

REAL CHANGE

VOL. 13 NO. 50

Microforms-New
Univ. of Wash

\$1

**YOUR VENDOR BUYS
THIS PAPER FOR 35¢
AND KEEPS ALL THE
PROCEEDS.**
PLEASE PURCHASE FROM
BADGED VENDORS ONLY

WWW.REALCHANGENEWS.ORG

ISSUES • INSIGHT • IMPACT

Locals Only

**FCC officials told to restrain
media consolidation**

By **BILLY JOYCE**
Contributing Writer

More than 425 people packed into the auditorium at the downtown library on Thurs., Nov. 30 to testify and listen to testimony on media ownership rules before FCC Commissioners Jonathan Adelstein and Michael Copps. The event was scheduled to last three hours but ran 45 minutes long to accommodate all those who came to give their comments.

It was an unofficial hearing with only two of the five commissioners present. Based on the 2003 Seattle hearing, Adelstein and Copps said they would like to see an official hearing here with the full commission present.

FCC action in 2003 that gutted regulations was met with a groundswell of grassroots public disapproval. More than 3 million people voiced their disgust with the FCC, and as a result, the regulations were reinstated.

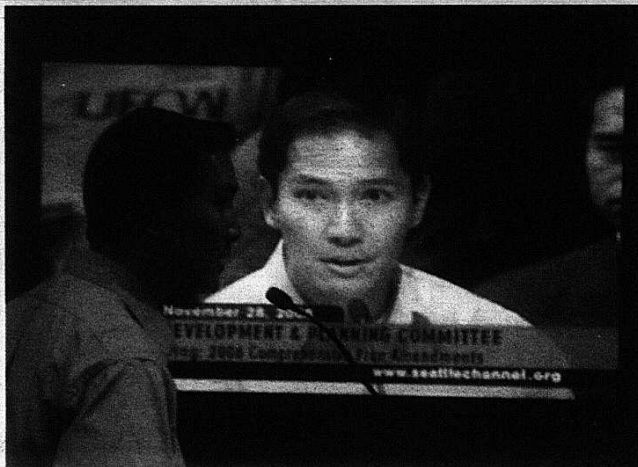
"We want to have the voice of Seattle loud and clearly expressed in the halls of the FCC," says Adelstein.

Many citizens said that loosening media ownership rules — like raising the number of radio and TV stations a company can own in a market, or eliminating the rule that prohibits one company from owning a broadcast station and the major newspaper in a single market — will cause drastic harm to the health of communities, democracy, and freedom in order to beef up the bottom line for corporate stockholders.

"Media consolidation undercuts our very democracy," Copps said. And evaluating these rules is really just asking the question, "Will our media help us expand democracy or will it serve the commercial interests of a few huge players?"

Sylvia Haven, a concerned citizen whose car got stuck in snow on the way to the hearing, said, "Nothing would have persuaded me to come out in the slushy road to get here this evening unless it were a matter of life and death."

See FCC, Continued on Page 12



QUANG H. NGUYEN TESTIFIES AT A NOV. 28 PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FUTURE OF LITTLE SAIGON, WHERE A LARGE RETAIL MALL IS PLANNED. PHOTO BY JOEL TURNER

Who Benefits?

Before a mall reshapes the I.D., community groups want an agreement

By **CYDNEY GILLIS**
Staff Reporter

"Goodwill is not Wal-Mart."

That's what Seattle City Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck said last week of a plan to replace south downtown's Seattle Goodwill with a 10-acre shopping mall that Steinbrueck told councilmembers "should not be seen as Godzilla taking over the community."

With two of the nation's other largest retailers slated to anchor the Dearborn Street project — Lowe's and Target, which the magazine *Chain Store Age* ranks at No. 6 and No. 7, respectively — that's exactly what community leaders in and around Seattle's Little Saigon and Chinatown-International District are worried about. They say the mall, which will include 700,000 square feet of retail with 400 rental units and condos on top, will gut the area.

"We are concerned that the big-box retailers occupying this mall will eviscerate the character and the micro-entrepreneurship in Little Saigon," attorney Peter Chu told the City Council last Tuesday, Nov. 28, at a hearing on proposed changes to the city's Comprehensive Plan that would allow the mall to move forward.

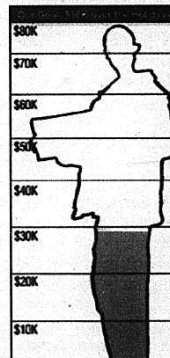
Chu was one of 32 business owners and residents of the newly formed

Dearborn Street Coalition for a Livable Neighborhood who spoke at the meeting, urging the council to delay its vote on the Goodwill site until the developer signs a contract with them guaranteeing public benefits such as jobs, low-income housing, and funding to promote Little Saigon and establish a Vietnamese Cultural Center.

See **GOODWILL**, Continued on Page 12

[Thank You!]

Last week, *Real Change* readers contributed a whopping \$11,604, bringing us to \$28,925 raised since Nov. 1. We can still meet our \$80,000 year-end goal if enough of our readers respond. For more reasons to give, please see Page 2. You may make a tax-deductible contribution at www.realchangenews.org, or use the coupon on Page 12 to make your gift now. Thank you for supporting *Real Change*.



GIVE, RECEIVE

When you donate to our Winter Fund Drive, you give our vendors a chance to create economic independence. **PAGE 2**

FARE PLAY

The government wheels out a plan to keep a bus offering free transport to those displaced by Katrina on the road 'til March. **PAGE 3**

SCAM FISTED

A DC woman tells the homeless she'll get 'em housing for a fee, but winds up keeping a hold of their money instead. **PAGE 4**

REJECT SMILE

The *New Yorker* finds a lot of cartoons too risqué to print. Artist Matthew Diffee wants you to see them. **PAGE 5**

THE MOCKINGBIRD TIMES

CENTERFOLD
SPREAD



Change Agent.....	3
Just Heard.....	3
Short Takes.....	4
Arts.....	8
Ask a Lawyer.....	9
Poetry.....	5, 10
Dr. Wes.....	9
Street Watch.....	9
Letters.....	10
Calendar.....	11
Director's Corner.....	11
First things First.....	11

A Community in Action

Your holiday support makes Real Change happen. Please help.

We're proud of our accomplishments, but *Real Change* needs your help to keep getting better.

Everyone knows that *Real Change* puts money in our vendors' pockets. We're an immediately available work opportunity that offers an alternative to panhandling and other ways that desperate people use to get cash.

Each month, more than 250 people get a hand up to help themselves by selling *Real Change*.

But here's the surprising part. About half of our vendors say the people they meet while selling our paper mean more to them than the money:

"It's made a dramatic difference in my life. It brought me out. I was in a closet before R.C., and now it's exposed me to a lot of compassionate people. It's spiritual."

"It's been huge, it's been inspirational, it's curing to sell Real Change. It heals a lot of the pain of the past."

"It's a very good paper, and addressing what other papers are not. And I have a big group that takes action from the back page. They ask me how are we taking action this week."

Real Change readers are able to reach across barriers of class and circumstance to offer support, friendship, and a little human warmth to those who, while sharing much in common, often live very different lives.

Our vendors and readers share a vision of a different kind of world, a world in which everyone matters.

Together, we are building a community in action that empowers all of us to create the kind of society we hope to live in.

During the holiday season, we at *Real Change* reach out to our readers for help. You make what we do possible. We need to meet our holiday fund

drive goal of raising \$80,000 by Dec. 31 to succeed in our work.

Publishing a quality weekly newspaper, offering opportunity and support to more than 250 vendors a month, working to end poverty and homelessness: All of this takes money. More than 40 percent of our budget comes from reader support.

We're proud of our accomplishments, but *Real Change* needs your help to keep getting better. Over the next several years, we plan to multiply the successes of our vendors, build a stronger voice of the homeless and poor people, and extend our advocacy and organizing work in several exciting ways:

Regional Distribution: *Real Change* will seek out partners throughout Puget Sound to extend this opportunity to readers and vendors in new communities. Broadened distribution will also extend our advocacy base and build power for long-term structural change.

Broadened Readership: We are an activist newspaper that reflects the vitality of a broad progressive community. Increasing vendor success means reaching new readers. In 2007, *Real Change* will launch a smart, targeted, marketing campaign to increase readership.

Deepened Community Organizing: As the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness enters its second year of success, there is a great need for more organizing on the ground to build sustained political will. *Real Change* will organize neighborhood by neighborhood to help build that support.

A Real Voice of the Poor: *Real Change* will broaden the opportunities that poor and homeless people have to inform the decisions that affect them. As part of this, we will launch a free monthly paper that is published by and for low-income people.

A Voice for Inclusion: *Real Change* is committed to covering news and events in all of the communities that make up Seattle and building relationships that lead to greater unity across race and class. An anti-bias strategy is a key part of our planning for the next five years.

Over the past 12 years, *Real Change* has succeeded beyond our wildest expectations. We are an award-winning weekly community newspaper that has, time and again, demonstrated an ability to take on City Hall and win. Yet there is so much more that we need to do.

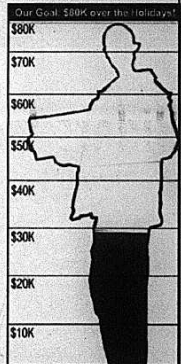
We are proud of the broad base of community support that makes our work possible. Your gift affirms the value of our work and lets us know we're on the right track.

Last year, more than 1,000 people made a donation to support our work. Most *Real Change* readers, however, have never taken that next step. If you believe in what we do, we invite you to join our community of donors with a gift that makes sense for you.

As this letter went to the printer on Dec. 5, we'd raised just \$30,000 toward meeting our critical \$80,000 year-end goal. Success happens one gift at a time. Please help however you can. ■

[Thank You!]

Last week, *Real Change* readers contributed a whopping \$11,604, bringing us to \$28,925 raised since Nov. 1. We can still meet our \$80,000 year-end goal if enough of our readers respond. You may make a tax-deductible contribution at our website at realchangenews.org, or use the coupon on Page 12 to make your gift now. Thank you for supporting *Real Change*.



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

<http://www.realchangenews.org>
Email realchange@speakeasy.org
ISSN 1085-729X

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



Who Is Real Change?

Board of Directors

Don Brown (President), Faith Wilder (VP), Erica Wiley (VP), Anne Bailey (Treasurer), Rebecca Kavouski (Secretary), Wes Browning, John Denooyer, Stephan Fjellstad, Katherine Jakielski, Margaret Kae, Mandy Levenberg, Gabriela Quintana, JoJo Tran

Advisory Board

Affiliations listed for identification purposes only: Sherman Alexie, Poet, Writer, Filmmaker, Nancy Amidei, UW School of Social Work, Kenan Black, Media Consultant; David Bloom, Rauschenbusch Center for Spirit and Action; Kari Connor, Wondagoody; Darnell Dent, Community Health Plan of Washington; Jim Diers, Author; Lynne Dodson, Jobs with Justice; John Fox, Seattle Displacement Coalition; Larry Gossett, King County Councilmember, Dist. 10; Jon Gould, Children's Alliance; Andy Himes, Poetry in Wartime; Bill Hobson, Downtown Emergency Service Center; Naomii Ishisaka, Colors NW; Sally Kinney, Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness; Sharon Lee, Low Income Housing Institute; Paul Loeb, Writer, Sarah Luthens, SEAMEC/Allyship.org; Roberto Maestas, El Centro de la Raza; Paola Maranan, Children's Alliance; Joe Martin, Pike Market Medical Clinic; Vince Matulis, United Way of King County; Carlos Marentes, Committee for General Amnesty and Social Justice; Al Poole, City of Seattle Survival Services; Wilson Edward Reed, PhD, Seattle University; Trisha Ready, Richard Hugo House; Aiko Schoeber, Statewide Poverty Action Network; Peter Schnurman, Retired; K.L. Shannon, Racial Disparity Project; Bob Siegal, National Lawyers Guild/Center for

Social Justice; Rick Simonson, Elliott Bay Book Co.; Pat Simpson, Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness; Hilary Stern, CASA Latin; Robby Stern, WA State Labor Council; Peter Steinbrueck, Seattle City Council; Silja Tahvi, journalist/essayist; Jim Theofelis, Mockingbird Society; Marilyn Watkins, Economic Opportunity Institute; Bruce Wirth, KBCS; Alice Woldt, WA Association of Churches

Staff

Executive Director
Timothy Harris
Director of Advocacy and Organizing
Rachael Myers
Editor
Adam Hyla
Staff Reporters
Cydney Gillis, Rosette Royale
Production Manager
Rosette Royale
Director of Operations
Craig Kirkpatrick
Director of Development
Joe Bushek
Volunteer Coordinator and Office Manager
Brooke Kemper
Vendor Services
Robert Hansen, Margaret Kae

Advertising Sales Representative
Candi Wilfang

Interns

Darina Garcia, Kevin Himead, Billy Joyce, Joel Turner, Lindsay Tree

Editorial Committee

Artis, Mary Andrews, Wes Browning, Stan Burris, Morrie Condit, Lisa Easter, Anita Freeman, José Ornelas, F. Roberts, Ruanda

Contributing Writers

Amy Besunder, Dena Burke, Julie Chinitz, J. Jacob Edel, Jess Grant, Lester Gray, Jessica Knapp, Robin Lindley, Chris Miller, Emma Quinn, Amy Roe, Rachel Rubinstein, Diana Wum

Photographers, Graphic Artists

Ginny Banks, Ken Dean, Terry Divyak, Sean Ellingson, George Hickey, Elisa Huerta-Enochian, Sherry Loeser, Luke McGuff, Justin Mills, Jude O'Reilly, Katia Roberts, Elliot Stoller, Mark Sullu.

Volunteers This Issue

Artis, Nick Cottrell, Tige DeCoster, Sara Dooling, Sandra Enger, Jeanette Fassbind, Susanne Forham, Rick Garrett, Valerie Garvito, Nadine Gioia, Ana Haberman, Armando Levia, Brianna Morgan, Dan Otto, Loretta Pirozzi, Beth Roberts, Rachel Smith, Sara Sprigg, Carrie Wicks

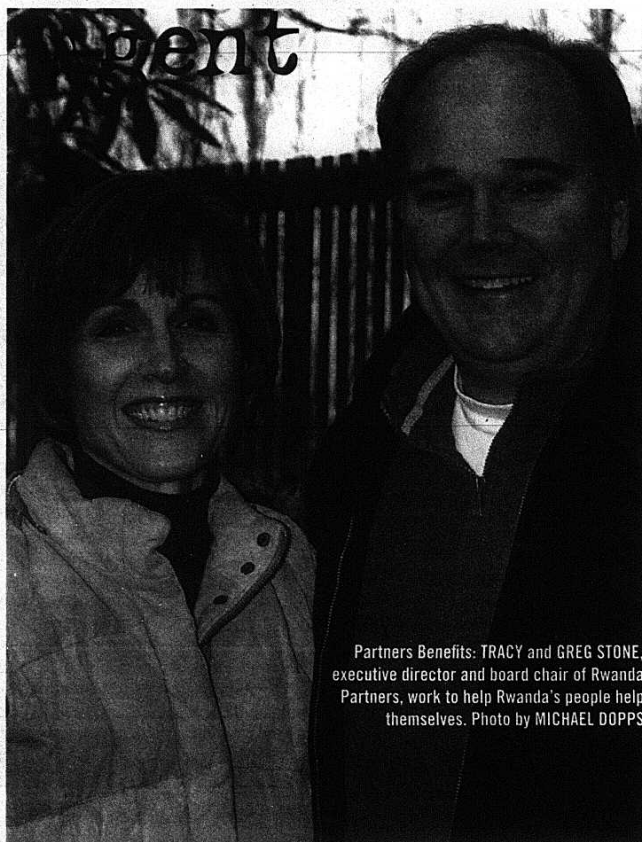
Change agent

Even though Bellevue resident Tracy Stone wanted to help Rwandan genocide survivors, she remembers being too terrified to leave her hotel when she first arrived there in 2004. Her husband, Greg, says he accompanied his wife not because he felt drawn to the country, but to help her through her distress. But something clicked, says Greg, when the couple realized they were "in the presence of very special people."

For Tracy, hearing Rwandan women's stories of survival provided the inspiration to put her fears in perspective. For Greg, interacting with Rwandans caused him to be moved by their humanity. For the pair, it led to their creating, after returning stateside, a non-profit called Rwanda Partners.

With a focus on generating resources to ensure the country's emotional and economic future, Rwanda Partners has worked to assist women forced into prostitution and children orphaned by the genocide. Currently, the organization buys baskets from female artisans and funnels the proceeds from local sales into building a Rwandan women's center and offering women job training. "I knew when I was there," says Tracy, "it was what I was supposed to do."

—Rosette Royale



Partners Benefits: TRACY and GREG STONE, executive director and board chair of Rwanda Partners, work to help Rwanda's people help themselves. Photo by MICHAEL DOPPS

Riders from the Storm

New Orleans shuttle buses speed economic growth

By ELLEN WULFHORST
Street News Service

Theresa Jones hangs on to her low-paying job in New Orleans by riding a free, government-funded bus 80 miles to work from the temporary housing she has lived in since Hurricane Katrina.

But her efforts to keep a job in hand and a roof over her head are in peril, as the bus service for displaced New Orleans residents faces imminent cancellation.

"I'm going to lose this job if they get rid of that bus," says Jones, 45, who earns \$100 caring for an elderly couple one week per month. "I don't see why they encourage everyone to come to New Orleans to work. I get a job, and they turn around and stop the bus."

Funded by the state and the Federal Emergency Management Agency and carrying an average of 1,000 people a day, the free buses have been running between New Orleans and the state capital, Baton Rouge, where many storm victims live, since last fall.

The service was slated to shut down Dec. 1, but a last-minute, one-time appropriation of \$2.1 million will keep it running until March 31, according to the New Orleans Times-Picayune. The free rides will stop after that.

The demise of the bus service would come as a blow to its riders, many of whom are low-paid workers who cannot afford to live in New Orleans, where a housing shortage has sent rents soaring.

"People want to work, they want to get jobs, and it's not asking very much of government to keep those doors open through something as meager as bus service from Baton Rouge to New Orleans," says Alan Jenkins of Opportunity Agenda, a research and advocacy group based in New York. "It makes no sense."

According to FEMA, the service was funded as a relief measure in an emergency situation that no longer exists in New Orleans.

"We're way beyond the emergency period," says Jim Stark, director of FEMA's Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office. "It's become a successful commuter system that rightfully belongs to the state for responsibility."

After March 31, the state may consider taking over the service, although that is likely to mean a one-way bus fare of \$6. Of the bus riders, 85 percent use it to go to work or to find work. Three-quarters of the riders earn less than \$10 an hour.

Andrea Raymond, 31, stays in Baton Rouge but works mowing grass at New Orleans' public parks. "I would have to quit my job because I don't have nowhere to live down here," Raymond said as she waited at a grimy corner of downtown New Orleans for a bus back to Baton Rouge. "It's a must."

Kathy Taylor, 33, also waiting at the bus stop, said she would work in Baton Rouge but finds employers reluctant to hire workers from New Orleans. So she takes the bus to care for an elderly woman in New Orleans.

"We're not welcome," she said. "I want to come home. Get the schools together, make it affordable for us so we can come back home." ■

Story courtesy of Reuters. ©Street News Service: www.streetpapers.org.

Free bus service links low-cost communities in Baton Rouge and jobs in New Orleans. The buses were saved by last-minute funding from FEMA on Nov. 30. Photo by Lee Celano / Reuters.



Just Heard...

Bounce this

Chris Van Dyk is a little miffed at state Sen. Margarita Prentice (D-Renton), chair of the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

Van Dyk is the co-chair of Citizens for More Important Things, the group behind Initiative I-91, a measure Seattleites passed in November that prevents the city from giving money to the Seattle Sonics to build a new basketball arena. In recent press statements, Prentice, whose home city of Renton is angling for an arena, has dismissed Seattle's vote as irrelevant to the rest of King County.

Van Dyk says Prentice is wrong and, to prove it, he has just raised \$3,000 to pay for a poll by Stuart Elway of how I-91 would have done countywide. The results, which Van Dyk expects in early January, should stop legislators from wasting taxpayer money on what he calls "the whims of well-to-do billionaire owners and their millionaire players."

—Cydney Gillis

Resistance is utile

Supporters of Lt. Ehren Watada, the Fort Lewis Army officer who's facing a court-martial for refusing to fight in the Iraq War, are planning a day of action in Olympia on Dec. 9, to champion the lieutenant's conduct. With a vigil beginning at noon at the Fourth Ave. Bridge, the day of action is one of several across the country supporting numerous military personnel who are saying no to war.

Lt. Watada's decision to not participate in what he feels to be an "illegal war" has him facing one charge of missing a troop movement and four of conduct unbecoming. His court-martial pretrial hearing is scheduled for Jan. 4 and 5.

Interested in standing up for Lt. Watada? Call 360-280-6198.

—Rosette Royale

Dow to Darfur

The King County Council rode to the aid of millions of displaced refugees Monday during their council meeting, condemning the ethnic violence in western Sudan's Darfur region and endorsing UN Resolution 1706, which calls on the Sudanese government to admit an international peacekeeping force that would supplant overwhelmed, understaffed African Union troops.

Dow Constantine (D - West Seattle / Vashon) was the resolution's prime sponsor; the idea originated with UW student Rachel Mathisen, who interned in his office this summer and set up meetings between councilmembers and student activists. Constantine's "motivation for doing this is that the 20th century has shown us that it's unacceptable to stand by quietly while genocide occurs," says on aide, Monica Ghosh.

Ghosh says motions calling for national or international action come up about once or twice a year; the last had to do with this spring's immigrant rights marches.

—Adam Hyla

The Runaround

D.C. woman accused of homeless realty scam

By DANIEL HORNER
Street News Service

In February, Alexis Twyman, looking for help in finding a place to live, went to the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center, the District's central intake office for families requesting emergency shelter assistance. From a flier at the center, she learned about a woman named Jasmine Worthy, who claimed she could find housing for homeless families.

Twyman met with an associate of Worthy's and soon turned over \$600 plus a \$25 application fee for the promise that the company would find an apartment for her in about two to four weeks.

After that, Twyman says, Worthy "gave me the runaround." She says Worthy showed her a number of apartments, but it turned out that all of them were occupied or someone else was ready to move in.

"I kept asking her what she was going to do," but Worthy didn't give

an explanation, Twyman says. "Then I got tired of it." Around the beginning of April, she asked for reimbursement.

After Worthy did not return the money, Twyman says she eventually sought help from the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, a nonprofit that provides free legal services to homeless individuals.

According to documents from the Legal Clinic and the D.C. government, Worthy has taken thousands of dollars from homeless people such as Twyman and failed to deliver on her promises.

A February report from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) says that Worthy "targets her services to persons with HIV/AIDS, ex-offenders and shelter populations."

"Unfortunately, for her clients, Ms. Worthy did not find them an apartment and kept their money," the report says.

In an interview, Worthy says she was "serving the community" by finding affordable housing for people who needed

it, and she keeps the money in escrow while they are waiting for housing.

On the basis of an investigation, the DCRA issued a Feb. 28 order fining Worthy \$2,000 for engaging in "property management" without a license.

The Legal Clinic started receiving complaints about Worthy one and a half years ago, according to Ann Marie Staudenmaier, a staff attorney for the clinic. However, Worthy was "very cagey" and proved to be "an incredibly elaborate liar," Staudenmaier says.

Cornell Chappelle, the chief of program operations for the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness, says he was concerned by the complaints about Worthy. But he says the partnership, which oversees District homeless shelters for the D.C. government, had more positive experiences with her in the past. While Worthy sometimes was late in finding apartments for clients, she eventually did find them, he says. About six

"I kept asking her what she was going to do. Then I got tired of it."

—Alexis Twyman, speaking of the D.C. woman whom she paid to help find housing

See SCAM, Continued on next page

Short Takes

Homeless deaths up

Last year, 94 people died on the streets in King County — 12 more than in 2004. According to a new report from Public Health of Seattle & King County, most died of acute intoxication (30, an increase from 20 in 2004) or trauma such as accident, suicide or homicide, all of which were up last year.

Homicides and suicides doubled: Last year, eight homeless people were murdered compared with four in 2004. Ten chose to end their lives. In 2004, five did. And there were 10 fatal accidents in 2005 compared with seven the year before.

Women in Black also reports 12 homeless people have died this autumn, including one murder and one suicide. The group plans memorial vigils for the dead at noon on Wed., Dec. 6, in front of the Seattle Justice Center, Fifth Avenue and Cherry Street, and again from 5-6 p.m. on Thurs., Dec. 21, at Westlake Park, Fourth Ave. and Pine St. Information: (206)956-0334.

—Cydney Gillis

Meds behind bars

King County's Jail Health Services is in the spotlight once again. In the latest of a series of public reprimands, the King County Office of Citizen Complaints issued County Executive Ron Sims and the County Council a "Report of Jail Health Medical Errors and State Inspection Results," warning the county of "legal liability."

The report stems from an October inspection by the Washington State Board of Pharmacy, which passed the King County Jail's Jail Health Services (JHS) with the lowest score possible. This is an improvement from a March inspection, when the agency failed.

The Ombudsman's Office started focusing on JHS in January 2004, compiling 192 complaints from inmates and employees alike. Among their stories: one inmate was given a non-fatal overdose of insulin because staff confused his charts; another inmate with a life-threatening disease failed to receive his uninterrupted supply of medications. In at least one instance, an entire shift lacked a nurse trained in

administering treatments, which meant treatments for 71 inmates, including one with a seeping wound and another who was pregnant, were left undone.

Other grievances included no accounting of lost medications, withdrawals for patients "long after" they had been discharged, and a "large box of undressed medication errors."

This wasn't the first time JHS failed an inspection. A report from October 2004 noted that the service "still does not appear to have an active Quality Assurance/Continued Quality Improvement program," an assessment repeated in December 2004 when JHS passed, again with the lowest possible score, and again in 2005 and 2006.

An email from a nurse to managers in 2005 indicated that even staff are imperiled by the jail's conditions: "JHS has a legal and ethical obligation to appropriately train employees, staff this facility, and provide safe adequate health care to the tens of thousands of individuals who are legally remanded to this facility each year. None of these obligations are currently being met.... You, as administration, are placing inmates at risk and our licenses at risk with current practices as they stand."

—Chris LaRoche

Payday lending "a drain on our neighborhoods"

A new report finds that payday loans cost King County residents \$40 million a year, sinking people deeper into debt they are unable to repay.

The study was released last Thursday by the Association for Community Organizers for Reform Now (ACORN) and based on data released by the Washington Department of Financial Institutions (DFI). It found that the typical annual interest rate of payday loans is 391 percent. And it says payday lenders force repeated renewals and build up interest in excess of their customer's ability to repay.

Payday loans are short-term consumer loans for small amounts. In Washington State, payday lenders

can charge \$15 for every \$100 that is borrowed, and all customers need to do is pay it off with a check post-dated for their next payday. The problem is that customers often cannot afford to give up their checks at the next payday, and are forced to pay just the interest and extend the loan. This process of rolling debt over can continue indefinitely, and customers often take out additional loans in order to pay off their old ones.

"Predatory lending is where you are capitalizing on people in need," says Washington ACORN President John Jones. "One person ended up paying \$3,000 for a \$500 loan."

Additionally, the report found that payday loan stores were found to be disproportionately concentrated in lower-income neighborhoods and near military

bases. Residents in Pierce County, where Fort Lewis is situated, accounts for \$23 million in excess fees.

"We realize payday loans are a service that needs to profit, but it requires better regulation," Jones says. "It should be a starting 3 percent interest, with no more than a 30 percent annual interest rate."

Recommendations by the report include a rate cap of 36 percent of all loans, aggressive prosecution of companies that violate state law, and getting banks to discontinue financing payday lenders.

Borrowers' personal choices are a factor as well, says Jones. "There are always other places to go to, like social services and state programs. I strongly recommend they explore other options."

—Kevin Himeda

Stop Payday Predators!

- Payday loans have an annual interest rate of over 390% APR!
- The Payday Loan industry targets low to moderate-income people, especially in communities of color.

Community Forum on Predatory Lending:



Sat. December 9th, 12-2 pm
at the Rainier Community Center
4600 38th Ave. South, Seattle

Join County Councilmember Larry Gossett and City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen to share your story or learn what you can do!

Food and childcare will be provided

For more information Contact Jesse Miller at jesse@povertyaction.org

Continued from previous page

months ago, the Family Resource Center stopped dealing with her, Chappelle says.

Even still, Worthy continues to attract customers, Staudenmaier says.

Sarah Bennett and her boyfriend, Bennie Freeman, also came to the Legal Clinic after their experiences with Worthy, whom they gave \$1,000. At one point, Worthy says she had found them an apartment but claimed it needed electrical work before the couple could move in, Bennett recalls.

After a while she and Freeman got frustrated, Bennett says, and Freeman called Worthy to get the money back. But Worthy was "always giving him some false hope because she knew how bad we wanted an apartment," Bennett says.

She and Freeman are now living with Freeman's mother, having been told multiple times by Worthy that the "check is in the mail."

As for Twyman, she is now going to school, working a temporary job, and has found housing. In a brief follow-up interview Nov. 11, Twyman says Worthy had called "out of the blue" and left a message. Twyman says that she called back and left a message but has not heard back.

Worthy says she had "just lost contact" with Twyman but was "supposed to be" meeting her soon.

However, service providers are not convinced. "If [Worthy is] found to have taken folks' money illegally, she should be prosecuted," Chappelle says. ■

Reprinted from Street Sense, Washington, D.C. ©Street News Service: www.streetpapers.org.

Pete Seeger in Concert

Perched on a pine stool, at seventy-plus his boyish build in shapeless shirt and scuffed jeans, defines *lanky*. With salted beard and glistening face, one front tooth overlapping the other, he tests a string for pitch, strums a random chord, welcomes the suddenly silent assembly. His leather cap, but not his smile, has lost its lustre.

Like a Methodist at revival time, he testifies about long lines of workers snaking down sidewalks, pickets hoisted high, facing the ferocious charge of union-busters; about throngs of arm-in-arm unarmed walkers sweating through Alabama, ignoring curses and spit, dodging nightsticks and fire-hose streams, marching on and on and on till they have overcome.

On the front row a toddler sucks her fingers as he relates the tale of Sojourner Truth. Banjo lifted skyward, sinews strained in arms and throat, he springs from story to solo, then, at the exultant "I'd hammer out free-ee-dom!" he beckons, transforms crowd to choir. His voice leaps from melody to bass to tenor, back to bass. Applause thunders the auditorium.

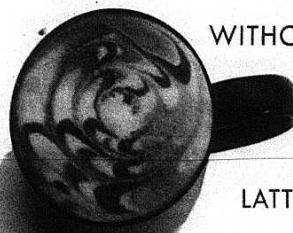
Standing in the back, a man in workday clothes runs grease-stained fingers through thinning hair. A woman clasps veined hands as Seeger lines out "Lonesome Valley" for those who are, under the spell of his embracing voice, no longer lonesome.

—SALLY BUCKNER

Let Real Change be part of your success
Reach 40,000 socially concerned readers while giving back to the community.

Real Change ad rates are competitive and affordable.

Check us out at www.realchangenews.org,
or call 441-3247 x202



WITHOUT DOUBT, THE MOST

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE

LATTÉ YOU'LL EVER DRINK.

When can a delicious latté help Seattle youth get off the streets and begin to lead healthy, productive lives? When you order it from a FareStart Café providing on-the-job experience for our Barista Training and Education Program. If one latté does all that, imagine the power of a sandwich and pastry.

www.farestart.org

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



FARESTART

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

Great Coffee. Better Lives.



Democracy Now!

Airing twice a day at 6:00 a.m and 5:00 p.m.

Hosted by the dynamic Amy Goodman, this award-winning national news program is committed to bringing the voices of the marginalized to the airwaves on issues ranging from the global to the local.

Free Speech Radio News 6 p.m. Weekdays

Public Affairs NOW! 5 - 7 a.m., 5 - 7 p.m. Weekdays

alternative
news

Listener-Supported

Non-commercial Radio from Bellevue Community College

Studio (425) 564-2424

Office (425) 564-2427

email: kbcs@ctc.edu

www.kbcs.fm

The Luck of the Draw

How do you get used to sweating out failures each week and free yourself of the fear of rejection? Ask a cartoonist for The New Yorker

"This, I guess, applies to everybody in whatever: You do what you do, be true to what you're doing, and do it because you enjoy doing it. That's probably a better strategy in the end, because there's nothing worse than somebody who really wants you to like them."

By ADAM HYLIA
Editor

Matthew Diffie has the same relationship with rejection that a logger has with poison oak or an office worker with spam: the more he gets of it, the higher his tolerance.

He and a handful of regulars for the *The New Yorker* are expected to turn in 10 to 15 single-panel cartoons a week. If they're lucky, one among that batch gets published.

Near as he can tell, Diffie says, once you have the privilege of hand-delivering your work each week, getting it accepted seems to be a matter of luck. He combed through the voluminous reject piles of 30 fellow cartoonists to put out *The Rejection Collection: Cartoons You Never Saw, and Never Will See*, in *The New Yorker*, which showcases the often brilliant work that just didn't make it — who knows why. Maybe, he says, because cartoon editor Robert Mankoff "didn't have the right sandwich that day."

On tour to tout the book last month, Diffie told *Real Change* about getting in the door, experiencing repeated failure, and making it to the point where it didn't matter any more.

Real Change: You first submitted a cartoon on a whim to a contest, right?

Matthew Diffie: I was up in Boston being sort of a failure at art and comedy, and *The New Yorker* was doing this cartoon contest, so I figured I could put the two failures together. I entered an idea and ended up winning, and Bob Mankoff, the cartoon editor, was the judge of that contest.

I met Bob, and he said, "Have you ever submitted to the magazine?" and I said I hadn't, and he said "Well, I'll keep my eye out." Right there, that was getting past the sludge pile, where most cartoons — submissions of any kind, I think — just don't even get looked at, or if they get looked at, it's nine months later by an intern.

So I did three cartoons a week. I think in the fifth week, I sold one. I

was like, "All right! Here we go." But then Bob told me, "Congratulations, but most cartoonists do 10 or 15 a week; I did 20 when I was young."

I started doing 15 from that point forward, trying to be really impressive. The whole first year, I sold four. I don't know what that averages, but it's not good.

And the next year I probably sold eight, and 10 next year. It was that third year that I really — I was learning this, because it's not exactly art, but it's not exactly joke writing. You have to combine the two.

RC: You included two of your own cartoons in this collection. Do you know why these were rejected?

Diffie: The Pollock one I guess I picked because it's essentially a highbrow poop joke. I thought the reference to Pollock would clean it up, get it in *The New Yorker*, but apparently not.

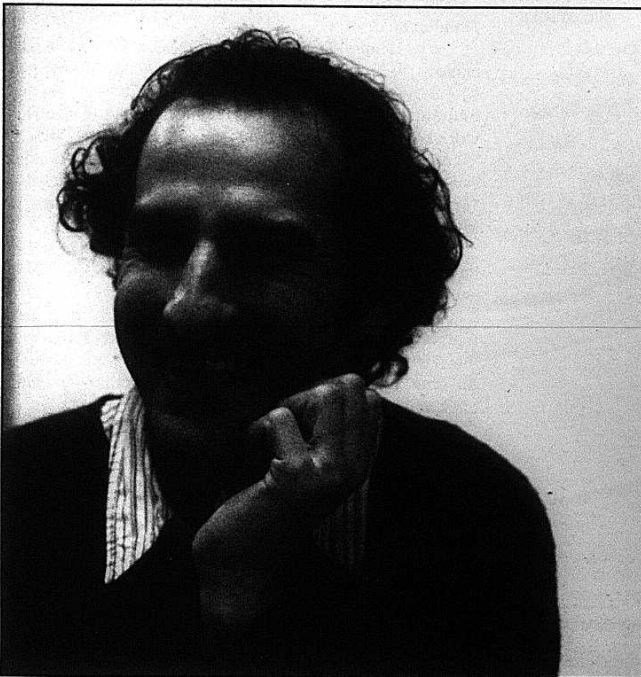
I asked Bob about this; he said that they could have run this one, but it's just a matter of that week, other cartoonists had really strong stuff. Or — it was early in my three years, and they weren't looking for a Matt Diffie cartoon at the point. Or, I sold something else that week, and they couldn't buy two. Or I don't know, for a million different reasons: Bob didn't have the right sandwich that day. This might have been in the Tina Brown

years, actually, so maybe I should have tried it again with [current editor] David Remnick before putting it in the book and forever canceling the opportunity. But this one is a poop joke, even with the highbrow reference.

RC: Are poop jokes not okay?

Diffie: Well, apparently not, because a lot of them are in the the book. I guess you have to really do something spectacular with it to get it in. I mean I've submitted this one 10 times over the last seven years. Sometimes you sell them that way, you know, if circumstances were against you the first time.

RC: If they're rejected, can you sell your work elsewhere?



Matthew Diffie, the editor of a book of cartoons left over from *The New Yorker*, called *The Rejection Collection*. Photo by Joel Turner.

Discrimination?

CALL US!

**Seattle Office
for Civil Rights**

(206) 684-4500
(TTY) (206) 684-4503

www.seattle.gov/civilrights

Free, fair, and impartial services

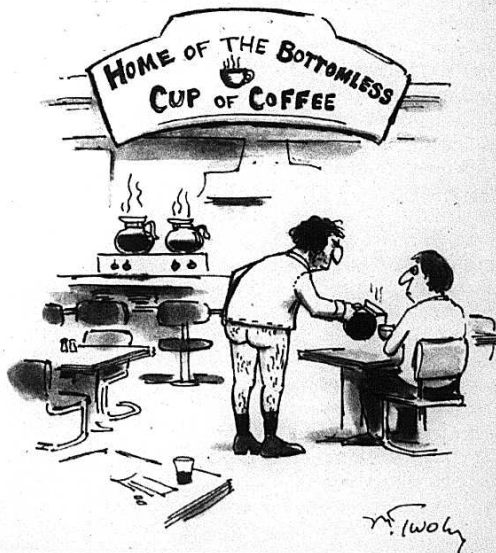


City of Seattle

Greg Nickels, Mayor

We All
Belong!

Housing
Contracting
Employment
Public
Accommodations



Continued from Page 6

Diffie: There used to be a lot of other markets, I'm told by some of the older guys who still do this. They would start at *The New Yorker* and make the rounds to 20 or 40 other magazines that bought single-panel cartoons. Now, *Harvard Business Review* does it. *Playboy* does it, but I don't ever do any that are that racy. A lot of the other markets don't pay really well. You get \$20 per issue.

RC: What does the *The New Yorker* pay?

Diffie: The starting rate for cartoons is \$675 for a single panel. As you see, selling four at that rate in a year is not a living, and it's only barely a living if you sell a bunch.

RC: Is this any of the cartoonists' bread and butter?

Diffie: I think most people have something else, you know, a lot of people teach or dabble in advertising, or paint, or some other — there are some TV writers among them.

RC: Paint as in —

Diffie: — Real art. And maybe some got lucky in marriage. The current rate of rejection is you bring in 10 a week and on a really good week you'll sell one, so that's 90 percent rejection if you're really doing well. And admittedly some of those are terrible. Just coming up with 10 a week, whether you have a good week or a bad week, you're bound at some point to have some dogs in the batch.

RC: Is there any rhyme or reason to what they reject?

Diffie: I don't know.

There's a bunch of them that I think are just — like "Crack Hoe" — just dumb. It's the kind of cartoon that cartoonists probably laugh at, just the idea that he did it. He thought of doing it, and didn't stop there, he actually drew it, and then he actually submitted it to the fancy-pants, high-brow *New Yorker*. You're trying to come up with sort

of clever, witty jokes all day and then you see somebody else just do this.

RC: Do you think that there's any offense to this ["Home of the bottomless cup of coffee"]?

Diffie: Yeah, I mean there's a lot of them here that are just a little too crude for *The New Yorker*, probably, but they're really funny. But at the same time he did [draw] it from the back, which is a step towards class.



RC: Do you think this one [the burqa-clad suicide bomber over the air vent] would maybe strike a chord as well, especially in light of the Danish thing?

Diffie: Yeah, that probably shouldn't have been in the magazine, that would have been a little irresponsible. Putting it in *The New Yorker* certainly would have gotten letters.

I did a cartoon with two Girl Scouts on the doorstep speaking to a man who's opened the door, and they're saying, "Would you like to buy some Girl Scout crack?" To me, it's not even very funny, but they actually went and bought it, and it ran, and it got letters from all kinds of places, all former Girl Scouts. No crack dealers — none of them were offended.

RC: The regular cartoonists have lunch each week after turning in their work. Do you guys ever go, you know, "Bob is just weird, his taste is weird, I don't understand it."

Diffie: Yeah, we have our choices, we have maybe three in the batch of 10 that we're like, "Oh, I really nailed it this week," and he often picks the fifth one, that we're like, "Oh, really? It's o.k. I guess." But, he's never picked something that I thought was terrible, and I often have terrible ideas and can't come up with anything better

by Tuesday morning, and I just have to bring them in.

RC: How do you think the cartoonists are responding to this element of random luck, that you never know

what is going to exactly click and be accepted?

Diffie: The more you do it, the less it matters. [Some] people do it for six months, and if they can't take that rejection, they go do something else. Which is perfectly a legitimate choice. But the people that stick it out, they get to the point where they realize they can't control that kind of stuff. This, I guess, applies to everybody in whatever: you do what you do, be true to what you're doing, and do it because you enjoy doing it.

That's probably a better strategy in the end, because there's nothing worse than somebody who really wants you to like them, or wants you to like their stuff — I mean, it just turns you off. But if somebody's confident and just does

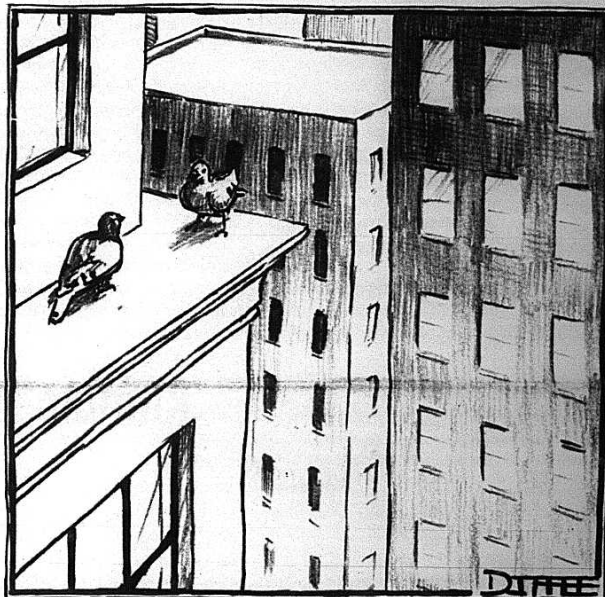
their thing, even if you don't like it, it will probably grow on you because of that. I guess that's what I've personally learned: just do it and enjoy the process of doing it. And by Thursday, when [Bob] makes the calls, try to be thinking of other things. ■

[The Book]

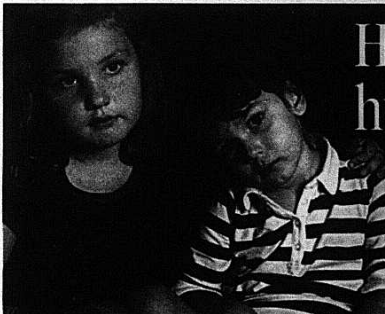
The Rejection Collection: Cartoons You Never Saw, and Never Will See, in The New Yorker (Simon Spotlight Entertainment, 2006). Hardcover, 264 pages, \$22.95.

[More rejection]


The New York-based Rejection Show, featuring cartoonists, writers, performers "and other human beings" display their work onstage and online at www.rejectionshow.com.



"I'd say my biggest influence is probably Pollock."



Help feed hungry kids



PLEASE DETACH AND MAIL WITH YOUR GIFT TO THE ADDRESS BELOW

Help a Family in Crisis!

YES, I want to help feed and shelter families in crisis this summer with my gift of:

DOING THE MOST GOOD ☐ \$20 ☐ \$35 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$_____

Please send your tax-deductible gift to:
The Salvation Army
P.O. Box 9219
Seattle, WA 98109-0200

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

To make a gift by credit card, call toll free 1-800-SAL-ARMY.
www.salvationarmyusa.org

Your gift to The Salvation Army will be used now and throughout the year to support Salvation Army services in our community.

Real Change Readers

are progressive, community-centered, and action oriented.
We are educated, affluent, and support businesses that share our values.

An ad this size can cost

as little as **\$30** per issue

call 441-3247 x205 for info.

Sagittarius Rising

The Centaur in the Garden
By Moacyr Scliar
Translated by Margaret A. Neves
University of Wisconsin Press, 2003
Paperback, 216 pages, \$14.95?

By ADAM HYLIA
Editor

Guedali was born with the body of a horse below his torso: a tail, a stiff horse's hide, sharp hooves that gave his human mother great pain, a stout equine package. And he spends his life — as he recalls it in a moment during a dinner party in the company of warm friends and his loving wife — underground. Hiding his monstrous body, and disavowing something fey in him that won't be bridled.

His parents lovingly lock him away in their remote Brazilian frontier farm, one of a number of Jewish homesteads created to get far away from eastern Europe's pogroms. The boy's horsey metabolism demands breast milk laced with lettuce; at night he runs the fields, gaining the amorous attentions of a local mare. When strangers come to the farm, the enormous boy hides in the barn. "Wedge... among the cows that silently chew their cuds, I become painfully aware of my shanks, my hooves. I am obliged to think of something called

horseshoes." Inevitably, the boy is discovered; dad can see that the agrarian dream that he chased all the way from Russia is done for. When they get to Porto Alegre, "My father sighs in relief: here you'll be at peace, my son.... City people don't care about anything."

Still hidden, Guedali takes correspondence courses in business; he has his bar mitzvah. The Jewish state is created when he's about 13, and he dreams of running off to join the Israeli army or a kibbutz. Instead, he joins the circus, impersonating two brothers who dress up in a centaur costume. He meets the only other centaur he's ever seen, Tita, fleeing her human master in a southern Brazilian plain. He and she spend their salad days galloping over the pampas. It would be a perfectly happy ending, except for the fact that each wants their horse halves gone. They arrange transport to Morocco, where they undergo surgery and are made human, mostly — except for their forelegs and hooves, which are disguised under orthopedic boots. Back home, Guedali proposes to Tita in a Porto Alegre restaurant, radiant with a few weeks' earnings from his export business. "Above the table, Guedali and Tita were dining at a charming restaurant; they conversed, were served by the attentive waiter.

Below, the hooves were in command, restless hooves, crazy to gallop... but having to restrict themselves to the meager square yard that was conceded to them for the moment."

For a while, the two seem to get by with their bifurcation. Then one day a young centaur shows up at the house, leaving Guedali in existential crisis. He wants to be a centaur again; he longs to ask his father, "Had Guedali the centaur boy been happy? Happier than the biped Guedali, or less happy? ... And what might be the secret of centaurs' happiness, if indeed they were happy? To make me understand, my father would have to go far back in time. He would have to go back to his roots. He would have to tell of his life in Russia, or the black horses of the Cossacks, of his coming to Brazil, of his first days in the Jewish colony, of the night I was born."

To all of which his father would only respond: "Forget all that, Guedali, everything's all right now."

You can take *The Centaur in the Garden* as a parable about being Jewish in the New World, or as a magical-realist work along the lines of Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Others have. The book mostly asks that it be enjoyed, a request that is easily met. ■

[Speaking]

Moacyr Scliar and Mexican writer Ilan Stevens talk about the history of Jews in Latin America, and the pleasant surprises found in Latin American Jewish literature, at the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center on Thurs., Dec. 14, at 7:30 p.m., as part of the Nextbook Writer's Series. For more information: www.nextbook.org.

You can take *The Centaur in the Garden* as a parable about being Jewish in the New World, or as a magical-realist work along the lines of Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Others have.

Rumble in the Jungle

Apocalypso
Written and Directed by Mel Gibson

By LESTER GRAY
Arts Editor

Mel Gibson is most likely a traffic stop and an indiscreet comment away from an Oscar nomination, and such as they say, a miss is as good as a mile. In a year of fair to middling competition, this heart-pounding drama set in the waning days of the Mayan empire, while uneven in execution, proves itself a worthy competitor.

Gibson's pointed fable focuses on the tribulations of one particular Mayan citizen, Jaguar Paw (Rudy Youngblood). Nestled in the forest, his village exists as one of many unaffiliated communities

of a Mayan civilization in decline.

Early on, Gibson employs an effective but historically suspect ploy to render the semi-invented culture sympathetic. Jaguar Paw and his fellow tribespeople administer some good-natured, bawdy ribbing to one of their kin, who has been unable to produce offspring. This anthropological sleight-of-hand brings these characters within a beer and football game

of being someone we know and care about. And like us, their complacency and distractions have consequences.

In the predawn hours, the village is brutally razed by a raiding party seeking slaves and humans to sacrifice for the Mayan priests. In the confusion of the melee, Jaguar Paw manages to hide his pregnant wife and their daughter before he is captured. *Apocalypso* tells the story of his escape and his subsequent efforts to avoid capture as he seeks to reunite with the family he left behind.

Gibson's ability to summon forth and shape performances from his actors, some in this case who have never been on a set, is his greatest strength but not his most salient characteristic. As a director, he is nothing if not visceral, and blood — dripping, squirting, with a bit of a splash here and there — remains an active contributor from his repertoire.

In spite of seasoned vets contributing to the camera work and editing, the cinematic product is not all it could be. The high-definition video images at times make you realize that the richness of film is a long way, if ever, from being digitally replaced. The chase scenes, a staple of moviemaking, feel a bit rough in patches, not uncommon in an era of actors and writers turned directors.

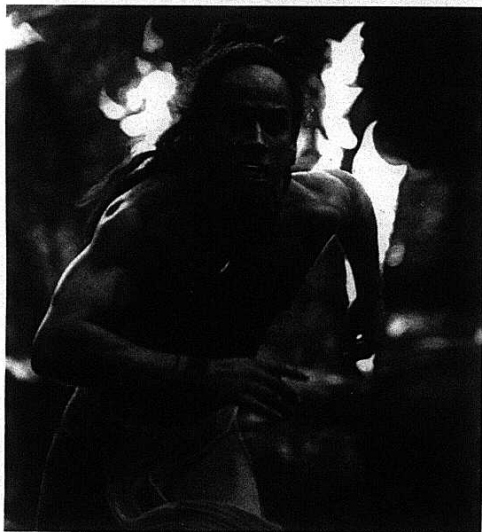
What does work are subtitles over dialog spoken in Mayan dialect, which adds authenticity. It encourages tight economic verbiage, which helps the pace in a movie that runs a bit long.

Gibson says that there are parallels to be drawn between the decline of the Mayans and our own times. Given the brutal depiction of the Mayans and the ending of the film, there are varied interpretations that could be assigned to this story.

Advice to Mel: given your PR issues over the last year, refrain from selling your product as a message movie. Pitch it as a good action flick, and leave the allegories to people with a little less baggage. ■

Mel Gibson's ability to summon forth and shape performances from his actors, some in this case who have never been on a set, is his greatest strength but not his most salient characteristic.

Jaguar Paw
(Rudy Youngblood) in
Apocalypso.



Adventures
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning



Don't kid yourself. All potential terrorists, even poor domestic terrorists non-funded by foreign governments, enjoy YouTube.

Big Brother is Watching YouTube

Isn't it good to know that your government is keeping tabs on you by means of something called an Automated Targeting System, or ATS?

ATS is one big funky profiling system that profiles you as a terrorist based on a whole range of information about you gleaned from your flights in and out of the country. Let's say you never get the pork for the in-flight meal. If you are always coming in from Tel Aviv, that might get you a low score. But if you are always flying in from Shiraz, Iran, that might dramatically raise your score. But if you are always also drinking the Shiraz, that might lower your score once more. And so on.

Fare Thee Well, in all your travels, and good luck on getting a low terrorist score! Remember, it's not personal — you're being targeted by a heartless, mindless, soulless, automated data-cracking system. What can go wrong?

But why should the government stop at collecting data about you from your flights in and out of the country? Well, I could tell you why, but it doesn't matter — they WON'T stop! So let's see what that will look like.

Fortunately, my mathematics skills are still keen enough that I know exactly what it will look like. It will look like Netflix. Netflix's founder, Reed Hastings, who, like me and my homie Florence Nightingale, is/was also a mathematician, was just the other day telling Lesley Stahl how Netflix automatically knows how to recommend movies to you based on what you have already rented. I forget the exact words he used, but it boils down to this: the more you know about everybody, the more you know about anybody. The system simply learns what you will like from what the other clients currently like who have recently liked what you like now.

How will that work in practice? The government probably won't mine Netflix's data because it isn't democratic enough. A potential domestic terrorist

might not be willing to spend \$5.99 a month on DVDs when he could be using that money to stock up on fertilizer. Instead, our government will track things we get for free. Like YouTube videos.

Don't kid yourself. All potential terrorists, even poor domestic terrorists non-funded by foreign governments, enjoy YouTube. Because of that it will be very easy for Homeland Security to find terrorists by assembling a YouTube preferences terrorist score. In fact, it would be so easy they're probably already doing it.

Think about it. If you think your personal iPod music list tells everybody everything they need to know about you, how much more will your YouTube video favorites do the trick? Just wait until Homeland Security's computers get wind of your passion for 1930s Soviet propaganda films featuring the Russian Internationale, with subtitles, or for 23-second clips of buskers in Budapest, annotated in Polish by someone who evidently speaks Polish but nevertheless chooses to call attention to her knowledge of English by calling herself tongue_just.

What do you think it will mean to Homeland Security when their computer bank finds out you can't resist scratchy videos of Uyghur lute players performing against backgrounds of Xinjiang Province landscapes? What it means depends on what all the other freaks out there with the exact same tastes do with their lives, and how often they get suspected of being a terrorist. If they (people you don't know) are suspected of being terrorists, you will be too.

Here's a stupid joke I just made up. How many Russians does it take to poison a light bulb? Answer: You are asking too many questions. Finish your soup!

Depending on whether you think my stupid joke is funny, the Bush administration can rate you on how trustworthy you are. It's easy. I think my joke is a hoot, and the government knows I can't be trusted. So if you like my joke, you can't be trusted either.

Be beyond suspicion. Don't do anything I would do. ■



REAL-LIFE ANSWERS TO YOUR LEGAL HASSLES

If I am hurt on a Metro bus due to driver error (like if the bus stops suddenly or the floors are wet and slippery), and there is no written account of that accident, what is my legal recourse?

According to Katie Carder at Foster Pepper, PLLC, when injuries are caused by a Metro bus driver's error, or by certain other conditions that make a Metro bus unsafe to ride, Metro is said to have acted negligently.

If you are in King County and injured on a Metro bus, county rules require you to file a claim before you can file a lawsuit against King County for your injuries. This gives the county a chance to fix the situation before you file a lawsuit.

The department that handles Metro injury claims is King County Risk Management (KCRM). You must follow the KCRM claim process to have your claim heard; failure to do so may lead to a dismissal.

The first step is to complete a King County "Claims for Damages" form, which is required to start the claims process, regardless of whether there was a written account of the incident. In the claims form, you will need to give specific details about your claim, including a description of the incident: date, time, place, Metro route number, witnesses, and type of injury. You can also turn in

any other documents that support your claim.

Next, sign the claims form and return it to the King County Clerk of the Council's office, which is located at the King County Courthouse in Seattle. The claim form must be an original.

After you turn in the form, the Council's office will assign your claim a number and will send it to a Risk Management tort investigator, which may take two to three weeks. Once the investigator receives your claim form, he or she will contact you within a few days to give you a claim number and request any other papers needed to complete the investigation. The investigator will look at various things, including the facts surrounding your injury, the applicable law, and the nature and extent of your damages. They will also look at whether you might have helped cause your injury.

After the investigation is completed, the KCRM office will send you a letter to notify you that your claim has been accepted, partially accepted, or denied. If payment is due to you, you will be required to sign a release and provide your Social Security number.

If your claim is denied, there is no formal appeals process. Your next option is to file a lawsuit against King County. However, you must wait 60 days from the time you filed your claim with KCRM before you can bring a lawsuit.

To find the "Claims for Damages" form, go to www.metrokc.gov/risk/forms.aspx or call (206)296-7432 to have the form mailed to you. ■



Sat., Nov. 18, 11:43 p.m., Sixth Avenue and Cherry Street, Parking Lot.

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) contacted Seattle Police and requested they respond to the 700 block of Sixth Ave. to remove about 20 transients who were camping under I-5. The lot is clearly posted "No Trespassing" in numerous places; SDOT was there to clean the lot. Upon arrival, officers activated their overhead lights and announced their presence via PA, and informed everyone to gather their belongings and leave. Officers came upon the suspect, a transient Black male aged 56, asleep at the end of the parking lot. An officer, who identified himself as SPD, and who requested the suspect leave the area, contacted him. He informed him he would be arrested if he did not leave; suspect did not reply or move. The officer asked him his name, and the suspect mumbled something unintelligible. Officer asked him to speak up, and asked his name again. Suspect looked blank. Officer arrested suspect "Doe" for trespassing and obstruction, and advised him of his rights. Suspect remained silent. He was transported to King County Jail. While at jail he refused to answer any of the staff's questions, and was booked for trespass.

Sun., Nov. 19, 9:45 p.m., First Ave., The Parc.

Officers were dispatched to a burglary call at the above address, and arrived to find the complainant, an employee of the business, who stated that the motion alarm had been tripped at 8:30 p.m. He had checked the building and found the suspect, a transient male aged 42, sleeping in one of the back rooms of the business. Complainant had then dialed 911. Complainant stated that the suspect was not an employee and did not belong inside. Officers searched the building and found the suspect asleep in a little kitchen area at the back of the business. He was taken into custody, and stated that he had entered the building at 5 p.m. when it was still open to get out of the cold weather. He went into an empty room and fell asleep. When he got up again he walked around, setting off the motion alarm — he found the business closed and locked up, and returned to the back room and fell asleep. A name check revealed an outstanding warrant, and suspect was booked into King County Jail for the outstanding warrant, trespass, and possible burglary.

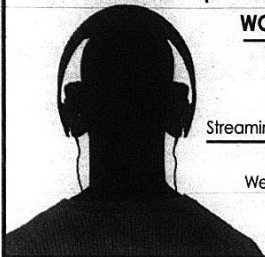
Sun., Nov. 19, 10:38 p.m., Second Ave. South, Extension Two.

A transient Black female aged 43 was contacted for a liquor violation after being observed drinking beer on the stoop of a private doorway. "No Trespassing" signs were clearly posted. Suspect had the odor of intoxicants about her person, and had bloodshot eyes. Officers knew her as a Stay Out of Drug Areas (SODA) participant, and this was verified via radio. Suspect was arrested and transported to King County Jail; she thanked officers as they arrested her, stating she had been up for the last 7-10 days smoking crack, and needed some rest. Officers stated she was unable to sit still and her pupils were dilated. She was booked into King County Jail for violation of her SODA order.

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.

Answers are intended for general information only and are not intended to take the place of the advice of your own attorney. Got questions? E-mail atji@seattleu.edu.

What does peace feel like?



WORDS OF PEACE ON TV

Comcast Cable SCAN TV

Ch. 77/29

Sundays, 9:30 pm

Streaming live at www.scan.tv.org

DISH Network Ch. 9602

Wed. 6:30 pm / Sun. 5:00 pm

www.peaceseeker.net

206.524.6363

LEFT BANK BOOKS

Worker Owned and Operated Collective Since 1973

92 Pike St.

Pike Place
MarketMon-Sat 10-7
Sun 11-6Used and
New bookswww.leftbankbooks.comleftbank@leftbankbooks.com

206.622.0195

Sometimes you just need a car.

If you live in the city, but you want to get out of town, chances are that a Flexcar sedan, AWD Honda Element, mini-van or pick-up can take you anywhere you want to go.

We pick up the gas, insurance, parking and maintenance so that you can drive hassle-free. New Weekend Specials are also available so taking a Flexcar on your outdoor adventures is now even more cost effective.

Real Change receives \$20 when you join on-line and mention us as a referring organization.

Flexcar
flexcar.com



This Holiday Season,

Help The Working Homeless
HELP THEMSELVES.

Since 1921 donations from people just like you have allowed the Millionair Club Charity to provide JOBS for the unemployed and HOT MEALS for the homeless. But we cannot do it without your help.

During this holiday season please remember one of your oldest local charities - started right here in Pioneer Square. Every dollar you give stays here in Seattle. We don't accept any government donations, so our ability to make a difference in the lives of so many needy people depends on one thing: YOU.

Every day 150-200 men and women come through our doors desperately wanting a

job needing a hot meal. Your donation counts, so please give generously.

Go now to www.MillionairClub.org or call 206-728-JOBS (5627) and donate today!

Millionair Club Charity
2515 Western Ave.
Seattle, WA 98121
206-728-JOBS (5627)
WE NEED YOUR HELP TODAY!



THE MILLIONAIR CLUB CHARITY

Letters

editor@realchangenews.org

City Council: check it out

Dear Real Change,

The Just Heard item "Budgeting Basics" (Nov. 15-21) states that "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... 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."

Although some City Councilmembers have claimed since its adoption that the plan mandates an immediate de-emphasis on shelter and an emphasis on housing, that's not the case. Nor does the plan predict that anything will be "working" by mid-2007. In fact,

the Plan states the following intention: "Within the first five years... as more affordable, permanent long-term solutions outlined in this plan become available, gradually shift resources away from providing emergency shelter." The first two years of the Plan (i.e., by mid-2007) are slated for feasibility studies, convening committees of various sorts, and similar organizational and planning tasks.

Given the spin put on the Plan by some council members, it will be difficult to trust any assessment they would produce regarding any supposed decrease in need for emergency shelter. If shelter need is decreasing by mid-2007, shelter providers will be the first to know. If the necessary amount of transitional and permanent housing comes online by mid-2007, housing providers will be the first to know. Maybe they should be our information sources, not the City Council.

Sally Kinney
Seattle

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

Circle

"His hand... not

empty!

had, been a source—"

the

child

(grown apart!) said,

to another. Was!

clinging,

And we know him.

—STAN BURRISS

Full Employment

The tight voices are right: even in hard times there is work for the willing, for example in the sand paper factory spreading glue on paper and applying one grain at a time, pressing the paper between plates with the weight of your body.

—DAVID THORNBRUGH

CLASSIFIED

Employment

Associate Director, Social Justice Initiatives — Great part-time opportunity to drive YWCA's agency wide efforts to combat socio-economic injustice & discrimination. See www.ywcaworks.org for details and req. exp. Apply hr@ywcaworks.org or P. Hayden, 2820 E. Cherry, Seattle, WA, 98122. EOE.

Project Manager to monitor the YWCA Children Youth & Family services programs contracts and grants and coordinate high-level admin. projects. See www.ywcaworks.org for details and req. exp. Apply hr@ywcaworks.org or P. Hayden, 2820 E. Cherry, Seattle, WA, 98122. EOE.

Resident Manager to ensure that quality, safe housing & services are provided to homeless/low-income residents for permanent housing at YWCA Opportunity Place. 12 hr/week & free rent, 1-bed apt. Details: www.ywcaworks.org. Respond to hr@ywcaworks.org or J. Bachhuber, YWCA OP, 2024 Third Ave. Seattle, WA, 98121. EOE 12/5.

Seattle Art Museum — Security Guard (Visitor Services Officer) SAM seeks Security Guards to provide security for our newly renovated downtown Museum. For details & to apply, go to: www.seattleartmuseum.org/jobs. EOE

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.

SnowBall is a sparkling evening of music, dinner, dancing to celebrate the LGBTQ community. Tickets \$40 and up. Sat., Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m., Swedish Cultural Center, 1920 Dexter Ave. N. Info: www.ingersollcenter.org.

Learn about and celebrate diversity at Culture Conversations. Tues., Dec. 12, noon. Youth Eastside Services, 999 NE 164th Ave. Info: (425)747-4937.

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

Calendar

This Week's Top Ten

Saturday 12/9

The Forum on Predatory Payday Lending is a panel discussion with community leaders hosted by County Councilmember Larry Gossett. Share your thoughts and concerns as well as hear stories of Seattleites who have fallen victim to the predators. Noon, Rainier Community Center, 4600 28th Ave. S.

Political analyst, former public affairs officer for the UN Mission in Kosovo, and co-author of *Peace at Any Price*, Whit Mason speaks about the failures of the mission to maintain law and order, protect human rights, and create democratic institutions. 7:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Co., 101 S. Main St.

Sunday 12/10

The International Human Rights Day Funeral Procession and Ceremony solemnly remembers the victims of human rights violations and celebrates the United Nations adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Participants are asked to wear black and can watch highlights of human rights violations from the War on Terror in Iraq and the Philippines, human trafficking, and the local and global deaths from poverty. 1 p.m., Washington State Convention and Trade Center, 800 Convention Place. Info: brettjelinek@hotmail.com.

Many of the planet's dwindling resources are located on lands inhabited by native communities, and those resources are now the target of giant global corporations who desperately need them to fuel their own unsustainable growth. Jerry Mander, bestselling author, and Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, chair of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, discuss their book, *Paradigm Wars*. Through indigenous and activist writers, the book celebrates the many successes in resistance. 2 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St.

Anne Riley, assistant director of the Ballard Senior Center, presents the results of a survey to determine the feasibility of locating a homeless shelter in Ballard. The evening also includes a presentation of the Oscar-nominated documentary *Streetwise*, an unsettling portrait of the daily life among homeless and abandoned chil-

dren on Seattle's Skid Row. Free, but food bank donations requested. 6:30 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church, 6512 23rd Ave. NW

Tuesday 12/12

Public radio commentator John Moe shares from his book *Conservative Me*, which recounts his six weeks of cultural immersion visiting the

National Young Republicans Convention, the most pro-Bush state in the Union, and a fundamentalist Christian church service. 7:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St.

Non-Profit Comedy presents a show filled with politically inspired humor to benefit NARAL Pro-Choice Washington. Tickets \$10 and up. 7:30 p.m., The Comedy Underground, 222 S. Main St.

Friday 12/15

Bringing light to the dark winter days, Seattle Labor Chorus celebrates the liberations of all from injustice and the right of workers to organize and secure a living wage. The performance includes special guest Si Kahn, a songwriter, director of Grassroots Leadership, and participant in the student civil rights movement of the mid-1960s. Tickets \$8 and up. 7:30 p.m., University Unitarian Church, 6556 35th Ave. NE.

Until Saturday 12/16

Winner of the 2005 Northwest Playwright Competition, *The Book of Nathan* is about the relationship between oppression and unjust war. Nathan Burrell, an African-American Army chaplain who served in the Vietnam War, awaits execution for killing a racist superior officer. The government gives him a second chance and the promise of a pardon in exchange for spying on the all-Black congregation of the U.S. Army that was actively involved in civil rights activism. Tickets \$18 general, \$12 students and seniors. Thurs., Fri., and Sat., 8 p.m. Theater Schmeater, 1500 Summit Ave. Info: www.schmeater.org.

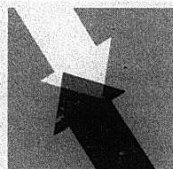
Director's Corner



I was thinking the other day about the unsung heroes of *Real Change*: the stores that support our vendors. Our vendors buy their papers up front for 35 cents and sell them on the street for a dollar. When a store opens onto a public sidewalk, selling there is First Amendment-protected free speech. Still, many of these go out of their way to make our vendors welcome. Those that have especially embraced *Real Change* include the University Safeway, Trader Joe's, the Bartell drugstores in Ballard and Wallingford, and the Capitol Hill Walgreens.

But when, as is often the case, a store opens onto a parking lot or other sort of private property, our vendors need permission. Many solicitors ask for this kind of access, but most don't get it, so to these stores we are particularly grateful. Madison Market allows our vendor to set up shop in their private seating area and calls us when she doesn't show to ask if anything is wrong. Central Market in Shoreline gives our vendors employee badges to signify that they are allowed on the property. Some of our best turf is at the various PCC Natural Markets, where our progressive content and the values of their customers find a perfect convergence. Their support of our vendors, in particular, has been extraordinary.

We apologize to those we've omitted here — we know there are others — and offer a huge *Real Change* thank you to all of our supporters.



First things First

Get Involved • Take Action

Olympia 2007: Now More Than Ever

Issue: The Washington State Legislature convenes in early January for a 105-day session in which they will write the next two-year budget. They're expecting a \$56.6 million surplus by June 2009, and Democrats in both the House and the Senate significantly strengthened their majorities in the last election. This year, they have a better chance than ever to move a progressive agenda that can include expanding affordable housing across the state and reducing homelessness.

Background: There are a number of proposals that the legislature should pass.

Increase the size of the Housing Trust Fund to \$363 million. Despite its growth in recent years, the Housing Trust Fund still has a substantial backlog of unmet need, and rising costs of construction are draining it. This increase would be the bold step necessary to jumpstart a statewide effort to ensure that everyone in Washington has a safe home.

Expand funding and eligibility for the state's Transitional Housing, Operating, and Rent Program (THOR.) Funding and vouchers for temporary financial assistance can provide a quick exit from homelessness or prevent homelessness altogether. Funding for THOR should be increased and the program should be expanded to serve single adults, childless couples and youth, and people on the verge of homelessness.

Improve services for people leaving state systems to ensure that youth aging out of foster care and individuals leaving prison don't become homeless. A key element of the state's plan to end homelessness is preventing people from being discharged from state care to the streets. The state should increase funding for transitional services, education, treatment, and employment services for foster youth and inmates being discharged.

Increase funding for mental health and substance abuse care. People living with mental illness and chemical dependency frequently become homeless and cycle through jail and hospitals at great public expense. Prevention and treatment help stop that cycle. In particular, many people receiving General Assistance-Unemployable are disabled by mental illness, yet the program provides no access to mental health care. Mental health coverage should be offered to GA-U recipients to allow them to recover and return to work.

Prevent landlords from discriminating in rental housing based on an applicant's source of income. Seattle and unincorporated King County have local ordinances preventing landlords from refusing to rent to prospective tenants just because they are using a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher. This protection should be expanded statewide and should include all sources of income (welfare, child support, social security, etc.). This would expand the affordable housing options available to some of the lowest income residents of the state, without costing the state anything.

Action: Contact your state legislators and the Governor and let them know that you want them to prioritize creating affordable housing and ending homelessness. You can leave a brief message by calling the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-562-6000 (Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m. to noon and 1-4:30 p.m. until the session starts). Or visit www.realchangenews.org to send a personalized email.

Also, mark your calendar for two important days to make your voice heard: the Poverty Action Summit on Jan. 15 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day) and Housing Advocacy Day, Feb. 2. Watch these pages for more information.

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

FCC, Continued from Page 1

The media, owned by a concentrated group of corporations, persuaded the public "to support a needless war," Haven said. Maybe with stronger rules on ownership, she said, "the next war won't happen."

Consolidated media largely ignores people of color in America and portrays them in [racist] caricature, showing Latinos as illegal immigrants and African-Americans as crime suspects, Copps said.

He said ownership dictates what is on the airwaves, and the major reason minorities are portrayed so unfairly is because they have been virtually shut out of media ownership.

Copps cited a study done by media nonprofit *Free Press* which reveals people of color, who make up more than 30 percent of the population, own only 3.26 percent of all TV stations.

Robert Jeffrey, publisher of *ColorsNW*, a multicultural magazine with a focus on uniting communities of color, said consolidation matters when it comes to minority ownership.

"The FCC has kept media conglomerates from buying up the few, ethnic media organizations we have," and the loosening of these rules "would worsen the ongoing exclusion of people of color in society," he said.

Copps told the crowd that those voices need to be heard again to protect a free media.

"It's up to you and me to be involved and to stay involved from this day forward." ■

GOODWILL, Continued from Page 1

It's called a "community benefits agreement": a contract with citizens that allows them to sue a developer if he fails to keep his promises. In an age of big-box encroachment on local retail, citizens have started using CBAs across the nation to mitigate the impact of development.

It's the first time citizens in Washington state have tried to get one, but so far, developer Darrell Vange hasn't agreed to formal negotiations.

In exchange for the street vacations that he needs to build the four-block site at South Dearborn Street and Rainier Avenue South, Vange is already working with the city on a public amenities package that the Seattle Department of Transportation would have to approve early next year.

Between that and the 60 meetings he's held in the past two years with community groups, Vange says the project addresses many of the Dearborn Street Coalition's demands. That includes making 100 of the project's housing units affordable to people earning 60 percent of median income, setting aside 10 percent of the site as open space, providing 50 small spaces for neighborhood restaurants and

shops, and using a union contractor for the construction.

Vange, who is building Goodwill a new, bigger facility as part of the deal, says he has also agreed to help start and fund a Business Improvement Area, which would provide Little Saigon with things such as signage, security, and marketing. Vange says all retail tenants at the new development would be members. "That in itself would be 50 percent of the BIA's revenue. That's a non-trivial proposal."

Representatives of the 20 groups that make up the coalition told the council last Tuesday that promises aren't the same as a binding agreement, which they'd like to get before the site's use is changed.

One of them was Quang H. Nguyen, director of the Vietnamese-American Economic Development Association, which leads the coalition with the Jackson Place Community Council.

"He's been good at listening to us," Nguyen says of the developer. "The thing that concerns us is he's unwilling to accept a formal negotiation process whereby at the end of it, you have some legally enforceable document."

"He wants to work within [the city] framework," Nguyen says, which is "skewed toward the developer for the benefit of the developer."

Nguyen and other members of the coalition say they're not against devel-

opment; they're just trying to ensure it's done in a way that protects existing shops, restaurants, and livelihoods.

Even if some shops are small, says Bill Bradburd, co-chair of the Jackson Place Community Council, commercial leases at the Dearborn Street project will command top dollar. "What kind of business can you put in there?" he asks. "What [the developer] has talked about is Jamba Juice and World Wrapps, but how does that tie into the cultural identity of Little Saigon?"

"This thing is suburbia rolling into our neighborhood" — a community, Bradburd adds, that is "ethnically mixed, lower on the economic scale, and certainly not a Jamba Juice kind of neighborhood." ■

[Event]

A vote impacting the Goodwill site is scheduled for Dec. 7, 2 p.m., at City Hall Chambers, 600 Fourth Ave., with a full City Council vote planned Dec. 11. Information: (206) 684-8804

[Resource]

A list of the community benefits that the Dearborn Street Coalition has requested of the developer, along with his responses, can be viewed at www.seattlegoodwill.org. Click on the link to Goodwill's plans, then click on "Dearborn Street Vision Response Document."

CHUCK RINEHART

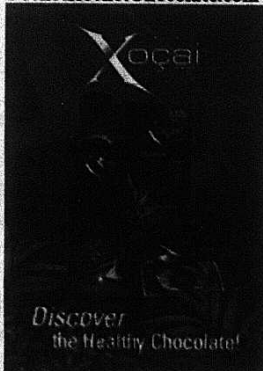
Journeyman Carpenter
Contractor

Remodels • Repairs • Updating
Disability Alterations &

Ph (206) 719-8450

Lic. # RINEHC1066MR

PocketRocketChocolate.com



Eat Healthy Chocolate?
Lose Weight!
Make MONEY!
Call Candi 206 264-2546

eyes ON FREMONT

UNIQUE
AFFORDABLE
EYEWEAR

Friendly,
Skilled Staff

On Site Lab

Eye Exams

Student
Discounts



4254 Fremont Ave. N.
Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 634-3375

The vendor who sold you this paper works. So does Real Change.

Real Change is an active force in the community, making a difference here and now.

Every month, more than 250 homeless and severely housed people earn the money they need while they help build a better community where people aren't homeless anymore.

Our weekly urban news, *Real Change*, is the voices you don't hear elsewhere and quality reporting on the issues that matter. We offer the information you need to take action and make a difference.

Real Change is reader supported. Last year, more than 800 people helped make *Real Change* a better paper by supporting the work they believe in.

Want to support the work of *Real Change*?

I Support Real Change. Here's what I can do.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

Email

☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$35 ☐ Other

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

Mockingbird Times



Recipient of 2005 Congressional Angels in Adoption Award
Building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth.

December 2006

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak Out Across the Nation

Volume VI, Issue 12

Visit us online at www.mockingbirdsociety.org or call 206-323-KIDS (5437)

In This Issue

Letter from the Editor
Jim Theofelis
Page 2

Meet the Staff: Andrea Roldan
Page 2

Meet the Staff: Melissa Stringer
Page 3

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
Jessica Garcia
Page 3

Life Without Medical Care
Amelia Lee Logan
Page 3

Creative Corner: My Daughter
Tosha Quirrels
Page 4

Creative Corner: Hear Me
Anonymous
Page 4

Creative Corner: 18 Isn't Enough
Jonelle M.
Page 4

Creative Corner: See Beyond the Outward Me
Jonelle M.
Page 4

Creative Corner: Foster Care
Tosha Quirrels
Page 4

My Story
Alexis Bednarski
Page 4

December Calendar of Events
Page 4

A Very Special Holiday



JAMICA
HENDERSON

Happy holidays to all of you. The time is here again, but this time it's more special for me. I now have custody of my two younger siblings and am making plans to get my foster care license. This will be our first holiday season together again since the last one we had as a family more than six years ago. It feels really good to spend the Holidays with my family. To me, it is a special time of the year when everyone gets to be comfortable, love one another, play games, relax and just have the time of our lives.

I can't tell you how excited I am to have my brothers under my wings. I have had to plan so much for them in such a short amount of time, but long enough to put some good love in their heart. My siblings are 15 and 16 years old. To me, these years are very important. When I was this age, I don't know what I would have done if I didn't have the two foster parents who loved me and helped me when I needed them most. They never gave up, regardless of the situation, because they loved me. I want my brothers to have the same support I had and if that means I have to be the one to give it to them, I will. I want them to have all they need before they reach 18. I

don't want them to turn 18 and not experience what it's like to be loved by anyone.

I have come up with a plan to make sure that I can give them what they need. I am in college right now and I work too. I work from 11-4 and go to school Mon-Thursday from 5-7. Then I go home to attend to my brothers. I've noticed since I've got custody of my siblings, that when I am away too long they seem to be hurt. It's a hurt from feeling alone for so long that when you do have someone who you love and you know loves you, you don't want them out of your sight. It hurts a lot to see my brothers missing love that much. They were not getting the love they needed while in foster care. Because of this, I decided that after this quarter I am taking school off and for the next couple of years. I am going to give them all the love and time that they need and deserve. I am still going to work at the Mockingbird Society (of course) but when they come home from school they don't have to worry about me coming home too late to ask them how their day went and spend quality time with them.

My brothers are both smart young men. They want to go to college and be somebody someday. I know they will as long as I am here to encourage them. They want to play sports and do things that teenage boys do. I know being a good and responsible caretaker will take lots of time. For instance, my younger brother Leon left his lunch money at home one day. He called the house and asked if I could bring him some lunch. Within 30 minutes I brought him

his favorite (fried chicken and macaroni & cheese).

Later on that evening, he told me, "Mickey, I really liked when you came up to my school and brought me something to eat. I like stuff like that." He said, "I'm glad to be living with you Mickey. You just don't know. If I would have called my foster parent and told them I forgot my lunch money, they would have let me stay hungry until I got home." I was really touched to hear and see how happy he was over something that may seem little to us but really big to him. I told him that he was welcome and if it happens again he won't feel embarrassed to call me.

Now I know what I have to do to help them continue to grow into the sweet young men they are: close that hole they've had with love and whatever else it is that they may need. I know that I have to work them into my schedule now because this is what I wanted to do. I am going to give them all my extra time until they graduate from high school. Once the last one graduates, I am going to take myself back to school and finish up on becoming that Registered Nurse that I want to be. In the midst of me becoming that RN, I will feel a lot happier because I won't have to worry anymore about my loved ones.

Getting custody of my brothers was one of my goals and now that I have completed that goal, I am going to put 100% into taking care of them and fulfilling all of their needs. Stay tuned for more.

My Super Sweet-Sixteen



RAQUEL
GRANATH

Throughout life people are faced with decisions. The choices that you make can determine the rest of your life. As my sweet sixteen races towards me like imminent disaster, I'm forced to reach some adult verdicts on a child's timeline.

I have so many goals and aspirations that I would like to accomplish in this upcoming year, but I always feel like my age is a barrier. I'm trying my hardest to overcome the oppressions of being an overly independent teen, but despite my efforts, I'm still stifled by everything around me. I consider myself to be self-sufficient and competent enough to maneuver alone. My mother on the other hand, considers me reckless and doing too much for my age.

So what's the right balance? How can I breathe without being suffocated, in addition to pleasing my mother so she's more likely to keep me on a longer leash? How can I upgrade to the living situation I want when society says I should live at home until I'm 18? These are merely a few of my current dilemmas, and as my birthday draws closer, the answers seem to drift further away.

While I was in foster care, I was in twenty different placements. Throughout those situations, I attended approximately seven

schools. This constant moving and changing was very detrimental to my academics. As a result, I was extremely behind in my credits when I finally did enroll in a stable high school. At that point my motivation was shot and I was looking at being in High School until 2011!!! In order to bypass that time consumption, I've been taking GED preparation classes so that when my birthday does come around, I'll be ready to pass it with flying colors! I took the practice tests and aced every section except for math, which is my arch nemesis. When I get that certification proclaiming I have all the credentials of a high school graduate, I will then be eligible to apply for full time jobs. That will be my first and most important achievement, as well as my first step towards maturity.

After I receive that accreditation, I intend to immerse myself in the workforce, slaving day in and day out until I can save enough money to enroll in Driver's Ed, buy a car and eventually move out. Somewhere amongst all this confusion, I would like to get emancipated so that I can make my independence official. Emancipation entitles one to make all their own legal decisions short of voting. It would eliminate my mother's voice and allow to me to sign a lease to optimize my self-reliance. The drawbacks to this legal procedure are as vast as the benefits. It's scary being out in the world on your own, but at this point I question what other choices I have.

Ideally, I would like to be in an ILP (independent living program) that isn't comparable to a group home. Curfews would be acceptable, but for the most part, I don't

want to have to answer to anyone. I would even be willing to pay rent in such a setting. Even though I feel capable and confident in my own character, I can honestly say that I would still need guidance and assistance to maintain travel on the right path.

I bet you're wondering, well what about school? Do you think I would leave it high and dry? Of course not. It's on my list, but unfortunately, it will have to be postponed at least until next fall. My plan is to work full time until I'm able to leave the nest, and then at that point, focus on getting my Associates degree. I haven't thought far enough ahead to know which field I want to work in. But I know I want a job that would best showcase my talents as well as pay a high amount of money and be fun!! To be honest, I'm terrified. I'm scared about the big bad world because I don't have enough years stacked up to know what to expect. I feel alone sometimes because most kids my age could never imagine the tribulations that I've faced up to this point, or the fear of a dismal future.

I hope and pray that I make the right decision. I'm not sure yet if I will follow through with emancipation, but I don't see any other way to make the progress I want in the time frame of a year. I know I'll need all the support I can get, so don't worry my faithful readers, I have no intentions of leaving Mockingbird anytime soon. I will stay optimistic and hopefully this ordeal will pass and become part of my epic life. Stay tuned: this soap opera will continue when more news arises.

Letter from the Editor

JIM
THEOFELIS



Once again I begin my article by thanking the young people who have contributed to this issue of the Mockingbird Times. I am always touched and left in awe by how these brilliant young writers can articulate their life situations with such clarity, insight and courage. A great example is Jamica's article on her determination to become a licensed foster parent so she can get custody of her teenage brothers. She is motivated by giving her brothers a sense of knowing the warmth of unconditional love.

Melissa's and Jessica's articles give voice to the impact on kids when they must accept the dark realities of life that most adults would shun. But mostly, they give voice to their desire to have the same opportunity for a good life that others have. Amelia talks about the critical issue of youth leaving foster care without access to health care. She does a great job of explaining how a lack of primary or preventative health care leads to more expensive costs down the road.

I am pleased to report that Washington State Representative Mary Helen Roberts will sponsor legislation during the 2007 Washington Legislature that will allow youth exiting foster care to retain their Medicaid until age 21, which will give them access to health care. This issue will be the primary item on the Mockingbird Society Legislative Advocacy Agenda for 2007 and I invite each of you to assist us getting this legislation passed.

I want to take a moment to thank all of you who have donated to Mockingbird Society and, in particular, I want to give a very hearty "Thank You" to all of the wonderful soccer players, coaches and teams that have sent Mockingbird Society Team Donations. Of particular note are the Holy Names Cougars (of which I'm a proud member of the coaching staff).

Finally, I want to wish each of you a very Happy Holiday season. During the hustle and bustle I hope you have an opportunity to express your appreciation and love to the children and teens in your life. They make our lives special and for that I thank each one of them.

Jim Theofelis

Jim Theofelis

jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

Meet the Staff: Andrea Roldan

ANDREA
ROLDAN



Baggy sweat pants and tennis shoes, carrying a Panasonic CD player, singing so nobody can hear, that's probably me: Andrea Roldan. I'm a sixteen-year-old junior at Summit K-12 in Seattle. I was born in Seattle, but I moved around A LOT during my childhood. I am very self-motivated and I attempt to achieve a lot in a small amount of time so I am pretty busy most of the time. In my free time, though, I like to read, watch TV, talk on the phone and (of course) listen to music.

"Born a leader with the world on my shoulders/ age is young but my mind is much older." I am very mature because of the many experiences and responsibilities I have had in my life which started at a very young age.

My younger sister and I were placed in foster care when I was about three. Our niece and nephew of my oldest sister were already in the same place so we felt somewhat comfortable, but they moved away within the first five months. I don't remember much that I can be certain of, but I have had many conversations with my mom and my sister about some of the terrible things that happened. The most shocking to me was about a baby the foster parents were caring for that died in the middle of the night and before they cleaned the crib they put my sister in it to sleep.

We visited my mom on weekends and I remember crying and fighting, holding on to her leg so I wouldn't have to go back, but I always did. Finally, after one year, my mom took parenting classes and we were released back into her care.

More than ten years later, I am emancipated and residing in a Seattle-based independent living program. It wasn't easy to get where I am now. There were some laws that caused major setbacks for me. If I could, I would alter the details of the Becca Bill (Mockingbird Times, July 2006).

In October of 2005, I moved into a shelter in Shoreline to get away from my mother's drug abuse in our home. My case manager called my mom multiple times during the next few days and insisted she didn't want me and I was trouble. So, I continued to go to school and work while my case manager assured me he would do everything he could to keep me safe. Then, one Friday night, after I came home from school, he told me he had to detain me because the police were on their way to get me because a runaway report was made. That was very hard on me and stressful.

I'm a pretty simple person with very complex dreams. One of the issues that I think is important is the need for more educational support for youth, because a lot of teenagers don't have a strong family background that helps and encourages them to succeed in school. We need more programs to teach young people how to break into the work field and how to transition from a youth to an adult and prepare them with the knowledge and experience that will help them tackle the responsibility of adulthood.

What attracted me to Mockingbird Society was that I love writing in all different formats. I like to be challenged with the developing of my ideas in order to communicate them to people effectively because I believe there is a lot of power in writing. I also love doing outreach, attending different community events, and meeting people. I am hoping to help plan events here too. I am looking forward to this opportunity with Mockingbird Society.

*Lyrics from "Destiny" by Mary K. Blige

*The Mockingbird Society
wishes you and yours a very happy
holiday season.*

Thank You's

Steven Stroh; Frances Demarco; Karen Cowgill; Steve Finney; Steve Shafer; Margaret-Ann LeRoy; Patty Sandoval; June Stinson and Bruce Cross & Perkins Coie.

On behalf of the HNA Cougar Varsity Soccer Team we would like to thank: Julie Braybrooks; Holly Norris; Stephanie Brosio; Catherine Woods; Robert Patten; Elizabeth Villanueva; Julie Shefts; Julie Tupper; and Wendy Shibuya.

On behalf of Coach Siri and the V6 Dragsters, we would like to thank: Robin Hopkins; Jim and Sandra Berglund; Jill Johnson; Laura Poulin-Moore; and Dawn Wilkinson.

On behalf of the St. Joseph 7th grade soccer team, we would like to thank: Coaches Manning and Dr. Jan Dwight.

ABOUT US: The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents involved in homelessness and foster care. The Mockingbird Times is a monthly newspaper written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.63 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The Mockingbird Times has a monthly circulation of 50,000 copies being distributed across Washington State and the U.S.A. through a private distribution list and as an insert in *Real Change*, a Seattle-based community newspaper. Youth involvement is the key to the philosophy, values, and success of The Mockingbird Society and, as such, youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. Donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the Mockingbird Times may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2006 The Mockingbird Society.

A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox

Make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth and support the Mockingbird Society!

Donations may be tax deductible and all donors receive the Mockingbird Times. Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Mockingbird Society in the amount of: \$ _____

Suggested Donations:

\$ 1,000+.....Protector \$500-999.....Caretaker \$250-500.....Organizations \$50+.....Supporter \$25.....Foster Parent

NAME _____ EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please fill out and mail this form with a check or money order payable to: The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave South Suite 240, Seattle WA 98144, or donate online at www.mockingbirdsociety.org.

☐ Please bill me for the amount indicated.

☐ My employer will match my gift; enclosed is my matching gift form.

☐ I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.

☐ Please do not include my name on published donor lists.

MEET OUR STAFF

Executive Director
Jim Theofelis

Youth LEAD Coordinator
Najia Morris

Operations Manager
Ros Ghan

Administrative Assistant
Juan Ramirez

Public Relations
Darcie Gray

Executive Assistant
Lauren Frederick

Senior Youth Representatives
Misty Lou Cook, Jamica Henderson

Youth Representatives
Larissa Asher, Terasa Asher, Surri Evans, Jessica Garcia, Raquel Granath, Renita Baskin, Samuel Martin, Jonelle Abd-Rahmaan, Andrea Roldan, Melissa Stringer

Contributing Writers
Amelia Lee Logan, Tasha Quirrels, Alexis Bednarski

Volunteers
Chrissie Jackson

Layout
Kelly Hawkins

Meet the Staff: Melissa Stringer

My name is Melissa Lashelle Stringer and I am 19 years old. I was born in Renton, Washington at Valley Medical Center on January 19, 1987. I attended Summit K-12 until I graduated. I enjoy taking pictures which I have been doing for four years. When I was in 10th grade, I played volleyball until I injured myself and I couldn't play sports any more. When I have free time, I like to hang out with my friends and go places as much as I possibly can. I was in foster care most of my life and aged out at 18. I then moved out of the foster care system into a group home called Ruth Dykeman Children's Center.

I never really got to experience a childhood. There was too much abuse and other things for me to truly understand what my life was really made of then. I was six years old when I first went into foster care because my mother and her new husband would constantly beat me (among other things). I bounced around from home to home my entire life. I really never got the chance to call any place home for a long period of time until now.

I recently moved into a transitional living program called Passages (Youth-care). It is the best place for me because it teaches me how to live on my own and how to take care of myself (which I am still working on). I know that you are probably wondering why you should care about me. Well, I am not asking you to care about

me. I am asking you to care about all the people that have to go through the same exact stuff every day. In this world, there are kids that have to figure out where they are going to sleep and what they are going to eat. I think that is a problem and if it wasn't for Passages, that would be me right now.

If I could change one thing about homelessness, it would be the way people treat the homeless. People look at them as if they were just plain dirt. It is rude, because sometimes people cannot help what they do and how they are. Everyday, when I go down to the "Ave" (University District), I look at the way people treat the homeless kids. It hurts just to watch, because half the people down there are my friends and they are sick and hungry and people ignore them. I really wish I could change the way many people treat the homeless.

If I could change one thing about the foster/homeless system I would change everything. It feels like people expect foster and homeless youth to be able to fend for themselves. That makes the whole system just ridiculous.

When I found out about what Mockingbird Society does, I was intrigued because I have always wanted to share about my life and what I have been through. Now I get to share my life with the outside world with no hesitation at all. Now I get to do what I love the most: writing!

Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

JESSICA GARCIA



Last year, in 2005, I was in a lot of trouble with the law. I had warrants for my arrest and had been on Crystal Meth for a while. Most the time, I was in juvenile hall and got into a lot of fights. I was experiencing bad withdrawals and got to the point where I didn't want to be here anymore.

What was the most devastating thing was that I had no place to go. Every one has a story to tell. With all the things that I had already gone through in my life you would think that things would be different for me and not such a struggle. I was worn out last year because I was struggling really hard. I didn't know where I was going in my life, what I wanted to do or even how to get there.

My life in 2006 has been much different. I have worked at Mockingbird Society for seven months now and have been clean from meth for a year. I have had the chance to go to many events and conferences with Mockingbird and have enjoyed those times a lot. What I also enjoy is that even though the place I live right

now it isn't the best place in the world, it's teaching me a lesson on what I would do in a "messed up" position and how to handle the situation.

I made the decision this year to stop going to high school and go get my GED. I realize that I have to deal with what cards I was dealt: that being a person who grew up in the system with no stability, no money, and having to struggle every day on surviving with people and life in general.

Now I am looking towards my New Year resolutions. I'm going to go to Shoreline Community College and complete my GED; have a place of my own or have a family with a foster home with Casey Family; stay focused on my goal in life which is to become a lawyer and cosmetologist.

So what I have to do is become the best person that I know that I am. What I have learned while being in the system is to pick myself back up and show that I can do anything anyone else can do and to be the better person. Yes, people fall down. I have fallen down a lot. The problem for me was that I would sit there and pout rather than do something about it. I have a mouth and I won't let people make my choices for me. I will make my own. Because then I can blame myself for the mistakes in that case and I'll pick myself back up again.

Mockingbird Gives Thanks



Mockingbird Youth Representatives Raquel (foreground) and Jamica (background) excited to feast on Thanksgiving dinner.



Mockingbird Youth representatives Jessica (left) and Misty (right) get caught chowing down.

Life Without Medical Care

by Amelia Lee Logen

When you are sick, run out of medication or are due for a check up you go to the doctor. I mean, that is what you have done your whole life when you were in foster care. You get a runny nose and off to the doctor you go. But, what happens when you age out of foster care and aren't able to find a job that provides full medical, dental and vision benefits by the time you turn 19 (which is the age that you lose your medical coupons)?


Once you lose your medical coupons, you only have a few options: 1) You can go to the emergency room every time that you have a cough or don't feel good. 2) You could find a sliding scale clinic to go to (which you still may not be able to afford even if you qualify for the lowest sliding scale fee that they have). 3) You can rack up doctors bills that you will never be able to pay. Which, if you think about it, really isn't fair because if it comes down to that then you are getting punished just for being sick?

Then, you still have to think about paying for medication. What are you supposed to do for your medications when you no longer have medical coupons and are just making ends meet as it is? A simple chronic illness, like allergies, can cost you a lot just for one month. Now, add a cold or flu on top of that and there is more money in just medications to get better.

The fact of the matter is that when kids coming out of foster care lose their medical coupons, it's not a small matter. It is something that will impact our lives in a huge way. In most cases, this is something that we aren't prepared for. Even just adding another year to the amount of time we get to keep our medical can make a huge difference, because another year can mean the difference between having enough experience to get a job with benefits and being stuck with a ton of medical bills that will never get paid and a handful of needed prescriptions that will never get filled. And that is a huge deal for everyone.

Get Published ~ Get Paid!

We are looking for articles, poetry, artwork and photography from our young readers who have experience in the foster care system and/or homelessness. If you want to be published in the Times, contact us at 206-323-5437 or via email at newspaper@mockingbirdsociety.org. For more info and to check us out, go to www.mockingbirdsociety.org.



partnered with

Treehouse

The Mockingbird Society

proudly present

HOLIDAY STARS

DATE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

TIME: 6-9 PM

Kids, families, caregivers, and friends are invited to a fun-filled evening celebrating the passions and talents of Treehouse and Mockingbird youth! From powerful poetry, martial arts demonstrations to innovative dance, come see the wide array of talents our young people possess. If you want to showcase a talent in singing, dancing, juggling, poetry or more, contact Rachel Walker: (206) 267-5141 or rachelw@treehouseforkids.org. Call or email to register by November 27.

MOCKINGBIRD YOUTH WILL MEET THE EVENT AND JEAN RAMIREZ WILL D.J.

Creative Corner

My Daughter

TOSHA QUIRRELS

I had my daughter when I was 16 years old
She is now 15 months old
I am a single parent
Annoying, but I can still stand it

Her father is signing his rights away
I want her to know her father's eyes
He is not ready for a life with me and my child.

Her father is dissenting
Now I feel so low
Sad that her father lets her go
It'll be just fine because she has a mother that loves her
Care's about her

Takes care of her
And gives her what she needs.
My child's father is a failure

No love for my child
No more love for me.
I don't care because now I'm free

Free from him
Free to live my for my child and never look back twice
My nerves rushed with anger

Claimed with the thoughts of my child,
Letting her grow up and do the right thing.
Her father will not corrupt me

I will push
I will shove so he will not kill my love for my child.
Because through my blood

Through my veins she shall do the right thing
My daughter is the best thing that happened to me
Watching through eyes and lonely tears
I want to be there to take care of all her fears.

My daughter is so special I would hate to end this now,
But my daughter is waiting on me to love her

To show her life
My daughter

My baby girl
The one that I brought into this world

Hear Me...

ANONYMOUS

I am a music note
I'm heard all over the world
And understood in all languages
My soul is like the pages of a
good book
Once you start reading me you
can't stop
My contemplations are like a
jigsaw puzzle
You can put me together
But there's always one missing
My heart is like the beach
Beautiful and deep
Because I feel things
With all my heart
And that is deep



See Beyond the Outward Me

JONELLE M.

See beyond the outward me
The clothes I wear
The shoes on my feet
The beautiful me, the inward me
My heart my mind my thoughts towards you.
Good and not evil friends till the end
An outspoken person
Creative wise sensible sensitive loving and kind
But when you see me
you don't smile you don't say, "Hi."
Be impressed with the inward me.
Don't judge me because it's not about what I'm
wearing that's unique
but under all the garments.
So see beyond the outward me.
I'm impressed by you so be impressed by me.

18 Isn't Enough

JONELLE M.

From the fetus through birth and way before
that we were conceived from man.
Your dad, your mom.
our different families.
When I cried there was nothing.
When you cried there was a silver spoon in
your mouth.
When I cried, I cried because my mom and
dad wasn't there.
I wished I wasn't born.
And when you cried they gave you a pacifier.
From 1-17 my voice cried out in the darkness.
From 1-17 your cries were turned into help.
But now that I'm 18 I cry loud and spare not.
But 18 just isn't enough.

Foster Care

TOSHA QUIRRELS

Foster care is rough

Foster care is tough
Kids will make fun of you
Kids will be your friend

You have it easy compared to the little girl next door getting beat up by her dad
Some kids don't know the meaning of getting taken away
But we know it's a real hard road to go down

You may think it's easy
But you just haven't tried it out
Some of us don't sleep well at night knowing we might get moved from the left to right
In the end we've learned a lesson
We can still be successful no matter what position we're in
There's always someone right beside us guiding us along the way

Where there is great love, there are always miracles.

~ Willa Cather

My Story by Alexis Bednarski

My name is Alexis. I am 12 years old. I have a brother and sister. One is 8 the other is 10. My favorite kind of music is rap, and rock. My favorite food is Mexican and seafood.

My life isn't so good right now. This is my second time in foster-care. It's really hard not living with my biological parents. I have made a lot of progress while being in foster-care. I had a bad reputation when I came to this foster home. I was doing drugs, smoking cigarettes, and I was sexually active. School was okay until I was always in trouble. I would do things like ditching school, hanging out with the wrong people, and doing all the wrong things. Then I ended up running away with my friends.

It was hell when we left. We were very scared and we got ourselves into a bad situation. Some guys wanted to kill us and we didn't even know them. We ended up leaving alive and we were lucky, all I can say is don't talk to strangers.

My family court date is coming up to see if I and my siblings will be a family again. I really do love my family and I hope that they have followed through so that I can go home. I feel that it is just wrong for CPS to have torn my family apart.

I go to a great school in Seattle called AS#1. It's the best school I've been to. I have a lot of friends and I have been going here for two years. I get really emotional sometimes just thinking about my past. I

really miss my old friends. We used to have a lot of fun together, but there comes a time when you have to forget and move on.

Life out there is scary for a girl today. You need to be careful with who you talk to and who you hang out with. You don't want to get yourself into a bad situation like an abusive relationship or getting pregnant at a young age.

Sometimes I wish I was reborn so I could start my life over. I think I deserve better than when I have. I get really mad when people nag on me. Because that gets me all wound up and ready to start a fighting. I have a really bad anger problem when people yell or touch me. Most of the time I don't care I let it go. Well that's my story and hopefully I get lucky and go home with my family really soon.

Remember Us!

United Way is conducting their annual campaign during September through December. Please remember that you can designate that your donation to United Way be directed to the Mockingbird Society. Thanks for all your continued support.

December Calendar of Events

Holiday Stars

When: December 14th, 6-9 PM

Where: 2100 24th Ave South (Treehouse Building), Seattle

For more information, see flyer on page 3.

Seattle Girls' Choir

The ensemble performs sacred and secular Holiday music from around the world

When: 12/16: 1:30 p.m.

Ticket information: \$15, student/senior discounts; (206) 526-1900

Free Christmas Dinner for Those In Need

If you know someone who would not be able to have a festive dinner on Christmas Day, Thai Siam Restaurant would like to extend an invitation to a free turkey dinner.

Where: Thai Siam Restaurant, 8305 15th NW, Seattle

When: December 25th, 12 - 2 PM

Contact: (206) 783-3668 or (206) 784-5465 between 2 and 5 PM Mon through Fri

SAVE THE DATE

All Foster Youth Deserve Healthcare

Join Mockingbird Society for Youth Advocacy Day in Olympia

Training Day: February 6th from 1-5PM @ Treehouse building, Seattle

Advocacy Day: February 9th from 9AM-3PM in Olympia

Food will be provided both days. Transportation can be arranged for travel to Olympia.

Contact: Mockingbird Society (206) 323-KIDS (5437)

Treehouse Holiday Hours

Tuesdays 12/12 & 12/19 from 2-7:30PM

Thursday 12/14 from 10AM-5:30PM

Thursday 12/21 from 10AM-4:30PM

There will be cookies, milk and arts & crafts on the 2nd floor.

Contact: Treehouse @ (206) 767-7000