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# REAL CHANGE

UW BOTHELL / CCC

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Real Change exists to provide opportunity and a voice for low-income and homeless people while taking action for economic justice.

219 1st Ave. S., #220  
Seattle, WA, 98104  
206.441.3247  
www.realchangeeng.org

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## Criminal failure: Students pushed out of school often end up in prison

By **MAGGIE WILKENS**  
*League of Education Voters*  
& **SCOTT DAVIS**  
*Our American Generation*

Each year, the racial disparities in Washington's education system grow. The worst-performing, least-funded schools continue to lose ground with their peers in terms of how well students are reading, how many are graduating on time and how many are attending college after graduation. These neglected schools boast some of the lowest scores on standardized tests and highest rates of suspension and expulsion, and are predominately attended by our immigrant communities and our communities of color.

On the other hand, Washington's well-endowed schools predominately serve white communities. This pattern of racial and economic injustice is known as the opportunity gap, or less accurately, the achievement gap.

We doubt this news will surprise any Real Change readers. The education system in the United States at large is failing young people. It has proven unfair, unproductive and expensive (especially in contrast to education in other countries).

You might be more surprised to hear that Washington is one of only nine states where the opportunity gap is still getting worse. The kids who end up on the wrong side of the gap, most often for reasons completely outside of their control, are finding that failure in school can be criminal. Today we are witnessing more students than ever who are being pushed from the classroom into the prison system.

Each year, Washington spends roughly \$6,500 on a student's public education. On average we spend \$34,500 a year to house a prison inmate.

Disgusting, right? Let's hope our budget priorities are not a reflection of our own priorities. It gets worse once you consider that less investment in education may be contributing to youth criminality,

and thus inflating the costs of the prison system.

If the quality of prison life, in terms of health services, diet and access to technology is better than our public school system, then this is a real problem. It means in some cases there is actually an incentive for — and worst-case scenario, a dependency on — incarceration to provide critical services to young people. It is as if we resolved to just let them learn in prison.

Upon realizing trends in the rise of discipline and the rise of Washington's opportunity gap, two local nonprofit organizations came together to research and create the "Schools 2 Prisons" project. The League of Education Voters and Our American Generation have been conducting research on the statewide impact of the opportunity gap and the school-to-prisons pipeline for the past five months. Visit either [educationvoters.org](http://educationvoters.org) or [oag.org](http://oag.org) to listen to our three-part podcast series where we examine "The Opportunity Gap," "The Cost of Inequity" and "From Pupil to Prisoner."

We invite you to join us for a discussion on 7 p.m. Sept. 22 at the Kent Senior Center, 600 E. Smith St., to think critically as a community about how to stem this problem.

So what do the opportunity gap and the school-to-prison pipeline actually look like? It looks like schools in wealthy, mostly white neighborhoods doing exceedingly better in terms of graduation

**Each year, Washington spends \$6,500 on a student's public education and \$34,500 a year to house a prison inmate.**

rates, reading proficiency and standardized test scores. It also looks like honors classrooms full of white students, despite having incredible diversity within their school building. It looks like teachers and administrators mistaking rowdy behavior for fighting, or mistaking a group of friends as a gang, and sending kids home to "resolve their issues" without the help of adults.

Over the past 20 years, public schools have been implementing strict discipline policies for bad behavior. This has happened because schools rely on Clinton-era zero-tolerance approaches to discipline, which mandate preset punishments for drug use or distribution, violence and even tardiness or truancy.

For these crimes, students are meted out punishments regardless of the circumstances surrounding their rule infraction. The prison "pipeline" metaphor doesn't speak as much to the range of options young people have, but more to the systematic denial of opportunities to succeed once students stray from a track towards graduation.

We all scratch our heads about why Washington has a growing opportunity gap when we need only look at the rates in which we suspend, expel and punish students of color and low-income students over their white and wealthier peers. Academically speaking, suspension is the worst thing you can do for a student. Imagine missing one week of school and then imagine not being able to make up missed assignments and tests. How are students supposed to help themselves when our discipline policies hurt so much?

Let's not think about this problem backward. Our state is compelled to spend so much money on prisons because we underfund our education system. Our failed discipline policies in schools not only waste money, they waste lives. ■

Maggie Wilkens is a youth organizer with the League of Education Voters. Scott Davis is director of Our American Generation.



## Director's Corner

**Today I asked a veteran human services advocate — who out of basic fairness will go unnamed — about the odds of any sort of revenue-based solution to the state's \$1.4 billion budget shortfall.**

He considered the matter for a full second. "Twenty percent. There's no two-thirds there. The Republicans are completely in line and the Democrats are cowed. And even then, it'll be something small, like a soda tax."

"You mean something regressive that screws the poor?" I offered.

"Screws the poor again," he said.

One needn't be a cynic to see this has the ring of truth. Earlier this year, state lawmakers slashed \$4.6 billion to meet the last budget shortfall. This brings the total amount of cuts to \$10 billion over the last three years. This,

they said, would make the budget "sustainable."

But the knives are out again and 2011 isn't even over.

Here's the really scary thing. The \$1.4 billion to be cut here in Washington state is a mere one-thousandth of the \$1.4 trillion that Democrats just bargained away in D.C. The odds of a revenue solution there are equally long and, just like here, more cuts are surely on the way.

This is what domestic austerity looks like.

Here in America, we've grown accustomed to the benefits of empire, to being the colonizer, not the colonized. We've largely avoided the radical sort of budget cutting that leaves our people dead and dying.

No more. The corporations that run the show have no loyalty to anyone but themselves and the frontiers of extraction are now within our own borders. Our poor and middle class are just one more resource to be milked for someone else's bottom line.

Here in Washington state, tax breaks for corporations have risen by 250 percent over

the past decade, from \$22 billion to \$50 billion. When recession hits and revenues are down, our gift to the rich is more unsustainable than ever.

There can be no economic recovery while the poor and middle class are being squeezed and public sector jobs are under attack. The problem is not that government is insufficiently lean. The problem is that corporations are too fat.

Inequality, driven by tax breaks to the most affluent, has grown for nearly four decades, and still, there is no jobs boom in sight. As President Obama has noted, American corporations presently sit on \$2 trillion in liquid assets. If they wanted, they could create jobs right now. But they'd rather see us bleed. The recession doesn't hurt them. It just weakens us while they grow more powerful. Sadly, our lawmakers are complicit in the strategy.

Our friends in Olympia need to find their courage, tell the truth, and stop the bleeding. And if they can't do that we need to make some decisions of our own. This is what unsustainability looks like, and it doesn't end anywhere good. ■



## After fatal accidents, cyclists seek safety measures

About 60 people, holding neon green and orange signs reading, "Enough is enough" and "We can do better," gathered on Campus Parkway between Fifteenth Street and University Way.

Nearby, a white-painted "ghost bike," covered with flowers, was placed in remembrance of 23-year-old Robert Townsend, who was killed at that spot Sept. 10 when he was hit by a car while riding his bike.

The memorial is one of three erected in Seattle in the past week by loved ones mourning the loss of Townsend and Mike Wang, 44-year-old father of two, both of whom were killed while riding their bikes, and Brian Fairbrother, Espresso Vivace barista, who died from injuries sustained in a solo bicycle accident.

The signs and ghost bike were part of a Sept. 15 press conference organized by the Cascade Bicycle Club to address the need for improved road safety.

The night before the press conference, Mayor Mike McGinn announced in a blog post plans for "a summit of community leaders, experts and elected officials to determine how best we can encourage an attitude of responsibility and empathy on the roads, and make it safer for all users."

But a date for the summit has not been set, and Cascade is eager to see changes. The group hopes to see four main results: zero traffic fatalities, an informed, engaged public, a decrease in divisive, inflammatory rhetoric, and leadership from elected officials.

"We're looking at you, city council members, mayors office ... all the way up to the State Department of Transportation," said M.J. Kelly of Cascade Bicycle Club.

Kelly urged those gathered, "Do your part to make this the last ghost bike we ever see."

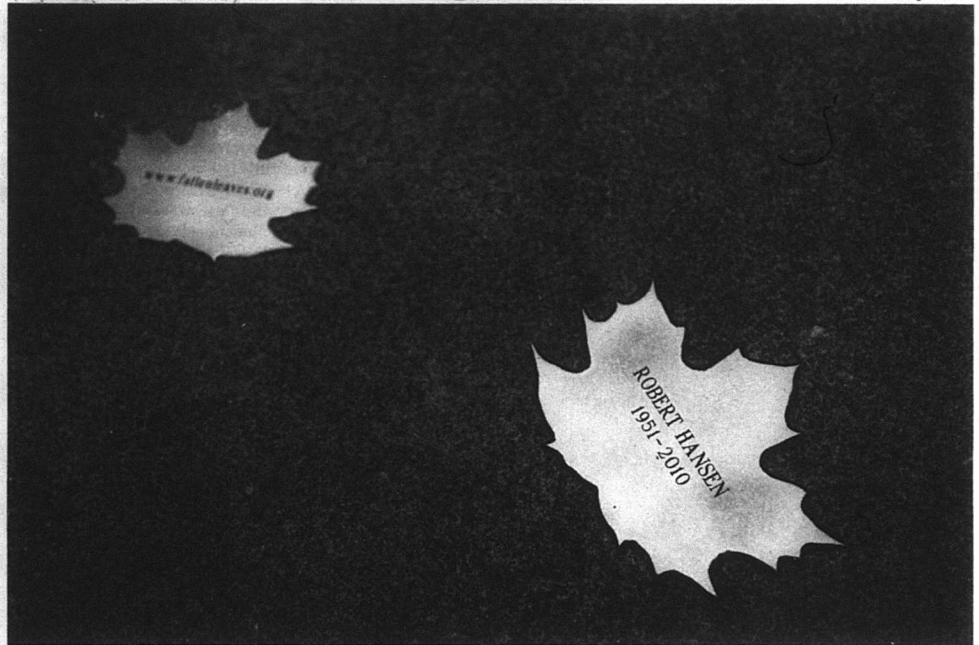
McGinn's proposed steps include expanding education efforts, improving enforcement and continuing to invest in infrastructure.

City Council Member Tom Rasmussen, who is chair of the transportation committee, joined other speakers in urging people not to blame one another.

"Let's stop pointing fingers and let's stop finding fault with each other, but let's work together to make our roads safe for all," he said. ■

—Alison Sargent

## Fallen but not forgotten



On Sept. 18, a bronze "Leaf of Remembrance" was embedded outside the Seward Park PCC market to honor former Real Change vendor Robert Hansen. Hansen sold outside of PCC for years until his death on April 28, 2010. "Leaves of Remembrance," begun by homeless women, honors the lives of homeless people who've died in King County. To learn more or donate, visit [fallenleaves.org](http://fallenleaves.org) Photo by Rich Mealy

## State asks citizens to place bets for vets

It's not for nothing that lotteries have been called a "tax on the poor." Research has shown that in such games of chance, it's poor people who are most likely to play — and get played. According to a 2008 study at Carnegie Mellon University, the poorer one is, the more likely he is to purchase a lottery ticket.

Amid looming budget crises, states have increasingly turned to lotteries to scare up cash for things like higher education. Now, add a new beneficiary to the lottery roster: veterans.

To raise money to keep a veterans program afloat, The Washington State Lottery is selling raffle tickets.

Now though Nov. 10, Hometown Heroes raffle tickets will be sold for \$10 wherever lottery tickets are sold.

On Nov. 11 — Veteran's Day — lottery officials will hold a drawing for the more than \$1.43 million in cash prizes.

The key difference between a lottery and a raffle, a state lottery spokesperson explained, is that with a raffle you don't pick a number.

### Veterans Innovations Program helps vets returning from Iraq and Afghanistan

At this writing, nearly 17,000 Hometown Heroes raffle tickets have been sold. Lottery officials are capping the raffle tickets at 300,000.

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the tickets will go to the state Veterans Innovations Program, which was launched in 2007 to help veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The program is forecast to be out of money in 2012, due to a lack of funding from the state.

Lawmakers passed legislation telling the state lottery to fund the program.

The Hometown Heroes raffle tagline is, "Even heroes need heroes." ■

—Amy Roe

## County creates special court for veterans

The King County Council gave the go-ahead to create a special court for veterans that emphasizes treatment over incarceration.

The pilot Veterans Treatment Court will offer support and treatment to veterans in the criminal justice system suffering from war-related trauma, such as traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. The legislation launches a one-year pilot project to provide specialty court services to veterans within the Regional Mental Health Court.

It also asks the King County Executive to review ways to continue the pilot, including using the recently renewed Veterans and Human Services Levy.

Councilmember Bob Ferguson, who sponsored the ordinance, said the pilot project will cost no extra money but would improve the lives of veterans.

According to King County, there are veteran treatment courts in at least 80 jurisdictions, including Washington State's Clark, Pierce, Spokane and Thurston counties. ■

—RC Staff

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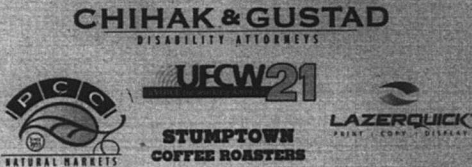


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7:30-9:00AM

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## Council approves paid sick leave for city's workers

**C**ollared by a cold? Felled by the flu? Take a sick day, with pay, courtesy of the Seattle City Council.

On Sept. 12, the council passed legislation requiring businesses with at least five full-time employees to offer paid sick days ["Critics say paid sick days law would cause layoffs," RC, July 13]. Councilmember Nick Licata sponsored the bill, which won passage with an 8-1 vote. The lone dissenting vote came from Councilmember Richard Conlin.

The number of paid sick days offered to employees varies depending on the size of the company. Workers at businesses with five to 49 employees will accrue at least five annual paid days; workers in businesses employing 50 to 249 employees will receive at least seven paid sick-leave days; those in companies with 250 or more employees will get up to nine paid sick days a year.

Businesses less than two years old are exempt.

The legislation, which goes into effect in September 2012, covers more than an employee's personal illness. Sick days will also be provided for an employee requesting time off to care for a family member or domestic partner who's under the weather.

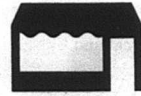
People experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking can also take paid time off by using a "safe day." This benefit provides an opportunity for individuals to receive medical treatment or take part in legal and courtroom proceedings.

In a statement issued the day following the vote, Conlin said that while he supports paid sick leave, the council's legislation "does not address the issue in a workable and fair way." He wrote the legislation fell short because it provides different benefits depending on the size of the company someone works for, it creates a complex and bureaucratic system, and it will probably result in fewer hours and reduced benefits for low-wage workers.

The council's vote makes Seattle the third city in the nation to mandate paid sick leave, following San Francisco and Washington, D.C. Beginning Jan. 1, 2012, Connecticut will require paid sick days to workers in the state. ■

—Rosette Royale

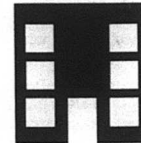
The Seattle City Council approved a bill requiring paid sick leave for businesses with at least five full-timers. Here's what an employee will receive:



5-49  
EMPLOYEES

40 hours worked = 1 hour sick leave

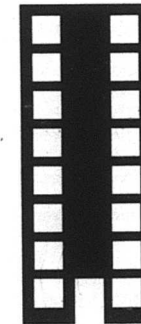
Up to 5 days/year



50-249  
EMPLOYEES

40 hours worked = 1 hour sick leave

Up to 7 days/year



250+  
EMPLOYEES

30 hours worked = 1 hour sick leave

Up to 9 days/year



Source: Seattle City Council

## Northwest Native Cultural Center to launch fundraising campaign

**T**he Northwest Native Cultural Center has filed to become a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and is preparing to kick off a campaign to raise \$8 million to build Seattle's first Native American center on the Seattle Center campus.

Last year, Dale Chihuly's glass museum beat out a Native cultural center to fill the Seattle Center Space vacated by the Fun Forest, but support from Seattle Center Director Robert Nellams encouraged Native center supporters.

In a June 6, 2011, letter to the group, Nellams wrote he was excited about bringing a Native cultural facility to

Center grounds.

The group chose an area north of the International Fountain by the Pacific Northwest Ballet School. Native architect Johnpaul Jones created a working plan with architectural and site drawings that call for a three-level building encompassing nearly 15,000 square feet.

In June, after reviewing the revised proposal, Seattle Center administrators gave their commitment to place the Northwest Native Cultural Center on the Center campus once funds are raised. ■

—RC Staff



Photo courtesy The Big Issue Zambia

## In Zambia, children run the law

By SAMBA YONGA  
*The Big Issue Zambia*

For many years, Mwansa Kapupa's friends would confide in him that they had been sexually assaulted or physically attacked but, until recently, there was little the teenager could do to help them.

"My friends would come to me and complain about being treated badly. Some would say their uncle made them do a lot of hard labor and did not take them to school. Others would say they were being sexually abused by their brother. This made me want to do something, so I decided to volunteer and help my community," the 17-year-old said.

In rural Zambia, where access to legal services is minimal and yet the need great, children are taking it upon themselves to see that law and order are enforced in their communities.

Kapupa lives in the small town of Mazabuka in the south of Zambia, where cases of child abuse have soared in recent years. This rural outback is unremarkable in many respects, but in recent months the town has attracted nationwide attention because of the success of a new initiative whereby teenagers have become law enforcers to protect their peers.

For the first time, Zambia's rural children have taken it upon themselves to fight for justice. Kapupa is one of scores of teenagers who've been trained to become paralegals in order to investigate allegations of child abuse in a country whose justice system has failed to of-

fer adequate legal services for the poor. Indeed, the scheme is being likened to one enacted during the apartheid era in South Africa when blacks who had no legal representation relied on the concept of "barefoot lawyers" for legal redress.

In Zambia, abuse against children has risen dramatically over the last two decades because of cultural beliefs that expose the nation's children to harmful practices. In many parts of the country, it is thought that sleeping with a child can cure a person of HIV. Misinformation and silence over the issue has perpetuated such crimes.

Zambian children are regularly sexually abused. Incest and child prostitution are common. Many are also forced into early marriages and are made to do hard labor. Although the law prohibits sexual harassment of children, sexual violence against children is endemic. Defilement, which the law defines as the "unlawful carnal knowledge of a child under the age of 16," is particularly common. In 2009, for example, the police recorded 1,676 defilement cases, but there were only 277 convictions and 63 acquittals. Until now, a culture of impunity has existed, but the paralegal project is challenging the status quo.

Kapupa is a high school dropout, but he recently enrolled in the legal program, which is run by a charity called Plan International Zambia. He joined the program after witnessing the distress of many of his friends who were subjected to inhumane treatment by the people who were supposed to care for them.

"It is not good for a young person to

be mistreated, so it feels good to help where we can," Kapupa said. He feels that although being a child paralegal is a huge personal undertaking, the positive benefits greatly outweigh any negative issues. With no access to education, Kapupa has found meaning in his life by helping report cases of abuse and bringing offenders to justice. The children he has helped are grateful for the role the paralegals play.

To date, 235 children have taken part in the project. Mazabuka's recorded rate of child abuse is now the highest in Zambia, not necessarily because the town has more offenders than other places but simply because more cases are being reported to the police.

Plan International Zambia, a humanitarian organization that advocates against violence, set up the program to run alongside an adult initiative designed to educate people about child abuse.

Although that project — based on the South African "barefoot lawyers" project — was successful, those who participated found it difficult to connect with young children who were skeptical about confiding in older people. Plan Zambia recognized the problem and so devised the child paralegal pilot.

Ernest Mwenya, child protection manager at Plan International Zambia, explained: "A culture of silence amongst children continued to persist even as we encouraged them to come forward, so the decision was made to start awareness campaigns for young children.

"Organically, a barefoot lawyers group for young children grew as they were

more able to speak to their peers. Child paralegals would go to schools and talk to their friends and this saw more and more kids reporting cases of abuse in their homes, or homes of friends and relatives. When people are reported, the law runs its natural course with cases being tried and guilty parties being convicted. Plan International Zambia is working with law enforcement agents to train them and sensitize them on making the environment child-friendly in order for there to be an even smoother system of justice."

Local police have backed the scheme and said that child paralegals have opened up an avenue for them to communicate better with communities on child protection issues. Plan Zambia has trained and equipped officers to handle sensitive cases better, and they are offered instruction on human rights laws, counseling and advocacy.

Chief Inspector Mwansa, head of the Victim Support Unit in Mazabuka, said: "We now have a 70-80 percent success rate of people being taken to court. Without the children, we would not have been able to carry out any arrests. We hope to improve upon this successful model and hopefully help reduce incidences further."

Plan Zambia is also working with community leaders to help educate them on the need to shield children from violence. One of the problems Zambian society faces, the charity stressed, is the absence of a social welfare system to support children removed from abusive families. ■

\*Name has been changed to protect identity of the child

Interview by STACEY BRIDEWELL  
Contributing Writer

Each night for more than five years, artist Clare Johnson has been drawing on Post-it notes before going to bed. The drawings, often supplemented with a caption, are part of what she calls "a futile, yet sincere attempt" to preserve memories. Today she has over 1,000 of the sticky-backed squares, which make up her exhibit, the "Post-it Note Project," on display until Oct. 14 at the Richard Hugo House.

Johnson is a native of Seattle, educated at Brown University and Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design in Cambridge, England. She splits her time between her two greatest passions: writing and art. She won the Michael S. Harper Poetry Prize in 2004 and her writing has been published in *Blithe House Quarterly* and *Cranky Literary Journal*. Guy's Hospital in London purchased her 35-piece drawing collection, "My Parents Told Me Not to Panic." Her art has been displayed at the Center on Contemporary Art in Seattle, Q Cafe and the Community Artists Program at the Seattle Design Center. She also has a history of leadership in advocacy, including events coordination for the Sarah Doyle Women's Center and two years as president of Brown University's LGBTQTA.

I met up with Clare at the Hugo House on a Saturday afternoon several days before the opening of her exhibit in early September. What struck me instantly about her was how unaffected she was, something I was not expecting from such an accomplished artist. She wore no make-up, a simple T-shirt and her only adornment was a plastic bracelet made of rainbow stars. "I really like..." she begins, pausing mid-sentence to search out a specific Post-it from the hundreds on display, "this one." It's a simple, sketched drawing of two figures in the rain. *Not a problem* it says in feather-light, minuscule handwriting. It's cryptic, as are a lot of the Post-its in her exhibit, but in the mystery there is a palpable sense of significance. We talked about her "Post-it Note Project," views on art, future projects, advocacy and exploring old houses.

#### So what is the "Post-it Note Project"?

I draw on a Post-it note at the end of everyday. It's basically either something that happened to me during the day or just whatever I'm thinking about at the time. So there's a lot of variety, but the basic idea is to do one at the end of each day to the best of my ability and sort of record things as they pass.

#### What inspired you to start this project?

I had been really interested in Post-it notes for a very long time, and I'm not sure I knew how to justify it or talk about it. I went through a really emotional period when I was in college and doing study abroad in London, in a painting program. A close friend passed away, really unexpectedly, while I was there and I couldn't make it back for the funeral. It was a hugely traumatic time, and I couldn't go into the studio for weeks. I couldn't make anything. And then afterward, the only thing I was able to make, to kind of transition back into doing stuff was little, tiny, incredibly abstract — which is very unusual for me — and very detailed acrylic paintings on Post-it notes. My tutors were a little baffled and nobody knew what to make of them. I didn't know what to make of them. I still have them. I found them in a book the other day, actually. When I got back to the U.S. and was with my advisor there, she said, "You know, they might make more sense if you put a date on them." And I didn't do anything about that for years. And only it occurred to me years later, when I was in grad school, that I wanted to do this. And then it kind of all happened at once.

#### Was it exhibited anywhere else before Hugo House?

It's been exhibited twice: once in Oxford [England], at the North Wall Arts Centre, but that was when it was in its really early stages, at about 400, 450. And then recently I showed them at Barnstorm, which is a three-night [arts festival] in May that happened in Belltown. And there were also a few of them that were published in a limited edition book "Undiscovered Artists 2010" in London. But that was just about 20 of them.

Small canvas,  
big ideas

Clare Johnson shares  
her obsession at  
Richard Hugo House



And it keeps growing. Every time I show it, there are hundreds more than there were last time.

**What turned you on to the arts in the first place?**

You know I can't remember, because I have always thought of myself as an artist. It's like my biggest identity thing. As a kid, I always was making art. It was just always a part of who I was. Which sounds kind of silly, but I loved — I really loved — drawing. So there's no particular thing that drew me to it. It's just always what I've wanted to do.

**You said that you "object to the belief that a painting should always be a statement about painting." What do you think painting, or art, for that matter, should be about?**

I really think it should be about life and the nuances and complexities of life. There are all kinds of different things you can choose to make art about within that framework, but what's really important is that it stay honest about all those nuances. With art, we can't say everything all at once and sometimes that can be limiting: You can get distracted by the fact that you can't say everything all at once. It's really important just to do the piece that you're doing in an honest way. It's great to be aware of the art world and stuff, but I feel like, for me, it can be really alienating, when artists get so caught up in one piece's relationship with the rest of the art world, because that doesn't speak to me personally, my daily experience. And I think that doesn't form a connection with other people.

I really think art should be — and it sounds kind of pretentious — something that helps us exercise empathy. That empathy is not always natural to people. It's easy to be stuck in your own situation and helping people see other people's situations, it's an incredibly powerful thing that art can do. And I think it's kind of sad when art at least doesn't try to do something that way.

**You say your work is a futile yet sincere attempt to locate and recover lost memory. Why is it futile and, if so, what is the use of trying to locate and recover lost memory?**

Well, it's futile in the sense that you just can't hold on to everything, you can't keep it all with you. And I say that as someone who has a really good memory, and people are often intimidated by the things I can remember about them. But even so, there are things that, no

matter how hard you try, you don't have control over. My grandmother has Alzheimer's right now and that's a perfect example of it: You can't control that entirely, no matter what you do. Things change on you, you lose stuff that's in your head, the landscape around you changes too. You can't recover. So that's what I mean when I say it's futile.

And yet, it's very sincere, because I have that urge. I want to hold to those things and I feel a lot of people have that urge too. So the only thing I can do with that urge is make an attempt and be honest about the fact that it's only an attempt, it would never be a perfect solution. But the fact that it can't be a perfect solution, acknowledging that out loud, making that clear in the art may be comforting to some people who feel frustrated by the same thing.

**So, *Real Change* is a publication about change, obviously, and advocacy. You have a history of community outreach and advocacy. Could you talk about that?**

Most of that was during high school, college especially, because there's such a wonderful format when you're in a school environment. You're not trying to change the whole world. You don't have to have the solutions for everything. You just have to look at the environment that you're in and do your best. And there's a really wonderful empowerment for people when they're in a student environment that way.

**So what groups were you involved in?**

At Garfield High School, we were co-chairs of the gay-straight alliance, which, I believe, was the first gay-straight alliance in the Seattle public school system. And we had a great advisor who gave us a lot of support. We got a lot of people involved with things, Day of Silence [a day of solidarity that highlights the oppression experienced by LGBT people]. Even students who weren't gay got involved. It was great.

So when I went to college, I ended up running the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, [and] Transgender Alliance there, which is now called the Queer Alliance, I believe. And I ran that actually by accident. It was a huge organization: It had hundreds of students in it and nobody wanted to run it. I was supposed to chair it again with someone who had a lot of problems that year and couldn't do it, so I got really involved in it. It was a huge thing for me and actually, I have some regret about the

**My work is futile in the sense that you just can't hold on to everything. Things change on you, you lose stuff that's in your head, the landscape around you changes.**

# Spare the prison and cane the convict

BOOK REVIEW: In Defense of Flogging

By Peter Moskos, Basic Books, 2011, Hardcover, 192 pages, \$20

Tom. LN° XIV.

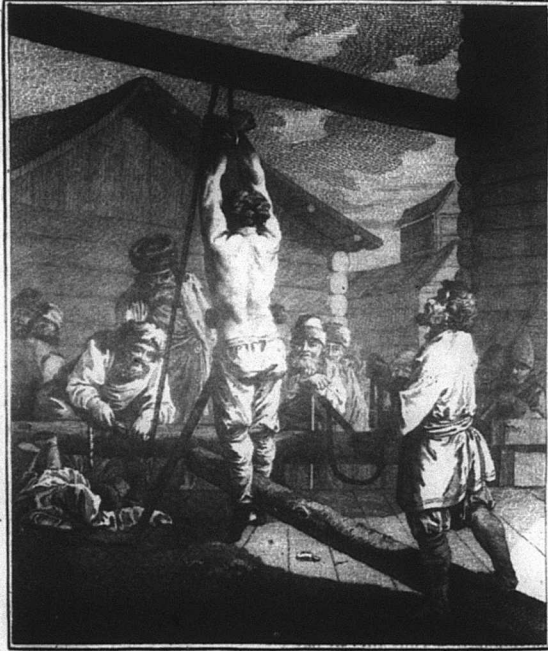


Image by Jean-Baptiste Le Prince, 1765

Review by  
**SEAN HUGHES**  
Contributing Writer

**Y**ou've just been convicted of a crime. Would you rather spend five years in prison or receive 10 brutal, skin-tearing lashes and go free?

Peter Moskos wrote "In Defense of Flogging" as a provocation, a way "to shatter the status quo" and with this opening gambit, Moskos succeeds in propelling flogging from an outlandish idea to one worthy of consideration. In doing so, he shines a bright light on the troubling state of America's jails and prisons.

What he proposes is that convicts, except for those who represent a danger to society, be given the choice between prison and caning, with two strokes for every year of imprisonment. No one would ever be flogged without consent. He presumes, reasonably, that a great many people would choose flogging over prison. This in itself should give the reader pause for its implications about the prison system.

Prisons are not just places where criminals are separated from mainstream society. They are places of violence, sexual assault, drug use and racial tension, where criminal knowledge and plans spread. Prisons prevent convicts from playing any positive role in their families or the workforce and make it difficult for parolees to reintegrate into society. The widespread use of solitary confinement contributes to the complete psychological breakdown of many inmates. And prison is quite expensive. The choice between flogging and prison, in Moskos' stark terms, is the choice between "hurt[ing] a man physically" and "destroy[ing] his life."

Still, flogging's direct barbarity gives many pause. Discomfort with punishment is, in fact, one of the reasons prisons have been so successful: Their terror is hidden from view. Most people have never been to a prison and don't know what goes on inside. We don't have to confront what we're doing to people. With a system of flogging, we do. And that, to Moskos, is one of the system's benefits: "If we want to punish, let's be honest about what we're doing." Flogging is nothing if not honest.

The question of punishment strikes at the issue of what we hope to accomplish when we sentence a convicted criminal. Moskos breaks this into three categories: incapacitation, rehabilitation and punishment/deterrence.

To incapacitate is to prevent a person from committing another crime, to protect society from him. Only a small fraction of the total prison population actually needs to be incapacitated to protect wider society.

Rehabilitation is the goal of many a prison reformer, and Moskos has harsh words for them. Prison reform, he argues, has failed and, moreover, is doomed to fail. In our present system, any money spent on prisoner rehabilitation will be forever

**Would you rather spend five years in prison or receive 10 brutal, skin-tearing lashes and go free?**



vulnerable to budget cuts, especially given that many of the services reformers advocate providing to prisoners are not provided to ordinary citizens. Tinkering with the system, he says, is tantamount to perpetuating an immoral mess. Pointing to Western Europe as a model doesn't convince Moskos either — he just doesn't see such a system as being approved by the American electorate. Moreover, many American prisons make little attempt at meaningful rehabilitation.

Finally, there is punishment and deterrence. To begin with, prison has little in the way of a deterrent effect. Flogging, by being more immediate, might. Many prison reformers have qualms about punishing. It seems dirty, backwards, anachronistic. But Moskos argues that this is not in keeping with the feelings of the broader American public. And, Moskos asks, if you had been mugged and your last memory before falling unconscious was the mugger laughing and urinating on you, wouldn't you want him to be punished? This confrontational and conversational tone forces readers to confront concepts they might rather have left unexamined. Indeed, the book's tone is one of its strengths.

Flogging's clear punitive impact is, to Moskos, a chief benefit. It is, to repeat an earlier point, honest. It has the additional benefit, when given with the defendant's consent, of being a less harsh option than prison. Perhaps some will even argue that flogging is too soft. To those who argue in favor of prison because of its "unparalleled cruelty," Moskos warns, "you might be a very evil person."

It's not that Moskos is enthusiastic about flogging — indeed, quite the opposite. Rather, he sees the option as less cruel than our barbarous prison system. To my surprise, I agree. ■

## INEQUALITY IN THE AGE OF MASS INCARCERATION

HARVARD PROFESSOR  
BRUCE WESTERN, PH.D.  
PRESENTS

"PUNISHMENT AND INEQUALITY  
IN AMERICA"

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Adventures  
in Irony

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## Looking for a good jobs program? Hire more junk collectors

Since Obama introduced his new plan for boosting jobs, I've been trying to figure out what the plan is. I can't, as news organizations apparently don't report on such things as the substance of bills anymore.

However, I've learned one serious flaw any stimulus package for the U.S. economy is bound to have: We get our goods from China. So, if we take money from the government to put more money into the hands of Americans, they will spend it on Chinese stuff, making China richer and America just full of more stuff.

There's a couple of ways U.S. employment can increase under such circumstances. By getting people to buy more Chinese stuff, we can make more jobs to haul stuff from China to American houses. That's one way.

The other way: Eventually all that stuff will break or become obsolete and need to be replaced by more Chinese stuff. So more and more Americans will get work as garbage sorters and collectors.

I've known some guys who have been way ahead of the curve in that department. One of them, I'll call him Jake, has been sorting and redistributing garbage since the early '80s. Jake represents the kind of American expertise we need going ahead into a future of overflowing garbage dumpsters. Jake will lead the way and show us how it's done.

Then, we Americans will become the world's experts in garbage management. The United States will be the world's Jake.

Seriously. Europe is undergoing a monetary crisis at this moment. I just read there's a proposal to break the Euro into two kinds of money, one soft and one hard. That's how desperate the European situation is becoming.

Anyway, Europe will soon need people with Jake's ability to sort garbage. We should be ready for that day and prepared to meet that need. That will get us a few extra bucks to buy cigarettes and shoelaces.

Meanwhile, remember the deficit problem? We still have a deficit problem. I have studied and studied and studied to death the deficit problem. I have concluded from my studies that there are precisely two ways to fix the U.S. deficit problem.

One is to stop spending money to kill people. Killing people, it turns out, is not a growth industry. It doesn't spin off economic benefits at a fast enough rate to offset systemic costs. I know that sounds abstract, but trust me, I've done the math.

The other way is to raise taxes on people who have money.

**Europe will soon need people to sort garbage. We should be prepared to meet that need**

Yes, that certainly sounds unfair. I hear you saying, "What about the people who don't have money?" I completely sympathize. But, again, I've done the math, and it works out that raising taxes on people who don't have money not only doesn't get you money to pay your government's bills, it actually costs you money. Tax collectors don't grow on trees.

Since there is no way America is going to stop spending money to kill people, paying down the government debt is going to have to involve taxing rich people. I don't care what Boehner says, that's just a fact.

Here comes the bad news: The money we collect from the rich will be money they won't be spending to buy Chinese stuff. That means, just like they say, fewer jobs for Americans.

Namely, fewer jobs hauling Chinese stuff here and fewer jobs managing the resultant piles of garbage. Therefore, doing what we have to do to pay down our government's bills will forestall our future as the world's most expert junk collector.

It's disappointing, I know, but we as a people will have to learn to delay gratification and take care of our collective fiscal obligations first. Only after we pay down our government's bills can we expect to enjoy our future as the world's foremost junk collector. ■

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

Lest  
We  
Forget



Sable Verity

## Sentenced as a teen, Barry Massey grew up in prison. It's time to set him free

Barry Massey was sentenced to life in prison when he was 13 years old. He was the youngest person in our country's history to be tried as an adult for murder in the first degree. Paul Wang, a husband, father and convenience store owner, was shot and killed when Massey and a boy named Michael Harris went into Wang's store, intent on shoplifting.

Exactly which of the boys committed the murder is debatable. Nevertheless, what cannot be denied is Massey was at least present with an older friend when Wang was shot and stabbed to death in a petty robbery gone wrong. Because of his decisions that day, Barry has spent nearly 25 years in prison.

By putting Massey away for life, the state determined that at 13 years old, he would never do anything of value in his life, never contribute to society in a positive way. They were wrong, and not just morally. The law has changed since Barry's case. If he were found guilty of the same crime today, life in prison would never be an option.

Barry Massey has twice petitioned for

clemency. In 2007, the Board voted 4-1 in favor of Massey, but Governor Christine Gregoire said no. Without explanation, her office said it came to a different conclusion than the clemency board and denied their recommendation; she suggested he try again in three years.

Earlier this year, Massey went before the clemency board a second time with even more support than he had before, including the former lead attorney for the governor herself. The board voted to deny clemency, citing Massey's relationship with his wife, Rhonda as their primary reason. Rhonda and Barry met while she worked in the prison, a relationship that obviously went against the rules.

In the end, whether or not Barry is released from prison rests in the governor's hands. Though the state never invested rehabilitation services in Massey, he has successfully rehabilitated himself. He created a purposeful life on his own because he believed he was destined to be better than his conviction, and stronger than the bars that hold him in prison.

Now Barry's supporters are pushing

in a new direction. Instead of clemency, they want Governor Gregoire to commute his sentence to 25 years (Wang's family opposes any possibility Massey could be released from prison). Under current laws, 13-year-olds would be sentenced to 25 years for the same crime. It's a change our state lawmakers recognize and respect, while ignoring the fact that Massey is still sitting in a prison cell.

It's time for the governor to step up and do the right thing. Massey made mistakes and suffered nearly 25 years because of them.

It is time for him to go home. ■

To learn more about the Massey case or sign the petition to Governor Gregoire, visit [Barry-Massey.com](http://Barry-Massey.com)

Sable Verity is a reporter and commentator covering social and political issues every week for KBCS Radio. For more information visit [kbcfs.fm](http://kbcfs.fm) and [sableverity.com](http://sableverity.com).

### POEM

#### Out on the Ground

I was sure that it was here  
parked it just beside the road  
packed with my bags  
and packed with my home  
I just can't believe it's gone.

Out on the ground  
for just as far as the eye may go  
there's no one except those who  
know

all they want to know.

Put my feet on your windowsill  
feel the air through the screen.

You say you got to get out in the  
Summer night

got to show you can fight.

Didn't used to be so lonely  
have you ever seem so low?

I don't know what's worth doing  
does any, does anybody know?

Out on the ground  
for just as far as the eye may go  
there's no one except those who  
know.

And if this isn't my home here  
what's home mean anymore?

Light and darkness.

Sun and globe.

— Mac Crary

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**New Research Studies May Improve Outcomes after Cardiac Arrest**

Hundreds of lives are lost every day from cardiac arrest. Researchers at the University of Washington and 10 other communities across North America are trying to improve those odds by finding better treatments to improve survival after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

One study is evaluating two different ways of performing CPR that are in current use in a number of communities. In one study, you could be treated with CPR consisting of chest compressions that are briefly interrupted for two breaths, or with chest compressions that are not interrupted when a breath is given.

A second study is evaluating whether heart rhythm medications are helpful when an electric shock fails to restore a normal heart rhythm. This can't be known unless these drugs are compared against one another, as well as compared against giving neither one. In this study, patients will receive all standard treatments in addition to which some patients will receive a rhythm medication, others a different rhythm medication, and others neither rhythm medication.

The goal of these studies is to improve outcomes for the some 300,000 persons who sustain a cardiac arrest each year in the United States and on average only 5-10% of whom survive. The only way to change those odds is to identify treatments that truly work to save lives. Doing so means you could be enrolled in such an emergency study without your consent. Getting consent for these treatments is not possible when someone is unconscious from cardiac arrest, because life-saving therapies must be given immediately.

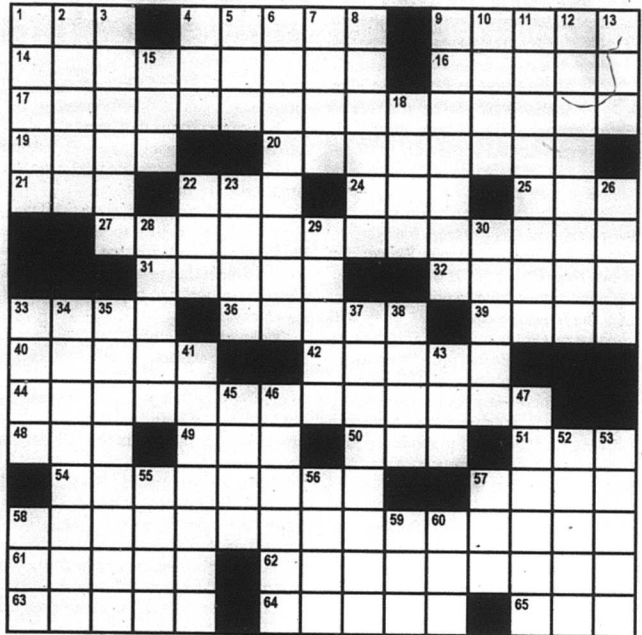
The University of Washington welcomes your feedback on these studies. For more information, please visit our website at [www.uwheartroc.org](http://www.uwheartroc.org), e-mail [skcroc@u.washington.edu](mailto:skcroc@u.washington.edu) or call our cardiac arrest hotline at 206.447.5671.

8/12/11 ROC CCC ALPS

**CROSSWORD**

You and Whose Army?

Puzzle by Patrick "Mac" McIntyre



**ACROSS**

- 1 Name in Hollywood that follows Brandon Bruce, Michelle or Spike
- 4 Slippery as \_\_\_\_ (2 wds.)
- 9 Artists' gown
- 14 'Armored' ant eater
- 16 Old TWA rival
- 17 Matter conducted behind closed doors and kept confidential
- 19 Unit of loudness
- 20 Middle-of-the-roader
- 21 Bard's "before"
- 22 Noted U.S. dance grp.
- 24 "There, but for fortune, \_\_\_\_" (2 wds.)
- 25 \_\_\_\_ kwon do
- 27 Serious loss of one's cool (2 wds.)
- 31 Toy wind instrument often heard in jug bands
- 32 Assemblée Législative
- 33 Train for a boxing match
- 36 Like draft beer (2 wds.)
- 39 Turkish governors
- 40 "You're \_\_\_\_!" ("You crack me up!") (2 wds.)
- 42 Baghdad resident
- 44 Many legends contain it (3 wds.)
- 48 Immigrant's subj.
- 49 New Jersey NBAer
- 50 Tee follower
- 51 Antiquated
- 54 Home of the Chargers and Padres
- 57 Complimentary
- 58 All-around pain in the butt (2 wds.)
- 61 Fountain place
- 62 Common exemplar of intense focus (2 wds.)
- 63 NBA Hall of Famer Dan
- 64 Group that gives out lots of IOUs
- 65 \_\_\_\_-80 (old Radio Shack computer)

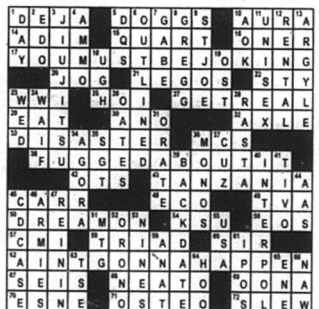
**DOWN**

- 1 Run out, as a subscription
- 2 Trial's partner
- 3 "8 Mile" rapper
- 4 Nabokov novel
- 5 Tiny criticism
- 6 Kind of microscope
- 7 River to the North Sea
- 8 Piano bar location
- 9 They're often dispensed in a 8-Down
- 10 Gershwin's "The \_\_\_\_ Love"
- 11 British unit of weight equal to 14 pounds (2 wds.)
- 12 2000 film featuring Tom Hanks as a FedEx employee
- 13 Metric lgth. meas.
- 15 \_\_\_\_ Maria
- 18 Acronym for a plane that can safely use very short runways
- 22 1977 double-platinum Steely Dan album
- 23 Classic clown

- 26-Tolkien forest creatures
- 28 Where Goodyear is headquartered
- 29 Recurring theme
- 30 Ledger entry
- 33 Rice wine
- 34 Irons
- 35 Flight paths
- 37 Where subtitled movies are a commonplace
- 38 Cut back
- 41 Feature of twining plants such as ivy
- 43 "\_\_\_\_pasa?"
- 45 "Star Wars" princess
- 46 1887 Verdi opera
- 47 New Orleans NBAer
- 52 Former Renault compact
- 53 Regards
- 55 Actress Campbell
- 56 Bite like a beaver
- 57 The \_\_\_\_ Four
- 58 Volkswagen hatchback model
- 59 Suffix with cash or rroup
- 60 12th graders: Abbr.

**SOLUTION**

Negatory  
 Sept. 14 - 20 Issue



Solutions to this week's puzzle will appear in next issue.

POST-ITS, Continued from Page 7

way my work life is now. But it's hard to do all those things. I struggle to do a lot of different things at once with my art and my writing, to keep a lot of different projects going, to support myself financially. Doing a lot of direct activism is often something that I don't have a good venue for. And the empathy idea definitely stems from all that outreach. Because the stuff that works the absolute best is when I just got to meet people face to face and talk to them, and try to understand what was going on with them and try to communicate what was going on with me.

**Do your experiences, opinions, frustrations on LGBT issues ever come out in your work?**

Yeah, actually. I think it's more obvious in my writing. I've been working for quite a while on a project that's inspired by snippets of family history and local history as well, of the Northwest, and my imagination about old buildings and spaces, which is another side note obsession of mine. But I use those things to imagine experiences of fictional ancestors for myself. And it's more like I'm trying to create a community of peers in the past, because one of the things that was really hard growing up as someone who identifies very early as queer was having to really dig for your history, for people like who you have been successful or meaningful in the world. There are tons of them, but nobody wants to tell you about them.

And then you do learn about that in the larger world. In my family history, there is no one who would talk about anything like that. So I'm kind of trying to imagine that kind of precedent for myself. And I think a lot of people do for themselves.

**And you've worked with children as well?**

At this point, I teach art to kids a lot. I used to work as a nanny. I'm inspired by children's literature. I think it's very poetic.

**So you say that you find children's books inspiring, poetic. And you work with children, and you often incorporate writing in your art. So is there a children's book project in the future?**

Yes, actually. I've written a children's book, an unpublished children's book. And I'm currently working on completing the illustrations, and I don't know what will happen with it. But it is very related to my history of LGBT activism, as well, because it's about a gender-neutral protagonist, which happens in children's literature, but people don't always realize it's happening. I think it's an incredibly meaningful thing for a lot of kids when a book doesn't have to adhere to one particular family system. And I have continued my activism through some teaching of classes. In London, I taught writing classes to gay parents who wanted to write kids' books that reflected their kids' experiences. And I'm hoping to start doing that in Seattle, too. I think that's really important.

**And do you have any other projects coming up?**

Yeah, I'm pretty busy. I've got a couple collaborations with "quiet," which is a group that does a lot of different kinds of art events, spanning from music and theater to art and writing. Their quarterly publication is going to feature two of my pieces of writing. And there's also doing an exhibition with a couple of my paintings. I'm also in a show in Bridgeport, in England, right now, that I'm hoping to see when I go visit.

**And I believe a writer's course?**

Oh. I'm teaching a six-week class here [at Hugo House] about looking at other art forms to inspire writing. So basically, you're stealing techniques for your writing from painting, architecture, the moving image. So I'm very excited. I used to teach that kind of class in England, so I'm excited to teach it in Seattle. ■

For more information about Clare Johnson, visit: [clarejohnson.com](http://clarejohnson.com)

The Post-it Note Project runs at Richard Hugo House, 1634 11th Ave., until Oct. 14. If you like the project, vote for it in the City Arts Fest Totally Subjective Opinion Art Contest: [tinyurl.com/43n6h6g](http://tinyurl.com/43n6h6g)



Photo by Matt Tykinski

## Vendor of the Week Tony Jeffers

If you've walked by the Wells-Fargo building on Second and Marion downtown, chances are you have seen Tony Jeffers selling Real Change, smiling and chatting it up with people as they walk by.

Tony is 51 and has been selling Real Change since January. He was born in Washington state and has lived in Seattle and the Philippines.

Tony married his wife, Rosalita, in 2002, and they lived in the Philippines together from 2002 to 2010. His wife is Filipina. He fondly remembers the sense of community and family that he felt while living there.

Tony didn't pay his immigration fees and was forced to return to the U.S. He has been separated from his wife for over a year. Most of the money Tony makes from selling Real Change has gone to his wife, who is currently suffering from a myriad of medical issues.

"My main motivation for selling Real Change is my wife, Rosalita," Tony said. "I spend very little money on my own self."

Selling Real Change is part of Tony's quest to bring his wife to the U.S. He hopes that Rosalita will be able to come in the near future and that they will be reunited.

"Real Change is steady, it is real steady. I could have used this money to advance myself, but my priority is her," Tony says. "I can't let her starve. She needs medical care."

Faith is an important aspect of Tony's life.

"I need to trust in God every day," he said. "God helps me sell, and I depend on God."

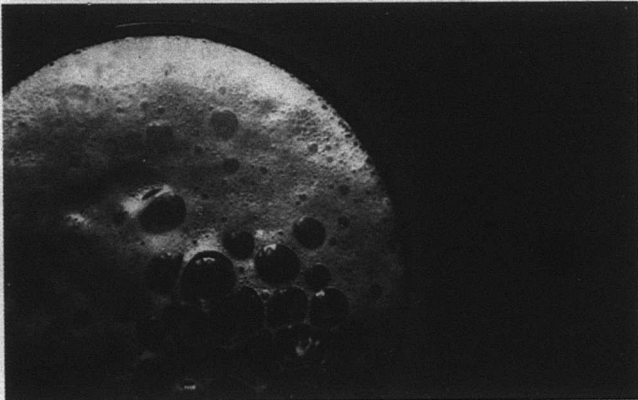
When Rosalita is finally able to come to America, Tony plans to move to San Francisco to be with her. He says that he may even sell the San Francisco street newspaper one day.

One of Tony's fondest childhood memories is watching his idol, children's television personality J.P. Patches. He remembers sitting in front of the television at 3 years old eagerly waiting for the show to come on. Wide-eyed and joyful, Tony remembers those cheerful moments as vividly as if they happened yesterday. He generously shared his life story, but reminded me it is only a small slice of his life.

"When you're 51," he said, "you have been through a lot more than will fit into a newspaper article." ■

—Matt Tykinski

# THIS WEEK



Bier ist gut. Trinken Sie etwas auf dem Oktoberfest. (That means, "Beer is good. Drink it at Oktoberfest.") Photo by Attila Kefeli, Flickr

### Choice words

Town Hall, Great Hall, 1119 8th Ave., 7:30 p.m. \$5.

**WED 21** When I think Calvin Trillin, I think food. "I don't care where I sit," he has said, "as long as I get fed."

More than a chowhound, "New Yorker" writer Calvin Trillin is a humorist, novelist, essayist, satirist, journalist, poet — in other words, a peripatetic performer. He's even adapted his stories for one-man shows.

You can expect the same showmanship when Trillin reads from his self-chosen selection, "Quite Enough of Calvin Trillin: 40 Years of His Funny Stuff."

The sum of his stories are made poignant by Trillin's remark that all of it — and everything he's written — was meant to impress his late wife, Alice, who passed away in 2001.

Chances are you'll be impressed, too.

### Listen

Central Library, Microsoft Auditorium, 1000 4th Ave., 7 p.m. Free.

**FRI 23** Citywide reading programs attempt to bring a highly solitary activity into the public sphere.

That's a tough one. Lots of readers are quiet people who only want to be left alone with their thoughts and an author's words. How do you get them to throw off their covers and come out for the night?

For starters, pick the right book. Julie Otsuka's novel, "When the Emperor Was Divine," the Seattle Public Library's 2005 Seattle Reads pick, was an inspired choice.

Otsuka's compelling fictionalized account of Japanese internment in America is intimate yet elliptical. It's been six years since I read her book, but the elegiac images Otsuka produced — a train, a shovel, the smell of a horse — have stayed with me as if drawn from my own memory.

Otsuka returns to Seattle with "The Buddha in the Attic," which could be seen as a sort of prequel to her acclaimed debut. It begins with young Japanese mail order brides who travel to San Francisco in the early 1900s and closes amid WWII and internment.

Hearing Otsuka give voice to her novel is something you can't do alone at home. (Otsuka doesn't read the audio book version — I checked.)

So — just this once — put down your Kindle and go.

### Talkin' 'bout tar sands

Revolution Books, 89 S. Washington St., 7 p.m. Free. Suggested donation: \$5-\$10, revolutionbookssea.org

**SAT 24** There's a big fight in the pipeline. Or rather, the proposed Keystone XL pipeline has produced an XXL-sized fight.

Activists are urging President Obama not to approve a \$13 billion pipeline that would carry Canadian crude oil from northeastern Canada's "tar sands" through the U.S. to Texas.

Environmentalists say it could put the U.S. at risk for a devastating oil spill and doesn't address the growing global carbon problem.

Seattle activists Orpheus Reed and An-

drea Strong were among the 1,254 people arrested Sept. 3 in civil disobedience actions in Washington D.C. They will talk about what they saw, and what's next in their plans to stop the project.

### Beer run

Solstice Plaza near the intersection of N. Thirty-fourth Street and Fremont Avenue North, 10 a.m., \$25 Pre-registration/\$35 day of race, fremontoktoberfest.com

**SUN 25** There are "fun runs" and there are runs that are actually fun.

In large part because it boasts a division called "beer belly," the Fremont Oktoberfest 5K falls into the latter category. To qualify for this select group, men must weigh

220 pounds or more, and women must tip the scales at 175 or better.

Beer belly runners start the race first, the better to beat the rest to the post-race beer garden.

But there's no rush, really. Every registered runner who is 21 and carrying ID gets a 12-ounce can of Pyramid Hefeweizen after crossing the finish line. Whatever your size, it's worth the weight.

Calendar compiled by Amy Roe. Got something we should know about? Email it to [calendar@realchangenews.org](mailto:calendar@realchangenews.org)



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