular topic can even shape a newspaper's coverage or editorial position, because editors use them to gauge interest on issues.

Some tips for making your letter effective:

- Keep it short and focused, no more than 200 words.

- Make it relevant to something you've read in the paper. Check out the coverage of the budget hearing, for example, and reference that. Relate it to a story that makes it easy to point out competing priorities, such as a story about the Viaduct. Or connect it to the upcoming election.

- Write as though you're talking to the editor, not the general public, but with an audience.

Below are talking points for your letter on the City of Seattle budget, but be sure to rewrite these, using your own language, and make it personal.

- In the past 5 years, since the dot.com crash and 9-11, there has been a severe economic downturn. Many more people in our communities needed help.
- This year the City coffers are larger—in fact the City has \$73 million more to spend in 2007 than it did in 2006.
- Now that there is greater City revenue, the Council has the opportunity to step up and make decisions to invest in people.
- There are competing priorities, but meeting people's basic needs for food, shelter, health care, etc. should come first. Since the City is in a good economic position right now, we can afford to take care of human needs, and still address other important things like transportation, parks, and police.
- Meeting human needs is the most urgent use of public money and now is the time to fund the Seattle Human Services Coalition recommendations.

Action: Pick ONE of the newspapers below and send a letter today (and if you wouldn't mind blind copying organizer@realchangenews.org, we'd appreciate it so we can keep track of the response.)

Seattle PI: editpage@seattlepi.com

Seattle Times: opinion@seattletimes.com

The Stranger: editor@thestranger.com

Seattle Medium: chrisb@mediumnews.net

Northwest Asian Weekly: info@nwasiaweekly.com

Pacific Publishing Co.:

www.pacificpublishingcompany.com (where you can find emails for neighborhood papers like the *Capitol Hill Times*, the *Bellevue Messenger*, etc.)

*If you haven't yet contacted City Council members, you can still do that too. Send a quick letter by visiting www.socialjusticenow.org.

FASHION, Continued from Page 1

safe cosmetics. Take, for example, the scalp-burning hair relaxers that Eaves, an African American, says many Black women use their whole lives.

Women who work in nail salons are often Southeast Asians, she says, many of them first-generation immigrants who aren't in a position to speak up about the problem.

After some information on phthalates was translated for a manager at the Queen Hair Salon, she insisted there was nothing wrong with the nail polishes. Separately, a customer volunteered that, after five years of applying acrylic nails at a salon, she had to quit. The strong odor of the acrylics, she said, gave her headaches.

"They don't want to discuss it with their employer because of their immigration status or because they're just trying to make a living," says Eaves, who works for Montana-based Women's Voices for the Earth. "But do they deserve to be poisoned while they're making a living?"

In Europe, the answer is no: In 2004, the European Union banned a long list of suspected or known toxins from cosmetics, including dibutyl phthalates (DBP for short). In the U.S., however, the Food & Drug Administration does not regulate the use of chemicals in makeup or body products.

Bowing to pressure from the safe cosmetics campaign, which was started by a coalition of nonprofit groups in 2002, some manufacturers, including Sally Hansen, Orly International, OPI and Unilever (the maker of Suave products), have agreed to remove DBP from their products.

Others refuse, arguing that trace exposure to dibutyl phthalate is safe. But, given the ubiquity

of DBP in personal care products, Steven Gilbert, director of Seattle's Institute for Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders, says the exposure adds up — and the effects are unknown, particularly for children.

Jimm Harrison, a scheduled forum speaker and co-founder of Bellevue-based Buldain Aromatics, a maker of natural skin-care products, says manufacturers simply prefer DBP because real ingredients such as essential oils cost more and are difficult to blend so that color and odor are stable and pleasing to consumers.

The industry gets away with it "because consumers want it that way," Harrison says. "They want it to be natural but smell synthetic. They want it to be natural but be white."

"When it's the consumer making the demands," he says, "the manufacturers will make the changes." ■

[Events]

Forums on unsafe cosmetic ingredients are scheduled Sun., Nov. 5, 2-5 p.m., at the North Bellevue Community Center, 4068 148th Ave. N.E., Bellevue, and Mon., Nov. 6, 6-9 p.m., at Swedish Hospital, Glaser Auditorium, 747 Broadway, Seattle. RSVP at (206) 632-1545, ext. 123.

[Info]

To check safety ratings for personal care products, go to www.ewg.org/reports/skindeep.

ELECTION, Continued from Page 1

The U.S. Census Bureau said in August that one in eight Americans and one in four Black citizens lived in poverty last year. In all, some 37 million Americans lived below the poverty line, defined as having an annual income around \$10,000 for a single person or \$20,000 for a family of four, it said.

Robert Rector of conservative think tank the Heritage Foundation argues there is little actual poverty in the United States and most poor people have a house, car, television, air conditioning, food, and medical care. Democrats, he continues, only employ the word to stir emotions, and "low-income status" would be a better description in most cases.

That case gains traction in the U.S., a society with a fiercely competitive ethic and a belief that hard work and self-reliance are a sure route to success, making it risky to promote a national goal of helping the poor.

What makes it harder still is that the religious right has hijacked the agenda for Christian voters, promoting opposition to abortion and gay marriage but ignoring poverty, says Jim Wallis, leader of Sojourners, a Christian ministry that promotes spiritual renewal and social justice.

Wallis cites recent research by the Center for American Values in Public Life which indicates that 85 percent of

Americans say poverty and affordable health care are more important issues than abortion and same-sex marriage.

"The conventional wisdom is that poverty isn't sexy and that nobody wants to talk about poverty.... You need political leaders with the courage to test the proposition," he says.

For many voters in New Orleans, talk of political courage may come too late to dent their cynicism.

The owner of a newly-rebuilt house near the stranded boat has created a mock Hurricane Katrina cemetery, with colorful headstones bearing epitaphs for local politicians and U.S. President George W. Bush. One reads: "Bush rebuilt the city — Baghdad." ■

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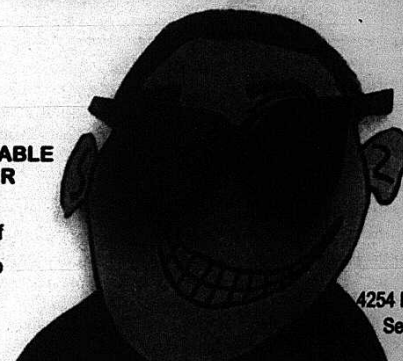
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