

# REAL CHANGE

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NOVEMBER 22 - 28, 2006

ISSUES • INSIGHT • IMPACT

## Opening Doors

*City Hall forum seeks to  
confront institutional racism*

By ROSETTE ROYALE  
Staff Reporter

John Page remembers being a star student at the inner-city Dallas school he attended. But when he, a Black teen, was bussed in the eighth grade to a school that was predominately white, he realized the students there knew things he had never heard of.

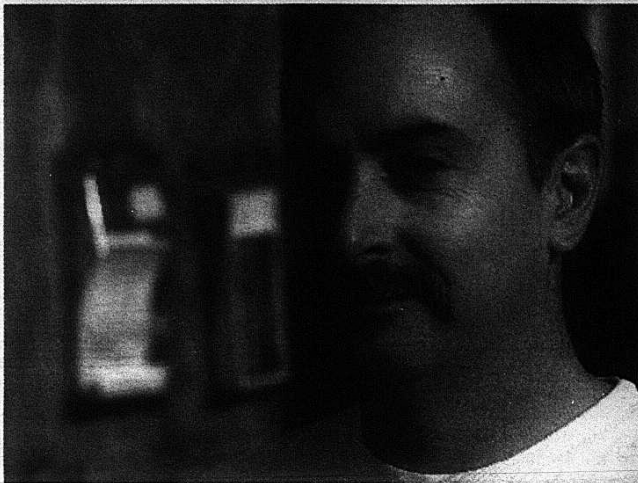
He had no language to describe why the two schools, and the education to which the students within those schools were exposed, differed at the time, he says. But now, at 42, he is better able to explain the situation into which he was placed.

"Had I had equitable access to education and been white in a white school," he says, "I wouldn't have been lost."

As for the cause of this inequity, Page is today capable of naming that, too: "Institutional racism."

And while Page is quick not to blame the institutional racism he experienced in youth as the causation

See RACISM, Continued on Page 10



DAN FREEMAN, THE OWNER OF DR. DAN'S ALTERNATIVE FUEL WERKS IN BALLARD. PHOTO BY JOEL TURNER

## Driving a New Way

*Price aside, biodiesel's acolytes sing praises of alternative energy*

By CHRIS MILLER  
Contributing Writer

Seattle's busiest, longest-running biodiesel depot is not your typical gas station.

It operates out of a converted mechanic's shop devoid of Slurpee machines, racks of cigarettes, and even rotisserie-style chilli-cheese-jalapeno-bacon-corn-dogs. The pump itself, lit by a single motion-sensing bulb, is a vintage analog in a locking trailer out front. When customers prepay on their accounts, they are given the key and 24-hour access to 99 percent biodiesel. The cars pulling up often sport stickers broadcasting "Biodiesel: No War Required."

Dan Freeman's humble but rugged set-up, Dr. Dan's Fuel Werks, has been the region's steadiest purveyor of biodiesel since 2001. These days, he sells 1,000 gallons a day including bio-heating oil.

The marketing? Even though Dr. Dan's emails all his customers to tell them when it's time to winter-proof the fuel, and his insistence that he's got a few secret "fuel tweaks and tricks" in his green energy source. His employee of three years, Mary Rock, recalls how she was stopped at a red light when "the driver in the car in back of me got out and ran up to my window and handed me one of our own flyers!"

The product markets itself through devoted customers, both through word-of-mouth and a strong blogosphere

See BIODIESEL, Continued on Page 10

## DEVIL'S FOOD

In Portland, Ore., the death of a homeless man causes a city to ask what feeds a lack of compassion for others.

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## RANGER FLICK

The Mayor may have wanted more park rangers downtown, but the City Council decides to fund human services instead.

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## MASS MEDIA

An unofficial hearing, to be held by the FCC, will allow Seattleites to voice their thoughts on representation on TV, radio and newspapers.

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## HEAVEN SENT

Journalist turned author Julia Scheeres, who's white, recalls life with her adopted brother, who was Black, in *Jesus Land*.

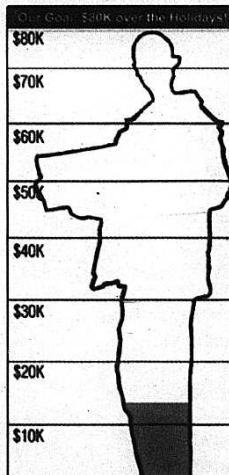
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### [Our Success Depends On You]

Real Change does a whole lot with very little. More than 250 vendors each month are able to help themselves out of homelessness by selling 11,000 or more copies of *Real Change* each week. Our award-winning journalism helps keep you informed on the issues you care about. And our effective advocacy engages people like you to take action on the issues they care about. All of this happens on a budget of slightly more than \$500,000 a year.

Please take a moment today to support opportunity and dignity for the poor and homeless, quality community journalism, and activism that makes a real difference by giving to our Holiday Fund Drive. We depend upon readers like you for the largest share of our support and must reach our \$80,000 year-end goal to enter 2007 with the resources we need.

We're asking our community of readers to take that next step by supporting our work with a donation. We're coming up on the half-way point of our fund drive, and need your help to stay on track. Last week, our readers came through with another \$4,628, bringing us to a total of \$13,164 raised since Nov. 1. Thank you again to everyone who has helped so far. We invite you to join them today. Please visit our website at [realchangenews.org](http://realchangenews.org) or use the coupon on page 12 to make your gift now.



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# Devil Take the Hindmost

A Portland man's death prompts a personal response

By MICHAEL HOPCROFT  
street roots

We believe in merit in this country, we believe success must be rewarded and failure punished. And there are those who would make the case that homelessness and disability are supreme failures, worthy of supreme punishment.

**Editor's note:** James Chasse, 42, was a homeless man suffering from schizophrenia in Portland, Oregon. On September 17, he was approached by Portland police officers for acting "oddly" and for what the officers believed was public urination. Accounts of what happened next are under debate, but Chasse ultimately died in police custody from "blunt force trauma to the chest." He was tackled, beaten, and hogtied by police. He suffered 26 broken ribs, but medics declined treatment at the scene. A controversial grand jury investigation cleared the officers of any wrongdoing, but questions and allegations remain about police abuse and the treatment of people suffering from mental illness on the streets.

**T**he Devil take the hindmost. A vital, unspoken creed of American society: that those who achieve great things are the ones who do not notice those who fall behind.

The fact that it is so easy for people of talent to fall out of the race does not seem to matter. We focus our attention as a society on the man who becomes a tycoon, not the millions who don't, until one of them grabs attention in a way he would rather not have done, often by dying. This is James Chasse's story, and mine.

Like James, I joined the hindmost, and nobody paid any attention to me.

In 1985, my life was going just swimmingly. I was in the early part of my third year at a private university here in the Northwest. I was getting ready for a small but significant role in a

Tennessee Williams play. My advisor in the English Department believed I was ready to think about graduate school. My theater teacher was convinced that I had what it took to at least make a go of acting as a profession.

Then I was diagnosed with depression, and while my professors treated me no differently, the Dean of Students was clear: I was mentally ill, therefore I could no longer be a student. My mother was even clearer: my life was over as far as she was concerned. The question wasn't whether I would kill myself, but when.

Ever since that year, I have carried inside myself the knowledge I had lost my future. There are many, many people in my position; people of skill and promise and ambition, who because of illness have been pushed not only to the sidelines but out of the stadium.

In reading the reports of the life of James Chasse, I saw a great deal of myself. So it was easy for me to picture myself on Burnside that horrible September evening, not knowing what was happening around me and unable to understand what I had done or what instructions I was supposed to follow.

I feel the contempt of people because I feel it within myself. We believe in merit in this country, we believe success must be rewarded and failure punished. And there are those who would make the case that homelessness and disability are supreme failures, worthy of supreme punishment.

The pain that internalizing that argument has brought me is endless. Nobody has judged me more harshly than I have myself. I have told people that I owe my continued existence only to my lack of courage.

Yet when I see what is out there in the community, I see there is courage in

simply finding a way to live each day in a world where you are not viewed as a person, where you are not seen as having interests. There is courage in simply surviving your difficulties, even if you can't solve them right away.

Many people in the aftermath of the death of James Chasse are saying it should not have happened and are looking to assign blame. I can accept the first part; Chasse endured a beastly, agonizing, and humiliating death. Will blame alter other people's actions or perceptions? Will punishing one person change the attitudes of others?

I will be the first to admit that I do not have the answer. All I can say is this: what happened to James Chasse could have happened to me just as easily, or to any number of the people I see every day. We are the hindmost. Does this society really want the Devil to take us? ■

Michael Hopcroft is a volunteer for the Mental Health Association of Portland. For information about the James Chasse case, visit [www.mentalhealthportland.org](http://www.mentalhealthportland.org).



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

Mission Statement:

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

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

On the Web at

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Real Change is a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association, the International Network of Street Papers, and the Greater Seattle Business Association.



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# Change

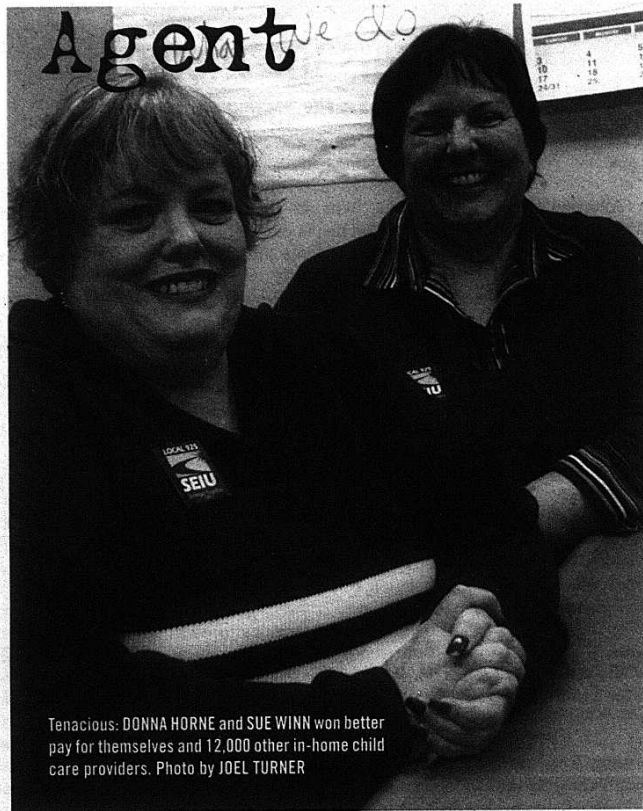
**S**ue Winn and Donna Horne have collectively put nearly half a century into looking after people's kids. Last week, they improved their earnings, along with the pay and working conditions of Washington's 12,000 in-home child-care providers.

Winn and Horne are two of the principal bargainers for at-home child-care providers across the state who won a first-ever labor contract from state officials last week. The contract, which includes health care and a 10 percent pay increase, awaits final authorization by the Legislature early next year.

Horne runs a day care out of her Lake Stevens home; Winn does the same in La Conner. Both have taken national leadership in a movement that makes explicit the connection between providers' welfare and children's well-being.

They and other child-care providers will continue to just get by, contract or no; Horne has gone without health coverage for three years. The real payoff in their businesses, says Winn, is "seeing kids I've raised become successful citizens and making it possible for parents to work without having to worry."

—Adam Hyla



Tenacious: DONNA HORNE and SUE WINN won better pay for themselves and 12,000 other in-home child care providers. Photo by JOEL TURNER

## Pro Fund

**City budget nixes park rangers in favor of human services**

By CYDNEY GILLIS  
Staff Reporter

"Generally speaking, we're more than thrilled with the way the budget came out."

—Steve Daschle, co-chair of the Seattle Human Services Coalition

**S**o much for the mayor's idea to have park rangers roaming around downtown: In the 2007-2008 city budget passed Monday, the Seattle City Council killed the proposal.

The five rangers would have given directions to tourists and tickets to those who broke park rules. Instead, the council put the ranger money toward hiring 31 new police officers and four new civilian patrol assistants, or cadets, in a \$5.8 million public safety package that addresses human need as much as enforcement.

The cadets, for instance, will engage in non-enforcement activities such as helping crime victims, assisting the homeless, and searching for runaways and missing persons.

The package, put forward by Council President Nick Licata, also adds or beefs up programs aimed at keeping youth out of trouble, protecting the vulnerable, and giving substance abusers a fresh start. That includes \$840,000 to help alcoholics or addicts get treatment and housing, \$305,000 in legal aid for domestic violence victims, \$409,000 for late-night teen recreation, and \$300,000 for youth employment programs.

Overall, the final, two-year budget of \$6.7 billion boosts human services, adding a total of \$13.5 million in new funding, which includes a 3.5 percent adjustment for inflation and \$1.7 million in city funding that makes up for federal cuts. The council also restored some or all of the human service cuts proposed by the mayor, leading to a collective sigh of relief among Seattle service providers.

"Generally speaking, we're more than thrilled with the way the budget came out," says Steve Daschle, co-chair of the Seattle Human

Services Coalition. After years of stagnation or cuts in human services funding, achieving the inflation adjustment "was a major coup for us," Daschle says.

The budget includes \$2 million to build about 40 units of housing for the homeless (with half designated for veterans) and maintains extra funding (\$705,000 in 2007) that Nickels originally came up with last year to ensure no shelter beds are lost in the city's move to a "housing first" model.

Among the proposed cuts, the mayor had called for cutting the Meals Partnership Coalition's entire budget of \$52,000, which the council restored. It did the same with the SOAR initiative, providing \$135,000 a year for its parent education and youth programs.

Funding for human services advocacy — lobbying or grantwriting that brings in support from outside the city — fared less well: The council restored \$100,000 a year out of a previous \$280,000, which had gone to help nonprofits build capacity in their organizations and technology systems.

Councilmembers also set aside \$50,000 that the Fremont Public Association can apply for to rescue its housing counseling program, which lost \$79,000 in funding this year (half its budget) from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"My sense is when push came to shove, they couldn't justify support for the advocacy efforts of human service agencies," Daschle says. "We have some educating to do with the mayor and the council on the importance of this work," and the \$60 million in non-city funds he says it raised last year.

Regardless, "We're very pleased," Daschle says, and "grateful to the mayor and the City Council for prioritizing basic human need." ■

## Just Heard...

### Award winners

The Seattle Trans Jail Policy Working Group was instrumental in helping to create a first for King County and, as a result, the group is being honored.

The organization is set to receive the city's Distinguished Citizens Award for Human Rights on Dec. 7, for its work in helping to craft the first-ever policy on the treatment of transgender, transsexual, intersex, and gender variant persons housed within the King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention. The award will be conferred upon the group as part of a city-wide commemoration of the signing of the UN's Declaration of Human Rights, which occurred December 1948. ("The Change," Aug. 23).

—Rosette Royale

### Wellness, for now

North King County residents who rely on sliding-scale medical care seem to have gotten a full year's reprieve from the planned closure of two north-end clinics operated by Public Health — Seattle & King County.

Originally slated for closure next year, the clinics got a six-month reprieve in County Executive Ron Sims' mid-October budget proposal. In the final budget, approved Monday, county councilmembers set aside \$2.7 million to keep the offices — one a full-scale medical facility, the other a dental clinic — open until 2008, when a sustainable funding scheme — still to be worked out — takes over. Last year, the county spent an extra \$23 million to meet the needs of uninsured and under-insured people. ("Bad Medicine," Sept. 15).

### Shot by the roadside

Allied Arts' re-envisioning of a highway-free waterfront takes on another dimension with Gary Sutto's photo exhibit at City Hall this month. Sutto has been displaying a collection of his photographs from under the Alaskan Way Viaduct; the images frequently capture the evidence of people's living arrangements, whether in cars or on cardboard. Lit by morning or evening sunshine, the photos show dusty, empty turf, cast-off shoes, bubble wrap, and sleeping bags caught on razor wire. In a statement accompanying the exhibit, Allied Arts puts a social edge to the waterfront's future: "We can choose to integrate our waterfront planning with [the] 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Our region can provide funding and incentives to create a dry, safe haven from violence, and provide emergency housing, supportive services, and job training for those willing to participate."

Sutto's work, which appeared in the July 16 issue of the *Seattle Times*' Sunday magazine, is up in the lobby of City Hall, 600 Fourth Avenue, until Nov. 30, and can be seen anytime at [seattleviaduct.com](http://seattleviaduct.com).

—Adam Hyla

# Who Owns the Media?

FCC to hold unofficial Seattle hearing on local control

By BILLY JOYCE  
Contributing Writer

African Americans and Latinos, who make up 27 percent of the American public, own only 2 percent of all broadcast TV stations. Women, who make up 51 percent of the population, own less than 5 percent of all TV stations.

—Source: Study by the national media reform group Free Press

**F**CC commissioners Jonathan Adelstein and Michael Copps are coming to Seattle to solicit public opinion on deregulating media ownership.

The Federal Communications Commission, led by Republican chairperson Kevin Martin, is considering lifting a ban which restricts a single company from owning both the major newspaper and major broadcasting system in a single market, expanding the limit on the number of radio stations and TV stations a single company can own in a market, and raising the number of local television stations one company can own.

Martin decided on a list of six cities where the FCC would hold public forums to get feedback on scaling back these regulations; Seattle isn't one of them.

In response, local non-profit group Reclaim the Media invited the five FCC directors to come out for an informal public hearing. Only Adelstein and Copps agreed to attend.

"We don't think six hearings is enough. It's critical that we hold the hearing in Seattle," Adelstein says. "The Seattle community has been extremely concerned about the issue of media consolidation."

Media consolidation has direct effects on local programming, competition between media outlets that encourages quality coverage, and the

success of minorities and women who own broadcasting companies.

Reclaim the Media co-director Karen Toering asks, "Why are they opening up new rules on media ownership and consolidation" when consolidation sets back women and minority owners?

Toering cites an October study by the national media reform group Free Press that states, "Pro-consolidation policies enacted by the FCC in the late 1990s have indirectly or directly contributed to the loss of 40 percent of the [broadcast TV] stations that were minority-owned in 1998."

The same study says African Americans and Latinos, who make up 27 percent of the American public, own only 2 percent of all broadcast TV stations. And women, who make up 51 percent of the population, own less than 5 percent of all TV stations.

Allowing giant companies to own more media stands to benefit only a handful of corporations like Disney, Viacom, NBC/GE, News Corp., Time Warner, and Clear Channel, says Toering.

"Further consolidation or merging of these industries means fewer voices and fewer ideas."

In 2003, the FCC deregulated media ownership rules under then-chairperson Michael Powell. The rules allowed a media company to own up to three TV stations, eight radio stations, the cable channels, and a local newspaper in a single market. And they made these

decisions "without seeking meaningful input from the people," says commissioner Copps in a speech he made during an October public forum in New York.

The FCC then reversed those measures due to public outcry and the work of independent groups like Reclaim the Media and the grassroots organization Prometheus Radio Project, which filed suit.

After the 2003 deregulations, FCC commissioners held an official public hearing in Seattle. This month, locals get to have their voices heard before a decision is made.

"When they do these field hearings, it helps with public education. It allows the public to speak directly to the commission," Toering says.

The FCC is an independent government agency directly responsible to Congress. It governs all interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable. Each of its five commissioners is nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate for five-year terms. Only three of the five commissioners can be of the same political party as the president; currently, there are three Republican commissioners and two Democrats, Adelstein and Copps.

Partnering with Reclaim the Media to present this forum are the Minority Executive Directors Coalition, the Seattle Times, KBCS 91.3 FM, and the University of Washington Communications Department. ■

## [Media Democracy]

An panel with FCC commissioners: Thurs., Nov. 30, 6 p.m. at Seattle Public Library's Main Auditorium. The forum will be hosted by Seattle Times publisher Frank Blethen with introductions by Sen. Maria Cantwell and Rep. Jay Inslee.

## Short Takes

### Down to zero

They're in agreement: the King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD) won't put up with staff sexual misconduct.

That's the overall assessment of The Moss Group, Inc., a consultant team hired to provide a review of operations and practices within the DAJD. Under cooperative agreement with the National Institute of Corrections, the team reached such a conclusion after two on-site visits, the first in late April, the second in mid-May. Along with interviews conducted with the Director and Deputy Director, the opinions of close to 90 staff members and 21 inmates were garnered through focus and discussion groups held at the downtown Seattle facility. The Regional Justice Center Detention Facility, located in Kent, was not covered in the report.

But while the report concludes the DAJD exhibits a policy of "zero tolerance" toward sexual misconduct, there are still a number of recommendations, including: evaluating the management of special populations, including female inmates, as a way to diminish tension and provide an "early-warning system for issues related to sexual abuse and staff sexual misconduct;" implementing a more expeditious inmate grievance process; and the full implementation of the Internal Investigations Unit policies and procedures, which looks into allegations of employee misconduct.

The report notes that the current culture at the downtown site — known as the King County

Correctional Facility — has been influenced over the past several years by a "number of custodial sexual misconduct investigations" that led to criminal and/or administrative actions. The result of such investigations, the 57-page document reads, has been "media attention," which has impacted both inmates and staff. In the summary, the consultant team advises that the DAJD's critics can quote assessment information out of context. "This report," the consultants stress, "should be used only constructively to further enhance the culture of the organization." Along with recommending that the department thoroughly review the Prison Rape Elimination Act, it suggests the DAJD consider a review of policy, which could be conducted by the consultants themselves.

—Rosette Royale

### Death, taxation, and the minimum wage

The results of the Nov. 7 mid-term election ended the hopes of anti-"death tax" campaigners in both Washingtons. In this state, Initiative 920 went down to defeat not only because of King County voters; it was killed by voters in more reddish locales from Grays Harbor to Pullman. In D.C., the partisan shift of Congress means the federal plan to kill off the tax on heirs won't be back anytime soon, predicts the social and economic justice group United for a Fair Economy.

However, watch out for plans to reduce the tax rate or raise the exemption into the stratosphere, allowing more and more multimillionaires to pass greater portions of their wealth, says UFE in a post-election statement. "We plan to work with our supporters and partner organizations to win a responsible estate tax reform in the next Congress." And, there's always the lame-duck session: this December, as the current Congress convenes for the last time, UFE and other tax fairness activists say they'll be watching for last-minute attempts at repeal.

Voters in all six states with new minimum wages on the ballot approved them. Montana and Nevada adjusted theirs to \$6.15; Missouri workers will get \$6.50; Arizona's will be \$6.75, and Ohio and Colorado go to \$6.85. All, like Washington's, will be adjusted annually according to the cost of living. Twenty-nine states now have higher minimum wages than the federal government's mandated \$5.15, which has stayed the same since 1997, according to the Economic Policy Institute. Because of these new laws, the institute estimates 1.5 million workers will get a raise.

—Adam Hyla

### Target this

"Big development coming to your neighborhood," reads a flyer going out this week to business owners in Seattle's Little Saigon. "Let's make sure it benefits our community!"

That's the rallying cry of the Dearborn Street Coalition for a Livable Neighborhood, whose members plan to show up Tuesday night, Nov. 28, for a public hearing on proposed changes to the city's Comprehensive Plan. If passed, one of the changes would set the stage for a 10-acre shopping center to be built on the site of today's Goodwill store at S. Dearborn Street and Rainier Avenue S., adjacent to the small, Vietnamese-owned businesses that make up Little Saigon.

A Target, Lowe's, and 30 to 40 small shops are planned at the site, along with 400 to 500 condos. Seattle Goodwill, the site's current owner, would get a new building out of the deal. But the coalition wants Little Saigon to get something, too, so it's asking Ravenhurst Development for a community benefits agreement before the City Council raises building heights for the project.

Among the benefits, the coalition is seeking jobs, low-income housing, and protection for immigrant-owned businesses. "You are needed at the public hearing," the coalition's flyer says, "to say NO to large-scale development without stakeholder input."

The hearing is scheduled Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers, 600 Fourth Avenue. For information, call (206) 441-0499, ext. 23, or e-mail [edix@seattlegoodjobs.org](mailto:edix@seattlegoodjobs.org).

—Cydney Gillis



Used Furniture

Why's it called skid row?  
Because men on the skid gather there.  
Don't women go there too?  
Not as often as the men.  
Will we see dad down there?  
Not today.

She drove her new used care there and parked  
There was plenty of parking in that part of town  
The sidewalks appeared wide and empty.  
Papers and wrappers blew by  
Pigeons stood their ground  
Bottles and cans lined doorways of places no longer open

Where are all the bums?  
Shh, don't call them bums.  
Hobos?  
Hobos live near freight trains.  
Winos?  
Shh.  
Well, what do i call them?  
Don't call them at all, and don't speak to anyone.

I kept my eye out for whatever they were called  
We went in one of the big cheap furniture stores  
A skinny man with mustache, wearing a tie and no jacket waited on  
mom  
I looked at a wind-up victrola

Come on, we're leaving  
Aren't we buying any furniture?  
Not here.  
Why...  
Come on.

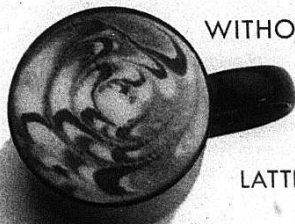
Back outside i saw a man sitting on the sidewalk  
I walked up to him  
He wore a hat and when he looked up i saw he had an eye missing  
I was going to ask if he were a bum or wino but asked where his  
eye went?  
What? You see it?  
He laughed and i saw his eye wasn't all he was missing  
Mom yanked me away  
I told you not to talk to anyone.

We rounded a corner from the main street  
There were 20 to 30 men in the shadows standing, sitting, waiting  
Wow, look at 'em all. What are they waiting for?  
I don't know, come on.  
She would not let go of me now  
We crossed to the empty side  
We entered another furniture store  
An old man with glasses and suspenders waited on mom  
She continued to hold my hand  
The man was showing her dressers  
I felt her jump and move away from the man

I don't believe this.  
What, what?  
We left the store  
He grabbed my behind.  
Is that why we left the other place?  
He made an indecent proposal.  
What's an indecent proposal?  
Nevermind. We're going to Sears. They have to be gentlemen there  
or  
they lose their jobs.  
And then what? They end up here?  
It would seem, that or in the used furniture business.

We got back to the car  
My hand was getting sore  
I saw a man across the street pissing in a doorway  
I raised an arm to point this out  
Mom pushed me in on her side  
He turned as we started the car  
He smiled wide and proud and put himself away  
His teeth were really white and strong  
He was all there

-LARRY CRIST



WITHOUT DOUBT, THE MOST

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

FareStart Library Café, Seattle Central Library, 1000 4th Ave.  
FareStart Café at 2100, 2100 24th Ave. S., Rainier Valley.



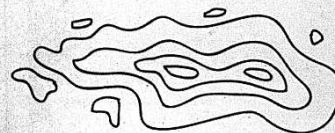
FARESTART

Great Coffee. Better Lives.

Buy a pastry or sandwich, get a free coffee (expires 04/01/07)

Story Problem 7

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



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



## Vindicated

Religion put Julia Scheeres and her adopted brother through hell

By ADAM HYLIA  
Editor

"To be honest, since I was brought up with David since we were toddlers, I didn't see him as Black or white, really. I saw him as my brother. It wasn't about color, he was my family. And then it became so much about color in our teenage years that I distanced myself from him."

Julia Scheeres is doing OK. now. She has a B.A. in Spanish and a Master's degree in journalism. She has been a reporter for the *L.A. Times* and is a published author. She is a new mom.

What Scheeres retells in her 2005 memoir *Jesus Land* is a not-so-good time in her life, her late teens, when she outgrew the bonds of her parents' rigid Christian discipline and sought admission to the real world.

Things were bad enough at her Indiana home already. Scheeres' emotionally distant mother devoted herself to her correspondence with missionaries in far-flung countries; she frequently told her children how glad she would be when they were out of the house. "Then, God will be my family," she'd say. In the basement hung two paddles, one emblazoned with the words "Spare the rod." The other: "...and spoil the child."

Also in the basement lived her two adopted brothers — the only two African Americans in their whitebread Indiana community — who were the frequent object of beatings from Dad. The older of the two, Jerome, would redirect his rage into assaulting Julia sexually — about which she told nobody, believing that you don't narc on your brother. David, the younger, Julia's age, was her closest friend until they moved out of town and entered a new high school. David, alienated, attempts suicide. Julia's boyfriend and a pack of condoms are discovered in her bedroom. Both find themselves at Escuela Caribe, a Christian reform school in the Dominican Republic, subject to what Scheeres and many other "graduates" of that program describe as psychological and physical abuse.

Now 38, Scheeres wrote the page-turner memoir *Jesus Land* to testify to the harms of religious fundamentalism and the existence of David, who died in a car crash at the age of 20. The book is about the cyclic nature of violence,

the folly of good intentions, the bigotry of rural America, and the hypocrisy of Christian doctrine. More than anything, it's about getting through all this: surviving, as she writes, "racism and religion." She reads from her book Tues., Nov. 28, at Elliott Bay Book Co.

**Real Change:** What did it take for you to write this memoir? You're a journalist, you could have chosen some other form.

**Julia Scheeres:** Well, I chose a memoir because it's a very personal form. This was something my brother was working on when he died: growing up Black in a white family in the Midwest, the reform school, our relationship. Obviously I can't tell his story, I can only tell my story as it relates to him. Being the same age and being so tight from age 3 to age 20, I felt like I could do a good job honoring his memory and his experience.

**RC:** You're writing from the perspective of your 17-year-old self. What did that take: What did it take for you to get back into that head space?

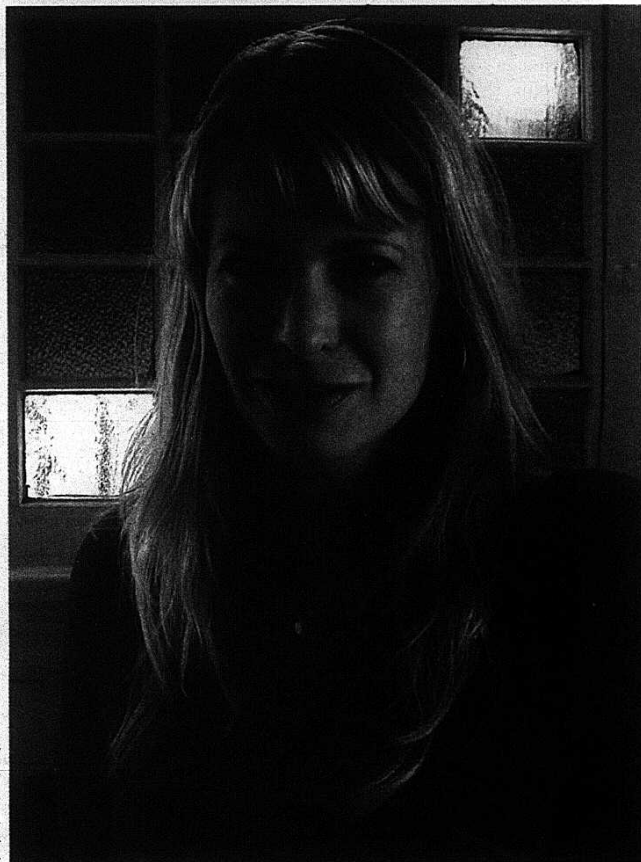
**Scheeres:** I kept some good journals from back then, I would read my journals; I would listen to a lot of '80s-era music, read my brother's journals, his letters, and just kind of conjure up the time and place and remember what

it was like to be 17 — on the edge of adulthood, but still controlled by other people.

**RC:** There were some horrid things going on in your household. And something I wanted to know more about was your relationship with your mom. How would you describe your relationship with your mom back then? There was a lot of tension, a lot of animosity, but nothing physical between you and her.

**Scheeres:** No, it was more emotional — emotional absence on her part. One of the reasons I wrote the book was to expose how — you know, I have a problem with fundamentalism on any level, because basically fundamentalism means intolerance: You're going to have your belief system which you believe is right, and everyone else is wrong. Not only does that hurt people on a large societal scale but on a miniscule scale among families, too. My parents put their religion before their children, to our detriment. So instead of dealing with typical familial problems, they would just kind of bury their heads in their religion, or strike out in punishment. There was no kind of deep introspection. I feel like religion gave them the excuse not to really deal with us.

**RC:** When they adopted your brothers, Jerome and David, what do you



Julia Scheeres' memoir *Jesus Land* describes her relationship with her Black brother, David, growing up in a white, rural Indiana. Photo by Tim Rose.

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Continued from Previous Page

think they lacked that could have made a white family successfully adopt and love two Black kids in the white rural heartland?

**Scheeres:** What did they lack? Well, you know, I think they adopted them for the wrong reasons. It was more about proving a point, you know: the fact that the adoption agency called and said, "We have plenty of other kids" — Black children — "who need homes," and all of a sudden they were thrown into a religious crisis. It was like all right, if we say no, then it's un-Christian. The thing about religious fundamentalists like this is that everything that comes their way is there because, you know, God has willed it. God was throwing this dilemma at them: Do we say no if it's a Black child?

**RC:** God was testing us, is what they would say.

**Scheeres:** Yeah, God was testing them: Are they going to say no? Despite the fact that they had their own prejudices. The first time my mom picked up David she feared the black was going to rub off on her hands. So they had their own deeply ingrained prejudices, and had no type of interaction with African Americans or other minorities at all. My parents were pretty whitebread, as was our community.

**RC:** David was your best friend. But you had moments that you're probably not proud of, moments where you're behaving in a way that doesn't welcome him into the new group of friends that you made at the high school —

**Scheeres:** Right, where I turned my back on him, and that's something I have to live with for the rest of my life.

**RC:** But you're obviously different from the other kids in the book — you're not bigoted.

**Scheeres:** Well, it came to a point, when we started at that new high school, where it's kind of like, "All right, I just want to be the 'normal teenage girl' and fit in, I'm tired of being known as the Black boy's sister." And that's when I kind of turned my back on him.

**RC:** And that was a crucial moment in your life, right?

**Scheeres:** Right. The book really is about our relationship and how I went from

— when we were really little, I was jealous of his skin color because I thought he got more attention, to the time I turned my back on him, to Escuela Caribe, where we had a common oppressor and we came together again.

I could have left that part out, where I shamefully turned my back on him, but that's not a full picture.

To be honest, since I was brought up with David since we were toddlers I didn't see him as Black or white, really. I saw him as my brother. It wasn't about color, he was my family. And then it be-

came so much about color in our teenage years that I distanced myself from him. But yeah, when you're brought up with someone, you're like, "This is my brother, if you don't understand how cool he is and how special he is and how many talents he has, then that's your problem, not mine."

**RC:** Do you have any advice for other people who would like to get a similar

experience down on paper — an experience of getting through a lot of trauma and a very narrow environment, a racist, hypocritical, bigoted environment. What would you say to someone who wants to write about that?

**Scheeres:** Go for it. Writing is the best way to exorcise your demons; it's been a great boon for me emotionally. I felt like I vindicated David in some small way by having his story out there and setting the record straight. He was such a great person. He died so young, and now I have thousands of people who read my book and know who he is and are emailing me, saying they felt like they know him. That's the greatest compliment. That's what I set out to do: to write down his life, to immortalize him in that way.

**RC:** Are you planning anything else?

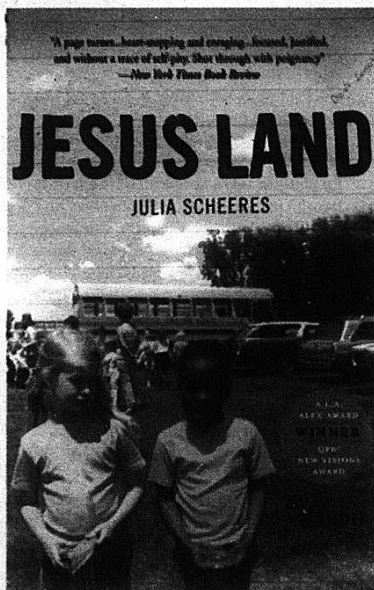
**Scheeres:** Yeah, I'm writing a novel now, with some of the same themes as *Jesus Land*, but it's fictionalized. It's about what happens when you're brought up in a very narrow, fundamentalist environment and then escape it and get out into the real world. Kind of like [the reality TV show] *Amish in the City*: what happens when you take these godly Amish teenagers and put them into the world with its temptations, how do they navigate secular society? Those are some of the things that fascinate me. What happens when you lose your religion? What do you find to replace it, or do you need to replace it? ■

[Reading]

Scheeres reads from *Jesus Land* Tues., Nov. 28, at 7:30 p.m., at the Elliott Bay Book Co., 101 S. Main St.

[Testimonials]

New Horizons Youth Ministries runs Escuela Caribe, the reform school in the Dominican Republic Scheeres and her brother were sent to. Reports of mistreatment, authored by former students, can be found at [www.nhym-alumni.org](http://www.nhym-alumni.org).



## These Are the Children We Swore Never to Have

This generation doesn't believe  
you are what you eat,  
it doesn't want to murder its parents.  
These children know money does  
grow on trees  
if you just push deep enough into the forest,  
if you just  
follow the trail of neon brand names  
out of the labyrinth.  
For them, Che Guevara  
liberated soda pop to found  
the utopia of t-shirts.  
Voting the skateboard plank  
Doesn't shake the political pumpkin  
in the spray can rattle of their disdain.  
These are the children we dreamed of  
in marijuana caves,  
in lysergic skulls ringing down  
the nectarine millennia,  
orange peel outcasts of citrus orchards  
bulldozed for malls, rat maze  
they mastered before they could talk.  
These are the children we promised ourselves  
never to have, camel bland faces  
turned away from the stars.

—DAVID THORNBURGH

## Strangers in Newsprint

**I Know You're Out There: Private Longings, Public Humiliations, and Other Tales from the Personals**

By Michael Beaumier  
Three Rivers Press, \$13.95

By AUSTIN WALTERS  
Contributing Writer

Michael Beaumier is a veteran personals editor for the *Chicago Reader* and guardian angel to all hopeless romantics, from the longtime brokenhearted to the suddenly single. His new book of essays, *I Know You're Out There: Private Longings, Public Humiliations and Other Tales from the Personals*, contains stories and lessons gleaned from the back pages of the newspaper over the course of seven years.

Beaumier peppers in some of his own experiences in love and loss, chronicling his current romantic relationship and the exploits of his large and unconventional family. By far the most compelling bits of the book, Beaumier's essays show his talent as a storyteller and potential as a writer, despite *I Know You're Out There* being an overall miss.

The most memorable chapter tells of Beaumier's unruly family of eight siblings and eccentric parents, as they grieve over the death of his brother Paul, the family's ninth child. Born with a fatal birth defect,

their mother spends two years at Paul's hospital bed, and her absence forces the family to realize that she has been the instigator of all of their pranks, retaliations, and practical jokes. The gloom that settles over the house is broken only when mom begs them to start fighting or setting fire to each other so that she can have a little fun again.

With regard to the selected stories about newspaper personals, a very funny chapter talks about all of the words people use to describe themselves and how these words actually translate. Women are not fooling potential dates by listing "beautiful" with a "contagious smile" because men read "delusional" and a "drug addict." A man may describe himself as an "artist" but that really means "writes bathroom graffiti," while "athletic" means "watches football on TV."

Then there is Bill, a SWM who is completely terrified of approaching women, fearing any form of rejection. Bill establishes a pathetic pattern of placing as many as two ads a day, and Beaumier is forced to take action. Speaking on Bill's behalf, the author pens a letter of introduction and recommendation to help Bill break the ice with potential dates and encourages him to make plenty of copies.

There is also Arthur, an inmate at a local jail who is due to be released

in a few months and is looking for a new girlfriend and a fresh start. Does Beaumier know of any regular personal posters that happen to be beautiful and are fond of cons? Just by breaking a few major newspaper confidentiality rules, of which he "isn't being paid enough to resist," Beaumier introduces Art to Deb. Deb writes great letters and sends a nice photo prompting Art to thank Beaumier profusely, and recommend his services to the entire jailhouse population.

For short stretches Beaumier's voice is fresh and funny, a combination of David Sedaris' self-deprecating wit and Dan Savage's provocative candor. But the rest of the time the essays feel too contrived as he tries too hard to shock, delight, or inspire.

A champion of the lonely, he also deals with his own relationship issues. A gay man with a hypochondriac, obsessive boyfriend, he realizes that he gets more satisfaction from spending time with the dog. So after a messy breakup, Beaumier, single and lonely, writes his best ad yet:

*You are not losers, no matter what anyone thinks, not as long as you keep your chin up. SWM still isn't sure who he is or what he's looking for, but won't quit looking still hoping until he finds it. There's someone for everyone. I know you're out there — I'm out here, too.* ■

For short stretches Michael Beaumier's voice is fresh and funny, a combination of David Sedaris' self-deprecating wit and Dan Savage's provocative candor. But the rest of the time the essays feel too contrived.

### Free at Last

The day I got out of prison  
I pushed a lifetime of tears in a wheelbarrow  
down an empty street.  
No one met me at the gate  
naked under a raincoat  
or promised to publish memoirs  
written on cigarette paper between beatings.  
On my own like an empty cola can  
kicked down the street by bored boys.  
The day I got out of prison  
I wore a suit of frozen cigarette smoke,  
waddled like a headless duck escaping  
a Chinatown restaurant window.  
Dragging the bodies of my murdered selves,  
a dozen doves that flew through narrow bars  
to make bad movies in my cage.  
The day I got out of prison I stumbled volcanoes,  
choked on virgins falling out of trees,  
clambered smoking ruins of European capitals  
still wet from being extinguished,  
felt nothing but chalk and the grit of spinach  
coating my teeth.  
The day I got out of prison  
was the day I began dying.

—DAVID THORNBRUGH



Adventures  
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning



So the fact that I feel like giving some thanks this Thanksgiving tells you I might be coming down with something. All the more reason to share.

U usually on Thanksgivings, I won't give thanks for anything, because the whole concept of a day set aside to apply peer pressure upon everyone to force them to

give thanks for every damn thing was dreamed up by the same bozos who invented uniforms, flags, floggings, genocides, and wars. Come to think of it, whenever anyone tells me to "Have a nice day!" my natural instinct is to say, "Take a hike, bozo — you're not the boss of me."

So the fact that I feel like giving some thanks this Thanksgiving tells you I might be coming down with something. All the more reason to share: I am thankful to Bill Speidel for introducing me to my home, the Pioneer Square District, and for teaching me so much about Seattle and how Seattle works, with a little help from my Dad.

Bill Speidel was a local author. When I met him in the middle of the '60s, I was a teenager who had never read anything he had written. I had to take his word for it that he was an author. Fortunately, he wasn't shy about it.

I met Speidel in connection with a project he was doing. He wanted to get parts of Seattle that had been buried in the Jackson-Yesler regrade dug out, so he could draw tourists to them and so revitalize the Pioneer Square neighborhood. He got word out that he was looking for high school kids to volunteer for the excavation, and I was one of the ones who showed up.

The beginning of the first day, we crowded into his office just off First Avenue to listen to him talk about the underground and what his plans were. One of the things that struck me was that the walls were exposed bricks. During his talk Speidel took credit for that interior decorating innovation that has since become de rigueur in that part of town. He admitted it wasn't historic (historically the walls were plastered and wall-

papered), but it looked historic, and looks are everything, he said.

As a suicidal 16-year-old with bad skin, crooked teeth, and disproportionately long legs, nicknamed grasshopper of all things, I resented that remark. Beauty had to be more than skin deep or I was screwed. Bill and I were not hitting it off.

But I hung in there, and I helped dig out what we now call the Seattle Underground. I spent several hours on two separate days in those dark dusty tunnels shoveling dirt and debris into wheelbarrows.

The dust got so thick we could only see a few feet in front of us. Sometimes I couldn't see my feet. I had a cough for several days later and it made my mouth taste like dust. Even my Father, who usually didn't care about me breathing or not, noticed. He asked me how I got like that.

When he found out I had excavated tunnels without the benefit of hard hat, face mask, or minimum wage, he got all union-y on me and started screaming about chains and slave-masters and something about "line them all up against the wall" and I don't remember the rest, except that he said he wouldn't let me go back.

Then my Father pointed out something that I had totally missed. He said that after the Underground was cleaned out it would be possible for Speidel to charge tourists to see it. So by helping clean it out without pay or safety gear I was investing my labor toward Speidel's future wealth, and I had not been guaranteed any financial return on that investment. All I was getting for my sweat and my bad health was a little bit of a history education.

My Dad said, "You want an education? Come here and I'll whack you upside the head with a board just like they did the strikers in 1919. It'll teach you what it's all about."

Just then, I experienced enlightenment. Thanks, Dad. Thanks, Bill. ■

## Thanks for the Memories

## To Market to Market

Bus Chick,  
Transit  
Authority

Carla Saulter



If you're not into lugging or pulling, you can ride the bus to the store and then call a cab to take you (and your load) home.

The most common question I am asked about my car-free life (besides, of course, "Why?") is, "How do you shop for groceries?" This errand, time-consuming and inconvenient with a car, is perceived to be next to impossible without one. My goal this week is to show you that it is quite possible — and not even especially difficult.

If you read the first installment of this series, you know that proximity to useful services is key to a successful bus-based life. My house is two blocks from a mediocre chain grocery store, which I patronize to fulfill immediate needs such as missing recipe ingredients and severe cases of the munchies. For less pressing needs, I have other methods.

### Method 1: Scheduled deliveries

I prefer locally grown, organic produce, but I don't live close enough to a food co-op to make frequent trips feasible. Enter Pioneer Organics, an organic produce delivery service that brings fresh, seasonal, earth-friendly produce right to my door. Pioneer groups deliveries by location — neighborhoods are assigned a particular day of the week — to ensure that fuel and time are used efficiently. I receive my delivery every other Wednesday, and it provides enough produce to last the full two weeks. Of course, a bus chick can't survive on produce alone.

### Method 2: Effective planning

Like most people, I keep a running list of food items I need. Unlike most people, I don't drive a car to the grocery store to buy them. Instead, I take advantage of opportunities that arise in the course of my regular travels. For example, if I'm waiting at a bus stop that's near a bakery, I use the time to buy bread — or an enormous slice of chocolate cake. If I happen to be passing through Pike Place Market on a day I'm low on cheese, I'll stop at Beechers to replenish the supply.

### Method 3: Appropriate equipment

Every couple of months, I make the trek to my favorite co-op to stock up on bulk foods. Getting there on the bus isn't too much trouble: two short rides or one short ride plus a short walk. Getting back, loaded down with umpteen pounds of fragile, cumbersome groceries, is a bit more of a challenge. For these occasions, I bring very sturdy reusable bags and my super-heavy-duty backpack. Many bus chicks also swear by the rolling wire grocery baskets. These handy contraptions (often unfairly associated with old ladies) allow you to buy freely, without regard to your personal carrying capacity.

If you're not into lugging or pulling, you can ride the bus to the store and then call a cab to take you (and your load) home. Or, you can use Flexcar. That way, you won't miss out on the time-honored tradition of trying to find parking in a crowded grocery-store parking lot. ■



Mon., Nov. 6, 11:00 p.m., 800 blk S.

**Dearborn St.** Officer observed suspect, a transient Asian male aged 26, walking on Department of Transportation (DOT) property on the south side of the block. Suspect was contacted, and a name check revealed an outstanding warrant. He was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Tues., Nov. 7, 8:15 p.m., 1220 E. Jefferson St., Ethios Br.

Suspect, a transient Black male aged 32, was standing on the sidewalk in front of the above address. He was known to have an outstanding warrant, and officers contacted him. The warrant was verified, and the suspect was arrested and booked.

Sat., Nov. 11, 12:15 a.m., 100 blk S.

**Dearborn St., DOT property, vacant lot.**

East Precinct officers were conducting a premise check of DOT property at the above address. The area has multiple off-ramps that connect with I-5 and I-90 and has been left deliberately vacant as it houses multiple support columns for the off-ramps. It also has immediate access to fast moving freeway traffic. WA DOT has several "No Trespassing" signs posted in the area and also has a contract with Seattle Police to enforce this rule and deter criminal activity in the area. Transients frequent the area and often engage in criminal activities, including narcotics use and sales, prostitution, and camping/squatting. Officers contacted six subjects, including the suspects, a transient white female and a transient Asian male, both aged 41, for trespassing on DOT property. Both suspects were 100 yards away from the closest point considered to be open to the public. Several subjects tried to run away from the scene to avoid the officers. The first suspect became disoriented by her surroundings and was quickly apprehended. The second suspect attempted to flee the area on foot by jumping onto an I-5 off-ramp, running across the road, and jumping back onto DOT property. After a foot pursuit lasting several hundred yards, officers apprehended him. Asked why he ran, he replied, "Because I was scared." Officers obtained the names of the suspects and ran them via police computer. They found a previous trespass admonishment for suspect one dated Oct. 25, and she was arrested and booked for criminal trespass. Three other suspects were also arrested for separate crimes.

Sun., Nov. 12, 1:28 p.m., E. Madison St.

Suspect, a transient white female aged 51, was observed by officers, [who] immediately recognized her from previous contacts and were aware that the suspect had a Violation of the Uniform Controlled Substance Act warrant outstanding. She was contacted, and the warrant was verified. She was arrested and advised of her rights, and a search incident to arrest turned up a small piece of crack in her right front jacket pocket. She was transported to the precinct, where a field test verified that the substance was cocaine. Suspect was transported to King County Jail and booked for the outstanding warrant.

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.

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

## RACISM, Continued from Page 1

for every event in his life, he still views it as an underlying catalyst, one that sent his life arcing from working in the telecommunications industry after high school to committing robbery in his mid-30s to serving time in the Monroe Correctional Complex. Better access to quality education, he claims, along with better housing and health care, would have made him feel more a part of American society. "But I just don't feel I've had the same treatment," says Page, "and had the same doors opened in the same way."

A search to address the opening and closing of doors to certain people based upon perceptions of race, this is a force that drives an event scheduled at City Hall on Nov. 28. Entitled the "Undoing Institutional Racism Gathering," the noon-day happening hopes to bring people looking for practical solutions to lift the oppression from those impacted by racism.

A highlight of the gathering will be excerpts from a video filmed last month at the Washington State Reformatory Unit at Monroe, as part of the Black Prisoners' Caucus (BPC) fifth annual summit. Recorded by local videographer Dennis Wilbert, the clips are culled from close to 90 minutes of straight footage filmed within the unit's non-denominational chapel, while inmates discussed the summit's focus: the impact of the justice system, and other related systems, on children, youth, adults, and families.

Wilbert — who had been to Monroe once before in 1976, to assist a UW undergraduate film project that asked those who were incarcerated their concept of freedom while the nation celebrated its Bicentennial — says he was impressed by a number of the inmates who spoke

See RACISM, Continued on Page 12

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THE MILLIONAIRE CLUB CHARITY

## BIO DIESEL, Continued from Page 1

presence — in fact, much of the biodiesel blogging is devoted to locating and pricing the fuel.

The prices had been lower than gas or petro-diesel for much of the summer, thanks in a large part to the federal \$1-a-gallon subsidy to biodiesel blenders, Washington state tax incentive programs, and the recently bankrupt U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Bioenergy Compensation Program started by President Clinton.

Today the prices — with petroleum costs falling — are nearly 50 cents higher than petro-diesel. Why do the customers make this effort?

"Socio-politico-enviro — it's always those," says Dr. Dan.

"With me, it was a moral imperative," says Teresa Garchitorena, a student at Bastyr University. "I've got so many strong opinions and felt that I couldn't say anything driving a gas car." The Maple Leaf resident sold her new gas-powered Volkswagen Golf for a biodiesel-powered 45-50 mpg Rabbit a year ago, and she thinks it's worth it. "When I'm driving and see kids walking on the sidewalk, it makes me feel so much better knowing that I'm not polluting the air they're breathing."

Department of Energy testing shows biodiesel to emit 96 percent fewer hazardous solid wastes than traditional diesel, as well as enormous reductions in CO<sub>2</sub>, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, and the complete absence of sulphur oxides (a major acid-rain component).

Another major advantage bio-fuels offer is a closed carbon-cycle, advocates say: Instead of introducing new (buried fossil) carbon into the biosphere, the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by burning biodiesel is merely a re-introduction of carbon that has already been absorbed by the plants integral to making the fuel.

Operating in a national economy, though, the cycle is not totally pure. Fuel Werks obtains their biodiesel by way of Indiana's West Central Soy, a farmer-owned cooperative venture,

depending on petro-diesel-spiced trains for delivery.

"Ideally, we'll be Washington-produced and Washington-used, but right now, that really isn't an option," says Dr. Dan. He adds that, "The average American eats about 400 gallons of oil a year," referring to the gas fleets necessary to stock and operate our food processing plants, distributors, retailers, fridges, and finally, our families and bellies.

That's the same amount of fuel with which Ms. Garchitorena's BioRabbit could drive around the coast of Australia — twice — and still have plenty of gas to head inland.

West Central Soy, nonetheless, delivers a product that Dr. Dan is happy with, being the highest qualification recognized by the National Biodiesel Board.

Imperium Renewables, parent of Seattle Biodiesel and owner of the under-construction Gray's Harbor Biodiesel plant (set to be the largest in the country), has also recently won the same certification. Imperium will be shipping a blend of domestically-produced seed oil and Malaysian-grown palm oil in its seed-oil — a major concern for environmentalists anxious that increased demand for palm oil fields,

See BIODIESEL, Continued on Page 12

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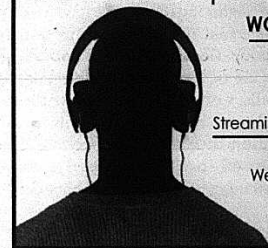
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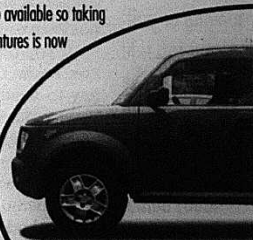
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## Opportunity

**My Fat Cat Designs** — Native American-Bead Designs. Hand Crafted Bracelets and Earrings. By artist Faith Ann Trust (vendor #3231). Call (206)322-7438 to view jewelry, place an order, or for general information.

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# Calendar

## This Week's Top Ten

### Saturday 11/25

The new film *Darfur Diaries: Message from Home* screens, followed by a discussion and book signing with the filmmaker, Jen Marlowe. *Darfur Diaries* probes the history, culture and heritage of Darfur and challenges the easy perceptions of how the conflict is often portrayed. 7 p.m. at the Langston Hughes Center, 104 17th Ave. S. More info: [www.darfurdiaries.org](http://www.darfurdiaries.org).

### Sunday 11/26

The Burke Museum celebrates Mongolian Independence Day with performances of traditional Mongolian long songs, yatang, and dance. Free with museum admission. Burke Museum, University of Washington campus, near NE 45th St. and 16th Ave. N.E.

### Tuesday 11/28

Northwest authors John Keeble and Kathleen Flenniken won 2006 Prairie Schooner awards for fiction and poetry, respectively. Keeble, over from Central Washington, wrote a collection of short stories called *Nocturnal America*. Flenniken, of Seattle, is author of a book of poems called *Famous*. Both read at 7 p.m. at the University Bookstore, 4326 University Way NE.

Julia Scheeres survived her abusive childhood and forged a lifetime bond with her adopted brother, David, that was cut tragically short by his death at age 20. She's in town to read from her memoir *Jesus Land* at 7:30 p.m. at the Elliott Bay Book Co., 101 S. Main St., in Pioneer Square.

### Friday 12/1

The true story of Germany's most famous anti-Nazi heroine is brought to thrilling life in the award-winning 2005 drama *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days*, in which the Munich resistance movement dedicated to the downfall of the Third Reich is expertly recreated. Free, but donations kindly accepted. 7-9:30 p.m. at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Place N. Info: [www.meaningfulmovies.org](http://www.meaningfulmovies.org).

### Saturday 12/2

"Sea Songs," a free celebration in song of cultures living and working on and near the oceans, features performers from the Samish Nation of Washington, the Dalmatian Coast

of Croatia, and Samoa, and an Alaskan fishing boat captain and poet performing his epic saga of being lost at sea. Free, with complimentary refreshments after the show. 1 p.m., Town Hall, Eighth and Seneca Sts. downtown.

"Insatiable!" is a day-long festival of readings by Seattle's next generation of Asian American playwrights. Northwest Actors Studio, 1100 East Pike St., second floor. Tickets are \$5 per reading for general admission; \$9 for a three-reading pass; or \$12 for an all-fest pass. Information: (206) 323-9443.

### Sunday 12/3

The Committee for Truth and Justice in Ireland presents their eighth annual Holiday Freedom Fleadh, which benefits Feile an Phobail, the West Belfast Community Festival ([www.feilebelfast.com](http://www.feilebelfast.com)). Since 1988, the festival has celebrated Northern Ireland's creativity, energy, sport,

and passion for the arts, and served to funnel sectarian tensions into something positive. Mick Kelly's Irish Pub, 435 S.W. 152nd St., Burien. Irish dancers at 5:30, music from 7-9:30. For more information, call (206) 369-7087.

### Thursday 12/7

The Central District Forum for Arts & Ideas explores the outer limits of political expression with a look at two of American history's most famous, and unknown, rebels. "Patriot or Terrorist? Exploring the Legacy of Nat Turner and John Brown" asks whether armed resistance is ever a viable option in the face of state-sponsored violence. 7 p.m., Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, 104 17th Ave. S. (near Yesler Way). Information: [www.cdforum.org](http://www.cdforum.org).

## Director's Corner



Lately, I've been thinking a lot about Kool-Aid. As in, should I drink it, or not? This particular Kool-Aid has to do with the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Everywhere I look, people seem to be walking around with big frosty pitchers and smiley faces.

And why not? The Plan's stated goal of "ending homelessness" is a turn for the better. And I've liked the idea of Housing First for nearly two decades. Until recently, the feds maintained that homelessness was an enormously complicated affair, requiring a vast matrix of subtle approaches. "Housing, housing, housing" folks such as myself were denied as simplistic ideologues. Suddenly, my long-held opinion is federal policy. How gratifying.

Here's the problem. The vast majority of this housing is to be paid for locally, with philanthropic, city, county, and state funds. The feds, in the meanwhile, will continue to rape the treasury through crony-capitalism, war profiteering, and welfare for the well-off, while they promote the idea that churches, charity, and local government should be held accountable for ending homelessness.

What's wrong with this picture? Each year, the feds tighten the screws on social services spending just a bit more, leaving the private sector, public philanthropy, and local government to pick up the bits and pieces that get squeezed out.

One excellent Kool-Aid antidote is the new report regarding the federal record on homelessness, available at [www.wraphome.org](http://www.wraphome.org). It's time to push back. Accountability has to work both ways.



## First things First

### Get Involved • Take Action

## Give Some Well-Deserved Thanks

**Issue:** On Mon., Nov. 20, the Seattle City Council unanimously passed the final 2007-08 budget. They had more to spend this year than they have in the past but remained cautious in their budgeting because that may not last into the future. Even so, they prioritized human needs, and the final budget reflects that. Before we move on to the next effort, the council and the mayor deserve a word of thanks. Besides, it's Thanksgiving; it only makes sense that we ask you to say thanks.

**Background:** After many months of working together, Seattle-based human services and anti-poverty advocates came up with a comprehensive set of recommendations to move Seattle closer to ending homelessness and meeting human needs. Their recommendations were ambitious, but necessary, and not unrealistic given the budget outlook.

The mayor and council paid attention to the Seattle Human Services Coalition's recommendations and passed a budget that increases human services by \$7,875,000 for 2007 and \$5,564,000 for 2008.

Budget highlights include:

- \$2.5 million in new funds for permanent supportive housing for homeless people.
  - \$1.7 million set aside to offset federal cuts in human services for Seattle residents.
  - With one exception, no cuts to current human services. (The exception was a reduction in funding for coalitions that do human services advocacy at the county and state level and bring significant resources to Seattle residents. The mayor's budget cut this entire program — \$280,000 — and the council restored only \$100,000.)
  - A successful public safety package led by Councilmember Licata and Councilmember Steinbrueck that connects public safety with the need for human services like domestic violence prevention, late night youth programs, and job training.
- Action:** Contact Seattle City Councilmembers and the mayor and say thank you for prioritizing human services in the final budget.

Take action online by visiting [www.realchangenews.org](http://www.realchangenews.org) and clicking the Take Action button on the right. Or contact the mayor and the council directly.

Mayor Greg Nickels: (206) 684-4000, [www.seattle.gov/mayor](http://www.seattle.gov/mayor)  
Nick Licata, City Council President: [nick.licata@seattle.gov](mailto:nick.licata@seattle.gov) or 684-8803  
Tom Rasmussen, Chair, Housing, Human Services, and Health Care committee: [tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov](mailto:tom.rasmussen@seattle.gov), (206) 684-8808  
Richard McIver, Chair, Budget committee: [richard.mciver@seattle.gov](mailto:richard.mciver@seattle.gov), 684-8800  
Sally Clark: [sally.clark@seattle.gov](mailto:sally.clark@seattle.gov), 684-8802  
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Calendar compiled by Dena Burke. Have a suggestion for an event? Email it to [calendar@realchangenews.org](mailto:calendar@realchangenews.org).

**RACISM, Continued from Page 10**

during the summit. Inmates told stories about their children, he recalls, along with apologizing to them for their reasons for being at Monroe. "I came away from that feeling: Now, there's a group of people who hold some information that would be very important for a lot of people to have," he says.

When asked to film the summit, Wilbert says he quickly agreed, as he wanted to help explore the idea of how people behind bars raise children. It's part of the work of undoing institutional racism that he, as a white person, feels he must make a commitment to undertake. "I don't see it as a solution," he admits. "I just see it as a step to point out the problems we're facing."

Page, who currently serves as an outside liaison to the BPC, was unable to attend the event: released from Monroe last May, he must wait a full calendar year before stepping inside again. As the father of an 18-year old son, the summit's highlight on family, he says, was dear to him. With six months of freedom under his belt, he says his ability to secure housing, hold down a job, and have a car is directly related to his work with and in

the BPC, which he belonged to while serving time.

It was while inside, through the BPC, that he sat in on a two-day workshop addressing institutional racism. During that weekend, he says, he began to see the ways that the criminal justice system, the housing system, and other systems adversely affect poor people and people of color. The video, which he's seen, highlights not only the leadership work of those working inside with the BPC, but also how institutional racism has influenced the lives of prisoners and their families.

Through learning about institutional racism, he says, he's now able to identify, in a manner he couldn't in his youth, the intersection among related systems and the ways they touch people: "It's a natural connection." ■

**[Event]**

The Undoing Institutional Racism Gathering takes place Nov. 28 in the Bertha Knight Landes Room, City Hall, from noon to 1:30 p.m. Free and open to the public, light refreshments will be provided. For more info: (206) 615-1574.

**BIODIESEL, Continued from Page 1**

with an oil yield 13 times that of soy per acre, will encourage the razing of rainforest for profit.

Dr. Dan is a stickler for domestically produced, soy-based oil — or perhaps an algae-derived form that is still under development by Green Fuel Technologies. "If it's palm-oil, why bother?" he says.

Jay Standish, a biodiesel-burning Olympia resident who fills his Jetta TDI at that city's Pacifica and Acme stations, has much respect for Fuel Werks' commitment to farmer-owned domestic oil sources. "It's completely flabbergasting," says Standish.


The replacement of a rainforest's biodiversity by single crop cultivation represents, says Standish, the negation of exactly what biodiesel hopes to accomplish: "starting some honest communications with the earth that could actually become viable commerce." ■

**[More info]**

Check out the National Biodiesel Board, an organization devoted to consumer education and product monitoring: [www.biodiesel.org](http://www.biodiesel.org).

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