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REAL CHANGE

# Local Farms, Healthy Kids

How Washington produce could boost the economy, improve students nutritional intake...see page 4.

"Most schools don't have kitchens anymore," says Clayton Burrows. "They just reheat the food."



Mike Verdi, above, sells produce to customers at the West Seattle Farmers Market. Photo by Joel Turner

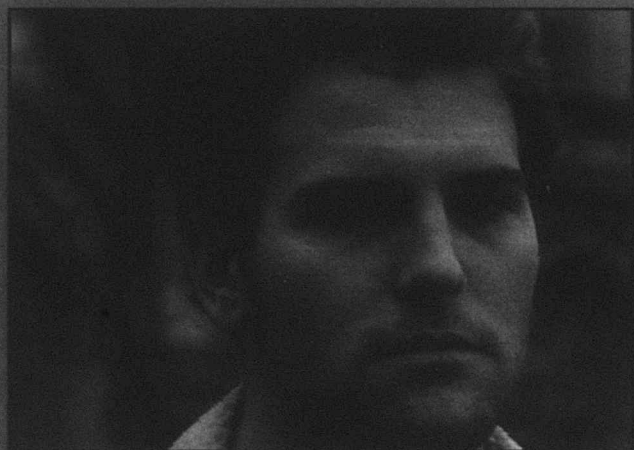


Photo by Andrew Lee

## Angry Young Vet

Joshua Farris returned home from his Army stint in Iraq and fell into the hornet's nest of student activism...see page 7.

Hide the Poor: Mayor Nickels wants to give the homeless a blanket ban from lingering on public property...p.2

Your vendor buys this paper for 35c and keeps all the proceeds. Please purchase from outdoor vendors only.

**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.

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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.

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



**After a shadow of public debate, the mayor will lay down a breathtakingly cruel policy of hounding human beings out of town**

## The rich are coming. Hide the poor

By **TIMOTHY HARRIS**,  
Executive Director

**H**ow is one to respond when the most beautiful, affluent, and liberal city in America outlaws basic human survival? What are we to feel? What words could measure up to the sadness of this moment?

The Mayor's staff has described their draft policy on homeless encampments as "consistent and compassionate." Consistent, perhaps. But compassion requires action that is based upon understanding and empathy.

This is not that.

Seattle has joined the ranks of cities across America whose growing affluence will no longer tolerate the sight of extreme poverty. As urban living attracts those who can pay the price, the visible poor have come under attack in communities from LA to Boston.

Here in Seattle, in the few blocks that about Pike Place Market, construction cranes mark four developments that will house 505 new condos with an average value of \$2 million each. This represents about one-tenth of new downtown condo development.

The rich are coming. Hide the poor.

Until sometime last year, the City of Seattle mostly left homeless encampments alone until complaints forced action. This was as it should be. Last year's one night homeless count — held in the dead of a cold January night — revealed about 1,600 people surviving on the streets. They slept in doorways and in cars. They rode the night buses. They walked to keep warm. They huddled underneath blankets and inside sleeping bags.

They made do without shelter because the shelters were full.

And then, for reasons that have yet to be made public, city policy shifted. Since at least May, by order of the Mayor's office, homeless encampments have been systematically destroyed with minimal notification and no regard for the wellbeing or the belongings of the campers.

Once this policy came to light — after *Real Change* surfaced documentation through a series of Public Disclosure requests — a blindsided City Council asked the Mayor's Office for an explanation.



**Last week one of our vendors told me a story I've heard a hundred times.** He's been working his ass off. Over December, when the tips

were good, he made almost \$4,000. He saved most of it. Cash. Sitting in an envelope. On a more typical month, he'll make about half that.

This guy's clean and sober, but there have been times when he wasn't. Mistakes

were made. What they received were lies about vacancies in the shelter system, false assurances that most clearances would halt, and empty promises about an open process to create policy.

As we reported last week, the campaign to aggressively clear campsites never slowed. And now we have the policy, formulated behind closed doors and offered for a two-week public comment period and one public hearing which will almost surely be ignored.

The draft policy, which criminalizes overnight sleeping on any public land, is far worse than any of us anticipated.

The Parks Exclusion Ordinance, passed originally to keep city parks family-friendly, will be extended to every

**By harassing homeless campers into leaving the city, we only deepen their misery and decrease the odds that they will ever get the services they need.**

scrap of public property in the city. The power to issue exclusion citations on the basis of mere suspicion is broadly delegated. Exclusion order violations will bring criminal penalties.

Desperately poor people will leave the city. And this is the exact intent.

The policy's tight language leaves no ambiguity as to what activities are now illegal, but where City responsibilities are concerned — in matters of notification, outreach, storage of possessions, and provision of alternatives — the wording becomes extraordinarily open-ended and filled with exceptions.

## [Speak Now]

**Have your say about the proposed rules at a public hearing Mon., Jan. 28, in the Rainier Room of the Seattle Center, First Ave. N. and Republican St., starting at 6 p.m. To speak, sign up between 5 and 6 p.m. For more information, or to provide feedback, see [www.seattle.gov/humanservices/news/public\\_comment.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/humanservices/news/public_comment.htm). And to plug into the Real Change Organizing Project's efforts against these rules, email [organizer@realchangenews.org](mailto:organizer@realchangenews.org) or call (206) 441-3247 ext. 201.**

## Director's Corner

were made. He had a professional job once. He can't really do that anymore. His past comes dragging along behind him.

What this guy needs most in the world is an apartment for himself and his disabled wife. They lived in their car for awhile, but when he started selling *Real Change* about a year ago, they got themselves into a crappy little motel room out on Aurora for \$300 a week. They've been there ever since.

"Being poor is expensive," he told me. Yeah. It is. Three hundred bucks a week for a lousy 120 square feet. No kitchen

"Suspicion" of illegal activity nullifies a requirement for 48 hours' notice. A judgment by a clean-up crewmember that belongings "may be contaminated by unknown substances" is enough to warrant their summary destruction. The talk of additional shelter for those who are evicted is so vague as to be unenforceable. Outreach is discussed, but no resources are committed and no responsibility assigned.

This policy is little more than a legal justification of an existing immoral practice.

Even more sadly, the Committee to End Homelessness in King County has steadfastly refused to take a position on this, the most significant shift in city policy toward the homeless in memory.

Given that the mayor is on the CEHCK Governing Board, this is less than surprising, but that doesn't make it right. Those who claim political and moral leadership for "ending homelessness" in King County are complicit in their silence.

It is unacceptable to allow the work of ending homelessness to be confused with the systematic practice of eradicating the evidence. By harassing homeless campers into leaving the city, we only deepen their misery and decrease the odds that they will ever get the services they need.

This week, Seattle will hold the Annual One Night Homeless Count. Hundreds of volunteers will fan out through the city in the middle of the night to assess whether we're winning or losing the battle.

By turning the fight against homelessness into an attack upon the homeless themselves, Nickels has undermined the integrity of the longest-running, most sophisticated homeless count effort in the nation.

This is profoundly sad. And sadder still if he gets away with it. ■

means paying more for food. And trouble is never too far away.

When the rental vacancies get down below 4 percent, guys like him don't stand a chance. If you have an eviction in your past, a criminal record, or bad credit, you're screwed.

So business is booming in the poverty hotel biz.

To qualify for the long housing wait lists, he and his wife would need to move back into the car. They can't face that. They're looking for options. Where are the breaks? That's not a rhetorical question. I'm asking.



## Just Heard...

### Doing the numbers

If the city's shelters were motels, on most stormy nights their "no vacancy" signs would be ablaze.

Mayor Nickels' staff told the Seattle City Council at a briefing Dec. 3 that the seasonally opened severe-weather shelters were not quite at capacity over the previous weekend. The implication: those camped out on public property have a legal alternative that they're choosing not to exercise. Instead, they're taking, as the editors of the *Seattle Times* called it last week, "a Huckleberry Finn option."

City numbers from that time period show that the weekend in question, Nov. 30 - Dec. 2, was somewhat of an anomaly. The 25-capacity severe-weather shelter for women, located in the basement of a low-income building in Pioneer Square, hosted 42, 30, 30, and 32 women in a four-night period Nov. 15-18. The co-ed shelter (mainly attended by men) in the bowels of City Hall was at or just over its 75-person limit Nov. 14-18. And those numbers doesn't show attendance at the overflow shelters opened by neighboring non-profits when the severe-weather shelters reach their limit, says the Coalition on Homelessness' Alison Eisinger. People find other accommodations whenever they can afford it; they head back to the shelters, she says, because "there's a lot of month left at the end of the money."

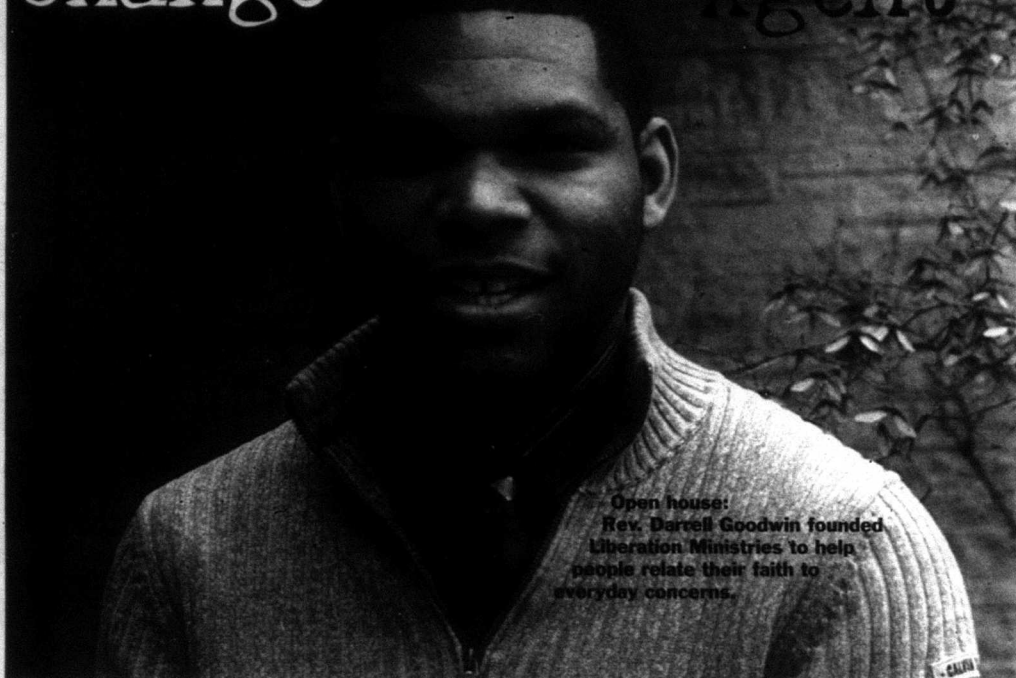
### New Americans

The 350 marchers attending a Martin Luther King Jr. Day rally on the capitol steps got some good news Friday: Gov. Chris Gregoire will forward one of the five planks in their economic justice platform by convening a commission to examine how the state's immigrant population, undocumented or not, might be better incorporated into civic life. The so-called New Americans Initiative is a project of faith-based and social justice groups across the nation calling on state governments to step in where the feds haven't, offering economic and political access to help immigrants, undocumented or not, get their feet under them in an economy that tends to offer only low wages and paltry services.

Gregoire hasn't said when she'll sign an executive order creating the commission, says Heather Hallman of Hate Free Zone, a community organizing group for immigrants and their allies. It will be another ray of light for the MLK Day marchers, joining Sen. Karen Keiser's proposal to expand health coverage to every Washington resident.

—Adam Hyla

## Change



Open house:  
Rev. Darrell Goodwin founded  
Liberation Ministries to help  
people relate their faith to  
everyday concerns.

Photo by Revel NT

When someone told Darrell Goodwin, shortly after he moved to Seattle, that local people needed an inclusive place to worship, he didn't know what to think. True, he'd ministered a church in Vermont at one time, but here, in Seattle? With him as pastor? He voiced doubt. In the following weeks, a similar message was repeated by others. And so, heeding the call, he set out to see if it could be done.

He decided the answer was, Yes, when, last March, he founded Liberation Ministries, a church grounded in a simple principle: making religion relevant. Modern-day relevance shows up in weekly Bible studies, where, Rev. Goodwin says, congregants mull over such self-generated questions as "What does the Bible have to say about gambling? Or pornography? Or marijuana?"

But such questions aren't his ministering focus. What's important to Rev. Goodwin, who also serves as associate director of multicultural affairs at Seattle University, is bringing people together, whether in the pews or on the church blog. In less than a year, the congregation has grown from the low 20's to the mid-50's, filled with a mix of gender identities, races, and cultures.

"But it's not about how many people come," says Rev. Goodwin. "If they got something out of being together, I'm happy with that."

—Rosette Royale

For more information, check out: [www.liberationministries.net](http://www.liberationministries.net)

### Serving without health care

Former NBA star and coaching legend Lenny Wilkens has, like many former athletes, turned some attention to philanthropy. His Lenny Wilkens Foundation is chaired by government and corporate heads from former Mayor Norm Rice to WaMu exec Bob Flowers. Among the foundation's interests is ensuring health care for all children. More than 100 restaurant workers at a Seattle-area restaurant chain share this concern.

The difference? They work at 13 Coins, the dining establishment in which Wilkens is an investor. And since 2006, when the restaurant changed hands, they've been working without a union contract, and paying outsized premiums for health insurance for themselves and their families.

On Jan. 23 workers, in cooperation with the UNITE HERE Local 8 union, are going to the offices of Wilkens' Bellevue-based foundation to ask him: How about affordable health care for us?

Restaurant server David Johnson, a diabetic who's worked at the 13 Coins for 29 years, says he pays \$200 a month to insure himself. His son gets cover-

age through the publicly subsidized Basic Health Plan.

"This is one of the things we're seeing all over," says UNITE HERE organizer Jessica Lawson. As costs rise, "employers are shifting health coverage to the state."

Lawson, who's planning the event, says mediation talks with 13 Coins' management broke up last month over health care and disciplinary policies. Workers' representatives asked for a union-backed plan that asks for \$50 premiums in return for full family coverage; management wouldn't bite. "If they're not going to agree to that, it's not worth it to have a contract," she says. "So we're starting to reach out to the public and reach out to the other investors who might be allies."

—Adam Hyla

### Braam back in court

The attorneys who sued the state over its treatment of foster children took the case back to court last week, saying the Department of Health and Social Services hasn't lived up to the terms of a settlement reached in 2004.

In a motion filed in Whatcom County Superior Court, the attorneys who represented Jessica Braam in a class action

lawsuit say DSHS's Children's Administration has fallen short in four areas: The department is failing to make the monthly visits required for more than 60 percent of foster children, they say. Caseloads are averaging 25 children per worker — higher than the 18 called for in the agreement. Less than half of all siblings in foster care are getting the twice-monthly visits with each other that DSHS is supposed to provide. And more than two-thirds of foster children aren't getting the health and education screenings required in 30 days, letting time lapse, the plaintiffs say, before a mental health issue can be identified and treated.

"We shouldn't have ever gotten to this point, but the lack of urgency and insufficient commitment by the state to keep the promises it made to Washington's children has made [this] action necessary," plaintiff attorney Casey Trupin of Columbia Legal Services says in a statement.

"We are disappointed with this back-to-court strategy, which ignores

Environmental bill could improve children's nutrition, support Washington farms

## Sending local foods to poor schools

By COREY KAHLER,  
Contributing Writer

**S**ome of us know that the average bite of food travels 1,500 miles to reach our mouths. While the increasing number of farmers markets in American cities has been working to bring that mileage down, the Washington Environmental Council (WEC) is lobbying the legislature to take the localization of food to a more elementary level.

The idea is simple: get kids to eat well and local agriculture to make money by forging a supply relationship between farms and school districts.

Under the "Local Farms, Healthy Kids" program, school districts could halt the official bidding process for food services and give first preference to nearby farms.

So that the nutritional benefits of locally grown foods go to those who need them most — undernourished children — schools that have higher rates of poverty would receive a greater share of the \$4 million required to start the program.

"Most healthy foods are expensive and perishable," explains Rep.

Eric Pettigrew (D-South Seattle), the legislation's sponsor. "When families don't have the money for those foods, they need to look at long-lasting foods that are most often less healthy."

For this reason, the money would also make more coupons available for farmers markets. And the WEC is asking for an additional million dollars to provide fresh produce to local food banks that have, says WEC communications director Tom Geiger, "moved from an emergency dynamic for families... to a daily food run."

Despite a general consensus on the idea, its implementation may be a bit trickier. School cafeterias aren't well

**Despite a general consensus on the idea, its implementation may be a bit trickier. "Most schools don't have kitchens anymore," says Clayton Burrows, director of Growing Washington, a nonprofit aimed at supporting local agriculture. "They just reheat the food."**

equipped to turn 100 pounds of raw potatoes into lunch. "Most schools don't have kitchens anymore," says Clayton Burrows, director of Growing Washington, a nonprofit aimed at supporting local agriculture. "They just reheat the food."

Despite these difficulties, local farms are ready for the one million steady customers enrolled in the state's K-12 schools. The students are ready too, says Pettigrew.

"What kids learn now about food, they take with them into adulthood," he says. "Just having the food around, kids will find out they like more than they did before." ■



Mike Verdi, the co-owner of Whistling Train Farm in Kent, sells produce to customers at the West Seattle Farmers Market. State legislation could allow schoolchildren greater access to fresh fruits, vegetables, and other products from local farms. Photo by Joel Turner.

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**community.**

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## Getting ready for Feb. 9 presidential caucuses

# Clinton, Obama campaigns coach Dems how to win

By CYDNEY GILLIS,  
Staff Reporter

It's just after 12:30 when applause and cheers break out among the few people who have already arrived at the Machinists Union hall in South Seattle. On a giant screen hanging from the ceiling, a photo of Hillary Clinton seems, to out-smile that of presidential opponent Barack Obama as a newscast calls Clinton's win in the Nevada Democratic caucuses.

Eventually, 45 Democrats would spread out under the fluorescent lights of the vast hall. They had come for one of many caucus training events that the New York senator's campaign has held in Washington. As with trainings for other candidates, the goal is to teach supporters the rules of the precinct caucuses that will be held Feb. 9 and, more importantly, how to work the room to their side's advantage.

The former first lady already has many aces in the hole. One is the White House experience that so many of her supporters stress. Another is a state campaign committee that includes some of Seattle's biggest political names — among them, former Gov. Gary Locke and U.S. Rep. Jay Inslee (D-Bainbridge). At Saturday's training, Margarita Prentice, chair of the

**"We've been in the wasteland for eight years," King County executive Ron Sims told volunteers at a caucus training for Hillary Clinton supporters. "Sen. Clinton is going to get us out of that."**

state Senate's powerful Ways & Means Committee, sat right up front as King County Executive Ron Sims warmed up the room.

"We've been in the wasteland for eight years," Sims said. "Sen. Clinton is going to get us out of that."

Sims was the only African American in the room. The next day, a group of 30 people that included five Blacks and a greater range of young and old, crammed into the all-volunteer Seattle campaign office of the senator from Illinois for a training of their own. On one wall were photos of Barack Obama with the chair — and, so far, sole member — of his state campaign committee, Rep. Adam Smith (D-Tacoma).

Unlike the Clinton supporters, only one person in the room raised a hand when field organizer Kurt Peppard asked who had ever been to a caucus. Before the event began, Rebecca Young, a 47-year-old mother and rock musician of Seattle, said she's for Obama because he offers a new and radical choice. "Experience is overrated," she said.

The two rooms show how the lines are drawn between Clinton and Obama in Washington and across the country, with one side touting her can-do experience and the other pushing his voice of a new generation. Democrats say support remains high for John Edwards and his populist platform, but if the former Senator from North Carolina doesn't pull enough votes at a caucus, his supporters (and those of Dennis Kucinich and other candidates) will find themselves forced into a choice between the frontrunners on caucus day, which some say could play into Obama's hands.

"In a race between Obama and Clinton," says Jackie Minchew, chair of the 44th District Democrats in Snohomish County, "I'll be for Obama."

Minchew says he's for Edwards because he opted not to take corporate contributions and "his message is people-oriented," he says. "It's about the two Americas [and how] the middle class is shrinking and the poor [class is] growing."

But, if Edwards has dropped out by Feb. 9 (Washington's caucuses fall after the 22 state Super Tuesday on Feb. 5), he won't vote for Clinton. Like many Obama supporters, he says he mistrusts her, in part, for what happened during



### The Saturday after Super Tuesday

With Sens. Clinton and Obama casting their eyes toward the 22 state primaries on Tues., Feb. 5, Washington will have its caucus on Sat. Feb. 9. Here, in Clinton's campaign office downtown, Jim Kainber, caucus and delegate selection coordinator, schools volunteers on how to persuade fellow caucus goers. Photo by Andrew Drawbaugh

her husband's presidency. "He wasn't the president that we thought he was," Minchew says. "Welfare-to-work was a gift to the Republicans. NAFTA was a corporate giveaway."

With Hillary Clinton, "I'm afraid it's going to be the same thing," he says.

Not so, says Cathy Allen, a longtime Democratic political consultant and Clinton campaign worker who attended Saturday's caucus training. "I don't know why it is people assume that a husband's position is the wife's position," she says. "I would only ask most people to judge their own situation and realize that you can seldom take a husband's position and translate it to the wife's."

Allen says she's worked with Clinton on many projects over the past 10 years,

both in paid and unpaid roles, and that she's the proven choice, particularly for America's children, their health and their education. At the caucus training, participant Irene Roberts of Renton said she wants Hillary to roll the clock back to the Clinton years, when the budget was balanced and jobs were plentiful.

"Even Barack Obama says we have to make real changes," says former Gov. Locke, and "real changes mean things like welfare reform."

At Obama headquarters in Pioneer Square, Kurt Peppard scoffs, pointing out Obama's history as a community organizer. "It's the same politics as usual, top down, we're going to do this for you," Peppard says of Clinton. But "I don't trust people who are going to do it for me." ■

### A Jolly Caucus Race

Democrats and Republicans will vote for presidential candidates at precinct caucuses on Sat., Feb. 9. The meetings start at 1 p.m. As you enter the caucus, you must write down your presidential preference — which can include "undecided" — on the sign-in sheet at the door. This is your vote and it will be tallied with the others at 1:30 p.m. to determine how many delegates each candidate will get from your caucus.

After the first tally is announced, the caucus chair will ask whether anyone would like to change his or her vote, as supporters of some candidates, such as Dennis Kucinich or Ron Paul, may not have polled enough votes to get any delegates at all. The chair will then ask for volunteers to make a one-minute pitch for the candidates of their choice. Expect supporters of the front-runners to court votes from others in the room.

After the speeches, a second vote will be taken. Each candidate's supporters will then break off into groups to choose who among them will serve as their candidate's actual delegate(s) at the next level, which is the county convention. (Longtime caucus goers, be advised: Party platform resolutions on issues such as health care or the war are no longer allowed.)

All Democratic delegates will be chosen at the Feb. 9 caucuses — the Feb. 19 primary does not count for Democrats. Republicans will select half their delegates at the caucuses and half during the primary. The Democratic Party offers a "surrogate affidavit" to vote at their caucus in absentia, but the affidavits are only allowed for religious reasons, a disability that keeps one homebound, or military service out of state.

To find out where your caucus will be held, go to [www.kcdems.net](http://www.kcdems.net) or [www.wsrp.org](http://www.wsrp.org).

—Cydney Gillis

# BABY

It's cold outside

**Real Change is collecting winter gear.**

Our vendors need rain gear, winter clothing, boots, gloves, socks, underwear, tarps, blankets, toiletries.

Deliver to 2129 2nd Ave., Belltown. 441-3247 x206 for details.

## Vendor of the Week



Something probably looks a little familiar about Sean Hall's face.

About two months ago, *Real Change* interviewed one of its longest-selling vendors. He's a gray-bearded, friendly-looking guy who has sold with such unflinching good nature that when his van burned a couple years ago, a local business raised enough money to buy him another. His name? Mike Hall.

"I was just making conversation with him," remembers the younger Hall. "I was asking him about selling the paper, you know?"

Sean turned to the man, said that he looked kind of familiar, and got the response to end all responses.

"I should look familiar," said Mike Hall. "I'm your father."

In late summer of last year, Hall and his girlfriend came to Seattle from Grays Harbor County, wanting a change and a decent-paying job. And Hall had both for a while, plus an alright place to stay. But a couple of Hall's "friends," who'd been crashing at his house,

wound up cozying up to Hall's landlord — and bumping him and his girlfriend off the lease.

Hall wound up in a tent in a Seattle park, jobless, discouraged, and very wet. Having no fixed address made getting a job next to impossible, and a two-year-old charge for a nonviolent misdemeanor didn't help, either.

"People don't get that it's hard to find work. It's not that [I'm] lazy or don't want to work. I'm a good worker," says Hall.

So Hall tried his hand at *Real Change*, where, among other things, he reconnected with his old man.

"It was like it was fate," says Hall, who recently met his grandpa for the first time.

"I appreciate the people that support *Real Change* and buy my papers. They really do help a lot," says Hall.

You can find him at Third and Pine, where he sells almost as many papers as his dad.

—Photo and story by JP Gritton

## BRAAM, Continued from Page 3

the steady progress we are making to keep foster children safe from abuse and neglect," Cheryl Stephani, assistant secretary for the Children's Administration, responds in a news release. "We have an obligation to protect all vulnerable children who come to the attention of Child Protective Services, not just those who are in foster care."

The progress includes the fact that the final 95 of 400 new caseworkers will be hired by the end of May,

Stephani says, and their caseloads are down to 21 per worker — lower than the plaintiffs claim. She adds that nearly 80 percent of the children in state care who are living with their parents do receive a monthly visit, up from 56.4 percent in April, and that 79 percent of incoming foster children receive a screening within 90 days.

The plaintiffs are asking the court to order DSHS to fully comply with the settlement in 60 days or impose a fine within 90.

—Cydney Gillis



Fred Spruittenberg marches with a crowd of hundreds on the Capitol steps Mon., Jan. 21, for the Martin Luther King Day rally in Olympia. Participants — including Spruittenberg and 20 more *Real Change* vendors — called for affordable housing, health care, immigration reform, and an end to predatory lending practices.

Photo by Jon Vechnon

## What Is This?

Observing the years roll by  
Wondering what it is  
In me capable of understanding  
Time passing by?

Observing you passing me  
Wondering what's the real difference  
I mean really

Periodically some sort of alien ability  
Invades my mind  
And I see much more  
Than I like to  
Particularly with limited understanding  
Observation is most often  
Problematic...

And there is indeed a problem  
In that  
Observation demands an answer  
Since obviously questions abound  
As in  
For instance  
What is this?

—Jay Cornelius

Who's the special person who offers you Real Change?  
Nominate them for Vendor of the Week:  
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Student activists won't put aside their differences, says Joshua Farris

## Frustrated Iraq vet moves on

Interview by CYDNEY GILLIS,  
Staff Reporter

Joshua Farris is only 26, but he's already been to war and back — both as an Army specialist in Iraq and as a college student on the frontlines of the anti-war movement. And what this plainspoken native of the Columbia Gorge town of Lyle, Washington, has to say about Seattle's attempt to wage peace isn't good.

Sitting in a picture window of a cafe in the University District, Farris' baby-blue eyes flash steely gray as he explains that he's tried everything he can think of, first as a student at Seattle Central Community College and now at the University of Washington, to call people's attention to the war and organize resistance to it.

After serving in Baghdad from April to October of 2003, Farris "slipped out" of the service in 2004 during a short window in which the Army wasn't stop-lossing soldiers, or keeping them past their discharge dates. He started school at SCCC and joined its Students Against War, put on rallies and forums with the group and, in 2006, was one of seven people who staged a 27-hour sit-in at Sen. Maria Cantwell's office demanding that she clarify her position on Iraq.

Last fall, Farris, who plans to be a teacher, took the movement to his transfer school, the UW. He founded a new group, Washington Huskies Against the Military Occupation, or WHAMO, which mounted an Arlington Northwest memorial of faux gravestones on campus in November. During the time he was organizing that, Farris went to an Eastside Democratic fundraising dinner where he jumped up and called down Sen. Patty Murray's continued votes to fund the war — a confrontation that can be seen on YouTube.

It's been a heroic effort. But now Farris is done. Though he's flying to Washington, D.C., for a March 13 event at which veterans will tell their stories, WHAMO is no more, a casualty, he says, of the bleakness and the bickering that drives the anti-war fight right out of people like him.

**How did you regard the war before you went over?**

Well, my dad and grandpa always said, basically, question conventional

wisdom. My dad always said, "If somebody says they've got all the answers, they're full of shit...."

The big thing that I remember was I was in the chow hall with a buddy having lunch and we were watching Colin Powell give his address to the United Nations and he was beating his fist on the table. Billy looks at me and he says, "Look at these war pigs, dude." And I was like, "Yeah, we're going to war. This is crazy. This doesn't make any sense."

**So you were there at the start of the war?**

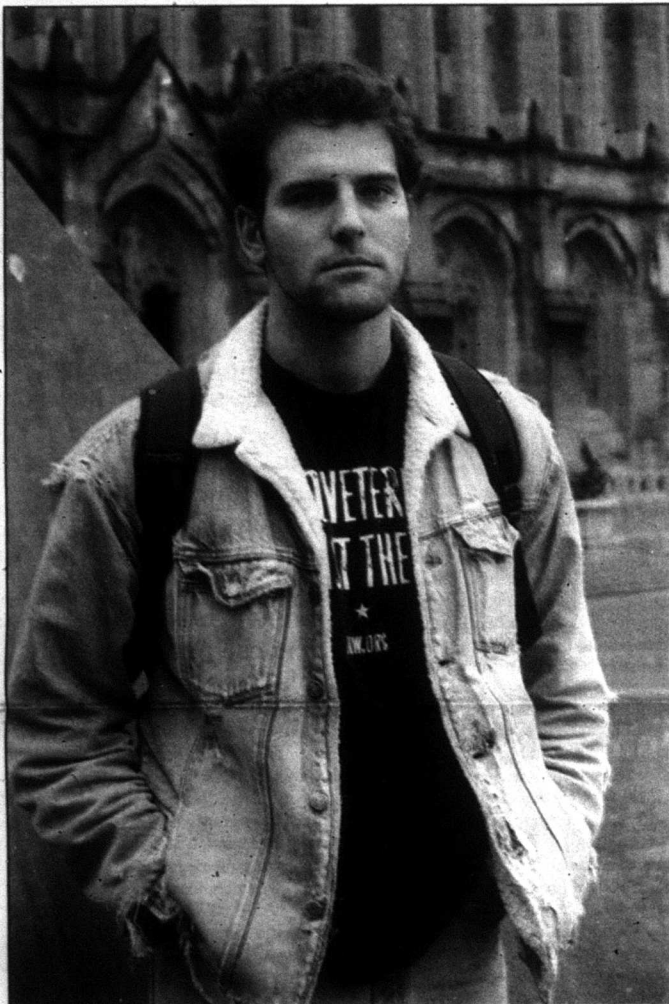
[No.] My unit was 11CAD in the first Army division out of Germany. We were supposed to go into Turkey and through the north [of Iraq], but that didn't happen, so we ended up missing the whole war. We had to go the long way around, through Kuwait ... By the time we got into Iraq, everything's done.

[After stints of guard duty and night patrols in Baghdad], we started driving around the Bradleys. You could hear these vehicles coming from a mile away,

**"The big thing that I remember was... watching Colin Powell give his address to the United Nations.... Billy looks at me and he says, 'Look at these war pigs, dude.'"**

so we'd never see anybody, but our vehicle got hit [by an IED]. [One guy] gets his face peppered with shrapnel. There's blood everywhere. The driver gets his eardrums blown out. My buddy Lazarus was in the back with me, sitting there freaking out ... It was weird because I had broken the back hatch the night before, so the day the vehicle was hit, [the hatch] should have taken my head off. It was like I've got a guardian angel or something looking out for me. I was really freaked out by that.

That was as close [to battle] as I got. But I just kept seeing over and over that we weren't there to help out these people. There were people who came up to us and were begging us to help them and I would be told to turn them away. There was one particular situation where this man was just begging me to help him because somebody was hurting his family ... I'm like, "We should do something," [but] I had to send him away. It re-



Southwest Washington native Joshua Farris returned from the Iraq war, enrolled in college, and founded a UW anti-war organization, only to find apathy and factionalism hard to overcome. Photo by Andrea Lee

ally dawned on me at that moment that if there was any chance of me to do good while I was in Iraq, it was right there, and I was really powerless to help this guy. So I came back and I was really disturbed about that.

**But you didn't leave the service ready to protest in the street?**

No, and I really didn't understand — I didn't feel the anti-war movement got me. I didn't feel like that was a legitimate outlet for my energy. But I wanted to do something.

**Why didn't you think the anti-war movement got you?**

Well, the thing when they talk about racism and when they link it to social stratification and Palestine... that's not why I think we should get out of Iraq. I think we should get out of Iraq because we never should have gone there to begin with and because we're

supposed to be going after the actual people that attacked us, not these other people. Saddam Hussein's one thing, but there's lots of bad people in the world that we could go after... why not send some Special Forces in there to kill him? Why send the whole frigging U.S. Army in there? ...

All these other things that people threw onto it didn't really click with me. Listening for the last three years to these old, lefty professors, I've pretty much [made] almost this complete political evolution where I understand all these things are connected to [the war]. But I also still think you can't get 80 percent of the people in the country to rally around Palestine and all this other stuff. I think it's wrong to try organize people on what 10 percent agree with. You're

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## Land of the Free

### ■ A Free Life

By Ha Jin, Pantheon, 2007, Hardcover, 660 pages, \$26

Review by ELLIOTT BRONSTEIN,  
Contributing Writer

What a peculiar book Ha Jin has written: awkward but assured, clunky and compelling, way too long yet curiously hard to put down.

*A Free Life* chronicles the Americanization of the Wu family — father Nan, mother Pingping, and young son Taotao. After the Tiananmen massacre on June 4, 1989, the Wus cannot return to China because of politically suspect remarks that Wu has made, so now they are “trapped” in the United States. Nan had been working toward a Ph.D. in political science, but in a fit of discontent he abandons his academic quest and the family must re-invent itself. After some time in Massachusetts and New York, the Wus move to the suburbs of Atlanta, purchase a Chinese restaurant, and settle in for a long-term struggle toward financial independence.

Over the next decade Nan and Pingping will work long hours, hire help, fire help, meet friends, lose friends, earn money, lose money; all the while struggling with the unfamiliar legal, financial, and education systems of their adopted country. China, the mother-country, always looms in the background [as the standard of comparison for all facets of life].

Nan Wu sees himself as one of the “weed people,” a “mere immigrant” whose actions are of no concern to the Chinese authorities — or anyone else, for that matter. He dreams of abandoning his self-described dreary life and realizing his ambition of being a poet. Yet he knows that the measure of “freedom” he has found here does not grant him that type of latitude. He watches as other Chinese friends, unencumbered by family concerns, begin to make names for

themselves as writers and artists back in China, though he finds most of their work mediocre and lacking courage. Flipping through a Chinese book on American life, filled with starchy personal success stories, Nan wonders, “Who will speak for the failures?”

Nan’s emotions oscillate constantly between restlessness and contentment. When he and Pingping pay off the mortgage on their home in the Atlanta

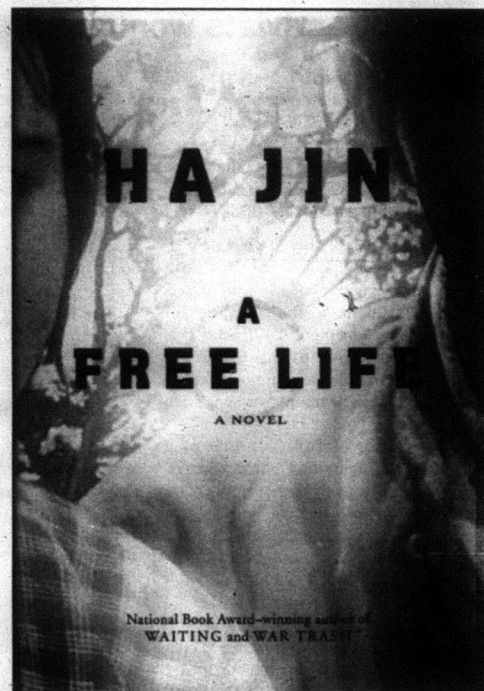
**A Free Life** is a symphony written by a composer who has suddenly developed tone-deafness. At the same time, the novel remains fascinating to read, if only for the extraordinary window it opens on the lives of Chinese newcomers to this country.

suburbs, Nan feels disappointed over how easy it is to succeed in the United States. “In just a few years he’d gone through the journey that often took most immigrants a whole lifetime.” On the other hand, Nan learns to savor the day-to-day pleasures of his improbable new circumstances. “He felt that a good life should be uneventful, having few dramatic moments; instead it should be filled with small delights, each of which should be appreciated and enjoyed like a gift.” —

I suspect there are more than a few emotional parallels between the fictional Nan Wu and his creator, the National Book Award-winning Jin. Both men came to the U.S. in the mid-1980s, and both have spent their adult lives in deepening engagement with this country. Jin has written eight books of fiction in English, but *A Free Life* is his first set in the United States, and his first to articulate an American experience.

Jin is a fine writer; he knows what he’s doing. His previous book, *War Trash*, was a masterly account of a Chinese prisoner of war held by the Americans during the Korean War. But in *A Free Life*, his quiet, compact style sometimes fails to convey his characters’ complexity. Again and again, as Jin reaches to describe Nan’s storm of emotions, his words fall short. Nan Wu is a struggling poet, but Jin has purposely — perhaps stubbornly — written a book that pointedly lacks poetry. The story spirals on and on with dogged determination, neither to shape the events in Nan’s life nor to highlight their significance. There are even a few tin-ear notes, such as when a parking attendant is described as a “short black fellow.”

*A Free Life* is a symphony written by a composer who has suddenly developed tone-deafness. At the same time, the novel remains fascinating to read,



if only for the extraordinary window it opens on the lives of Chinese newcomers to this country: the divided loyalties of an immigrant family, the internecine rivalries of an expatriate community, the mind and body-numbing work of running a restaurant, and the fears of parents for their children (who as always grow up too fast). Jin’s prose seldom sings, but I believe he gets all the details right.

And on a slightly different subject ... Has anyone else noticed a decline in the standards of book production? *A Free Life* is the second new hardcover I’ve encountered recently whose binding split apart in the course of reading. Coincidence? Or another sign of the Apocalypse? ■

Your book purchases can benefit Real Change. For more info, go to [www.realchange.org](http://www.realchange.org), click on the Powell’s button, and browse the books recently featured in our pages.

## Chicken Little

I ask for Chicken Little  
because the sky is falling in;  
chunks of it are landing on  
the lawn.  
Babar is a nice elephant,  
but his life is so ordinary.  
The wolf, wearing Grandmother’s  
pink lace bonnet, is smiling.  
He’s got blood on  
his teeth—a serial  
wolf—the three pigs  
are up next.  
My cheek is against  
Mother’s arm.  
I rub the pink skin.  
I am very young,  
but only one very.  
Suddenly I bite.

Quick teeth.  
Good chomp.  
Good thing she makes  
me brush ‘em  
I grip and hold.  
Mother jumps up!  
Little Riding Red Hood  
lands on the floor.  
(Well, I’m only a baby.  
Of course I don’t know  
what I’m doing.)  
Hansel and Gretel are  
looking for breadcrumbs.  
I just wanna know  
if Mother’s blood is red.

—Lorraine Campbell





Adventures  
in Irony

## ©Dr. Wes Browning

I couldn't remember just now what I was going to write about. Then I spotted the story about Chuck Norris saying McCain's "too old to handle the pressures of being president." Chuck Norris is a spry 67 while McCain is a decrepit whole four years older, at 71.

Which reminded me, I was going to talk about reasons not to not vote for presidential candidates. I don't want to tell readers how to vote, because that would be presumptuous of me. But some of the reasons I've seen given for NOT voting for certain candidates are sheer bovine doody.

That John McCain will, if elected, be a year and a half older than Reagan upon his first election, means nothing. After all, we went and re-elected Reagan when he was two and a half years older than what McCain will be. So we just have to all agree, scouts' honor, to only elect McCain once.

Also, his full name is John Sidney McCain The Third. Do NOT NOT vote for someone because one of his names is "The".

Let's examine a few of the other candidates now, in no particular order.

Some say Hillary Clinton shouldn't be president because she 1) screwed up that national healthcare initiative of hers back in '94, and because 2) she's married to Bill. Actually, 1) Congress fails to pass lots of good laws and 2) Mrs. Lincoln was Mary Todd.

Lincoln is an excellent source of counterexamples. Too tall — Lincoln.

Faith,  
Culture,  
Politics



Rev. Rich Lang

We hear a lot of chatter these days that our economy is in a recession. Some even worry that the recession could be long lasting, perhaps melting our economy down into a depression the likes which hasn't been seen since the 1930s. There are some who believe that the stratospheric folk, those 1 percent who own about 40-50 percent of the entire wealth of the nation, actually wouldn't mind an economic meltdown. As is the custom with the stratospheric folk, when all is said and done, their assets will find safe haven, and after the collapse they get wealthier, while we get Katrina.

So I'm kind of a nut. I don't trust stratospheric folk. As a matter of fact I tend to think they are much more of an enemy of the human race, of freedom, and justice, than those enemies that our government tries to make us fear and hate. When I see our economy tanking

Too inexperienced — Lincoln. Dude slept with a man — Lincoln.

Mitt Romney is a Mormon. While most decent Americans his age were learning how to make bongs out of tin cans and aluminum foil, Mitt Romney was speaking to Frenchmen, telling them the good news that Jesus had vacationed in America. Who cares? The important

**Barack Obama has people saying he isn't Black enough. Evidently, none of these people have noticed that ALL of his Democratic Party rivals are less black than he is.**

thing is, he didn't inhale.

Barack Obama has people saying he isn't Black enough. Evidently, none of these people have noticed that ALL of his Democratic Party rivals are less Black than he is. It makes me worry that we put too much emphasis in K-12 on the three Rs, and not enough emphasis on encouraging consciousness.

Then Governor of Arkansas, Mike Huckabee declared 1997 a year of racial reconciliation in that state rather than propose any significant civil rights legislation. On the other hand, as a minister, he took proactive steps to integrate his church. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. Ouachita is most likely pronounced "ouch-itta". One must look deeper to excuse oneself from voting for him.

## ©Dr. Wes: Reasons Not to Not Vote

Dennis Kucinich, a leprechaun, was the keynote speaker of a North American Street Newspaper Association conference attended by yours truly. I can vouch that he is shorter than my grandmother, who was a genuine pixie woman. He once saw a flying thing, while at Shirley MacLaine's house, and admitted he couldn't identify it. He is more than twice the age of his hot babe wife. While mayor of Cleveland in the '70s he so offended the Mafia that they sent a hit man after him. Hey, no one's perfect.

Fred Thompson played D.A. Arthur Branch on *Law and Order*, a TV show. If he were a liberal Democrat that would be grounds for calling him just another wacko Hollywood liberal. But he's not a liberal so you can't hold that against him.

John Edwards looks like your rosy-cheeked paperboy, but people say they wouldn't vote for him because he's sued the American Red Cross three times for distributing HIV-contaminated blood. It goes to show what an "ambulance chaser" he's been. But it was his JOB to sue the American Red Cross for distributing HIV-contaminated blood. Haven't you ever done things you didn't want to do while working for The Man?

Short and quick: I haven't mentioned Giuliani, Ron Paul, Gravel, or any of more than a dozen declared third-party candidates. That's NOT a reason to not vote for any of them. This column has 666 words. ■

Sound off and read more:  
[drwesb.blogspot.com](http://drwesb.blogspot.com)

## When our ambitions go sky-high

my first thought is, "What are the stratospheric people trying to steal now?"

And this brings me to the point of this article. Our nation really is at war. But it's not a war on terror. Rather it's a terrible war on the poor. We're in a class war where stratospheric gluttons of greed continually feed on the bones of the poor and working class. Those of us who find ourselves in the so-called middle, those whose income hovers somewhere between \$40-80,000, are continually the targets of stratospheric seduction. The 1 percent wants us to think that our interests are in line with their interests.

The real truth is that the middle class has far more in common with working people, struggling people, and poor folk than we do with those who make over \$100,000. And most certainly, we simply have nothing in common with those who soar beyond the million mark. The problem is, sadly, that "we the people" no longer have a political party that represents our interests. Only wealthy people and corporations own political parties these days.

The solution, gladly, is that we need to build people power that envisions an economy that redistributes segregated wealth into commonwealth so that both generational aristocracy and generational poverty come to an end. It seems to me that the *Real Change* Organizing Project is a useful first step. Through RCOP we can educate folk about the real issues, gather folk together for the real fight, and equip folk for the real battles, so that we can win the real war and flush those stratospheric greed junkies down their thrones into the streets where, with God's grace, they can become real human beings again.

But let's not wait until our own bones are munched. Today, while we still have flesh and muscle, let's unite, building a network of strength, and a future worthy of our sacrifice today. ■

Rev. Rich Lang is pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Ballard, and can be contacted through [www.turnseattle.org](http://www.turnseattle.org)



## Street Watch

[Streetwatch compiler Emma Quinn is on vacation, so we've put together a digest of noteworthy busts from 2007. —ed.]

**Thurs., Jan. 11, 2 p.m., S. King St., I-5 underpass.** Officers contacted the suspect, a transient Black male aged 43, for trespassing on property belonging to Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) under the I-5 overpass at King St. A name check revealed an outstanding warrant, and suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

**Tues., Feb. 20, 7:26 a.m., Starbucks, Queen Anne Ave. N.** Subject, a transient white male aged 27, entered the Starbucks and fell asleep at one of the corner tables. An employee tried to rouse the man from slumber, but was unsuccessful and called for aid. Seattle Fire arrived and also tried to wake the suspect. Once awoken, subject became enraged and screamed at Seattle Fire and left the store in a fit of temper. Once outside Seattle Fire tried to assess his physical condition. Subject was still in a rage, and picked up a table and threw it at the power pole, and then tried to punch a fireman. Officers arrived and noticed that the subject was soaking wet — the air temperature that day was in the low 40s — and his clothing was filthy. Subject's only property was a small drawing of a fairy, and subject was very protective of this. Officer states that subject was obviously not in his right mind — he did not speak, except to insist the fairy drawing was his. When asked any questions he only hung his head and said nothing. Officer felt that subject needed to be seen by a mental health professional before being either booked or set free. He was transported to Harborview by ambulance for an evaluation.

**Wed., Oct. 17, 6:02 a.m., 800 Block of S. Main St.** An off-duty officer who was working security patrol in the downtown corridor contacted a transient white male aged 33. Suspect was sleeping in the doorway of a business. A records check showed the suspect to be active with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and they contacted his DOC officer. They were advised to place the suspect under arrest for failing to report on Oct. 16. Suspect was arrested and transported to the precinct, where he was turned over to the DOC for placement on a work crew.

**Mon., Oct. 22, 1:07 p.m., 1550 Block Alaskan Way.** Officers on bike patrol for the Metropolitan Improvement District (MID) observed and contacted a transient white male aged 44 for possessing and consuming a container of alcohol in a park. Upon running the suspect's name, officers found he was active with DOC, and had an outstanding warrant. His DOC officer found the suspect to be in violation of his probation, and the warrant was verified. Suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

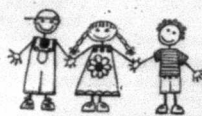
**Mon., Oct. 22, 10:48 p.m., Western Ave.** Officers working patrol were conducting a premise check at Victor Steinbrueck Park on Western Ave. when they located the suspect, a transient Black male aged 47, inside the park past the signed/posted closing time of 10 p.m. Suspect was sitting on a park bench by the east entrance, directly in front of a sign that listed the park hours of 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Suspect was placed under arrest and subsequently booked into King County Jail for trespass in the parks.

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

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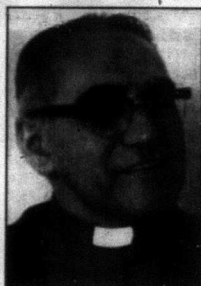
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capabilities."

—Oscar Romero

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**Letters**

editor@realchangenews.org

**Someone's watching? Who cares?**

Dear *Real Change*,

"What me worry?" about Park camcorders if they  
"capture [my] innocent conduct," according to the  
ACLU [City Plans Park Cams," Jan. 16].

Why should I worry if they film me walking  
through a park? Maybe a "drug dealer or a prostitute  
will just move to another place" — good! At least they  
will leave my neighborhood — where not only do I

live but had, up until recently, provided very low-in-  
come housing — where drug dealers and prostitutes  
have never been welcome.

Martin Paup  
Seattle.

**Correction:** The item circled in the front-page  
photograph in last week's issue is a floodlight, not a  
video camera. It's one of two 400-watt high-pressure  
sodium floodlights maintained by Seattle City Light.  
While the story accurately reported that there are  
other city-operated video cameras at neighborhood  
community centers, we erred most grievously in  
misrepresenting the camera on Page 1.

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## IRAQ VET, Continued from Page 7

better organized with what 80 percent of the people agree with.

### So what turned it around that you got involved?

There was a thing in 2005 — January 20, I think — where this group [at Seattle Central Community College] had kicked the recruiters off the campus and they tore up all their literature. It wasn't really that violent, but there was so much rage directed at these two recruiters that I felt like it was kind of an attack on me, which was wrong, [but] I escorted the recruiters off with security and I apologized for how these young students were treating them. I started talking to these students and [asking] what do you want, a draft? Recruiting is a necessary thing. And they were like, "We don't know." They were just doing it because that's what you're supposed to do, right? And they were really cool kids. I ended up having a few beers with them and ended up coming to their meetings. I've never seen anything like it since: They had like 50 students coming to one meeting and it was a two-hour meeting. There were these really strong women [in charge] and they made things kind of fun. It was art, it was positive.

[But] there were these two students [from the International Socialist Orga-

**I think it's wrong to try organize people on what 10 percent agree with. You're better organized with what 80 percent of the people agree with.**

nization] and they would yell at people and there was lots of arguing. In the course of about a month, all the energy that had built up with this thing from Jan. 20 was gone. People didn't want to deal with these meetings and the arguing and the bickering.

### Over what?

Well, like the big thing with racism, right? It's universal in all wars to dehumanize the enemy combatants, because it's not a natural phenomenon for one human being to kill another human being. And they kept talking about this racism and this is the same time where they're talking about supporting the Iraqi insurgency, which are the ones killing our guys. This is huge. Talk to some of the people in SNOW (Sound Nonviolent Opponents of War). They say this is the reason that the whole anti-war movement in Seattle fell apart, was because of this one divisive set of politics.

These are just young kids who want to do something positive and make a difference, and they couldn't deal with it — nobody could, nobody wanted to. And I saw more and more people just

get pushed away. Finally we told the ISO that we didn't want them involved in the group anymore. We wanted them out... I ended up working with the group for another two years. I got it going myself [in 2006], and we did some really good things. So I figured now that I'm at the UW, I should start up a group here. It was

**Being an activist with your sole focus being the war in Iraq, it's a dreary, dreadful thing. It's horrible trying to keep yourself motivated, and then to have all these arguments and bickering and infighting.**

pretty amazing to me that there wasn't already a group.

### The UW had no anti-war group?

No... They've had three different groups in the last five years and they've all died. They last a couple of months and they die off. I think they've had the same problems that we had at Seattle Central.

### What happened with your group?

The first thing, being an activist with your sole focus being the war in Iraq, it's a dreary, dreadful thing. It's horrible trying to keep yourself motivated, and then to have all these arguments and bickering and infighting. [People] just don't want to be associated with it. They'd rather try to save the puppies and the dolphins or something.... I had to stop everything to get myself together. I had three breakdowns, getting angry at people.

One of them, I'm handing out flyers at the Hans Blix event. [The former U.N. weapons inspection chief for Iraq] comes to town and you think these people would be sympathetic, but I walk up to six people [with WHAMO flyers] and consecutively one after the other, I get, "No, no, no, I'm not interested." The sixth person that said that to me, I said, "What? You're not interested? Why the fuck are you here to see Hans Blix? What is the significance of this guy? I'm an Iraq veteran. I'm kind of interested in this. I'm a little concerned with this. I give a fuck. Do any of you give a fuck?" I'm yelling in a room of hundreds of people. I grabbed the flyers and threw them on the ground and I'm like, if anybody touches me right now, I'm going to hit them in the face, I'm so angry at everybody.

### What do you do now?

I'm tired of being completely wrapped up in the war and just constantly thinking about it. I'd like to do something like maybe work on getting clean election reform passed. There's already a group established that's trying to get people educated about it. And also I need to start taking care of myself. I need to finish college and start teaching. ■

light year

light year

Silence...

now.

It could, be

mine...

not,

small.

Only

(and—this, is the distance!) my part.

Flying

away.

Forever.

—Stan Burris

# DASS

## dance

daniel and consensu-partners

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.....artistic director DANIEL WILKINS  
.....spoken word poetry by AMY MAHONEY

Warning: contains adult language, mild adult content, and intense situations that may not be suitable for some children



R. Crumb's unmistakably groundbreaking comic art draws from the cultural and societal experience of human nature. Crumb's about as 'punk' as it gets, self-publishing the first issue of *Zap Comix* in 1968. Since then he has risen to cult status among the underground comics scene and is now recognized by the status quo. "R. Crumb's Underground" is the Frye's showcase for this alt-comics pioneer. The free exhibit kicks off with a lecture on Sat., Jan. 26, and the film *Crumb* will be shown Sun., Jan. 27, both beginning at 2 p.m. Frye Art Museum, 704 Terry Ave. Exhibit runs through April 27. Info: [www.fryeart.org](http://www.fryeart.org). PS: the image is Crumb's "Self-Portrait With Third Eye," 2004.

# Calendar

## This Week's Top Picks

### Wednesday 1/23

No matter who we are, we all live in a world scarred by generations of inequality based on people's skin tone. Members of United to End Racism will be on hand to teach supportive listening through Re-evaluation Counseling. Re-evaluation Counseling is the process of allowing one to heal through the natural response to hurt that is often, during development, stifled by adults. Garfield Community Center, 7-9 p.m., 2323 East Cherry St. Info: [www.rc.org/uer](http://www.rc.org/uer) or [dvoraslaivn@gmail.com](mailto:dvoraslaivn@gmail.com).

### Thursday 1/24

Nuclear bombs for space exploration? Apparently this was the goal for a group of scientists led by Theodore B. Taylor and Freeman Dyson. *Project Orion* is the story of how these scientists planned a spacecraft propelled by nuclear bombs. Author George Dyson, an engaging speaker on the history of technology who also happens to be Freeman's son, will be on hand to contextualize this almost occurrence within the political and cultural happenings of the Cold War. Hats off to these scientists for trying to put nuclear bombs to positive use. 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Seattle, Eighth Ave. and Seneca St., enter on Seneca. \$5 at the door. Info: [www.townhallseattle.org](http://www.townhallseattle.org).

### Friday 1/25

Abortion can sound as harsh as a four-letter word when uttered in mixed company. *I Had an Abortion* is a film that attempts to break down this still-taboo issue. The film showcases 10 women age 21 to 85 who candidly describe their abortion experiences. Their stories span seven decades, going back before *Roe v. Wade*. The film offers these stories as a way to personalize what is now a very heated debate. The film is part of a national campaign to support and defend women's full reproductive health rights and to promote an upcoming book tour for Dr. Susan Wicklund's *This Common Secret: My Journey as An Abortion Doctor*. Event is free, co-sponsored by Seattle NOW, the Washington Alliance for Reproductive Choice, and NARAL.

Donations are kindly accepted: 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Place N. Info: [www.meaningfulmovies.org](http://www.meaningfulmovies.org) and [www.speakoutfilms.com/film.html](http://www.speakoutfilms.com/film.html).

Pop some No-Doz or slam some lattes to take part in the annual One Night Count of Homeless People Without Shelter. The Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness and Operation Nightwatch coordinate this event to take account of and document the extent of homelessness in King County. Volunteers—some from *Real Change*—head outdoors to count parts of Seattle, Kent, Bellevue, White Center, Federal Way, Renton, and Shoreline; see firsthand evidence of peoples' daily struggles for survival. 2:30 a.m. Info: (206)357-3149.

### Saturday 1/26

It's important to support the underage music scene, especially when it's producing an array of talented and socially conscious youngsters. Check out the Seattle Young People's Project MLK Hip Hop Show, "The Good Life: What's Your Dream?" The annual show celebrates Dr. King and makes connections between current struggles and the civil rights movement. Event showcases homegrown talent, including Dakota Camacho and Seattle favorites El Dia and Beyond Reality. Don't miss the headliner, Skim, a memorable up-and-coming performer. Vera Project, Seattle Center, donations \$5 youth, \$8 adults. Info: [www.syp.org](http://www.syp.org) or (206)860-9606.

### Sunday 1/27

Today is the International Day of Commemoration to Honor Holocaust Victims, designated by the United Nations General Assembly. Check out the Washington State Holocaust Resource Center for information on events and stories. Info: [www.wsherc.org](http://www.wsherc.org) or [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org).

Calendar compiled by Paul Uhl.  
Putting on your own International Day of Commemoration? Send us the details:  
[calendar@realchangenews.org](mailto:calendar@realchangenews.org).

Want to help create **positive** social change?

You can always **volunteer at Real Change.**

A few hours a week can make a **big difference.**

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[www.realchangenews.org/volunteer.html](http://www.realchangenews.org/volunteer.html)



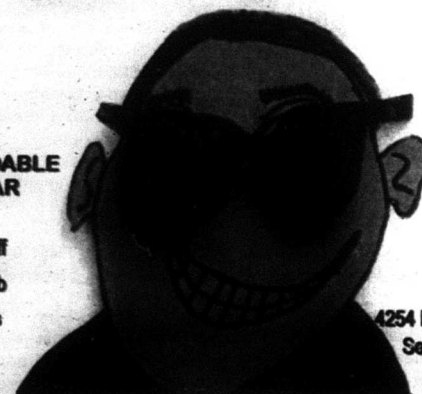
### to APPLY:

Attend our weekly orientation held on Tuesdays at 9:30am at FareStart (7th & Virginia)

### WHAT is FARESTART?

- A 16-week **HANDS-ON TRAINING PROGRAM** in the Culinary Arts (cooking, knife skills, food preparation, and food safety)
- Services to help you **FIND HOUSING**
- Services to help you **FIND A JOB**
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