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\$216,121.54

Raised as of Dec. 27

\$180,000 goal reached Dec. 26

3 days to go

\$20K

\$40K

\$60K

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\$100K

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\$180K

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VOL. 15 NO. 2

DEC. 31, 2008 - JAN. 6, 2009

REALCHANGE

Recovery Transforms Lives

Located in Belltown, the Recovery Café has helped people like Shannon Kitchens battle a 20-year addiction to drugs and alcohol: "I credit my sobriety to this place." But next year, the café will move to a temporary home...see page 5.



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Photo by Katia Roberts

Taxi to the Dark Side

Spurred by an offhand comment by a cab driver, journalist Silja Talvi realizes why mass incarceration stands out as our major civil rights struggle...see page 4.



Photo by Joshua Huston

Predictions: Notable locals cast their eyes to '09, prophesying on the media, immigration, the Iraq War, and even W...pgs. 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11.

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

Real Change

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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 *Real Change* Organizing Project (RCOP). 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.



Thanks to you, *Real Change* is healthy and strong. We're organizing an aggressive response to the root causes of homelessness: inequality and racism. Keep the support coming.

Building to win: The case for 2009

By **TIMOTHY HARRIS**,
Executive Director, Real Change

Over the years, I've come to appreciate the golden rule of grassroots fundraising: If you tell the truth, take the risks that the times demand, and operate from a place of integrity, the money will follow. But only if you ask. We asked, and you came through.

At \$216,121 raised over November and December, *Real Change's* \$180,000 year-end fundraising goal has been more than met. Our debt is retired. Our landlord gets his last six months' rent. An unusually difficult year has ended, and we're operating from a place of health and strength. You made it happen, and we thank you.

You get that *Real Change* works; that we engage our vendors, readers, and allies in addressing the issues that directly affect all of us. You get that our capacity to mobilize is based in our fifteen-year history of walking alongside those who have the least, and the growing web of relationships that is *Real Change*.

You get that the time to organize is now, and that with your help, a different reality is possible. 2009 brings its own challenges. With your help, we'll meet those as well.

Race and Poverty in Seattle

Mass homelessness is a structural fact of the economy, and the visible result of three decades of increasing inequality, combined with social policies that maintain rather than reduce poverty.

Homelessness in Seattle and King County is growing and becoming more racialized. The 2008 One Night Count documented a 15 percent increase in homelessness over the previous year. During this snapshot early morning January count, 5,800 people were in emergency and transitional shelter, and another 2,300 homeless were found surviving outside on a night when the shelters were full. The count also documents that although Blacks make up just 5 percent of county residents, they make up 40 percent of King County's homeless. This number is up 4 percent from just two years prior.

As the effects of the subprime loan collapse continue to ripple through the economy, creating budget deficits at all levels of government, essential survival services are at risk of being cut back or eliminated at the time when they are needed most.

As inequality in Seattle has widened, city policy on homelessness has shifted to the reduc-

tion of visible poverty and a focus on criminalization. Sadly, this has brought a zero-tolerance approach to public camping with the provision of few viable alternatives. A University of Washington team of academics determined that the city has employed "a discourse of filth and contagion" to promote its policy of homeless sweeps. The mayor's focus on proactively identifying and eliminating homeless campsites from public spaces has dramatically increased the stress and desperation of street survival. Protocols designed to assure the public that these policies are humane and responsible offer little real protection to homeless campers.

The past three decades of growing homelessness and incarceration are related to the realities of a global economy that has eliminated most of the opportu-

Real Change believes that single-issue, siloed approaches to homelessness have only led to structures of mitigation that are inadequate to the obviously growing problem.

nities for "unskilled" work and created a largely unrecognized pool of structurally unemployed. This includes the more than five-fold increase in incarceration that has taken place since 1980, an increase that has placed one in 99 Americans behind bars and left an African-American male high school dropout with a two-in-three chance of being imprisoned by the age of 35. Seattle's high school graduation rate for African Americans is a mere 52 percent.

Seattle is moving ahead with plans to build a new municipal jail to accommodate anticipated increases in incarceration. The facility will cost at least \$210 million to build and another \$19 million annually to operate. Money that could be used to rebuild lives will instead deepen the cycle of poverty for the most disadvantaged in our society.

Seattle's new jail is an expensive commitment to the structural racism that will surely deepen poverty in disadvantaged communities. There are

alternatives — but none will happen without a grassroots fight for a better way forward.

Opportunities and Challenges

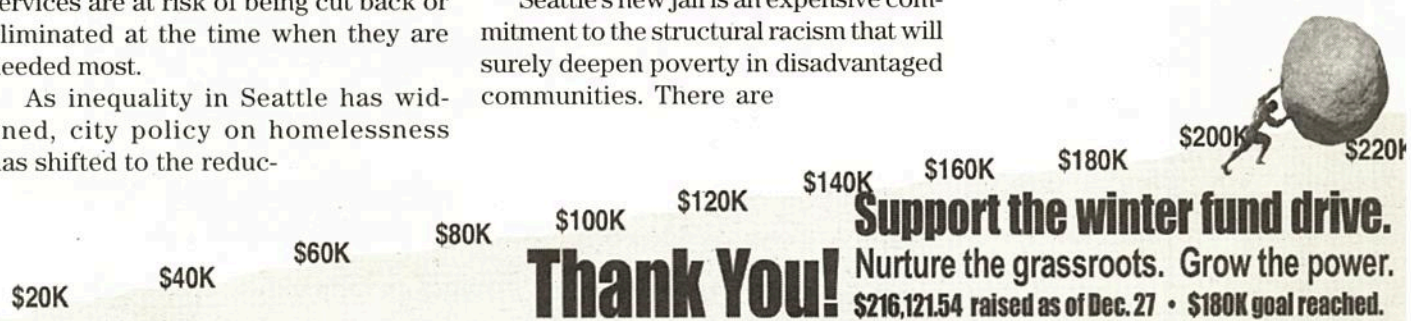
Real Change is engaged in two related campaigns to defend those who have the least. Since we uncovered the mayor's secret homeless sweep last year, we have been the leading voice for better survival solutions in Seattle. Over the past year, we've held four overnight protest encampments at City Hall. We've mobilized large numbers of people for public hearing documented consistent violations of the city's own policy, and provided major support to the Nickelsville survival encampment that has gained the strong support of Seattle's fair community.

Our No New Jail Campaign has challenged the mayor's assertion of inevitability, and elevated the jail issue from a NIMBY-based discussion site alternatives to a community-wide debate over the role of incarceration in perpetuating race-based inequality. We are organizing a broad-based and powerful coalition to take action on this issue, and will hold a large public forum on the new jail this January.

Real Change believes that single-issue, siloed approaches to homelessness have only led to structures of mitigation that are inadequate to the obviously growing problem. In the absence of large, activist constituency to defend the poor and economically vulnerable, human services are subject to reduction during these times of state, county, and city budget deficits.

The *Real Change* newspaper and Organizing Project addresses root issues of growing inequality, racial income disparity, declining housing affordability, and attacks upon basic civil rights by growing a powerful and vocal base of activists to take action on these issues. We believe that the hope that exists for structural solutions to poverty and inequality can only be realized through a powerful grassroots

See FUND DRIVE, Continued on Next Page



Just Heard...

Respite for Jefferson Terrace

Plans to convert a publicly owned low-income high rise called Terrace Jefferson to homeless housing are moving slower than the Seattle Housing Authority last stated: At a Dec. 10 meeting with tenants of the building, located on First Hill next door to Harborview Medical Center, SHA resident liaison Sven Koehler said the housing authority's board of commissioners will not vote on the conversion plan in January, as SHA's director told residents in October.

The plan, which many of the 17-story building's elderly and disabled residents object to, calls for SHA to let the Downtown Emergency Services Center to manage the building and rent its apartments to the homeless, starting with 60 units in late 2009. One floor would also be used to expand the county's homeless medical respite program, which currently provides 22 beds at two shelters for those who have been discharged from a hospital but are too infirm to go to the streets.

The new facility at Jefferson Terrace would serve about 30 patients at a time. But respite director Dr. Leslie Enzian told residents Dec. 10 that the facility would not admit patients with active tuberculosis or diseases such as flu that are spread by coughing or sneezing. Inappropriate behavior, she added, would not be tolerated.

Some residents, however, said the patients would make noise, might go out and use street drugs, or could expose them to antibiotic-resistant MRSA staph infections. "I just wish," said one, "you wouldn't [put] it here."

Noel House purge

Karen Young has written a letter to Seattle Councilmember Nick Licata asking that Belltown's Noel House women's shelter stop throwing away personal belongings.

On Dec. 4, Young says, she lost clothing and needlework that she intended for holiday gifts in a Noel House purge that she calls capricious and illegal. Though residents had been warned beforehand, she says, the shelter did not open on Dec. 2 when residents were told to collect their stuff.

Program director Eileen McComb says the shelter has specific limits on how much it will store and makes these rules clear to each woman. Staff conduct random bed checks for excess, she says. After a woman receives her third warning about overage in one calendar quarter, she adds, staff do toss the extra items.

Residents complain about it regularly, she says, but it's traumatic for staff as well. "No one," she says, "wants to throw their belongings away."

—Cydney Gillis

FUND DRIVE, Continued from Previous Page

activism that unites constituencies across issue and class.

Real Change is well positioned for leadership on these issues. More than a thousand annual supporters of our work provide the majority of our financial support. The next largest share — 35 percent of our budget — derives from earned income through circulation and advertising revenue. Grassroots and earned income funding for our work have both grown annually. These resources offer *Real Change* enormous freedom to pursue our mission in a manner that is uncompromised by funding sources.

Yet, *Real Change* still faces serious capacity issues on three fronts. Large increases in the numbers of vendors we serve, driven by the increased need and desperation on the street, have challenged our ability to adequately respond. In the face of this rising direct need, our grassroots activism is difficult to sustain. Finally, *Real Change's* limited administrative capacity reduces our ability to effectively manage the resources we already have, and more aggressively expand our grassroots support.

To meet the challenges of organizing an activist response while meeting the increasing direct need, *Real Change* needs to grow over 2009 in the following areas:

Vendor Staffing: Inadequate vendor staffing limits our ability to

effectively serve the more than 350 vendors we now see each month. *Real Change* works to connect vendors who express a desire for services with providers that can meet their needs. Our ability to do this effectively is limited by staffing and the capacity to effectively engage the many volunteers who support our work. (Cost: \$32K)

Equipment and Space: Our 15-year location at 2129 Second Avenue meets our needs as an inexpensive, stable location that is friendly to those we serve. The 2,000-square-foot space, however, is no longer adequate to our growing staff and clientele, and the resulting pressures limit our effectiveness. Our aging technology — computers, servers, software, phone systems, etc. — need to come into this century. Over the next year, *Real Change* must redesign the space and upgrade the tech systems. (Cost \$30K)

Administrative Infrastructure: *Real Change* needs an operations manager to coordinate staff management, more effectively measure and track progress toward goals and milestones, and manage the administrative details of an expanding organization. This will free up the ED to organize, build community, and enlarge the grassroots support needed to sustain and grow our work. (Cost \$45K).

Production and Online Support: *Real Change* newspaper staff (2.5 FTE's) are challenged by the demands of weekly production and lack the ca-

capacity to ramp up for a more multimedia approach that a dynamic internet presence requires. A staff position that focuses on newspaper production, maintaining a multimedia website, and producing a coordinated *Real Change* e-newsletter will augment our readership, increase grassroots support of our work, offer a professional public face to our activism, and enhance the quality of our core service. (Cost: \$40K).

At the close of 2008, *Real Change* is strong and healthy. We are rooted in an expanding base of grassroots support and on a stable foundation of earned income that grows with our circulation. We are taking the risks, telling the truth, and organizing for power. Your support makes that possible.

Thanks. ■

With your help, we can beat our Winter Drive goal in this final week of 2008, and get a head start on the work of 2009. Please make your gift to *Real Change* today. Visit our website at realchangenews.org, or mail your donation to *Real Change*, 2129 Second Ave., Seattle, WA 98121.

'08 - '09

Ending our wars

Joe Colgan lost his son, Lt. Ben Colgan, to a roadside bomb in the first year of the Iraqi occupation. Every week Colgan stands outside the Federal Building inviting passersby to sign postcards asking members of Congress to do all they can to end the war.

What ought the United States resolve to do with Iraq in 2009?

I think the most just and profound statement our new administration could make concerning our misbegotten war in Iraq would be to begin an orderly withdrawing of all 350,000 military and support forces. This would begin no later than March and be completed no later than June 2010. The 60,000 mercenaries would be among the first to go.

Each American would benefit from apologizing to the Iraqi people for our invasion of their country. If we can come to terms with that mistake and admit some responsibility for it, we will be able to also commit to financially helping the Iraqis rebuild all we destroyed. We ought to also resolve to understanding and respecting the Iraqi people and whatever government they choose to live with.

We Americans must rethink and challenge our country's use of military force to solve this so-called "war on terrorism" by occupying Muslim countries. I think it is another big mistake to put more troops into Afghanistan unless all the surrounding countries and our allies do the same. We also must question the idea to utilize mercenaries and contractors to fight our wars.

It is the responsibility of all American families who do not have sons, daughters, moms or dads in the armed forces to support and become watchdogs of the Veterans Administration. I ask them to please stop and walk a mile in the military families' shoes — to think for a few moments about how they would feel waiting for their loved one to return from tour after tour after tour. If we citizens are going to continue to allow foolish wars to build our empire, then ensuring that our veterans receive the best care available, for as long as is needed, is not only our responsibility but our duty.

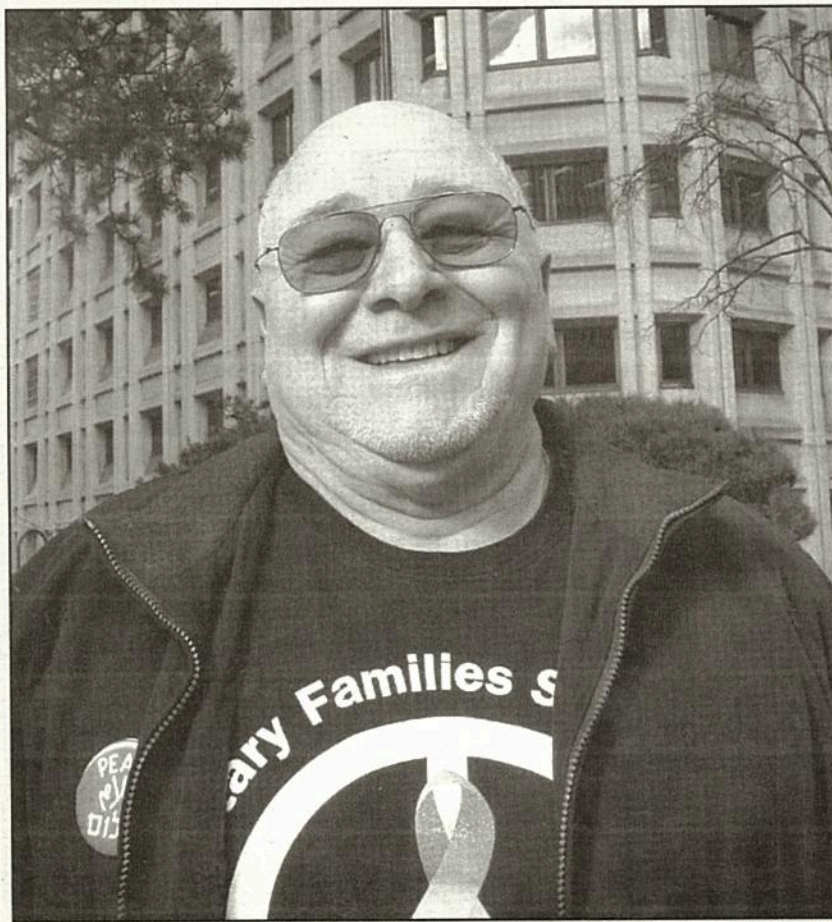


Photo by Adam Hyla

CROSSWORD

Edible Epithet: Solution
for Dec. 23 - 30, 2008 issue

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Mass incarceration is the civil rights struggle of our day

Not the "Other"

By SILJA J.A. TALVI,
Guest Writer

If it's anything I hate, it's being late for an appointment, but there I was, scrambling for my keys, just 20 minutes away from a scheduled meeting with Timothy Harris, the executive director of Real Change. We were set to discuss the final details of a scheduled benefit event: a joint fundraiser held earlier this year, featuring former police chief Norm Stamper and myself discussing issues of gender, ethnicity, and poverty as they related to the (local and national) War on Drugs.

I called a cab, and hopped in to the backseat. I gave the driver the address, and he inquired whether it was a business or a restaurant of some kind.

"It's *Real Change*," I said.

There was a brief pause as we left the alleyway behind my building, rounded the corner, and headed up a steep hill.

Stopped at a red light, he turned half-way around in his seat to take a closer look. "You're not homeless, are you?" he blurted out.

Before I could answer, the cabbie laughed uncomfortably at the question he had just asked, and then followed it up with a comment that seemed to be his way of trying to reassure me that he wasn't trying to insult me: "I mean ... I mean ... you don't look homeless."

"I'm not," I replied. "But why do you ask?"

"Good. I can't stand homeless people," he answered back.

I was uncharacteristically shocked into a moment of silence. Seattle is known for a lot of things, but not for people who actually say all the unpleasant things

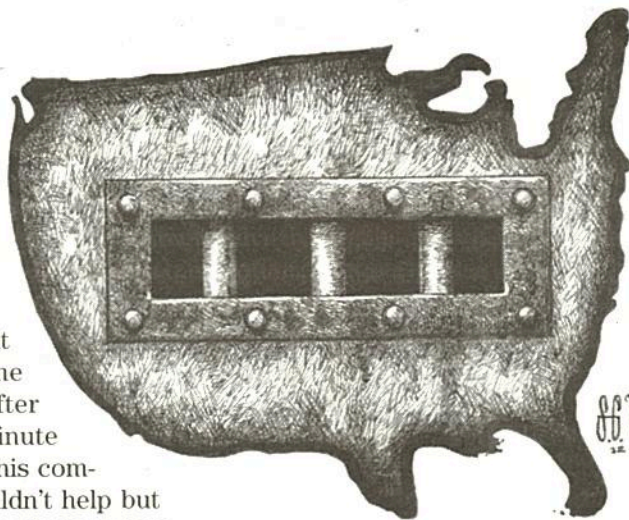
they think about each other. But this Seattleite had just put his vitriol out there for me to taste. After taking a minute to process his comment, I couldn't help but prod for more information.

"Why do you hate homeless people?" I asked.

He shrugged. "Just because ... well, you know, I work hard all day and they don't."

That one rated right up in the top 10 of what I've come to think of as the general public's reflexive "Why I Hate the Homeless" list. Having heard that sentiment expressed so many times, I also had a good sense of where to steer the discussion next — without getting as outraged or angry as I would have earlier in my life. Over the years, I've worked to hone my technique for dealing with comments like these so that I try to learn about the origins of a person's prejudice as much as I seek to dispel it.

With all of that in mind, I started poking around to figure out what this man knew (and didn't know) about homelessness and poverty in America. I alluded to the ease with which any one of us in this country can lose our footing — even in the best of times — and end up without a job, a home, or money to pay the bills. I didn't want to lecture him or make it seem



as though I was quizzing him. I really wanted get a better sense of how he saw the world around him — and why — and I wanted to use as much of this short cab ride

to drive off a bit of the angry, judgmental sentiment he seemed to feel toward people without homes to call their own.

I asked him if he realized that millions of people in this country are homeless without any obvious visual cues.

"I don't know if you've met people like this before," I offered, "but there are homeless people all around us who go to work, who often hold down more than one job, but still can't afford to pay rent or put down a deposit," I said. "A lot of homeless people don't actually live on the street, but they're still homeless: they 'couch-surf,' live in motels, even in their cars."

"Oh, yeah, I know that," he replied immediately.

And then: "I used to live in my car."

I was incredulous. "For how long?" I inquired.

"Oh, maybe six months," he answered. "But I wasn't one of those homeless people who turn to crime or anything. I wasn't dangerous or anything."

I was utterly intrigued.

Here he was, a working-class cab driver, who had clearly ended up in some kind of financial trouble earlier in his life, to the point that he had ended up living in his car. Yet having had that experience, he still spoke as though he had never walked in his own shoes.

When I had first started talking, he had mentioned that homeless people were usually "criminals." As such, I was even more curious about what came to mind when he thought of crime and "criminals."

I inquired whether he realized that if homeless people who live on the streets are arrested for something, they tend to be arrested for minor offenses, ranging from petty theft to public intoxication and/or the "crime" of sleeping on the street. I also asked him if he had thought about the fact that actual sociopaths — the people amidst us who are essen-

There's no question that some people experience personal transformations while they're behind bars, and a few even receive adequate rehabilitation, education, or counseling. But many more come out in worse shape than when they went in.

tially incapable of feeling empathy and thus have the most potential to be truly dangerous to other living creatures — are often quite "successful" in business, politics, and other leadership positions in legal and illicit enterprises. Had he considered, for instance, that most of the nation's serial killers have been middle-class, "respectable" citizens, who often preyed on destitute, struggling, and/or otherwise vulnerable youth and adults — especially people living on (or making a living on) the street?

But even more to the point — and I had to be quick and direct, because we were nearing my destination — when he associated homeless people with crime, did he realize how many people were

'08 - '09

The immigrant rights movement on new ground

Hilary Stern is director of CASA Latina, a multi-service agency that organizes and provides a voice for Latino immigrant workers.

The immigrant rights movement was very visible in 2006, but it has been pretty invisible since. What is in store for 2009?

The priority for the immigrant rights movement remains the same: to fix our outdated immigration system so that we can reunite families and protect all workers, including immigrant workers. We need to have a fair system where hardworking immigrant families are able to get on a path to full citizenship. However, right now the priority of this country, our new President, and Congress is to deal with an economic crisis. We recognize that the immigration reform that this country and our immigrant families need will probably not happen until we get our economy moving in the right direction.

In 2009 you will see the immigrant rights movement ask that there be a moratorium on workplace raids until there is a comprehensive immigration reform. Our economy and our community does not need any more disruption. Families are hurting enough without also having to be uprooted from their jobs and their communities.

—Interview by Travis Duprey



Photo by Revel Nt

See THE OTHER, Continued on Page 7

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“School of Transformation” a course in revival

Graduation celebrates achievements in sobriety

By CYDNEY GILLIS,
Staff Reporter

Shannon Kitchens had struggled with alcohol and drugs for 20 years when she finally hit bottom. One day last summer, she says, she was behind the wheel of her mother's car when a police officer stopped her for the second day in a row.

She had an open bottle of booze sitting in the seat beside her. But instead of arresting her, the officer told her to park the car and let her go. The 41-year-old former weight trainer, who got hooked on the painkiller OxyContin after an injury and later started using heroin, went back to her mother's Shoreline home, crawled into a tub and had what might be called a “Come to Jesus” talk with herself.

“I was sitting in the bath and said, ‘I have to stop or I’m going to die,’” Kitchens recalls.

She called around to treatment centers and got into a methadone program on Airport Way S. in Seattle. While riding the bus to the site, she says, she kept passing a little storefront on the corner of Second and Bell with a sign that read

At first, Shannon Kitchens was just going through the motions, but the friends she made got her through those first 90 days. “I credit my sobriety to this place,” she says. “It’s helping reintegrate me into life.”

Recovery Café.

One day, Kitchens finally walked through the doors and someone told her about the café's nonprofit sobriety program, which asks only that people who join — and Kitchens did — meet with a group of fellow participants each week and, eventually, give back to the place, whether by serving some of its free meals or offering an ear to someone in need.

At first, she was just going through the motions, she says, but the friends she made in her “recovery circle” got her through those first 90 days. “I credit my sobriety to this place,” she says. “It’s helping reintegrate me into life — simple things like getting up every day and making a commitment to do something, having a purpose.”

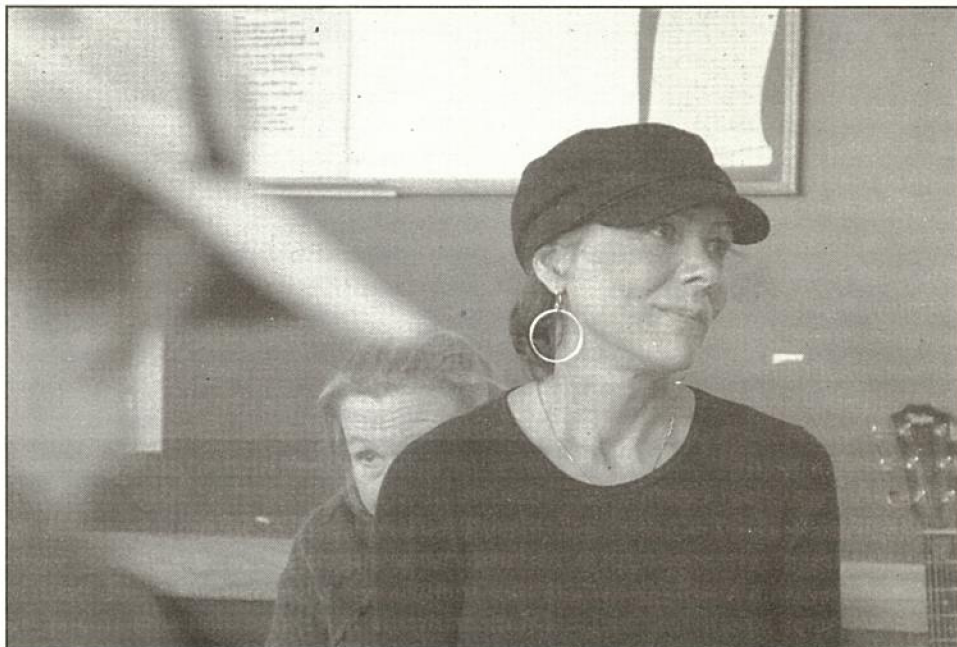
As Kitchens speaks, a café volunteer puts a Christmas tree next to the storefront's floor-to-ceiling windows and begins hanging ornaments. There will be a holiday party later, but, before that, about 30 café members and staff are to honor Kitchens and eight others for finishing the first semester of the School of Transformation, a set of life-skills and coping courses led by volunteers at the Recovery Café.

The graduation ceremony is informal. One by one, participants are called to stand and listen to their peers share heartfelt accolades and thanks for their contribution to the café. But, this time, the event marks more than the graduates' passage: It will be the last Christmas and the last ceremony of its kind at Second and Bell, where the café was founded in 2004. The building's owner, the Archdiocesan Housing Authority, plans to redevelop the site to expand the Noel House women's shelter and Rose of Lima transitional housing it operates there.

Early next year, the Recovery Café is moving down Second to temporary quarters at the old FareStart Café space that AHA owns in the Josephinum Building. The café has been looking for a permanent site for months, but affordable space in or near downtown, where services for the café's homeless and mentally ill members are located, is proving hard to come by, says Killian Noe, the café's founder.

In the short term, the temporary space will be larger than today's café, allowing for more classes and AA meetings, says Dave Shull, a staff member and “dean” of the Transformation School. Classes are taught four nights a week and focused this past semester on intercommunications, relapse prevention, spirituality, and other topics meant to help those reinventing their lives.

By the time Shull calls Kitchens' name in the graduation ceremony, tears are streaming down her face. One of the people who stands to address her is Dave



Shannon Kitchens is dealing with a two-decade-long addiction to alcohol and drugs with help from the Recovery Café, where last week peers honored her efforts at sobriety. Photo by Katia Roberts

Petersen, 45, a fellow graduate who lost a trucking dispatch job and his apartment to crystal meth two years ago.

“When I first started coming here, you befriended me,” Petersen tells her. “You made it all right for me to share my life. You helped me make that turn.... Thank you with all my heart.”

“You were a little lost woman and now you are so radiant,” says Cora Morales, who graduated the school last year. “When you come in the room, you light it up.”

Morales, 59, already has 22 years of sobriety behind her, but says it wasn't until she took the transformation classes — in particular, the course on spirituality — that she stopped living on the edge.

“We read books on Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity and expanded our vision of what God is,” she says. “It taught us how to open ourselves and see all human beings as spiritual beings, to go beyond the external and see them as we would ourselves.”

While Morales is glad the café is moving to a larger space in the short term, she says she will miss the Second and Bell storefront because it has a certain spirit of its own and, more importantly, keeps drawing people back week after week.

“It offers that peace and serenity,” she says, “that they don't have in their lives.” ■

'08 - '09

Changing the Constitution

In workshops, seminars, and publications like “Policy Watch,” Nancy Amidei has helped teach thousands of ordinary people easy ways to make their voices heard in the state capitol. She retired this fall from the University of Washington School of Social Work (where she was a senior lecturer and director of the Civic Engagement Project), but her advocacy trainings continue.



The state is dealing with a breathtaking \$6 billion drop in tax revenue. What can it resolve to do in 2009 to cope?

We should resolve to find a way to get a progressive income tax. That means addressing a two-part challenge.

One: the State Constitution says that any tax on “property” must be uniform and equal, and back in the 1930's, the state Supreme Court held that “income” is “property” — which would rule out a progressive income tax. It's possible that the courts would see the issue differently today.

Two: Even if our legislators could get the votes for a change in the Constitution, there would likely be a citizen initiative. Opponents with wealthy backers could easily demagogue the issue and work to defeat it. That doesn't make it impossible, just costly and tricky.

We've got the most regressive tax system in the nation, at least partly because we're one of only four states with no income tax. Plus, many groups — including the 2002 Tax Alternatives Report headed by William H. Gates, Sr. — have laid out approaches to overall tax reform that include a state income tax.

Among the many pluses: a progressive income tax would help us make the system fairer, especially to lower- and middle-income families; it would allow us to lower the sales tax, the property tax, and fix the unfair business-and-occupation tax; it could make the state's revenue base more adequate. Bottom line: It's the right thing to do, and with work, it's possible. To borrow a current phrase: Yes We Can!

Vendor of the Week



Darcie

It's snowing outside. And it's really coming down. I ask Darcie if we should still do our interview, or perhaps reschedule for another day.

"Well, I'm working, aren't I?" she says.

She's right. And it's this level of commitment and sincerity that has earned Darcie her recognition as Vendor of the Week. So I put on my coat, grab the video camera, and head out the office door into the cold.

After all, Darcie has inspired more than a few people and deserves to be recognized. Just two nights before, she spoke to an audience at City Hall during *Real Change's* campout, an event that brought together everyone from homeless activists to academics to protest the city's sweeps of homeless encampments.

"It's cold out here and the shelters are all full," Darcie says. "There's no place to sleep."

And if you do sleep out, there's a likely chance that you'll be harassed by Seattle's finest. Or have your personal belongings stolen: that's what happened to Darcie. "I was camping and I came home one night and all my stuff was gone," she tells me, "My tent, my sleeping bag, my I.D., everything."

That's why she spoke so passionately at City Hall: to stop the sweeps.

"Just because we're homeless doesn't mean we're not human beings,"

she says, "[The police] think we're scum, we're animals, that we don't belong here...[but] we bleed the same blood, we breathe the same air." She pauses for a moment. "They just see us as a job."

"How does that make you feel?" I ask.

"It makes me feel really disappointed in our justice system."

Powerful words. So powerful that numerous event-goers flooded our phone with calls the day after her speech expressing their gratitude. "She was very moving," one woman told me, "It makes me feel good about what we're doing."

Did I mention it was the first time she'd ever given a speech?

"I didn't think what I said actually changed people, but it did," Darcie says. "And I didn't think one person can make a difference, but it does."

You can find Darcie selling the paper at Seventh and Seneca, so be sure to give her your support. And to her regular customers, she says, "I'm so grateful and appreciative... if it wasn't for you, I wouldn't be this far."

—Story and photo by Alex Becker

See Darcie in a video interview at www.realchangenews.org.

'08 - '09

On the future of media

Michael Hood is a freelance writer who watchdogs the airwaves at blatherwatch.blogs.com.

We had three rounds of layoffs at the Seattle Times announced this year. What's the future of media in Seattle?

It's dreary. People in the business are resigned to the fact that we're going to be a one-newspaper town, and whatever you think of these papers — we're not a very well newspapered town — the loss of another big newsroom is tragic. If people don't like journalists now, they should consider the alternative.

Talk radio, which I focus on, once had a lot of clout; now, locally produced talk radio is all but dead. KVI, which was a national leader in talk radio, is down to one show and next year it may be gone; where once Kirby Wilbur and John Carlson could drive an initiative — three strikes, the anti-affirmative action initiative — they're a shadow of what they once were. Lots of people

listen to KIRO's Dori Monson. He ranted and raved against Obama, Gregoire, Sound Transit, and all the initiatives on the ballot that cost money — but they all won and won big. They listen to him but don't pay him any heed, that's the good news.

The bad news: Wall Street owns the big media companies who own most of the local stations. Local programming is expensive, so, in squeezing these stations for every penny, they replaced local jocks with nationally syndicated shows brought down off satellites. They got rid of what made radio strong: community. Now, Wall Street's in deep shit and radio is drying up; it's the fruits of neglect and greed. My hope is these stations get so cheap that local investors will buy them up and we can start all over again with real local humans doing real local radio.



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THE OTHER, Continued from Page 4

arrested last year? (Nearly 11 million.) Or that people in the U.S. were more likely to be arrested for drug violations — and within that category, for the simple possession of marijuana — than any other offense? Or that driving under the influence (not assault or robbery, as people commonly assume) was the most common reason why men were arrested in metropolitan areas? Lastly, did he know that one in 33 Americans, at this very moment, were under some form of correctional supervision?

I stopped to catch my breath, and to see if he was still paying attention.

"Actually," he said in a different tone altogether, "I did nearly a year in jail for driving under the influence... a few times."

So, the man himself hadn't just been left without a home, he'd actually been locked up in jail! Based on his admission of repeat DUIs, he had also had problems with alcohol.

The cabbie piped up with another stunning comment about his experience.

"I'll tell you," he said, "I couldn't wait to get out because of all the crazies they had locked up in jail."

He pulled up outside of Real Change. I started to pull out my dollar bills, and decided to give it one more shot: "You know, a lot of people in this country have got some kind of mental illness; people all around us struggle with emotional problems of all kinds."

He was silent, and started making change.

"Look," I said, "I've struggled with depression most of my life. So do a lot of people who end up in jail."

The cab driver's face lit up, and he turned around in his seat. "Oh! So do I! That was the thing with the DUIs!" he exclaimed. "I was drinking because I was so depressed."

What, if any, were the real differences between this cab driver and other homeless people, "criminals," or mentally ill people that this man had been so quick to judge? As our cab ride conversation revealed, the differences were mostly about societal perception and self-perception; the latter had convinced him that, despite his similar experiences, he wasn't one of "them."

Helping him to construct this particular empathy barrier was the fact that he had lived in his car, which kept him from having to sleep on the street, a park bench, or in an overcrowded night shelter. Tucked away in some parking lot, perhaps, this man was

still just as homeless as any other American without a roof over his or her head, even though his marginal existence wasn't as easily noticeable to the rest of society. Consequently, he wasn't likely to have endured the same level of hostility, disdain, disgust, or danger as people face once they're living on the streets, where they can be far more easily identified, targeted, attacked, or arrested.

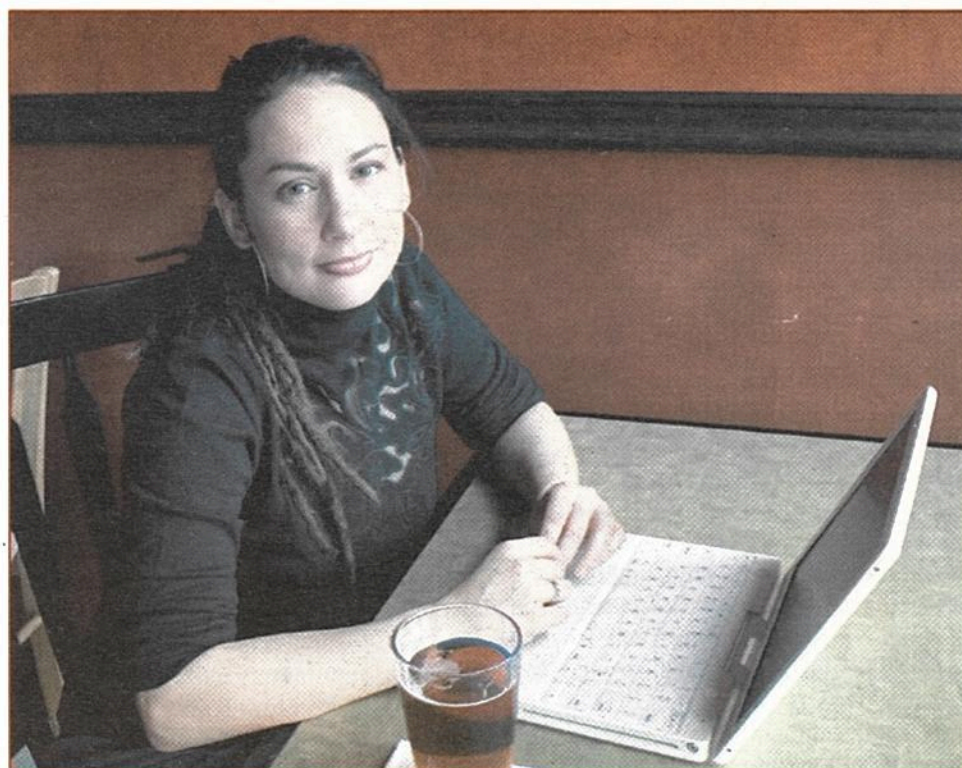
It's also true that the cab driver hadn't ended up with a felony conviction for his DUIs. But the prosecutor could have chosen to charge him with a felony, given the repeated nature of the offenses. The fact that he didn't end up with a felony record — or go to state prison — didn't make his "crime" any less severe — or potentially deadly, for that matter. While it's likely that he lost his license for a while, he had obviously gotten it back.

To boot, without a felony conviction on his record, the cabbie wouldn't have to face the all-too-prevalent employment and housing discrimination that accompanies a person's felony record. Felony background checks are required for almost all job applications, and it continues to be nearly impossible for an applicant to be able to prove that they weren't called in for a first-round

The taxi driver — and the rest of us — are living in a dominant culture in which poverty, homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse, and addiction are still largely viewed as moral failures.

interview because they were honest and checked the "yes" box. Felony background checks are also required for acquiring professional licenses of any kind, usually resulting in denials or revocations of licensing even if the person has already done their time, and/or the nature of their crime could not possibly constitute an occupational hazard. (A former drug offender illogically denied a cosmetology license, for instance, is quite different from the former child molester logically denied a license to drive a school bus.) In Washington State, as in most others, housing discrimination is completely legal if a potential renter has ever been convicted of a felony (of any kind)—no matter what the nature of the offense, nor how long ago the sentence was served out.

All of this just touches the very tip of the iceberg of what are known as the "collateral consequences" of imprisonment. In Washington state, as in many others, there are the major hurdles involved in trying to regain the right to vote. Most people coming out of prison can for-



Silja J.A. Talvi Photo by Joshua Huston

get about trying to access any form of public assistance, much less obtain federal aid to pursue higher education — especially if the felony was drug-related. (In fact, people with felony drug offenses are the only category of offender completely excluded from federal aid for higher education and, depending on the state, from all or most forms of public assistance.)

Then there's the matter of mental illness, and the "crazies" this cab driver told me that he couldn't stand being around. There's more than a bit of truth to what he said, albeit in a derogatory manner. Mental illness is rampant in American jails and prisons, whether in the form of concealed depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, or full-blown psychotic episodes. Essentially, jails and prisons have become the mental illness warehouses of the modern era, but there's not even a bit of pretense that these institutions exist to heal people from what ails them. And while not everyone doing time is mentally ill, by any means, most people in jail or prison do have some kind of mental health disorder — and this is particularly true for incarcerated women, whose rates far exceed those of their male counterparts.

My conversation with the cab driver went better than I could have hoped in such a short period of time, because he made it unusually easy for me to draw the connections between his ostensibly "normal" life and the lives of the people he made such a point of deriding. That said, I couldn't say that I'm sure that he drove away with a clearer understanding of any of these connections. To be completely honest, it would hardly surprise me if he eventually dismissed or forgot the entire conversation.

The taxi driver — and the rest of us — are living in a dominant culture in which poverty, homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse and addiction are still largely viewed as moral failures. And if one or more of those things lands a person in jail or prison, well, then, this is even more so the case.

This particularly uncompassionate and overtly hostile way of relating to

such a significant portion of our national population isn't just unfortunate; I contend that it's damaging to the very fabric of our society. Instead of taking pointless stabs at the notion that some of us have morally superior ground over the countless millions of Americans generically labeled as "criminals," we should begin to see the large-scale incarceration of the poor and homeless, the mentally ill, and the substance addicted as a massive social failure. With 2.3 million Americans behind bars at this very moment (for a total of 7.5 million under some form of correctional supervision) — and with at least 13 million people cycling through American jails in any given year — we can't keep pretending that this is the problem of those undesirable, abnormal "others" in our midst.

At this point in modern American history, homelessness, mental illness, and mass incarceration — and the intersections thereof — are very much our problem. These are our tax dollars. Like it or not, these are our family members, friends, and neighbors. We are talking about our public safety. We are dealing with our collective human and constitutional rights. For all of these reasons, and many others, this is our future at stake.

America is hardly unique in its historic willingness to imprison the poor, marginally employed, and undereducated. From the standpoint of governmental social control — especially in the framework of a "democratic" society where control is still heavily concentrated in the hands of a very small minority — it actually stands to reason that marginalized and unprivileged youth and adults would be the most likely people to be imprisoned. Removed from the public eye, most prisoners are rendered unseen and unheard in physical environments ripe for constitutional and human rights violations of all kinds. When the weighty factors of racism, xenophobia, sexism, and pervasive hostility toward the mentally ill are added to the mix, the likelihood of

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See THE OTHER, Continued on Page 11

The novel that never sleeps

■ Lush Life

By Richard Price, Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2008, Hardcover, 464 pages, \$26

Review by ROSETTE ROYALE, Staff Reporter

Back in 2000, 2001, I spent some time in New York. Brooklyn, to be specific. Lived with a guy who was a complete jazz nerd: must've owned 2,000 cd's if he owned one. Monk, Coltrane, Mingus, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Eric Dolphy, Sun Ra, and a whole mess of other people I'd never heard of before, but wound up loving.

Two, maybe three times a week, we used to go hear live music. Sometimes we'd take the D train, shuttling over the East River, high above the city; in the distance, the still standing Twin Towers. Other times, he drove, a beat-up white van cruising over the Manhattan Bridge. The music at the clubs was stratospheric. Half the time, I didn't know what I was listening to, but oh, live jazz. You can't beat it.

My favorite club sat just above the Lower East Side. The glass from broken windshields glittered on the potholed streets like a bungled diamond heist; lamps along the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges glowed like a strand of Christmas lights for a family of Goliaths; steam rose from manhole covers with hellish fury; the stank of piss bruised your nostrils. The area was beautiful, hypnotic, terrifying, alive, hysterical, dangerous, hyped up, strung out, in your face, and wide awake. Kind of like Richard Price's *Lush Life*.

The novel takes place in the same neighborhood. Set in 2003, it's a story about people, people whose lives are a mess going up one side and a wreck coming down the other. Scary thing is, their lives are about to get a whole lot messier. And the wreckage they're about to face? It's a head-on collision.

Not that Eric Cash knows this when he sees the crowd outside a market managed by a pair of Yemeni brothers. The horde, mostly Latino, have shown up for the miracle: the Virgin Mary, she's inside. Or her face is, in the frost clinging to the glass in the freezer case. Eric manages a bar just down the street, and when he and a bartender who works there, Ike Marcus, go

check out the Virgin themselves, they find the image lacking. Disappointed, Ike opens the freezer door. Seconds later, the virgin melts. Ike wonders if he'll pay a price for his transgression. Damn right he will.

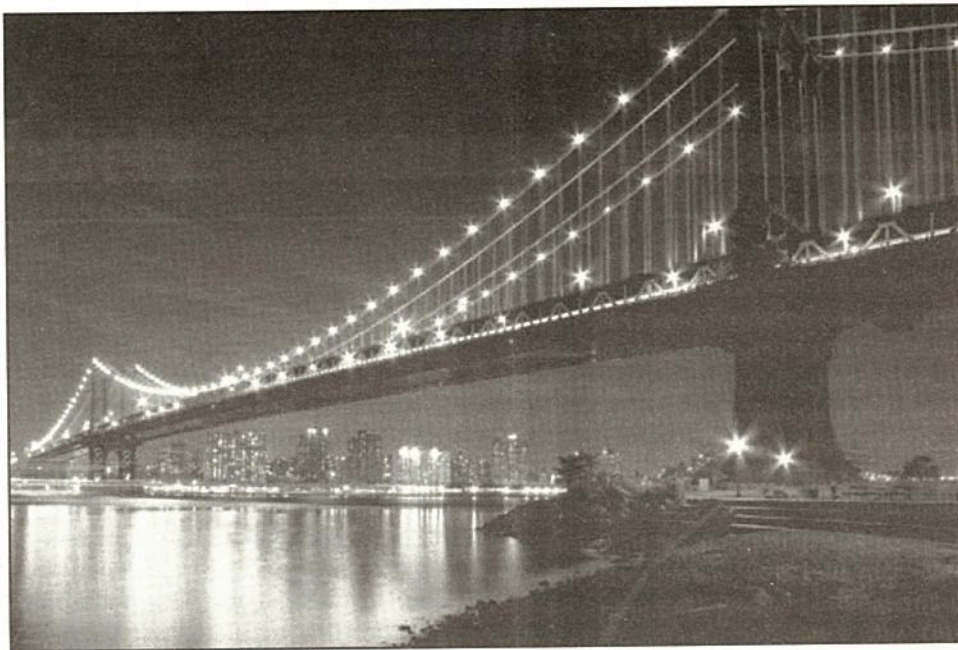
Later that night, Eric and Ike, along with a third barhopper they meet, get wasted. Stumbling down the street, the trio runs into two guys. Give up the wallets, the guys demand. Eric hands his over. Their besotted friend falls down drunk. Ike steps up to the muggers and says, "Not tonight, my man."

And "then—pop—too late, the guy chest-shot, looking up on impact as if someone had called his name from a window, then crumpling without ever looking

Little Dap did indeed give Tristan a .22. Does that make one of them a murderer? Maybe. Probably. Definitely. But then again, maybe not. It's hard to believe anyone's story when everybody in the book is running a game on somebody else.

back down." As Ike lays dying, Eric calls 911. At least, that what he tells the cops.

But Matty Clark, lead detective on the case, knows Eric's lying. He never made that call. And the Bambi-eyed Yolanda Bello, the other detective working the shooting, she knows the I-phoned-to-get-help-for-my-friend story is bunk. Seems a couple of witnesses — referred to by the cops as "wits" — who were across the street at the time of the shooting, they say there weren't three guys and two muggers. Just three guys. But Eric swears they were cornered by muggers, one Black, one Latino.



The Manhattan Bridge, leading to the Lower East Side, in New York City.

Still, the cops ain't buying it. So, with Eric down in the questioning room, they decide to work him over, good-cop, bad-cop style. Make that sweet cop, evil cop, with Yolanda wearing both coats at the same time:

"Eric, listen, Matty and me? Every day we're up to our ass in human garbage. Psychos and sociopaths and common household scum. Every day. Does that even remotely sound like you? Doesn't to me. As far as I'm concerned? You're almost as much a victim in this as Ike, so here's the deal. You tell us how it went down, tell us where the gun is, and we'll make this as close to a cakewalk for you as we can. Will be *happy* to. But the first move here has got to be yours."

Yet Eric insists he's telling the truth. And the gun? He doesn't know a thing about it.

Maybe Yolanda and Matty would do better to question Tristan and Little Dap. Two teens who live in the projects nearby, the duo were out that night trying to make a little cash pushing pot. And Little Dap did indeed give Tristan a .22, just in case things got iffy. And the two were in the same neighborhood as the shooting. But does that make one of them a murderer?

Maybe. Probably. Definitely. But then again, maybe not. Even when Price — author of bestselling police procedurals and

a cowriter for the HBO series *The Wire* — tells you who pulled the trigger, at times, you doubt it. That's because it's hard to believe anyone's story when everybody in the book is running a game on somebody else. Everybody. Eric lies about using his cell phone. Yolanda makes up stories to get suspects to give up the goods. Matty misleads his higher-ups as he trawls for more resources to solve the case. A reporter writing about the murder tells his editor Patrick Swayze was involved in the shooting. The wits leave out key details. Ike's father, his son murdered, won't come clean about Ike's home life. Little Dap acts big by telling untruths. Tristan won't confess to even minor mistakes. And these are

Everywhere there's booze, pot, coke, sex, thugs, guns, deals, wheels, cuffs, fists, blood. And the whole stew is marvelous.

just the major characters.

Then there are the minors, a dramatis personae sprinkled with every bit of ethnic/cultural/religious difference you can think of: white, Dominican, Puerto Rican, Black, Yemeni, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Hindi, Orthodox Jew, Muslim, Christian, atheist, artist, writer, drunk, punk, dunce. Everywhere there's booze, pot, coke, sex, thugs, guns, deals, wheels, cuffs, fists, blood. And the whole stew is marvelous. Flat out, uncut, top shelf, hard-knocks FANTASTIC. That interrogation scene, right after the murder? It goes on for more than 100 pages, not one word wasted. And nearly all of the book's action takes place within a few gritty blocks near the Lower East Side.

So, when I claim *Lush Life* is a book about messed up people, that's only partly true. It's also a book about a place, a specific neighborhood that's becoming a gentrified cesspool, where the citizens crawl over each other for dominance like roaches after scraps left on the kitchen counter. It's the kind of read that'll take you somewhere, like a bridge to a new destination. Like Miles, like Bird, Price's wild, improvisatory writing style will take you there. And you won't ever want to come back. Ever. ■

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Adventures in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning

I'm writing nine days before this will appear. I can't possibly know what's going on there in the time where you're at. The problem isn't that I can't predict the future. The problem is, like everyone else, I can't predict it correctly.

Therefore, when I get the urge to predict the future, I prefer to predict it far enough out that when it will have come about my actual predictions will have been forgotten, and I can say that what happened is what I said would. No one is going to go to the archives to check. That's one reason I will buck the trend and make predictions now for 2010 instead of 2009.

The other is, I have this theory about why 2001 was such a bad year: *2001: A Space Odyssey* was too good. The movie jinxed the year. So, ipso reverso, 2010 should be a great year, because the movie *2010: The Year We Make Contact* blew. Since I've never seen any of the movies set in 2009, I can't begin to guess what that year will be like.

So I will now predict the wonderful world of 2010.

I'll start with the easy stuff. There will be no aerial highways for flying cars, once again, in 2010. 2010 will be the first year in U.S. history that no one wonders for even a minute what having a Black president in the White House would be like. Some very bad weather will happen

somewhere. In spite of all efforts to prevent it, terrorists somewhere will blow something up, so it will take even longer to get a ride on a ferry.

During the latter half of February 2010, Canada will be in the news constantly, and then be forgotten again by the end of March. Around the same time, clipboard sales will increase, and

I have this theory about why 2001 was such a bad year: 2001: A Space Odyssey was too good. The movie jinxed the year. So, ipso reverso, 2010 should be a great year.

complete strangers will visit millions of Americans asking too many prying questions. Lisa Simpson, a cartoon character, will be married. (These items are courtesy of Wikipedia.)

Every U.S. business will have received at least one bailout by the end of 2010. Some of them will have been bailed out two or three times. All the world's trees will finally be cut down in order to print all the money for the bailouts. In the summer, your kid's lawn mowing service will get a federal bailout.

In predicting local news, I'm trying to see the 2010 Mayor of Seattle. I'm getting an image — it's fading in and out

— it's someone I don't know yet. But I can definitely predict everyone I know hopes I'm right.

Due to the economic downturn, *Real Change* will have more vendors than ever. As the number of vendors approaches the number of customers, we will have to make up for it by going daily. There will be not one, but two crossword puzzles in every issue.

There will be so many homeless people that area shelters will adopt an alphabetical admissions system. Everyone will get two days of shelter each month. The days you get shelter will depend on the first letter of your last name. The city will point to this system as proof that everyone is getting the shelter they need, so no new shelters will be funded.

As King County's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness enters its sixth year, its Governing Council finally says, "Whoa, we're not getting anywhere at this," so they cross out "Ten" on all their literature and write "Twenty" above it, and put out a press release announcing that they're way ahead of schedule. Critics suggest they set the end date of the Plan to End Homelessness in the past. The Committee to End Homelessness is as likely to invent a time machine to return us to 1964 as they are to actually end homelessness by continuing to sit on their hands and wait for the magic federal pixies to solve the problem with federal pixie gold dust, as they have been doing. ■

Sound off and read more:
drwesb.blogspot.com



A selection, from 2008. — The Ed.

Tues., Jan. 1, 3:55 p.m. First Ave. & Mercer St. A citizen flagged down officers to report a subject breaking bottles on the street. Officer located the subject, a transient white male aged 39, talking to himself and staring at the sidewalk. He did not know what day it was and was mumbling about silver feathers and monsters. Subject appeared mentally ill and in need of an evaluation — officer called for an ambulance, and subject was transported to Harborview for a mental health review.

Mon., March 3, 9:44 p.m., Airport Way S. An officer responded to claim of suicide. On arrival he contacted the subject, a transient white male aged 43, who was using a pay phone on Airport Way to call Crisis Center staff. The Crisis center had informed the officer that the subject had stated he was going to step in front of a train to end his life. Subject appeared slightly intoxicated, and refused to speak to the officer regarding his plans to commit suicide. Subject was placed on an involuntary hold and transported to Virginia Mason for a mental health evaluation.

Tues., April 1, 1:19 p.m., Shilshole Ave. NW and NW 45th St. Victim, a 40-year-old white male, is currently homeless and living out of his van, which is part of the listed location. Complainant is also living out of a camping van / pickup parked at the same location, and on the listed date called 911 to advise that an unknown white male was out in the street swinging a pipe around. Upon the officers' arrival, the complainant pointed out the victim's vehicle and stated that two adult males came out of the vehicle each stating they had been assaulted by the other. Complainant stated he did not actually see any physical altercation between the males, but saw them both get inside the vehicle. When the officer made contact with the victim, he was inside the vehicle alone and the suspect was gone. Victim was very intoxicated and uncooperative and would not say what had happened. He would not say he sustained his injuries and repeated over and over that he did not want to press charges. Though asked several times, he would not tell the officers what had occurred. Victim had sustained an approximate one-inch laceration to the back of the head, a bloody nose, and multiple scratches and scrapes to his face and head. Victim was treated at the scene by Seattle Fire Department, but refused any follow-up treatment.

Sat., May 24, 12:10 p.m., Second Ave. An officer working off-duty for Metro Transit was dispatched to the 2100 block of Second Ave. regarding a sleeper on the bus. He arrived and found suspect, a transient Black male aged 24, sleeping on the bus with his feet sticking out in the aisle. He awoke the man and removed him from the bus. A name check revealed an outstanding warrant, which was verified via radio. Suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

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.

Faith, Culture, Politics



Rev. Rich Lang

Every new year brings with it possibilities of hope and promise. Every new year the world turns. How it will turn is largely up to the good work we choose to do, or, conversely, neglect to do.

After eight miserable years of being bullied by our government, many are looking forward to the return of diplomacy in international relations, to civility in domestic politics, to respect for Constitutional law, to compassion in our economic policies. Many have enormous expectations that we are being given an opportunity to begin again as a nation. Indeed, the malfeasance of the Bush administration has clearly demonstrated that their values bring only death and destruction. Their cruelty and incompetence has given birth to a renewed desire to walk a different path, to live for a better hope. As we enter this new year many feel that a new world is really, truly, possible.

But, of course, realizing the possibilities takes hard work, and much courage. The Democrats, although far less fascist than the Republican Party, are still, nev-

Rev. Lang: The world is about to turn

ertheless, lackeys that carry Wall Street's water. Although they do not deserve our trust we, nevertheless, must continue to work within to reform the values of the party. The bottom line reads that until the Democrats take up, with vigor, creativity

This New Year we are being given an opportunity to turn the world.

and passion, the cause of worker unionization we are stuck with a corporation party that simply uses us, then abuses us. Until the Democrats embody in their policies a commitment to earth care, all we really have is a facade of change.

Despite Obama's lofty rhetoric, he will be under intense pressure to serve the same financial and military interests as the Bush administration. If, and that is a mighty big if, we are to rebuild our country it will be "we the people" who give backbone to the political parties to legislate the morality we seek for our nation.

We the people come in all shapes and sizes with many gifts, abilities and talents. Each of us doing our best in our own work for justice and reconciliation is the greatest New Year's resolution we can make. For me, doing my best work means continuing to love my wife faithfully, guide my children respectfully, care for my neighbor in need, and recognize in the face of the other a friend, not a foe. As a preacher my best work will be to continue to build authentic community, to warn against building empire, to promote care of the earth. It will mean continuing to do my own inner work so that my outer work for justice is truly revolutionary and therefore a birthplace of hope.

This New Year, we are being given an opportunity to turn the world. It is my hope that each of us doing good work will turn the world with wisdom, and turn it toward affection and care. ■

Rev. Rich Lang is pastor of Trinity United Methodist in Ballard. He can be contacted through www.tumseattle.org.

'08 - '09

1st Amendment in Public

Balloonist and magician **Mike Berger** sued the city over the Seattle Center's rules admitting and regulating street performers, or buskers. A panel of 11 federal judges is rehearing the constitutionality of the Center's rules. The ruling is due in 2009.

What's at stake, in terms of the right to free expression, in the judges' decision?

This fight benefits all performers and all people who go to public places. Seattle Center has tried on a regular basis to say that it's not a traditional forum and that it is not a public park. They tried to say it was not owned by the city. If the earlier ruling does not get overturned, every single person going to any park would need a photo ID permit. The parks and sidewalks are a public forum; that's what public property is.

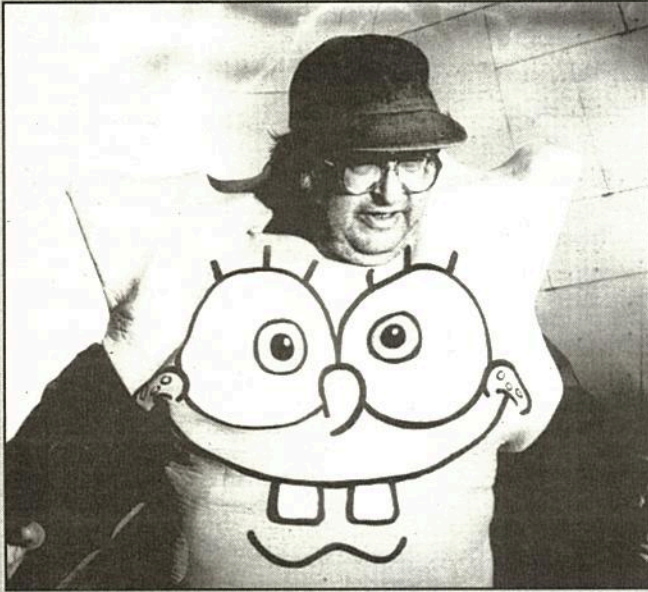
People from out of town, who have never seen a busker, think performers get paid; they don't even think to give you a donation unless you ask. And doing anything to indicate you need or want some money is a violation of their rules.

They put these rules in effect just to have a tool to get people out — so they don't have the same level of probable cause that you'd have to give to a policeman. There were already rules on the books prohibiting noise and fighting, but they wanted to have something they could use fast and furious.

And these places get our tax money. If they're not a public forum, why do they need public money? If you're taking money you have to act in a manner that's copacetic with the Constitution.

Ask people to donate to me, because I've been fighting this on my own. The depression it causes me is really dis-motivating, and you have to be motivated to perform. This is the seventh time I've had to take the city to court, and I can't afford the medicine to alleviate the conditions that developed from the stress of the lawsuits: diabetes, psoriatic arthritis in my feet and toes, insomnia, and manic depression. I am behind in my rent and facing eviction. I haven't been able to work for the last two weeks because of the weather. And Pike Market refused me a permit; they say there's only four balloonists allowed, which is prior restraint and regulating content. They're my next case.

Magic Mike's web site details his struggle over freedom of expression in public space that started in 1987. You can make a donation or can contact him at www.funandmagic.com/performersrights.html.



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CLASSIFIED

Senior Services Volunteer Transportation Program: King County seniors need your help getting to medical appointments. Become a volunteer driver and lend a hand to your community. Contact Senior Services at (206) 748-7588 or www.seniorservices.org for information.

CROSSWORD

A Stitch in Time

Puzzle by Patrick "Mac" McIntyre

ACROSS

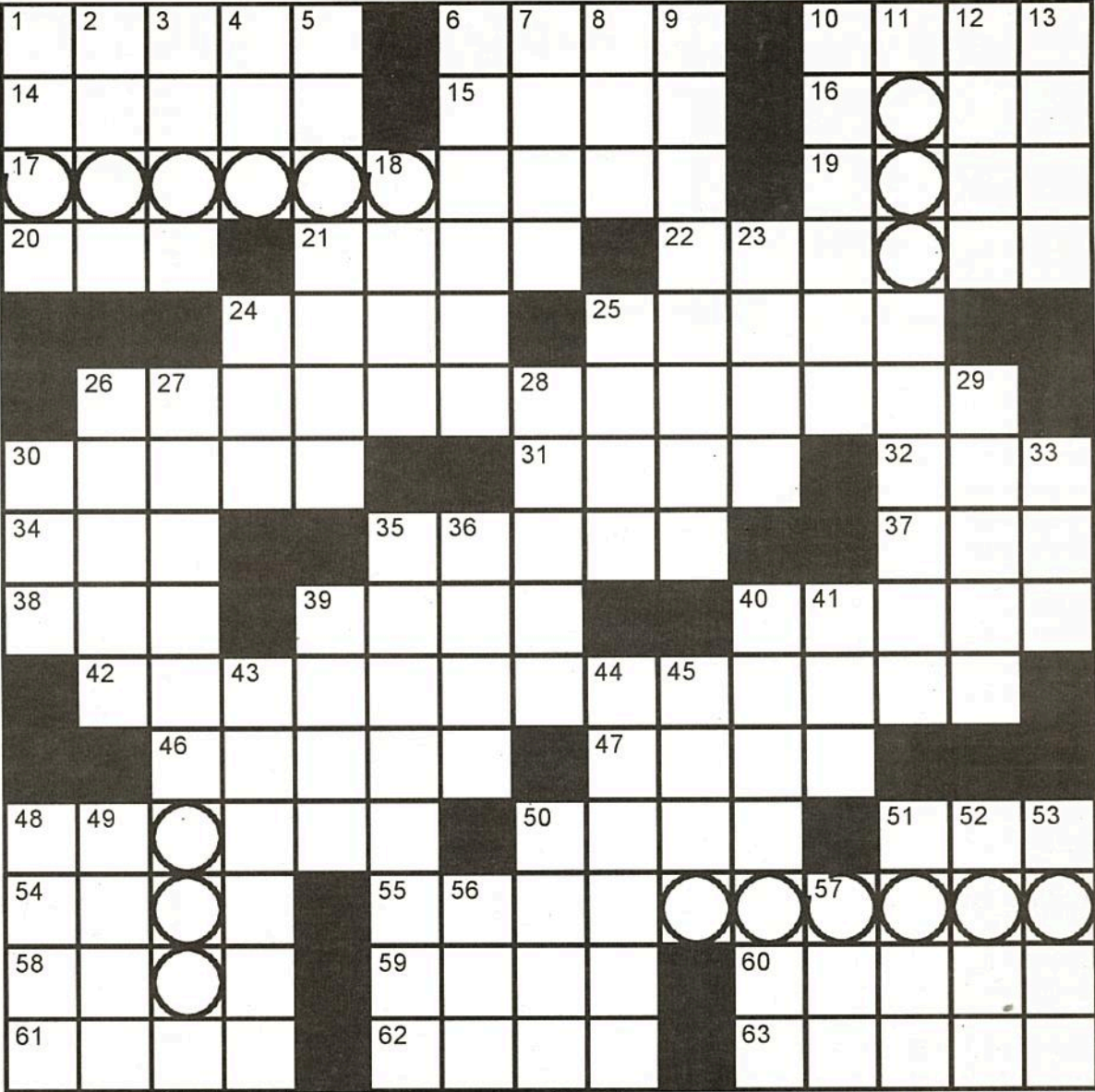
- 1. Oregon's capital
- 6. Engl. Lit. or Trig., e.g.
- 10. Abbr. on maps
- 14. Last Supper question
- 15. Lhasa ____ (dog breed)
- 16. "Oops!"
- 17. A gar, for one
- 19. Garr of Young Frankenstein
- 20. Roloids target
- 21. Singing syllables
- 22. Psycho sicko who ran the Bates Motel
- 24. Evening in Paris
- 25. Old Roman port
- 26. They're frequently earned by nice folks
- 30. Scott who played astronaut Alan Shepard in *The Right Stuff*
- 31. Spare parts?
- 32. 007 creator Fleming
- 34. Motorist's org.
- 35. Works at, as one's trade
- 37. Grp. associated with Charlton Heston
- 38. Unit of oil production: Abbr.
- 39. "Oh oh!"
- 40. Musical Chairs prize
- 42. Some craft groups (and a clue to the answers with highlighted letters)
- 46. Actress Berger of *Major Dundee*

- 47. Israel's Golda
- 48. Three-term New York governor
- 50. Fast ender
- 51. The second Mrs. Sinatra
- 54. Exuberance
- 55. Peter, Paul or Mary
- 58. Matter
- 59. What ukulele means in Hawaiian
- 60. Liquid salute
- 61. Preowned
- 62. Alluring
- 63. Asian tents

DOWN

- 1. Perform at a karaoke bar
- 2. Between ports
- 3. Prevaricates
- 4. J.F.K. posting: Abbr.
- 5. Tranquilizer that took its name from a New Jersey village
- 6. Jungle junket
- 7. "Breaking ____ Hard To Do"
- 8. Some college degrees
- 9. Actors Ben and Don
- 10. Aleve rival
- 11. Afternoon performance or showing
- 12. *The Thin Man* role

- 13. Kicker's target
- 18. ____ Brockovich
- 23. Elevator pioneer
- 24. Word in many business names
- 25. 60's TV boy
- 26. Spills the beans
- 27. Kind of agent that offers a lot?
- 28. Protestant denom.
- 29. Poet Teasdale and pastry icon Lee
- 30. Shoot the breeze
- 33. ____ King Cole
- 35. Popes
- 36. Women drivers' org.
- 39. Sty cry
- 40. Roloids target
- 41. Camera type, briefly
- 43. Freed of dependence on something, as with infants
- 44. Post-accident reassurance
- 45. Olds oldies
- 48. Llama land
- 49. "Sad to say ..."
- 50. Bend
- 51. Lab gel
- 52. Sleeveless garment
- 53. Graphic ____
- 56. Córdoba cry
- 57. "____ TURN" (sign)



Solution for this puzzle will appear in next week's paper. Last week's solution appears on Page 3.

THE OTHER, Continued from Page 7

arrest and/or incarceration during one's lifetime — as well as the likelihood of experiencing abuse behind bars — are increased exponentially.

Although every Western nation can lay claim to the deprivation of physical freedom as a method of punishment (a mechanism to protect public safety that I believe is quite necessary where some kinds of crimes and pathologies are concerned), those of us who live in the United States of America are facing a particularly severe and senseless phenomenon of large-scale incarceration in our own backyard.

What's worse, the American criminal justice system doesn't just lock up millions of youth and adults, but also releases them with full awareness that most will be re-arrested and/or re-incarcerated (often because of a technical parole violation). There's no question that some people experience personal transformations while they're behind bars, and a few even receive adequate rehabilitation, education, or counseling while they're locked up. But for all of those people, there are many more who come out in worse shape than when they went in, whether because of an acquired infectious disease or worsened medical/mental condition, sexual violence, or the day-to-day dehumanization common to the world of American prisons.

People are also being released, sometimes decades later, into a world that has changed so dramatically that they have no idea how to catch up, much less find a

place to live or work. Here in Washington State, people are released from prison with \$40 in what's called "gate money," whether they have a home to return to or not. For those people who do not, there's nothing but the streets for them to return to, with all of the attendant stressors, risks, temptations, dangers, and memories of the lives they left behind.

Last year, a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* revealed something else very troubling about what was happening to the people "re-entering" our society after having served their sentences. Namely, the researchers, who focused on the Washington state prison system, found that ex-prisoners were 13 times more likely to die within the first two weeks of their release than other people of similar age, sex and ethnicity. The most likely cause of death was drug overdose, followed by suicide, heart disease, and homicide.

The researchers suggested that the reasons for the high death rates could be linked with "an existing mental illness coupled with the stress of adapting to a life in society."

I continue to believe that the day will come, in our lifetimes, when this kind of discrimination ceases to be as commonplace as it now is, and when we join the rest of the Western world in recognizing that a person who has been found guilty of a crime cannot continue to be punished past the point of his or her sentence.

What they should have added was this: "the stress of adapting to life in a society that doesn't want to have anything to do with you."

In King County (and throughout Washington state), many thousands of youth and adults are released each year right back onto our streets, without

access to the help they need in order to be able to have a fighting chance at surviving in society. (to say nothing of actually succeeding at something that they like or love to do).

These past 30 years have shown us what doesn't work. What doesn't work is a system that keeps locking up people in increasing numbers, especially nonviolent offenders with drug problems and/or mental health issues.

What does work is the availability of early intervention, education, and vocational training. What does work is preventative and accessible health care, mental health counseling, drug and alcohol treatment, as well as recovery and other social support groups. What does work is a community-building approach toward public safety and policing. And

what does work is the possibility and promise of non-discrimination in education, housing, and employment where ex-prisoners are concerned.

I continue to believe that the day will come, in our lifetimes, when this kind of discrimination ceases to be as commonplace as it now is, and when we join the rest of the Western world in recognizing that a person who has been found guilty of a crime cannot continue to be punished past the point of his or her sentence.

Now, more than ever, is the time for intensified local and regional efforts to enact significant criminal justice reforms; to stem the growth of our local jail and prison populations; to increase the availability of harm reduction and drug treatment programs; to expand juvenile and mental health courts; and to emphasize gender- and culture-responsive approaches toward our diverse citizenry. In sum, now is the time for us to conceptualize and implement alternatives to the one-size-fits-all, prison-as-punishment model that we have embraced above all else. We've already paid a tremendous fiscal and social cost for an often ineffectual and dehumanizing criminal justice system. Real change isn't just possible; it's imperative. ■

Real Change advisory board member Silja J.A. Talvi is a multiple award-winning investigative journalist, essayist, and author of *Women Behind Bars: The Crisis of Women in the U.S. Prison System* (Seal Press/Perseus, 2007; www.womenbehindbars.org).

'08 - '09

Farewell, Mr. President

Andrew Himes is former director of the *Voices in Wartime* education project and author of an autobiographical one-man show called "Revival: How I Got Lost, Got Saved, and Failed to Overthrow the Imperialist Bourgeoisie." A Buddhist raised in a fundamentalist Christian family, Himes helped organize the *Seeds of Compassion* event that brought the Dalai Lama to Seattle in 2008.

How would you suggest we regard George W. Bush as he assumes the role of a former president?

Many of my friends, I am sure, will never be able to forgive George Bush. For them as well as me, he's played a thoroughly despicable role: the promoter of arrogance and greed, duplicity and self-righteousness, the pawn of others more cunning and evilly-intentioned than himself.

Bush shuffles off into history as a ramshackle gimcrack, the embodiment of a failed politician. He hoped to enter the annals of the presidency as an emblem of courage in the face of terror, the embodiment of democratic principles, and the architect of a new world order dominated by the United States. He wanted to be known as the savior of the Middle East, our fearless commander-in-chief, the conservator of America's greatness.

Instead, our grandchildren's grandchildren will know him as the ultimate contemptible incompetent, literally the worst president in our history.

I see him as something else, however. George Bush was a man of and for his time. He gave Americans exactly what we were asking for. When we were frightened by 9-11, he gave us a simple explanation and an apparently clear target. When we all wanted to be rich, he gave us a regulation-free economy and lower taxes and the dream of wealth for all. When we wanted to believe that toppling and killing Saddam Hussein would end the War on Terror and usher in an era of harmony and democracy, Bush obliged.

I am deeply grateful to George Bush, and I forgive him a thousand times over. We Americans needed to go down the dark passageways of Bushism; we needed to plumb avarice and selfishness, deceit, and contempt for humanity to the depths of our own historic disaster in order to face the challenge posed to us by the skinny Black kid with a funny name. How can we forgive George Bush if we're not ready to forgive ourselves?



Five, four, three, two... One thing about the New Year: there ain't a lot happening in its opening days. Honestly. And, with our weather being what it's been, things get cancelled left and right. That being said, it's time to welcome in '09, the year we tell Bush, "Adios," and say to Barack, "Bring on the change." You can do this in fine style on Wed., **Dec. 31, New Year's Eve, at the Space Needle**, which is proud to provide **"the world's tallest structure-launched Fireworks Show with more than 2,000 Pyrotechnic Effects."** Oooooohhhh. Supposedly, 50,000 will ring in the new at the "West Coast's version of New York's Time Square." Don't it make you wanna blow your horn? Party kicks off at, oh, 12:05 a.m. Just kidding. **Get there by 8 p.m. and you can get funkified with the Sonic Funk Band, at the Center House Stage. FREE.**



Calendar

This Week's Top Picks

Thursday 1/1

If you're still hung over from nearly eight years of W., sit back, take a plop-plop-fizz-fizz, and say, "Oh, what a relief it is." Only 19 more days till he's outta here...

Friday 1/2

The Beatles left the rock world a-twitter when they repeated "number nine, number nine, number nine." But check out another rocking nine: **Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, at Benaroya Hall.** Conductor Gerard Schwarz will be aiming his baton as the strings begin with some morose arpeggios, the tympani go all boom-boomy, and the Seattle Symphony Chorus gets happy with the "Ode to Joy" finale. The B-man's Symphony No. 1 is on the bill, too. Tonight, at 7 p.m.; Sat., Jan. 3, 8 p.m.; and Sun., Jan. 4, 2 p.m. Tickets ain't cheap, but see if you can get someone to take you. (Hey, Melinda Gates: Busy this Friday?) www.seattlesymphony.org.

Monday 1/5

Quick: How do you say, "Life and Death are Wearing Me Out" in Mandarin? Well, I don't know either. But stop by the Central Branch of the library tonight and you may hear someone who does. That's when **Mo Yan, famed Chinese author, will be on hand to read and discuss his works, such as Life and Red Sorghum.** On hand will be Christopher Lupke, associate professor of Chinese, Washington State University, author of books on Chinese literature. The reading is bilingual. And when's the last time you had someone read to you in Mandarin? Seriously. When? 1000 Fourth Ave., Microsoft Auditorium. 7-8:30 p.m. Free. www.spl.org.

Keeping on the multiculti tip: Perhaps, with the recent conflict between Israel and Hamas having blown sky high, you may be reflecting you need to know more about

Palestine, Israel, Gaza, Syria, and Jordan. Here's your chance. **Travel writer and erstwhile Seattle resident Melissa Rossi gives you the skinny on all things Middle Eastern with her talk "What Every American Should Know about the Middle East."** Having traveled through the area over the past year, she examines the U.S.'s geopolitical moves and how our presence has affected the region's economic and political development. Expect to have your mind activated. Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave. (at Seneca St.), 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$5. www.brownpapertickets.com. Info: www.townhallseattle.org.

Tuesday 1/6

Every dog owner knows those fine four-leggeds can sniff out just about anything. But what if science found a way to smell cancer? Well, that day has arrived. **Dr. William Hanson, author of The Edge of Medicine, plans to talk about how the electronic nose can do just that.** In this "Future of Health" lecture, he'll discuss that proboscis, along with wheelchairs that operate by reading electrical brain waves and the future of surgical robotics, all things that sound like sci-fi, but are sci-fact. Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave. (at Seneca St.), 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$5. www.brownpapertickets.com. Info: www.townhallseattle.org.

Calendar compiled by Rosette Royale.
Got a new event stuck in your noodle?
Email it to calendar@realchangenews.

Playshop January 16-18

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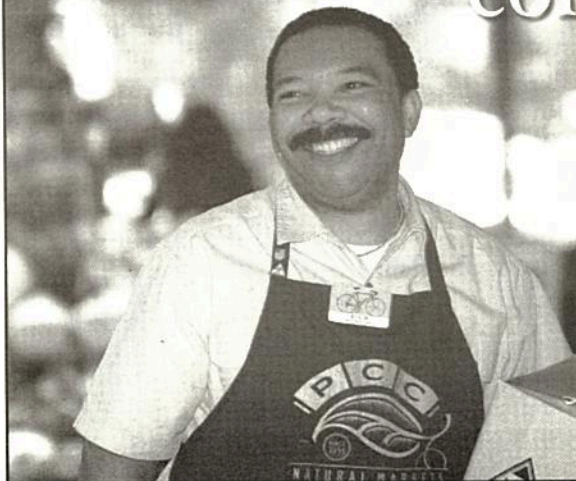
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