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NOVEMBER 15 - 21, 2006

Discontent

*With allegations of racism, morale
low at Seattle city department*

By ADAM HYLIA
Editor

In a months-long investigation into alleged racial discrimination at the City of Seattle's Legislative Department, 13 of 17 staffers of color reported that supervisors made the department a hostile work environment for racial minorities.

Those investigators' October report did not turn up evidence of discrimination, and it declared that the workplace was not, in fact, hostile. But the atmosphere is such that city staffers are readying a plan for workshops and trainings.

The aim, says City Councilmember Nick Licata, is better communication — both by management, who investigators confirmed were rude and condescending to lower-level staff, and within the ranks of employees, where a rumor mill circulated stories that, investigators found, were untrue in fact.

"The behavior of the managers in question did lead to complaints... primarily from minorities," says Licata. "But when [investigators] looked at their behavior, there was no evidence that it stemmed from a racist attitude."

See RACISM, Continued on Page 12



MIGUEL OROZCO, LEFT, AND GUADALUPE BERHO HOLD A BANNER IN FRONT OF THE MEXICAN CONSULATE. DEMONSTRATORS STAND IN FRONT OF THE CONSULATE ALMOST EVERY DAY FROM NOON TO 1 P.M., PROTESTING THE VIOLENCE IN OAXACA, MEXICO. PHOTO BY JOEL TURNER

Teach In

Local Oaxacans join movement for education, reform in southern Mexico

By DENISE HOLLEY
Contributing Writer

Television images show seething crowds confronting armed police in the streets of Oaxaca City in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca. The photos are vivid, but to many viewers, it's not clear what drives the protests.

Local residents from Oaxaca City have taken to the streets of Seattle to educate the public, says Miguel Orozco, a U.S. citizen born in Oaxaca and a member of Organización de la Comunidad Oaxaqueña en el Area de Seattle. He keeps in touch by phone with his parents and siblings in Oaxaca and visits frequently.

The Oaxacans and their supporters began a lunch hour vigil Oct. 30 in front of the Mexican consulate on Third Avenue at Blanchard Street. Under gray skies and drizzle Nov. 6, Orozco explained how a teachers' strike swelled into a movement to reform the state government.

"The government is practically destroying the state," Orozco said.

Teachers go on strike every year in May for better salaries and classroom supplies, Orozco said. But instead of negotiating, the new governor of Oaxaca, Ulisis Ruiz, called in the police on June 14. When police fired on the

strikers and made arrests, residents set up barricades and joined the teachers, forming the Asamblea Popular del Pueblo de Oaxaca (APPO). They are demanding that Ruiz resign.

Luis Martínez, a young cook from Oaxaca who stood in the rain by the consulate, said one of the police bullets hit his mother in the leg. She and his father had joined the masses in the streets of Oaxaca City. While she recuperated in the hospital, his father returned to the protest, Martínez said.

U.S. media "only show the negative and imply that the people want to be violent," Martínez said. "We're trying to build a better society."

The teachers' strike barely got a mention on U.S. news until an American photographer was shot and killed in late October, said Naomi Fernández of Edmonds. "Unfortunately, that's what it took to elevate the struggle to an international level."

As a former teacher in Oaxaca, Fernández understands the issues. She and three other teachers were sent to a remote town where they taught classes in homes. Many of the children spoke an indigenous language and struggled to learn in Spanish, Fernández said.

BLUE SMILE

Adding 30 cops and supporting social services can make us all feel a little happier.

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GREEN FLIGHT

Zero-energy townhomes, shunning a life downtown, set their sights on the 'burbs.

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RED CENTER

Strapped for cash, school district wants to hear down on University Heights for mo' money.

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ROOT CANAL

In Occidental Park ruling, judge pulls a fast one: remaining trees deserve their own study.

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BLOOM'S DAY

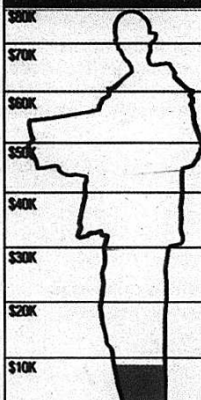
She's fought for women's rights for more than 20 years. Now, Marcy Bloom receives an ACLU honor.

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[Moving on up]

Last week, *Real Change* raised another \$3,222 toward our \$80,000 year-end goal. Thank you to everyone who has helped us reach \$8,536 in the first two weeks. We have six more weeks to make our goal and need

your help. Please become a *Real Change* supporter. Visit our website at real-change.news.org or use the coupon on page 12 to make your gift today.



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Police, Plus

City Council's public safety spending will get at the roots of crime

By NICK LICATA
Guest Writer

While Seattle has lower murder, rape, and assault rates than most comparable cities across the nation, we do have one of the highest property crime rates. This problem must be addressed, and one of the best ways to do so is to increase police visibility on the streets and in and around our schools, libraries, and other public places.

The Seattle City Council broke new ground in this year's budget with a comprehensive approach to prevent, reduce, and address crime and its impacts. We have developed a \$6 million Public Safety Package of changes for 2007 and 2008, addressing the public call for increased police staffing and the need for youth intervention and crime prevention programs and programs that link human services and public safety.

This package is another of several outcomes of the council's Citywide Neighborhood Crime Forum held in the spring of 2005. The forum was an unprecedented opportunity for more than 200 residents, police precinct commanders, and councilmembers to discuss how to work together across the city to promote security for each of our neighborhoods.

Although there has been much focus on the number of new officers needed by Seattle's police force, increasing the number alone will not necessarily reduce crime, as confirmed by criminal justice studies of metropolitan areas across the nation. For instance, San Jose has the fewest police per capita of the seven cities that are accepted as comparable to Seattle, yet its crime rate is the lowest, while San Francisco has more police and more crime than we do.

When comparing Seattle to these seven comparable cities, we have the second highest number of police on a per capita basis. When we make a comparison to East Coast cities, we find that we have more police per capita because, for one thing, East Coast cities tend to have more uniformed officers at desk jobs.

Nevertheless, while Seattle has lower murder, rape, and assault rates than most comparable cities across the nation, we do have one of the highest property crime rates. This problem must be addressed, and one of the best ways to do so is to increase police visibility on the streets and in and around our schools, libraries, and other public places. More foot beat and bike patrols would go a long way to reduce outdoor drug markets, car prowls, and car thefts. To help achieve this goal, the council budget adds 30 more officers than the Mayor had proposed for 2007 and 2008.

The council budget funds four civilian police assistants, to relieve police officers in each precinct of tasks that, while not direct law enforcement, still support a valued public safety objective. Funding an additional precinct liaison attorney for our southern precincts will assist police and citizens when the rule of law is needed to reinforce community expectations for responsible business practices and property maintenance. The council's budget also funds another investigator for the Office of Professional Accountability to shorten the length of time it takes to investigate citizens' allegations of police misconduct.

In the end, each city has its own problems to overcome. Intervention and prevention programs must be tailored for the communities they serve. Towards this end, the council's Public Safety Package devotes 46 percent of added funds for programs that focus upon public safety problem areas and problem people, while not forgetting to also address the problems that people have that contribute to our most intractable public safety challenges and frequently affect the entire community.

These are some of the programs that would be supported by the council's Public Safety Package. Rainier Beach and South Park Community Center TechNet Programs teach at-risk youth creative computer use as a job-training strategy. Reinvesting in Youth provides one-on-one help for troubled youth who need support to fulfill high school graduation expectations. The Seattle Youth Employment Program employs youth from disadvantaged families. The Late Night Recreation Program provides a secure environment for youth to engage in chaperoned recreational activities. Crime prevention efforts of Seattle Housing Authority communities provide community-building skills to residents fighting crime.

And finally, funding was extended for the council's own pilot programs to integrate social services and law enforcement efforts in two neighborhoods: the GOTS (Get Off the Streets) Program in the Central Area and the Clean Dreams Program in Rainier Beach. Both programs have police officers and social workers working together to identify specific individuals who need an array of social services to stabilize their lives and keep them out of the criminal justice system.

Seattle's quality of life is directly tied to the sense of safety that our residents feel when they visit downtown, shop in their neighborhood business districts, or walk their community's residential streets. The City Council is committed to investing in strategies, personnel, and programs to promote public safety for citizens in all of our neighborhoods. ■

Nick Licata is president of the Seattle City Council.



Real Change is published weekly and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Vendors receive 65¢ of the \$1.00 paid for this paper.

Mission Statement:

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

The Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Programs include the Real Change newspaper, the StreetWrites peer support group for homeless writers, the Homeless Speakers Bureau, and the First Things First organizing project. All donations support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

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Change

For the last decade, husband-and-wife duo Paul and Mary Margaret Pruitt have fought tirelessly to promote a universal health care system in Washington. "We feel that if countries possessing only a fraction of our wealth can have a successful, unified health care financing system, so can we," says Paul. The couple is so dedicated to this cause that they spend their golden years traveling to Olympia to lobby for health care reform as representatives of Health Care for All-Washington (HCFA-WA).

HCFA-WA is a volunteer coalition that advocates for secure, affordable, and comprehensive health care coverage. The organization developed a detailed plan outlining the feasibility of providing coverage to every resident in the state. Gov. Christine Gregoire shared the organization's concerns and in 2006 sponsored a bill to research the dimensions of this issue.

The Pruitts see this as a step in the right direction. "Approximately 600,000 individuals in our state have no health coverage," says Mary Margaret. "What we need is one health card, one processing system, one health plan: everyone in and no one left out!"

To learn more, please visit www.healthcareforallwa.org.

—Amy Besunder



Greening the Suburbs

Eco-friendly building headed for Issaquah

By AMY ROE
Contributing Writer

Aaron Adelstein, the executive director of Built Green, an environmentally-friendly non-profit residential building program, forecasts that 30 percent of King County's new homes will meet his organization's environmental standards by 2010. Photo by Joel Turner

With their much-maligned sprawl and super-sized tract homes, the suburbs are hardly considered the home of environmentalism.

One of King County's fastest-growing suburban cities is planning to change that by building homes so extremely green that they don't just reduce net energy consumption, they eliminate it altogether.

The city of Issaquah is seeking a \$420,000 grant from the state Department of Ecology to design and promote a plan for five to 10 "zero energy" townhomes or condos that each year would generate roughly as much energy as they consume. They would also be carbon neutral, meaning they would not add carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas linked to global warming, to the atmosphere, and would be built from non-toxic and renewable materials, improving air quality for the people who build the houses and live in them while lessening their impact on the environment.

"We felt that there was really a need to demonstrate the leading edge," says David Fujimoto, resource conservation office manager for the city of Issaquah.

After developing a plan for the units, city planners hope to persuade a builder to construct them. The homes would be put up for sale but would also function as a presentation center, offering guided tours led by docents, workshops, a Web site, and audio tours like those found in museums.

"It kind of ends up being a living classroom," Fujimoto says.

Fujimoto says Issaquah wants to demonstrate to risk-averse home builders that there's a market for this type of housing.

Multifamily homes account for 49 percent of all homes in Issaquah, and planners expect that balance to tip further in favor of attached housing as single-family sites become more scarce and housing prices continue to drive demand for affordable homes.

"As this area continues to develop more, and in some cases housing becomes more dense, this is the kind of home people are going to be looking at," Fujimoto said.

Issaquah is still awaiting word on the grant. Fujimoto said the city still intends to pursue the project.

Green is a growing niche in the booming real estate market. Built Green, a nonprofit arm of the Master Builders Association of King County, currently certifies about 14 percent of all new homes in King County as one of five levels of environmentally friendly construction. Executive Director Aaron Adelstein says. By 2010, he expects 30 percent of all new homes in King County to carry the certification.

"People who are interested in green homes are pretty sophisticated consumers," Adelstein says. "It's not mainstream yet, but it will be."

In California, for example, builders have constructed entire subdivisions of zero energy homes (ZEH, for short). J.F. Shea, builders of Redmond's Trilogy development, constructed a subdivision in San Diego in 2001 that featured solar water heaters in every one of its 300 homes.

Washington is still a long way from entire neighborhoods of ZEH homes, but Adelstein believes Issaquah's planned demonstration project could help pave the way.

By making even a few such homes a reality, Issaquah will be "driving public interest in those projects, because the more of them that are out there, and the more people talk about them, the more people will expect them," he says. ■

Just Heard...

Mock uniform

Attorney General Rob McKenna joined the last-minute maelstrom of sneaky campaign tactics with a Nov. 1 letter to south King County voters accusing Democratic State Senate candidate Claudia Kauffman, in pseudo-official language, of negative campaigning against Republican opponent Mike Riley. "As Attorney General, it is my duty to assure that consumers are protected from scams and misleading ads.... In politics, there are no consumer protection laws. Instead, it's up to each of us to view these attack mailers and television spots with a skeptical eye."

You can say that again. This particular mailer's design suggests it's issued by the Attorney General's office, and notes in fine print that it's from the state Republican Party.

Carrie Shaw: was that OK?

McKenna's got to try harder next time; voters in the 47th District went for Kauffman, 52 percent to 47.5 percent.

A shout out to the assiduous folks at www.washblog.com for breaking this story.

Two parties meet three

Amid last Tuesday's election results was a new stab at reforming the two-party system's vice grip on the political process with the passage of Charter Amendment Three, the Pierce County proposition that would replace the pick-a-party September primary with a single November vote.

Having passed by 52 percent, Charter Amendment Three requires the Pierce County Auditor to come up with an instant-runoff ballot for most county offices by summer 2008. Instead of choosing one candidate, voters would be invited to rank multiple candidates across party lines; the highest-ranked candidate wins the election. By ending majority-rule elections, instant-runoff voting ups the chances of independents to gain office as it ends the separate ballots of the pick-a-party September primary, say its supporters.

Budgeting basics

The Seattle City Council is on the brink of approving the city's 2007-2008 budget, and they've left intact a mayoral proposal of nearly \$2.5 million to get homeless people off the street.

Proposed by Mayor Greg Nickels this fall, \$2 million of the money will go to housing, and \$470,000 to counseling and other supportive services. While Nickels targeted the money specifically to veterans, staff say councilmembers are shifting the funds to cover veterans and non-vets evenly.

Along with passing the budget, the council is also trying to put a check on the municipality's march toward ending homelessness in 10 years. In a budget proviso, councilmembers promise that they would assess the need for emergency shelter in mid-2007, and consider shifting funds toward permanent solutions (like housing) if the 10-Year Plan is working and shelter needs are decreasing.

—Adam Hyla



The Heights of Transition

U-District community center may be in for change

By BILLY JOYCE
Contributing Writer

The people at Café Wannabe in the U-District know their neighbors well. A sign in the café's window says that one of them is in trouble: "Community Meeting: Save University Heights and the Farmers Market."

Purveyors display their goods for to those frequenting the U-District Farmers Market, the city's largest, held at University Heights. Photo courtesy of UHCCA.

Wannabe owner Wally Marsh says, "[University Heights has] definitely been a boon to my business, it's significant," but, "that's trivial [compared] to its significance to the neighborhood."

Seattle Public Schools owns the University Heights building. The University Heights Center for the Community Association (UHCCA) and its tenants (including the Neighborhoods Farmers Market Alliance) pay \$57,000 a year to Seattle Public Schools to rent

the property. The school district is reevaluating their policy that allows organizations that are classified as "youth and family education" centers to rent school property at below-market rate.

"They [Seattle Public Schools] are currently prepared to eliminate that classification," says Richard Sorenson, executive director of UHCCA, "which in effect would triple our rent."

District property manager Ron English confirmed that the School Board is considering charging market rate rent, which is estimated at about \$233,000 a year.

"The school district is looking at various sources of income," he explains.

English has been assigned to ascertain how much income the school district could look to reap in '08 if it charged market rate for its properties. The needs of the center's current tenants are certainly

one of the factors in the assessment, English says.

A tripled rent, says Sorenson, would be the equivalent of an eviction notice.

"The solution is real simple," Sorenson says: "Secure the site," either with a 100-year lease, or, he says, find a way for UHCCA to "buy the center outright."

The University Heights property was recently ap-

praised at \$5.6 million. Built in 1903, the building retains its Douglas fir floors, pneumatically regulated temperature control system, wide hallways, and basement bathrooms for girls and boys. With all of the authenticity comes maintenance costs; bringing the building up to code will take an estimated \$4 million.

Working with the Seattle City Council and King County, UHCCA has a plan in place to purchase the property from the district. Last week, the City Council voted to set aside about \$2.5 million from 2008 funds for the University Heights Center. And about \$1.8 million of county and city combined funds are earmarked to be allocated to the center's acquisition. UHCCA and its tenants would be responsible for the rest of the purchase costs and renovations.

It's not an unpopular cause. Citizens showed their support for UHCCA by sending a multitude of emails to councilmembers during the recent budget decision-making process. The messages urged the council to save the community center.

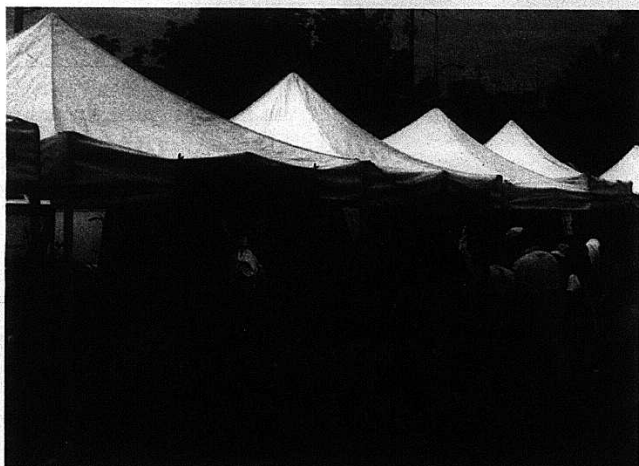
Sorenson sees the University Heights center as central to the culture of the U-District over the next 25 years. He knows what the school district did in Queen Anne, selling a building to a developer who converted it into condos.

"I think the school district learned that that's not the best solution," he says.

The goal is "serving the community the way it needs to be served," and he says he sees University Heights as "the anchor of the U-District revitalization." ■

"[University Heights has] definitely been a boon to my business..." but, "that's trivial [compared] to its significance to the neighborhood."

—Wally Marsh, Café Wannabe owner



Short Takes

Back talk

Environmental justice advocates from across the Northwest told the Environmental Protection Agency what was on their minds: return the EPA's Office of Civil Rights and Environmental Justice to our community.

Advocates made their sentiments known at a meeting called with the EPA last week to discuss the federal agency's decision to cut the office that handles environmental justice and civil rights for Region 10, which encompasses Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska, as well as Native tribes. Held with incoming Region 10 Administrator Elin Miller, the meeting came as the result of a protest that greeted Miller on her first day of work in late October. Along with consternation over the closure, the protest was also an expression of dismay of Miller's past work history: Between 1996-2004, she served as a high-level executive at Dow Chemical, which was followed by a stint as CEO for Arysta LifeScience, an agricultural chemical company.

The Nov. 9 sit-down held very few surprises, says Yalonda Sindé, executive director of the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice. "We knew going in she wasn't going to change her mind [on closing the office]," says Sindé. "That was made clear at the outset."

Instead, Sindé says that six advocates — three in person, another three via telephone — wanted Miller and five other EPA officials to consider the implications of the decision on the affected communities. She says that while staff seemed to be sensitive to their worries, a few administrators in attendance didn't appear to comprehend the health issues that poor people and communities of color face. Miller, adds Sindé, admitted that she would like to know more of those issues, which include, on the local level, health impacts of freeway exhaust to residents of the International District and the toxins plaguing low-income neighborhoods that abut the Duwamish River, a federal Superfund site. "But she wouldn't budge on the decision," says Sindé.

According to the EPA, last month's announcement to remove the office will allow for the agency to achieve a proper supervisor-to-staff ratio in anticipation of future budget cuts. But Sindé says that no immediate budget savings stemming from the closure have yet to reveal themselves.

Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition Coordinator BJ Cummings, also in attendance, says advocates are worried that the office's closure will lead to a further decline in addressing the health issues of ethnic communities. Even though EPA higher-ups contend that their decision will make little difference, Cum-

mings says those who work on the ground say that now, their work will be more difficult.

Cummings says that advocates will not give up fighting for the Region 10's now-closed office: "We want it back."

—Rosette Royale

Soon to be remembered

Hoping to build a memorial dedicated to the remembrance of the homeless who have died outside in King County, members of the Women's Housing Equality and Enhancement League (WHEEL) announced Tuesday the Seattle Parks Department's cooperation and approval of current plans at the annual Homeless Women's Forum at City Hall.

Originally initiated by Women in Black, a group of homeless women and their supporters who stand silent vigil when a homeless person dies on the streets, they were joined by community and church-affiliated supporters and design professionals to form a Homeless Place of Remembrance Committee, working to plan the memorial site.

"We're calling it a 'place of remembrance,'" said Sally Kinney, a volunteer on the committee from the Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness who was present for the announcement.

"There's no other place and time for these people to be remembered."

According to WHEEL, over 200 homeless people have died outside or by violence in King County during the past six years, 37 of whom died in 2006.

In November 2005, the Seattle City Council unanimously passed a resolution supporting the Homeless Place of Remembrance as a public memorial in a public space. In early 2006, WHEEL chose Victor Steinbrueck Park as the best place to site the memorial.

"We in the committee felt it was the best of all the sites we looked at," Kinney said. "It's a place that draws a diverse group of people, visitors, residents, and homeless alike, has high visibility, and is beautiful."

Recently, the Seattle Parks Department has begun to work with the committee.

"We're very appreciative of the Parks Department and City Council, who have embraced what we're trying to do," Kinney said. Senior parks staff "have authority over the final design of the site, but they've been nothing but cordial and congenial to us."

Kinney is hopeful the memorial will be completed in a year.

—Kevin Himeda

Root Cause

Judge tells Parks Dept. to study health of Pioneer Square trees

By CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

"The health, safety, and future of these trees is an issue. Nobody looked at this. It wasn't pursued by Parks adequately in terms of the impact on the remaining trees."

—Superior Court Judge John Erlick

A year after Pioneer Square activists took the city to court over a remodel of Occidental Park, a judge ruled last week that they were right: The city did not follow procedure before destroying the park's pergola and cutting down 17 of its 60 trees.

But, given that the city already removed the trees and pergola in March, along with the park's cobblestones, Superior Court Judge John Erlick took a long pause last Thursday while he considered what to do for the park's remaining London plane trees, which activists have argued could be killed by the remodel.

The trees, pergola, and cobblestones formed a European-type square often used by the homeless. Though the park was a Pioneer Square addition that opened in 1971, it is part of a historic district where, the judge agreed, city law prohibits removing a structure without a planned replacement, which must have district approval and financing before an older structure is torn down.

The judge ruled that the pergola's removal had neither, and that a city hearing examiner who previously heard the case had no jurisdiction on the pergola, an issue of compliance that he sent back to the Department of Neighborhoods to address.

Erlick also criticized the Parks Department for issuing an environmental "declaration of non-significance," or DNS, without studying what would happen to the remaining 43 London plane trees. The activists, led by Bif Brigman and Elle Tracy, have argued that paving over them prevents water from getting to their roots.

"The health, safety, and future of these trees is an issue," Erlick said. "Nobody looked at this. It wasn't pursued by Parks adequately in terms of the impact on the remaining trees."

"The petitioners have a legitimate argument here that they have the best interest of the community and trees at heart," the judge said. "This needs to be resolved."

Though Erlick has yet to issue his final ruling, which is not due until after the first of the year, he said he would send the matter back to Parks to conduct an analysis on the remaining trees — an idea that Brigman's attorney, Jim Klauser, called the fox guarding the henhouse.

"I think the city should follow their own rules," Brigman said after the ruling. But, "If [the Parks Department] already had a flawed process, how are we supposed to have faith in them that, oh, all of a sudden they're going to have an authentic one?"

The possible impact on the remaining trees wasn't put into the original DNS, says Parks spokesperson Dewey Potter, "because we have professional arborists on staff and we knew they would be fine."

"We will go back and re-do it," Dewey says. Then, "It's likely we will re-issue the declaration of non-significance." ■

Pioneer Square activist Bif Brigman, left, talks with his attorney Jim Klauser during a hearing on the recent remodel of Occidental Park in Pioneer Square at the King County courthouse on Thurs., Nov. 9.
Photo by Joel Turner



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Devotion

Marcy Bloom is on a lifetime quest to destigmatize abortion and give women power over their reproductive health

By CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

"The phrase 'partial-birth abortion' is anti-choice rhetoric — a woman is either having a baby or having an abortion. It's the smoke-and-mirrors propaganda that's used to scare the U.S. public into thinking that women are having abortions cavalierly, casually, and very late in pregnancy, when actually very rarely are these operations needed."

My first meeting with Marcy Bloom in the early 1980s was awkward, to say the least.

I was in a room full of women who were lying on mats or squatting low to fiddle with inserting different types of cervical caps — a more natural, European version of a diaphragm that would later be approved for U.S. use as a result of the clinical study that I participated in that day with Bloom.

Over the years, the cervical cap has served me well: It weaned me from paying a drug company for a hormone-packed Pill. What's more, it gave me control of my reproductive cycle — a concept to which Marcy Bloom, the now-retired director of Seattle's Aradia Women's Health Center, has devoted her entire life.

As a college student in New York, she volunteered at one of the first women's clinics in the U.S. to perform legal abortions. She took over Aradia in 1987, taking it from a small collective that operated out of a house to its current First Hill clinic and a budget of \$1.2 million before retiring in May.

Along the way, she held thousands of hands, lobbied hard, and stood up to an evangelical backlash that has regularly brought protesters to Aradia's door. In 1991, she helped pass Washington's reproductive freedom law, Initiative 120, and defeat the anti-choice Initiative 694 in 1998.

This Saturday, the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington will present Bloom with a William O. Douglas Award honoring her sustained fight for choice, which she continues today by raising funds for Mexico's Information Group on Reproductive Choice, the leading voice for decriminalizing abortion and legalizing contraception in Latin America.

But Bloom isn't resting on her laurels. Despite a midterm election in which South Dakota resoundingly defeated an abortion ban and two other states rejected measures that would



have required daughters to notify their parents of an abortion, she points out that the new Congress does not have a pro-choice majority. And it remains to be seen how the new, more conservative Supreme Court that George W. Bush has created will rule on Congress' "partial-birth abortion" ban.

Real Change: Why did you decide to get into women's health care? Was it always about reproductive choice for you?

Marcy Bloom: When I was 16, I helped a friend of mine, my best friend, obtain an abortion, and [in 1967] abortion was illegal. We were in high school, and we raised \$1,000 from our friends. That took a while. She only told her parents 10 years later. She simply didn't want to disappoint her parents by letting them know. We found a safe abortion provider in Pennsylvania and took the train from Manhattan. I couldn't go with her for the whole thing. She had to get into a car that met us outside of the train station in Pittsburgh, and they took her to a place where they performed the abortion. It was very safe, very clean, and he was a doctor, so it wasn't a horrendous experience in terms of getting sick. This is what class privilege does,

if you have the money. [But] the fear is getting caught and hiding it and feeling that it is a stigmatized choice you're making even though you know at 16 you couldn't possibly have a baby.

RC: From there? How did you get started?

Bloom: As an undergraduate, I volunteered in a women's clinic in Manhattan. They had just started doing abortions because the law had just changed. [New York, like Washington, legalized abortion in 1970.] My first job was to go to the airport to pick up women that were flying in from all over, many of them from the South.... One of the women I picked up was from a tiny town in Alabama. She was African-American and her parents were sharecroppers and that woman, through true grit and true dedication to her life and her future, found her way to New York, and I was in the room with her during her abortion, holding her hand and helping her breathe and stay focused — which is still the Aradia model, that there's a doctor, an assistant, and an advocate — and I remember thinking that this is what safe, legal abortion is all about. It's a woman who has no future unless she, and all the other women around the world, can make these choices about whether to have a family or not.

RC: What was your biggest struggle at Aradia?

Bloom: Finding the support and the financial resources to keep Aradia growing and changing as every organization needs to. And to be able to serve more and more poor and low-income women [coming to Aradia].

RC: Why is Aradia seeing more low-income patients?

Bloom: Both in the United States total, and in our own state, low-income

Marcy Bloom, who recently retired after a 19-year tenure as director of Seattle's Aradia Women's Health Center, will receive an award this week from the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington. Photo by Mark Sullo

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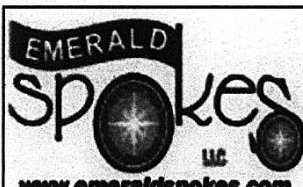
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Continued from Previous Page

women are not accessing health care, [so] they are not accessing contraception. Therefore, they are having higher rates of pregnancy and higher rates of abortion than women who can access health care faster and easier. This is the current trend of abortion care in the United States.

RC: Translate that into numbers at Aradia.

Bloom: A few years ago, [the clinic's clients were] about 57 percent low-income, so slightly more than half. Our payer mix was diverse and, from a financial point of view, that was supporting the organization [along with] our fundraising. But this past year in 2005, it was 70 percent low-income. That 13 percent shift is enormous. So figuring out how Aradia is going to not simply maintain but continue to grow and thrive became quite a bit more challenging.

RC: What are your plans now?

Bloom: One of the things I want to do now[is] write a book on destigmatizing abortion. If we could get to the point that abortion is not a stigma, it would be funded for poor women, women could talk about it more openly, the right wing would lose the steam of that piece of their movement, violence against clinics would be [an] uproar and could not be allowed in the public arena.... I never, ever could have anticipated the hatred and the violence of the anti-choice movement, particularly the subset that believes the assassination of doctors and the harassment of clinic staff is validated by God. I never would have thought that the God who I was raised to believe was a good, loving force in our lives, who is within everybody, could ever have been twisted to be used in the way God and religion are used in U.S. society and U.S. politics as they are today. But here we are 40 years later —

RC: — waiting to hear from a conservative Supreme Court on the partial-birth abortion ban. Talk about that.

Bloom: The phrase "partial-birth abortion" is anti-choice rhetoric—a woman is either having a baby or having an abortion. It's the smoke-and-mirrors

propaganda that's used to scare the U.S. public into thinking that women are having abortions cavalierly, casually, and very late in pregnancy, when actually very rarely are these operations needed. In U.S. society, 93 percent of abortions occur in the first trimester, in the first 12 weeks. But if that's the best, safest procedure for that woman, the doctor should have the right to choose, not the U.S. Congress, not George Bush.

RC: If it's upheld, what will the repercussions be?

Bloom: It could be the beginning of the end [of Roe v. Wade], which could take years, since these types of cases don't happen quickly.... But I'm encouraged by the questions that were asked by Justices Kennedy and Stevens.

RC: What did they ask?

Bloom: They asked about the medical appropriateness of the late-term abortion procedure. The ban Congress passed [said] that this procedure is never medically necessary. Having participated in many abortions over the years, [I know that] sometimes the beginning of one procedure can turn into another type of procedure. To deny access to this one type of procedure, which is vaguely defined and would be confusing to doctors, would not only be unconstitutional, it would be very dangerous to the practice of medicine and the lives and health of women.

RC: Couldn't the new Congress repeal the ban?

Bloom: The American public needs to know that pro-choice members are still in the minority in the House and the Senate. The makeup of the Senate in the new Congress will be 33 pro-choice members, 17 of whom are inconsistent on reproductive justice. The other 50 senators are totally anti-choice. In the House, 162 representatives are pro-choice, 52 [of them] inconsistent in that category, and 221 are anti-choice. It's great [the vote] was a message to Bush and a message to the world that we have had it with his abuse and his dividing this country, but in terms of choice and women's rights, we still have a long way to go. ■

The Revealing

Katrina slammed the Big Easy
hard,

hard.

Her juggernaut of wind and water
stripped the city of jazz and jumbalaya
to its unbeautiful essentials,

washed away the puppet show, revealing
boulevards —famed for parades
of clowns, jugglers, tinsel floats,
brass bands and brassy dancers—
now filled
with swill,

and the super bowl of the Superdome,
devoid of food and water,
crammed with hungry children, frantic parents,
and folk too frail for struggle.
Even Satchmo's trumpet c ouldn't wail
a blues so deeply indigo.

Katrina didn't wait for Mardi Gras
to rip the masks from the gala façade,
disclose hitherto hidden faces
of destitution, wringing hands
of privation, averted eyes
of guardians, Plenty of po-boys, oh, yes;
po-girls, oh, yes, po-folks by the thousands,
riding too many streetcars named Desire,
too many riders dependent on
the uncertain kindness of strangers.

—SALLY BUCKNER

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Say What You Mean

Nonsense: Red Herrings, Straw Men and Sacred Cows:

How We Abuse Logic in Our Everyday Language

By Robert J. Gula

Axios Press, 2002

Paperback, 174 pages, \$12

By JOHN SISCOE

Contributing Writer

While there are many books available on the relationship of logic and language, they often suffer from one of two problems: either they are overly technical or merely entertaining. Fortunately, this situation has been remedied with the reissue of Robert Gula's *Nonsense*.

Robert John Gula (1941-1989) was a Massachusetts school teacher who in his brief and crowded life — he was also a concert pianist — wrote or co-wrote 17 books devoted to the subjects he taught and loved: Latin, Greek, algebra, geometry, chemistry, English composition, and logic. *Nonsense*, his last book, is touted by his current publishers as "the best study of verbal logical fallacies that is available anywhere." That's the sort of statement Gula would urge us to be on our guard against (it's an

unsupported assertion), but it may well be true.

Unlike many of its rivals, *Nonsense* is written in clear and unpretentious language. Gula is a quiet master of communication, able to convey complex ideas in a lucid, succinct style. His subject, to put it plainly, is how we deceive others and ourselves. This deception, Gula gently reminds us, is universal. Each one of us holds strong opinions about matters we know nothing about, asserts as fact statements that arise out of prejudices and error, and believes in causal and logical relationships that are false and contrary to the facts. Sometimes we deceive deliberately in order to avoid responsibility for an error, or to part a stranger from his money, or from any number of similarly dubious motives. But most of the time we are largely unaware that we have displaced logic with fantasy and truth with falsehood. Gula recognizes that this is a normal condition of everyday life. His book is an attempt, if not to correct this condition, at least to shed light upon it.

Nonsense provides us with a wealth of examples of illogical fallacies, incorrect inferences, confusions of cause and effect, and erroneous comparisons. Further, it reveals how

the use of diversion, irrelevance, appeals to emotion, and the appearance of sincerity function as the tools of deception. None of this is new; Demosthenes and Cicero knew how the game was played. We, on the other hand, may not always be so knowledgeable. One of the best aspects of *Nonsense* is that it gives us access to a body of knowledge, classical rhetoric, that we mistakenly consider arcane.

Not all nonsense is harmful. Indeed, as Gula is aware, much of life would be unbearable without it. The danger comes when nonsense puts on the mask of reason, when a fallacy poses as a truth. That damage is very real, and one doesn't have to make an extensive study of history or current affairs to recognize its force.

Nonsense is one of those few books on the use and abuse of language — there are also Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* and David Hackett Fischer's *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* — which remain useful over the course of a lifetime. With its clarity of thought, economy of presentation, and flashes of gentle humor, it is the work of a great teacher and a wise man. Axios Press is to be commended for seeing it back into print. ■

Nonsense is one of those few books on the use and abuse of language that remain useful over the course of a lifetime.

Deep

Your eyes stare inward
You're lost in the pinpoint stars reflected in the water
What is it like in there?
Down deep on the bottom of your myriad sea?

The mask on your face
works so well on the dry lands
But can't you tell I know?
The deep in your eyes betrays you.

I start to wonder:
Will you ever come out of that calmly raging storm?
You're so intense!
Just what is it that causes such deepness in the foaming silk?

But . . . it looks cold way out there
In the watercolor waves of your eyes
It's almost tragic
Just how deep the water really is.

—LORELEI MCCANN

Adventures
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning



Those of you
Seattleites who
are saddened by
the prospect of no
longer being the
lightning rod of
hate for Ameri-
ca's extreme right
wing will have to
put your backs
into going Green
or Socialist next
time.

Here's a change. Fewer conservatives in right-wing paradises from Pissatchoo, WA, to Kissmahoochee, FL, will write angry letters exclusively to Seattle papers telling us what freak liberal losers we are. Instead they'll write a fair number of such letters to newspapers in Billings and Charleston, thus easing up on us.

The Democratic Party has shown itself to be a national party. That means that anywhere you go in the nation, you won't have to come all the way back to Seattle to find freak liberal losers who have won local elections. You will be able to find them as near as the next state over.

Those of you Seattleites who are saddened by the prospect of no longer being the lightning rod of hate for America's extreme right wing will have to put your backs into going Green or Socialist next time. Good luck with that! I mean that totally in a friendly, non-endorsing 501(c)3 kind of way.

Other major consequences of the Democrats' wins:

America will rediscover its love of government gridlock. There's nothing like the peace of mind you get knowing the government can't ruin your health and well-being with a surprise midnight-to-dawn legislative session. People will sleep better. American workers' productivity will begin to resemble that of the French, who sleep soundly because they know they can always strike in the morning. As productivity increases, so will earnings, and so will taxes, and there will be public money to pay for the tunnel option after all. It will be so easy for people to get from West Seattle to Ballard there will be charges in Ballard that "West

Thanks for the Mandate

The question of the week is, "What will change?" Now that the Democratic Party has limited control of one of the three branches of government, will we feel any different in two years, aside from the added age? Will GOP-Lite improve our figures? Will it put hair between our toes?

Seattleites are stealing our jobs!" and there will be calls for border control at the Ballard Bridge. The issue will boost Republican support in Ballard, and the cycle of politics will go on.

After the new Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, has had control of that body's "agenda" for a while and the nation sees Congress isn't emasculated as a result, one last prejudice will fall. San Franciscans will start to find acceptance in other walks of life as well. Don't be surprised if, in a few years, you start seeing San Franciscans "manning" roadwork crews (if only to direct traffic) or, who knows, maybe joining a "manned" mission to Mars! Our great-grandchildren might live to see a San Franciscan vice president!

The less-asked question of the week is "What should change?" Last week when I said we should mass-impeach a substantial chunk of the Bush administration, that recommendation wasn't predicated on a Democrat win. In a friendly way, out of consideration for their best long-term interests, I think the lame-duck Republicans should get that started now and not wait for the Democrats. That's not a partisan issue.

But I see one issue where the Democrats can make a huge impact in the next two years, and I'm confident they'll move on it quickly.

The Democrats have always been the Party of the Working Man and Woman, and the Party of the Poor and Downtrodden. They've always cared about making life bearable for all. I just know they're going to bring us real relief.

I know you all know what I'm thinking of here, but I'll say it anyway: Thank-you notes for voting!

Not thank-you notes from the Dems for voting Dem, but something really groundbreaking, namely, thank-you notes from the government for voting, period!

I'd love getting a postcard from the Washington Secretary of State, saying, "Dear Voter, Thank you for your excellent votes. Your ballot has been counted and has helped make our election a great success."

I think they've got a mandate for it! Decent wages would be nice, too. ■



Notable police reports from 2006

Thurs., Jan. 19, 4:30 a.m., 200 blk Yesler Way.

Suspect, a transient white male aged 36, was found in the above alleyway and was contacted for sleeping under a blanket laid over cardboard. He was also arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Thurs., March 9, 9:29 a.m., 100 Yesler Way, Pioneer Square Park.

Officers were patrolling the area of Pioneer Square Park due to several complaints from local business owners and area residents that there are transients camped out on all the park benches and in all the adjacent doorways, and that they are leaving behind large amounts of litter, which is creating a serious safety risk. The reporting officer took photographs of the activity inside the park and observed the suspect, a transient white female aged 25, "camping" inside the park. She was in possession of items which the officer stated could reasonably be considered as camping items: large blankets, duffel bags, and backpacks. The officer contacted the suspect and advised her that camping in a city park was unlawful and advised her to pack up her things and leave the park — which she did.

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

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

Fri., June 23, 12:43 p.m., Alaskan Way, Ye Olde Curiosity Shop.

An officer responded to a report of theft at the above address and upon arrival met with complainant, an employee of the store, who stated that the suspect, a transient Native American male aged 42, had left the store and set off the sensor by the door. Complainant stated that he stopped the suspect and recovered a plastic Indian Chief head worth \$13.50 and a plastic totem pole worth \$15.50 from the suspect. Suspect was interviewed, trespassed from the store, and 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.

Bus Chick,
Transit
Authority

Carla Saulter



Bus Riding 101: Location

I often use this column to write about how great it is to live a bus-based life, but I rarely give practical information about how to adopt one. Starting this week, I'd like to change that. Between now and the end of

the year (longer if there's more to say), I'll devote this space to best practices, tips, and recommendations to help you kick your car habit for good — a sort of car-free "how-to" guide in installments. Today's subject: location, location, location.

Some people choose a neighborhood based on the reputation of its schools. A smart bus chick chooses hers based on its proximity to transit. And for good reason. Where you live is the single most important factor in determining your happiness and success as a full-time bus rider.

If you're serious about going car free, choose a neighborhood with good transit coverage. I live on a corner where four bus routes stop, only a couple of blocks from two more. This means I have lots of options, and there's almost always a bus coming. I have to take two buses to get to work, but because the first bus stops right in front of my house and both run every 10-15 minutes during peak hours, my commute is fairly painless.

Proximity to useful services is another key to successful carfreedom. My place is across the street

from a library and within a few blocks of two major parks, several coffee shops, a community center, a grocery store, a video store, a dry cleaner, a drug store, a flower shop, and (don't trip) a beauty supply. This means I can walk to take care of many errands that others must drive to accomplish.

If you're settling for a sidewalkless suburb with spread-out strip malls and hourly bus service because you think it's cheaper, consider this: According to the American Automobile Association, the total annual cost (including gas, insurance, parking, maintenance, and depreciation) for an average mid-sized sedan in 2004 was \$8,410. Drop that expensive habit, buy an annual Metro pass for \$700, throw in another \$700 for fare upgrades, Flexcar rentals, and occasional cabs, and you've still got an extra \$7,000.

You might not even need the extra money. Apartment dwellers: You won't have to pay to park in your complex's garage. Condo owners: You can rent out your parking space and put the extra money on your mortgage. Homeowners: You won't need a garage, and because you'll be close to the amenities, you probably won't need as much space. If you're willing to make this single (admittedly major) change, your transition to full-time busing will be much easier. Plus, your life will probably get a lot more interesting. Dense, vibrant, pedestrian- and transit friendly neighborhoods are almost always a lot of fun. ■

Proximity to
useful services
is one key to
successful car-
freedom.

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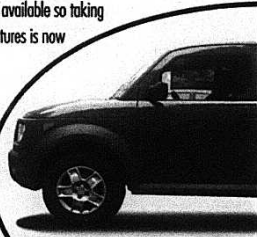
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Letters

editor@realchangenews.org

Making sport of politics

Dear Real Change,

Our form of government is a republic,
which means majority rule with mi-
nority rights. A democracy is strictly
majority rule and no minority rights.
Each and every citizen should support
the government, but how? Our support
of government definitely does not end
when we exit the voting booths. Since
our government is majority rule with
minority rights, we as citizens have to
inform the government of our views
year around. If our legislators and/or
congressmembers hear only from spe-
cial interest groups, then the special
interest groups become the majority.

How much of a responsibility do we
citizens accept for the objectionable as-
pects of our government? We certainly
can't totally blame our legislators, con-
gressmembers, and senators for what
is happening. Many citizens can quote
the name and statistics of professional
ball players. Most probably know more
about professional sports than about
their own government, and that is sad!
Let's take a quick test. How many play-
ers can you name on any professional
team? The next part is not so easy.
Rattle off the name of the following:
your legislator, your state senator, one
of your two U.S. Senators, your U.S.
congressmember, and the last elected
official to whom you wrote a letter. This
is a bonus question: can you rattle off
the voting record of one state elected
official and one federally elected of-
ficial? Professional athletes don't
significantly affect our lives, but our
elected officials do significantly affect
our lives. Professional athletes don't
raise our taxes. Professional athletes
don't restrict our constitutional rights.
Professional athletes do entertain us.

Maybe if our duly elected officials
started performing like professional
athletes, we may find something heroic
in them. Let's speculate and say that if
an elected official voted in favor of "the
people" 100 percent of the time, their
batting average would be 1,000. Well,
elected officials, what is your batting
average for the people? How are you
doing when it comes to upholding our
constitutional rights? What is your
performance on reducing taxes? How
many times do you swing out when

it comes to reporting fraud on your
peers? Do you connect or hit a foul
ball when it comes to listening to your
constituents? How many errors do you
have when it comes to entertaining
lobbyists or letting them entertain you?
How many times have you dropped the
ball on introducing favorable legisla-
tion for the people?

Our elected officials significantly
affect our lives, yet we know so little
about them. That is not their fault. It is
our fault. Might I make the following
suggestions? Don't reelect officials
who personally refuse to talk with
you on the telephone. Don't reelect
officials who refuse to answer your
letters or answer them inadequately.
Don't reelect officials who are involved
in controversy. Know the legislation
your elected officials introduce and
co-sponsor. Know how they vote on the
issues. It is time elected officials stayed
in touch with their constituents. If they
don't have the time to stay in touch,
then they are far too busy and need a
break. In that case, let's help them out
of office and don't reelect them.

Charlie Peters
Seattle

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Calendar

This Week's Top Ten

Friday-Sunday 11/17-19

Remember what life was like, back in the day? You can relive it all at the 4th Annual Hip-Hop "Back to Its Roots" weekend, at the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center. 8 p.m. Fri. & Sat. Workshops, a fashion show, a DJ, spoken word performance, dance, and MC competitions scheduled for Sat. and Sun. \$12 adult, \$7 youth. Tickets at 1-800-838-3006. For more info: (206) 386-1177

Friday 11/17

Meaningful Movies and Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice present *A Silent Forest*, a documentary about the unknown health dangers of genetically engineered trees. Discussion follows. Free. 7 - 9:30 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl.

Saturday 11/18

How does city life affect family life? Find out at the Urban Family Conference. Workshops include De-Traumatizing Black Youth, Family Branding, Partnering for Our Children, Let's Talk - Senior Life Discussion, Foster Family Transitions, Intentionality For Schools, and Engaged Teenage Parenting. To find out more, contact Tirzah Idahosa, (253) 298-9372. Registration 8 a.m. Opening remarks at 9 a.m. Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, 2401 S. Irving, Seattle.

Sunday 11/19

Elliott Bay Book Co. and ReAct Theatre present a staged reading of *The Exonerated*, by Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen. This play tells the story of death row inmates who were wrongfully imprisoned and later released. Pulled from real interviews with 40 death row inmates, *The Exonerated* shares the story of innocent people who spent anywhere from 2-22 years behind bars. Noon at the Elliott Bay Book Co. \$5 suggested donation. Reservations encouraged www.reacttheatre.org

Learn more about homelessness in King County at the "Homelessness Forum: How Can We Help?" Experts speaking at this event include *Real Change* Executive Director Timothy Harris, Regional Coordinator for the US Interagency Council on Homelessness Paul Carlson, Health Ser-

vice Manager at Harborview Mental Health Services Michael Donegan, and Rev. Craig Rennbohm from Mental Health Chaplaincy. Tonight from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church 8900 35th Ave. NE Wedgwood.



The Butoh-based dance troupe Sankai Juku returns to Seattle to present *KAGEMI-Beyond the Metaphors of Mirrors*. Director/choreographer/dancer Ushio Amagatsu has constructed *KAGEMI* to portray "looking at things on the other side of reflections" because "that's the realm of imagination, the virtual world." Sankai Juku has been lauded for their unique, transcendent beauty. Tues., Nov. 21. 7:30 p.m. at the Paramount Theater. Tickets are \$32-\$42.

library, 2026 NW Market St., 7 p.m. No charge.

Tuesday 11/21

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Frank McCourt talks about his life and newest memoir, *Teacher Man*, at Benaroya Hall. 7:30 p.m. There will also be a Q&A. Tickets are \$20. Call (206) 621-2230 for more information.

Friday 11/24

Step away from the shopping bag and join those who frown upon mass consumerism by commemorating International Buy Nothing Day!, a growing national movement where people reflect on concepts of "emptiness vs. consumption: the false dichotomy," "values," and "Disney." See www.adbusters.org to learn more.

Saturday 11/25

Jen Marlowe, the Seattleite activist/filmmaker/writer, presents a screening and discussion of the documentary *Darfur Diaries: Message from Home*, which she co-produced. Marlowe will also be signing copies of the film's book companion. \$7 at the door. 7 p.m. Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, 104 17th Avenue S. (17th & Yesler) www.darfurdiaries.org.

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

Director's Corner

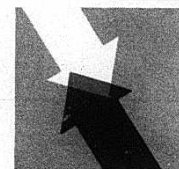


Today I was honored to attend WHEEL's 12th annual Homeless Women's Forum, which, as usual, offered an amazing testament to the bravery and resilience of those who have the least. Amid the testimonials to the warmth, generosity, and skill of the many service providers in Seattle who make survival possible was the prophetic cry that this is not enough.

One of this year's speakers was Lisa Nelson, the sister of Douglas Dawson, a homeless military veteran who was set ablaze last summer in Spokane, while he slept outside in his wheelchair. We must all, she said, work to bring everyone inside. The consequences of not doing so is more death on the street and more dehumanization of the poor.

The 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness received frequent mention, as in, "It's better to have a 10-Year Plan than no plan at all." The homeless women of WHEEL contend that the plan's focus on transitional options shortchanges those who are in most immediate need of survival shelter.

There was some good news, of sorts. The Parks Department is working with a group of homeless people to move forward the work of building a homeless place of remembrance at Victor Steinbrueck Park to honor those who have died on the street. The site will be a place of hope and healing and a place to remember how far we have to go.



First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

Tell Congress to Save Affordable Housing

Issue: This week, the Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) and community partners all along the West Coast — including *Real Change* — released a report documenting 25 years of losses of federal funding for affordable housing. During those 25 years, homelessness as we know it today has emerged. In recent years, the federal government has seemed intent on placing the burden of solving homelessness on local communities — by requiring 10-Year Plans — in order to receive small amounts of homelessness funding, without acknowledging that local communities can't solve this crisis without increasing federal support for building affordable housing. A new Congress offers new opportunities for change that makes ending homelessness a national priority.

Background: The report finds that federal cuts to affordable housing programs are the major cause of the re-emergence of mass homelessness across the country.

By initially responding to homelessness through small-scale funding for shelters, rather than by addressing the systemic need for affordable housing, the federal government locked itself into a path by which homelessness could not be resolved, and the need for shelters steadily increased. Over the next couple of decades, shelters grew from being a temporary emergency response to a supposedly momentary problem to become institutionalized as a permanent tier in the housing market of many localities.

Building affordable housing is the key to ending homelessness for good. Local communities can't be expected to fix the crisis created by the federal government. The federal government needs to commit new monies to providing funding for affordable housing for low-income residents. Housing is a basic human right — it's not OK for people in a country as wealthy as the United States to be homeless simply because they cannot afford rent.

As a country, we have the resources to solve homelessness. Consider the choices that we're making:

- The federal government is spending money on housing, but not on developing and preserving affordable housing. Over the last 30 years, annual tax expenditures for homeowner subsidies have grown from less than \$40 billion to over \$120 billion per year.
- The U.S. government plans to spend more on one destroyer than it spent on all 2005 capital expenses for public housing.
- The U.S. government plans to spend more on 10 F-22 jets than it spent on all 2005 operating expenses for public housing.

No matter how many hundreds of plans that communities are required to write, filling a \$54 billion affordable housing hole with \$1.4 billion in homeless assistance funding is an exercise in futility that can never be compensated for by any amount of local coordination or consolidation.

Action: Contact your U.S. Senators and Representatives and ask them to read the WRAP report at www.wrapnyc.org, and take leadership to increase funding for federal affordable housing.

Sen. Patty Murray (206) 553-5545 / senator_murray@murray.senate.gov
Sen. Maria Cantwell (206) 224-3441 / maria_cantwell@cantwell.senate.gov
Rep. Jim McDermott (206) 553-7170 / www.house.gov/mcdermott
Find other members of Congress at www.house.gov.

RACISM, Continued from Page 1

Still, says Licata, "Even though someone is not a racist, [they should not] perform in a way that makes people feel unhappy."

The allegations, which Licata says he first heard of upon assuming the office of Council President in January, were both personal and workplace-wide. Three employees — two African Americans and one Filipino, whose names were deleted from publicly released documents — told Licata they had experienced unfair treatment from supervisors for several years and had notified previous council presidents to no avail. Licata hired MFR Law Group, a Mill Creek firm, to look into the complaints.

MFR lawyers interviewed 50 current and former staff. In five separate reports, they looked at the specific complaints and then took up the larger claim that, largely through the actions of two supervisors, Administrative Services Manager Barbara Hadley, who has since retired, and City Clerk Judith Pippin, the Legislative Department was a "hostile work environment."

Investigators traced some particular complaints — a supervisor's racist comments, for example — back to the original witness and found that the comments had not, in fact, been uttered. Others were found to be true — for example, that a clerk was improperly paid for her time — but not based on racism.

And while 75 percent of the minority staff interviewed found their workplace hostile — "troublesome numbers," according to the investigators, who are themselves people of color — MFR was "unable to find specific actions which formed the basis of these perceptions."

This is because white counterparts within the lower-ranked staff experienced similar mistreatment.

"[R]egardless of race, witnesses seem to agree that [Hadley and Pippin, the primary focus of complaints] are controlling and condescending, and treat people differently based on their status within the organization.... Though offensive to employees of all races, [such behavior] tends to be in-

terpreted by minorities as deliberately disrespectful and racist."

The report also notes that in one of the supervisors' workgroups, "minorities are primarily occupying the hourly job titles" while "until recently, [the] management team consisted of only Caucasian employees."

Supervisors knew of the effects of their management style, but "it does not appear that specific actions were taken to address these misperceptions."

Licata praised the MFR Law Group's thorough investigation in an Oct. 17 statement shortly after its completion. But he says he wouldn't call minority staffers' responses about workplace hostility "misperceptions."

"Whether it's right or wrong, it's a perception. It's not like people were lying — they weren't making stuff up. Their perceptions were valid in the sense that they did feel that way. We all interpret actions differently."

One consequence of the investigation, he says, is a rededication to improving workplace morale and airing grievances. On Wed., Nov. 15, the Legislative Department's administrative director releases a workplan for having supervisors get communications and management training, setting up a personnel advisory group, and offering career development and cultural competency training to all staff. One senior staffer will oversee the Legislative Department's staff management, filling a power vacuum created by the quick turnover of the elected City Council presidents, who serve two-year terms.

Some of the same problems in the Legislative Department's work environment came to light in a 2001 report. The fact that they persisted, Licata says, means that not making some changes "would be an invitation to various continuation of discontent."

When he first considered opening the investigation, which totaled \$197,000, "The first concern was 'Are you going to spend money on this, what's it going to cost?'"

As interviewers uncovered low morale, "then it was like, 'We need to spend money on this, follow all the leads to the end.'" ■

OAXACA, Continued from Page 1

It took three months for their first paychecks to arrive; out of those checks, they bought books, pencils and art supplies, Fernández said. Often the impoverished parents traveled out to the countryside to work and took the children with them, disrupting their education. Later, Fernández taught school in another town for five years, then immigrated to the U.S. with her husband and daughter in 2002.

Her husband's parents have joined the protest at the nearby university in Oaxaca City, Fernández said. Both are retired from teaching, and two of their children work as teachers.

"The federal government is taking out the teachers of Oaxaca," Fernández said, referring to arrests and disappearances of educators. "Teachers have always embodied the spirit of struggle."

She emphasized that Oaxacan teachers are demanding changes to benefit their students, not just asking for a raise.

The Oaxacan protests reflect the discontent over the national election last July, said Benjamín Hernández on Saturday outside the CASA Latina day labor center on Western Avenue. He described the police crackdown as another "abuse of power."

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But two other men waiting for work questioned whether the teachers should be on strike.

"The teachers are the ones who provoked all this," said Jacob Cruz Reyes from Oaxaca. "The ones who are losing out are the children."

Luis Escamilla said his mother and grandfather in Oaxaca City were terrified by the protests and burning cars in the street. In spite of the police presence, "People can't walk outside in peace," he said.

Oaxaca and other southern Mexican states form a restive area

that has always demanded autonomy from the federal government, Orozco said. It has a large indigenous population and a high rate of illiteracy. In spite of the need, the government has closed boarding schools that trained low-income students as teachers.

Fernández, working at a dry cleaner in Edmonds, still yearns to teach, she said. Someday, she hopes to return to Oaxaca to open a school.

"First, we want [Ulises] Ruiz to go," Fernández said about the governor. "Then we want a just government." ■

[More online]

To hear more from protesters outside the Mexican Consulate, go to an audio slideshow by *Real Change* photographer Joel Turner: www.onehouseandonewords.com/oaxaca/index.html.

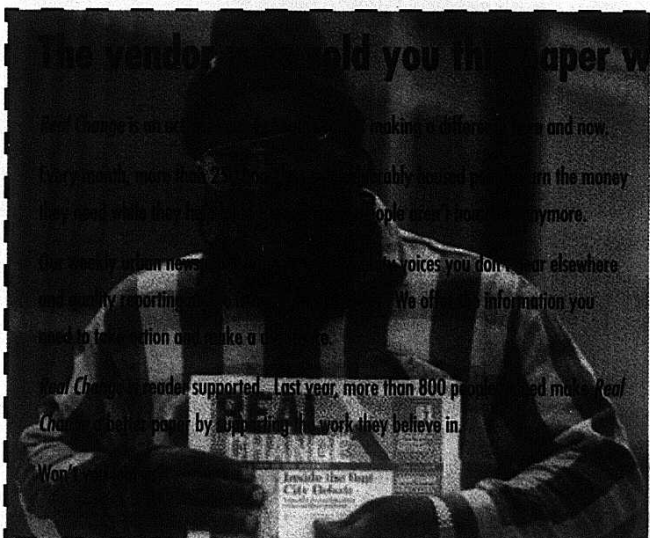
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