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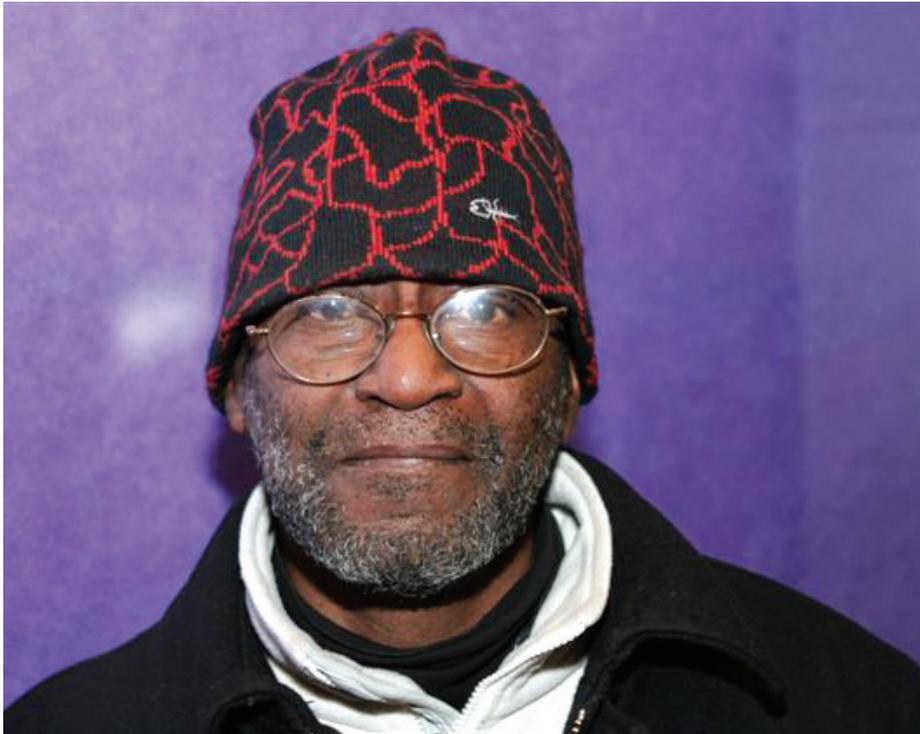
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ISSUES • INSIGHT • IMPACT

MARCH 21 - 27, 2007



SEATTLE POLICE PICKED UP BUT NEVER CHARGED MICHAEL BROOKS, 62, WHO SPENT THREE DAYS IN THE KING COUNTY JAIL ON THE BASIS, HE SAYS, OF HIS RACE. PHOTO BY JUSTIN MILLS.

72 Hours

Held 3 days for a crime he claims he didn't commit, a man seeks answers

By ROSETTE ROYALE
Staff Reporter

Usually, Michael Brooks would have taken the bus home. But on the evening of Feb. 5, he decided to walk. After all, the 62 year old reasoned, the exercise would do him good.

Stepping out of Seattle Central Community College (SCCC), where he'd just finished up in the Computer Center, he took a gander at his watch. 9:35 p.m. And under a nighttime sky blanketed by clouds, he began his journey to Madison Valley.

Brooks headed north on Broadway. When he got to Denny, he turned right, traveling east. As he ventured home-ward, he passed Cal Anderson Park. It was about then, he says, he noticed police activity: seven to 10 cruisers, up on 12th, blocking traffic. Officers, including one from the city's K-9 Unit, busied themselves on the north side of Denny. Brooks kept to the sidewalk on the south.

"As I proceeded to walk," says Brooks, "[a] police officer shined his flashlight on me, and he asked me stop." He says the officer requested identification; Brooks handed it over. Then, he says, the officer spoke into the

microphone attached to his shoulder strap, saying something to the effect of, "I think we have a suspect here."

Asked by a number of officers where he was coming from, Brooks says he told them SCCC. Then he says he heard one officer say they wanted to bring the victim by. That's when Brooks, a Black man who's called Seattle home since 1980, says he began to get worried.

Soon afterwards, a squad car pulled up. Brooks says he couldn't see through the glass, but heard a female voice say, "Affirmative."

Brooks says after that, he was handcuffed. When he asked what the crime was, he says he was shocked to hear the officer's response: "Attempted rape and assault."

He was read his rights, he says. Then he was placed in the back of a squad car and driven to the East Precinct, where he was held for an hour and a half. From there, he was taken to King County Jail. Given scrubs to wear, Brooks says he visited a nurse, and, after having his blood pressure taken and responding to a few of her

See BROOKS, Continued on Page 12

The Price of Living Large

Forest defenders say local "green" builder destroys northern habitat

By CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

"More Home. Less Money." It's a Quadrant Homes motto slogan that makes Ojibwe natives from Ontario, Canada, wince.

They also laugh that the Bellevue-based home builder just got an award for using "green" building techniques in its massive housing developments, which they say are directly deforesting their land, running off wildlife, and poisoning the environment with herbicides.

All of it, says Maria Swain, one of three Ojibwe tribal members who came to Seattle last week to protest Weyerhaeuser, the timber giant that owns and supplies lumber to Quadrant, is so that suburbanites can live "high on the hog" in a Quadrant home.

"The clearcut destroys everything," Swain says. "It destroys the life. It destroys the animal habitats."

"We used to pick blueberries," she says. "We can't even do that now because of the contaminants."

Since the 1990s, Weyerhaeuser has been buying logs that other companies clearcut at the Whiskey Jack Forest in northern Ontario. The area is home to about 700 members of Swain's band of the Ojibwe, called the Grassy Narrows First Nation, which theoretically controls the land under a federal treaty signed in 1873.

Swain says the people of Grassy Narrows wrote letters of protest, then sued the provincial government in 2000 over the logging license it issued to Canada's Abitibi Consolidated. In 2002, after getting nowhere, Grassy Narrows mothers and high-schoolers started a logging-truck blockade that continues to this day.

Tribal members also travel to Seattle to protest at an annual stockholder meeting that Weyerhaeuser holds in April.

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THE HEALING

Aradia's mission of woman-centered healthcare has passed on to a new generation.

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ON THE BALL

There's still time for important legislation barring genital discrimination and improving health care.

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BAKER'S BUST-IN

Looking for someone else, feds detain immigrant workers at a Belltown bakery.

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LOST IN TRANSLATION

What rules do Seattle police follow when interacting with those who don't speak English?

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SWEET LESSONS

UW professor Michael Honey does some digging on MLK's final campaign in Tennessee.

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A Legacy of Healing

For 34 years, Aradia Women's Health Center honored and respected women

By MARCY BLOOM
Guest Writer

The amazing feminist influence that made Aradia so unique for 34 years will live on in the lives of the women who were transformed by our innovative, woman-focused model of safe and respectful health care.

The painful closing of Aradia Women's Health Center on Jan. 31 was a deep loss for women, reproductive rights, and reproductive health, and a dramatic sign of our times. The federal government has not funded abortion care since 1978. Our state Medicaid fiscal reimbursements have been far too low. Costs for medical supplies, insurance, security, and staff health insurance have skyrocketed. Abortion care is on the decline in the U.S., except in the cases of poor and low-income women. So, as they increasingly came to our doors, our financial situation grew weaker. We were fulfilling our mission and vision by helping the women most in need, but the fiscal subsidies could not quite fill the gap. A true societal commitment to quality, funded health care for poor and marginalized women, including ALL reproductive health services, eludes us still. Add to that difficult mix the politics of reproductive health and abortion rights, and the long-term sustainability of running this dynamic and special women's health clinic with limited resources became very difficult to envision.

There were many good years, when Aradia expanded, started exciting new programs to educate young people about their bodies, hired bilingual staff to more effectively serve our clients, gave staff raises and bonuses, engaged even more generous donors, built a strong board, and truly thrived. However, close as we were in some years, there was never quite enough "thick" and there was frequently too much "thin." An organization can only cut staff

and programs so far until the vision, mission, and uniqueness become too compromised. I have come to understand that organizations have natural and inevitable life spans. This, sadly, was Aradia Women's Health Center's time.

I know that I will see Aradia's powerful influence continue on many levels, locally, nationally, and internationally. The amazing feminist influence that made our organization so unique for 34 years will live on in the lives of the women who were transformed by our innovative, woman-focused model of safe and respectful health care. Staff, volunteers, and board members have also been tremendously affected by this organization. They have all gone on to numerous endeavors as doctors, nurses, nutritionists, and social workers, and many are doing work in diverse parts of the U.S., as well as internationally. "Branded" with the feminist model, they trust women as moral and ethical decision-makers, they listen carefully, and they do not judge.

Given certain circumstances in women's lives, abortion is frequently the most morally responsible and honorable decision a woman can make. We have yet to destigmatize that decision and honor and respect ALL of women's choices. This struggle is yet another part of the special feminist legacy of Aradia Women's Health Center that will continue to transform women's health and women's lives — advocating for women's truths and women's choices — and it will always be powerful.

We were women's health and abortion rights trail-blazers and pioneers in every way. We changed the world, and it was exhilarating. Our advocacy was known throughout the country,

and in other countries too. I gave a presentation in Mexico City in 2005 about Aradia's respectful feminist model. Now, a women's clinic based on that model is in progress there. I survived clinic blockades, death threats, anti-choice legislators in Olympia calling me "a baby-killer," and ballot initiatives here in our state aimed at showing total disdain for women and turning the clock back on their health. Named for the Greek goddess of healing arts, "health care for women by women" was the Aradia byline, passion, and foundation.

Women still want and crave that type of medical treatment. Whether they call it "feminist" health care or use other words or concepts, I have no doubt that every single woman desires — and deserves — time, patience, compassion, non-biased information and accurate education, support, respect, and non-judgment. The feminist power that created Aradia Women's Health Center changed the lives of close to 60,000 women who came through its doors. Now, that power and commitment called "Aradia" will spread its wings even higher and take on new and even more dynamic forms.

I was honored to be the executive director of Aradia Women's Health Center for more than 18 years. I know that this incredible organization and this honorable work of quality reproductive health care and advocating for reproductive justice and women's lives has changed my life forever.

More than 68,000 women die each year in the developing world from the ravages of illegal abortion. There is so much important work for women's lives still to be done. Aradia has shown me the way, and she taught me well.

Marcy Bloom is now the United States Capacity Development Officer for the Mexico City-based Grupo de Informacion en Reproduccion Elegida (The Information Group on Reproductive Choice), Mexico's leading voice for reproductive justice and abortion law reform. Its goal is to decriminalize abortion so that all of the women of Mexico are assured safe and respectful reproductive health care. She is also a monthly writer on domestic and international reproductive health and justice issues for www.rhrealitycheck.org.



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

Mission Statement:

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

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

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Change Agent

"Life changed. What do I do now?"

Veterans just back from Iraq or Afghanistan ask Sheila Sebron that all the time. She's a volunteer counselor who left the Air Force with a leg injury in the 1980s and later ended up homeless. Today, after fighting for her own VA benefits and getting out of a wheelchair, Sebron helps others do the same through the National Association of Black Veterans.

Sebron often sees ex-National Guard or reserve members who can't figure out why they aren't their old selves again. Many, she says, haven't connected their erratic or suicidal thoughts to the pain of an injury or post-traumatic stress. Some tell her of horrors they've seen, then throw up. When they're ready, she guides them through the VA system for help.

"They need to give themselves permission to figure out who they are now and evolve," says Sebron, who wants to get a master's degree in rehabilitation and go on to work as a counselor. That is, if the VA ever grants her vocational training request. She's still fighting.

—Cydney Gillis



Just Heard...

Impeachable

Frank Chopp makes no bones about where he stands on George W. Bush: "I'd definitely support impeaching the president; the state's Speaker of the House told constituents March 17 at a 43rd District meeting: 'He's one of the worst excuses for a president I've ever seen.'"

The applause was immediate. It was only an opener, however, for the Seattle Democrat to explain why he's squelching a House vote on a resolution calling for an impeachment investigation. Chopp said, in essence, that U.S. Sen. Patty Murray wanted it killed.

In a meeting with leading legislators, Murray "urged us strongly not to do it," said Chopp, who controls what items the House votes on. The senator's rationale, he said, was that the legislature shouldn't interfere with Democratic Party's effort to win the White House in 2008.

Electable

If you want something done right, elect a person to do it, don't appoint them.

That's one of the reasons Toby Nixon, a former Republican state representative from Kirkland, is pushing King County Initiative 25, which makes the job of county elections director an elected position and creates a new, independent Department of Elections by the fall of 2008.

Nixon says the initiative, which was filed March 8 by a group called Citizens for Accountable Elections, is based on recommendations made by two different county task forces that looked at the vote-counting mess of the 2004 governor's selection. The group is now facing a 90-day window to gather the 55,000 signatures it needs to put the measure on the fall ballot.

Nixon will give a talk about the effort at a meeting of Washington Citizens for Fair Election on March 27, 6:30 p.m., in Room 107 of the University Heights Center, 5031 University Way N.E., Seattle. For more information, go to www.accountableelections.org.

—Cydney Gillis

Miami Prize

Florida's Miami Workers Center, a grassroots community organization, has won a major victory in its seven-year campaign to reverse the city's destruction of low-income housing.

When the city demolished the Scott Carver Homes, 1,129 families were displaced. Community activists responded by establishing the shantytown Umoja on government property nearby. The Miami Dade Housing Agency has since become notoriously plagued by corruption and mismanagement that the federal government has threatened to step in and take over the agency.

In an effort to stave off the federal takeover, agency officials sat down with community representatives and granted their demands, including one-for-one replacement of demolished units and the right of displaced people to return to safe housing in their communities.

—ronni tartlet

Remains of the Day

Family leave, housing funds still in play in legislative session

By CYDNEY GILLIS
Staff Reporter

With the 2007 Legislature coming down to the wire in early April, efforts to improve the lives of poor and working-class families are now tightly focused on surviving bills that would increase funding to house the homeless and create a paid family leave program.

For the bills that didn't pass their house of origin by last week's cutoff, advocates say they're now angling for funding in the final state budget for items such as increasing rental assistance for the homeless and making large employers pay more for worker health care.

The good news, says House Speaker Frank Chopp, is that both houses passed Senate Bill 5093, expanding the state's health coverage to 38,000 children — a measure Gov. Chris Gregoire has already signed into law. That means every single child in the state now has health care, Chopp told Seattle constituents at a 43rd District meeting held last weekend.

At the same meeting, he and fellow Democrats representing Seattle's 43rd — Sen. Ed Murray and Rep. Jamie Pedersen — also said 2007 looks like the year for paid family leave in Washington state.

The Family and Medical Leave Insurance bill, sponsored by Sen. Karen Keiser (SB 5659), would provide up to five weeks of paid leave for workers who are sick or need to care for a sick family member or newborn child. The \$250 per week stipend would come from a payroll tax of 2 cents per hour on workers, or \$40 a year.

"For six years, we've been trying to get this in place," says the Washington State Labor Council's David Groves, who notes that the measure passed the Senate last year, only to die in the House.

With the speaker's support, Groves says that's unlikely to happen this year. But Chopp cautioned

that it remains to be seen how Democrats will pull it off, given the governor's reluctance to sign any more tax increases into law.

The labor council's second try at getting large employers such as Wal-Mart to pay more for health care ran aground this year in the House, but isn't totally dead, Groves says. Rep. Steve Conway's Taxpayer Health Care Fairness Act, which would make companies of 1,000 or more employees pay the state for health services its workers use, could still be implemented as part of the budget process.

"We would have obviously preferred that the bill be alive and be pushing in the Senate," Groves says of HB 2094, "but we're pleased it's still around."

The Washington State Coalition for the Homeless also finds itself hoping for budgetary largesse. Though bills to increase funding for the state's Transitional Housing and Rental fund (THOR) passed in both the House and Senate, coalition director Corine Knudsen says, the bills died in their respective fiscal committees.

The coalition had hoped to add \$10 million to the program, which is currently funded at \$5 million. Knudsen says the coalition is now left to lobby for a budget increase of \$1 million, the amount recommended by the House Appropriations Committee.

A bill sponsored by Rep. Mark Miloscia that would increase housing funds for the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness remains in play, Knudsen says, with a small modification. Instead of raising document recording fees \$10, as Miloscia originally proposed, E2SHB 1359 would increase the fee by \$8 to raise \$13 million.

The House budget released Tuesday did not include increases that human services advocates had sought for the Basic Health Plan, general assistance grants, and welfare benefits — a big disappointment, says Tony Lee, ad-

See LEGISLATURE, Continued on Page 10

Lost One, Got Four

Immigration agents arrest workers at renowned Belltown bakery

By ROSETTE ROYALE
Staff Reporter

Sometimes, things start one way only to end another. A case in point: What began as an attempt by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to arrest one undocumented resident at her home last month turned, in less than an hour, into the seizure of four undocumented workers at a Belltown bakery.

In the morning hours of Feb. 28, ICE showed up at the known residence of a Honduran woman, with plans to arrest her for defying a Texas judge's order to repatriate to her birth country. At the residence, the officers — who were part of the agency's Fugitive Operations Program — were informed the woman wasn't there, but could be found at her place of employment, the well-known downtown bakery Macrina.

"So, they went to look for her," ICE spokeswoman Lorie Dankers says of the agents.

At the bakery, the presence of several men — who were plainclothes — staring in the window scared members of an immigrant workforce that assists in bakery prep. The workers, whose numbers were undetermined, fled. A backup cadre of agents from ICE, which sits under the umbrella of the Department of Homeland Security, were on hand by this time and, as workers scattered, four employees, says Dankers, admitted to being undocumented.

"We had no choice but to detain those individuals," says Dankers.

A columnist in the Seattle P-I reported that Macrina owner Leslie Mackie said she had documentation to verify the workers' legal status. Numerous calls to confirm this with Mackie were not returned.

Dankers says she believes that relatives at the home of the woman who was initially sought out called the prep cooks at Macrina to alert them that immigration agents were likely on the way. Their arrival, she continues, was not an attempt to target Macrina. "The bakery got mixed

up in this," she says, "because that's where the individual was working."

The four female workers — two hailing from Mexico, one from El Salvador, the last from Honduras — were taken to Tacoma's Northwest Detention Center for booking. Dankers says one of them, claiming she had a child and was caring for a sick relative, was released on her own recognizance. The three others were each held for \$15,000 bail; as of March 16, only one has posted the necessary funds. All four, says Dankers, will stand trial.

Officially established in the wake of 9/11, the Fugitive Ops program has 52 units scattered across the country, including a unit each in Seattle and Portland. Come summer's end, however, the program has plans to increase the number of national units to 75, with one in Yakima.

The Honduran woman who was the original target has yet to be apprehended. Dankers wouldn't comment more on her case, except to say an investigation is continuing. n

"We had no choice but to detain those individuals."

—Lorie Dankers, spokeswoman for Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Short Takes

Baristas unite!

Things are brewing at Starbucks about whether the world's largest chain of coffee shops is really socially responsible. Organizers of the fledgling Starbucks Workers Union plan to make a case it's not at all they're planning Wed, March 21, at the company's annual shareholder meeting at Seattle Center.

The union, which members of the Industrial Workers of the World started in New York, has joined forces with a group called Justice from Bean to Cupto call attention to how it says Starbucks treats its baristas — many of whom are relegated to part-time positions with no benefits — and how

Starbucks is blocking an effort by the Ethiopian government to get more money for its coffee farmers.

The union says Starbucks has refused to sign a licensing agreement with Ethiopia that would allow it to market its coffee at higher prices. Organizers point this out in a "2006 Starbucks Corporate Irresponsibility Report" that they plan to hand out in the doorway of McCaw Hall, where the shareholders will meet, along with parading a giant, inflatable "fat cat" crushing a uniformed Starbucks barista.

More information is online at www.starbucksunion.org.

No surge

Just as Seattle's antiwar protest was kicking off Monday, the Seattle City Council kicked into gear, unanimously passing a resolution calling for the U.S. to get out of Iraq.

The resolution states that 61 soldiers from Washington have been killed and another 671 injured in the conflict at a cost of \$357 billion to date. In addition to urging withdrawal, it also calls on Washington's congressional delegation to cut President Bush's funding for a troop surge.

In a statement, Council President Nick Licata said the council passed the resolution to mark the fourth-anniversary protests that took place across the country over the weekend, including a March 17 march on the Pentagon.

"The council joins citizens nationwide in voicing its support for an end to the conflict," Licata said in the statement. "We hope that this resolution will contribute to the effort to begin the orderly withdrawal of troops from Iraq."

In the legislature, Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles and Rep. Geoff Simpson had put forward similar resolutions that died last week in the Legislature. But Kohl-Welles, sponsor of SJM8003, says she's working with Senate Majority Leader Lisa Brown to get a resolution passed on the Senate floor.

—Cydney Gillis

Care to Africa

It's often those working the hardest on the biggest problems who receive the least appreciation. A group of Eastside teens are working to change that.

About 50 Bellevue students spent last Friday night at Newport Covenant Church creating handwritten notes to thank African community care givers who are working with AIDS patients.

"Thank you all so much, you are our heroes," wrote Emily Lewis, a high school junior, in her note.

The notes will accompany resource kits containing items such as community volunteers in caring for those with AIDS simple but necessary things like cotton balls, washcloths, gloves, paper, pencils and flashlights. Antibiotics donated from McKesson Pharmaceutical Services will also be included. There were supplies for 300 kits, which the teens sponsored at a cost of \$30 a piece.

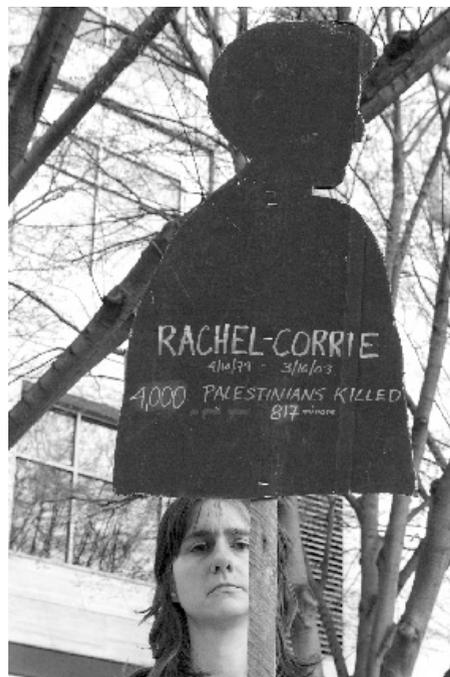
But it is difficult to say thank you and send resources to people halfway across the world without understanding who they are. Which is why the teens volunteered to begin their work by watching two 10-minute video segments designed to show the human face of AIDS.

The videos changed Lewis' perspective. "I didn't realize what a small, privileged part of the world we live in. The world is really not fair, and a lot of people deal with famine and things that never cross our mind every day."

Several of the teenage volunteers also participated in a 30-hour fast and then went to Seattle area community programs to contribute to some of the pressing local needs.

"They get to see what is going on in Africa, but then realize that there is a lot to do right here in Seattle," says Adam Anderson, the event organizer.

—Laura Peach



Working Overtime, pt. 1

SEVERAL DIFFERENT EVENTS MARKED RESISTANCE TO MILITARY EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST MARCH 16-19. RUTH LORENZ REMEMBERS OLYMPIA ACTIVIST RACHEL CORRIE ON THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF HER DEATH IN THE GAZA STRIP. PHOTO BY ELLIOT STOLLER.



Working Overtime, pt. 2

AROUND 1,000 ACTIVISTS — AND FOUR JAILBIRD EFFIGIES — MARCHED ON THE FEDERAL BUILDING IN DOWNTOWN SEATTLE TO MARK THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INVASION OF IRAQ. PHOTO BY MARK SULLO.

Loose in Translation

SPD guidelines on conversing with non-English speakers fall short, experts say

By PAUL RICE
Contributing Writer

Thanh Chi Phan, a Vietnamese immigrant who ran an unlicensed daycare facility in King County, may soon be remanded to state prison for an eight- to 10-year sentence if she is convicted of shaking 10-month-old Crystal Ly hard enough to give her brain damage.

Phan can barely speak English and was interviewed by a police interpreter who, according to her defense attorney, may have misinterpreted Phan's testimony, leading her to be wrongly accused.

Being a police officer can be hard work as it is. When you throw the need to operate in high-stress situations that might involve languages you don't speak, things can get even hairier. The Seattle Police Department has informal policies to deal with such situations when they happen.

"If we need to take immediate action, we're going to do that to protect the public," says SPD spokesperson Sean Whitcomb. "Once we get to an environment that is safe for everyone, then we can worry about dealing with the proper translation."

Whitcomb offers one scenario: Police are alerted to an assault-in-progress, which on arrival turns out to be a domestic violence situation between two Spanish-speaking people who don't comprehend English. Police would separate the subjects and then call for a Spanish-speaking officer to interpret.

If none were available and the situation were hostile, officers would detain the subjects, even if they couldn't properly tell them their Miranda rights.

"Our department policy states we will Mirandize on arrest," Whitcomb says, but acknowledges that often this is not the case with non-English-speaking persons. Constitutionally, it's only necessary prior to interrogation and imprisonment, so a subject can be detained and then read their rights at a later time, according to Whitcomb.

The Seattle police's use of bilingual officers to translate may cause more problems than it solves. Legal experts instructing police departments on how to deal with non-English-speaking people warn that the use of bilingual officers in any situation, even potentially violent ones, may be a death sentence for the court case that follows.

The National Association of Judicial Interpreters and Translators published a position paper recently which stated that, "Use of a bilingual officer [to interpret] may be regarded as a conflict of interest and may also be challenged in court." The Summit/Lorain Project, a resource document for dealing with language barriers, concurs. "Ability to carry out basic conversation in a foreign language is not enough for situations where safety and life can be at stake," it says. "Language proficiency must be reliably tested for police standards."

According to Whitcomb, bilingual officers are used by the SPD to interpret, but specific data on how often they are used was not forthcoming. He did, however, confirm that bilingual officers used in such situations are not certified or trained for interpreting.

A survey conducted by the city and released in December found that immigrant communities in Seattle rated police, fire, parks, and other public services highly. Released by the mayor and City Council, the survey also suggested that government agencies hire more bilingual staff.

The defense that Phan's attorney plans to mount has worked in the past — a notable example was in a 1999 murder trial in Ohio. Alejandro Ramirez was convicted of one count of murder, but because he could not read, speak, or understand English, and the interpreter used by police mangled the Miranda warning, his conviction was overturned and Ramirez set free.

Roberto Maestas, executive director of El Centro de la Raza in Seattle, hasn't heard about any problems with the SPD's handling of situations with non-English-speaking people lately, but does say there's a history of impropriety.

"The cop culture is very corrupt, and even though there may not be grotesque manifestations of this at any given time, the daily dysfunction is a reality for people of color," says Maestas. "It's something that's inevitable — at some point, something will come up." n

"Once we get to an environment that is safe for everyone, then we can worry about dealing with the proper translation."

—Sean Whitcomb, SPD spokesperson

"The cop culture is very corrupt, and even though there may not be grotesque manifestations of this at any given time, the daily dysfunction is a reality for people of color."

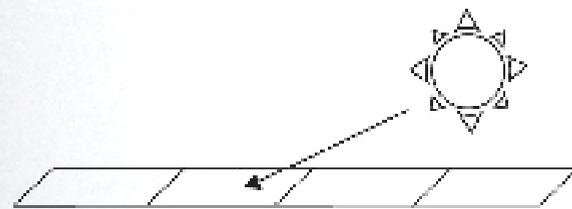
—Roberto Maestas, executive director, El Centro de la Raza

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Story Problem 8



Assume sunlight travels to Earth at a rate of 186,000 miles per second and concrete possesses a thermal mass of .15 degrees Fahrenheit per hour (in direct sunlight). If the temperature drops to 27 degrees Fahrenheit, how much perseverance do you need to fend off hypothermia?



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A Dangerous Road

Historian Michael K. Honey on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike

"Part of history is telling people's stories, particularly people who have been left out. To tell this history, you can't rely on the official sources, because African Americans are hardly found. So oral history became important to this project, where I could find the workers and have them tell the story as they remembered it."

By ROBIN LINDLEY
Contributing Writer

Memphis, Tennessee. April 4, 1968. A bullet from an assassin's high-powered rifle strikes Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and throws him to the balcony floor outside his room at the Lorraine Motel.

Most Americans know that Dr. King died in Memphis, but few of them recall why he traveled there. In the last year of his life, King changed his focus from civil rights issues to ending the war in Vietnam and ending poverty at home. In early 1968, 1,300 mostly black, underpaid sanitation workers in Memphis went on strike for better working conditions and union recognition. King heeded the call to Memphis to support these striking workers who epitomized the poverty and economic injustice he planned to dramatize with his Poor People's Campaign.

University of Washington history professor Michael K. Honey has written the first definitive history of the sanitation workers strike in his new book, *Going Down Jericho Road: The Memphis Strike and Martin Luther King's Last Campaign* (W.W. Norton, 2007). The book weaves the stories of the workers, activists, and local politicians with a detailed account of the last weeks of King's life. Cornel West called the book "a magisterial account of this neglected period." *Publisher's Weekly* and *Library Journal* honored *Jericho Road* with starred reviews.

Dr. Michael Honey teaches African-American, Ethnic and Labor Studies, and American History as a full professor at the University of Washington, Tacoma. He also wrote two previous award-winning histories: *Black Workers Remember: An Oral History of Segregation, Unionism, and the Freedom Struggle* (1999) and *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights: Organizing Memphis Workers* (1993). He lives in Tacoma with his wife, Patti Krueger, a music teacher at the University of Puget Sound.

Real Change: What sparked your book on Dr. King and the 1968 Sanitation Worker's Strike in Memphis?

Dr. Michael Honey: There wasn't a major book on the Memphis sanitation strike. It needed to be done, and I tried to write a definitive version. I also had my own experience as organizer in the Deep South from 1970 to 1976 with police repression and civil liberties cases. I lived in Memphis at that time, so I knew a lot of people in the book. It was a place that I could look at as a historian, but also know as an activist.

RC: What was the situation in Memphis in 1968?

Honey: Basically, the leaders of Memphis thought that they had an admirable record on race relations, but in reality, it was a city of massive poverty in the Black community. Over half of the Black community was below the poverty line in the 1960s, and 86 percent of employed Black men did laboring jobs. They were stuck at the bottom. A large proportion of Black women [were] domestic workers in white people's homes. The things that King was talking about when he was killed — social and economic justice — had not been addressed at all.

RC: Did the deaths of the two sanitation workers in February 1968 spark this strike?

Honey: It had been brewing for a long time. They had been organizing that union since 1959. When they came out publicly with the union demands in the early 1960s, 33 workers were fired. That was the city's response to people belonging to a union.

By 1968, the workers were very dissatisfied. February is not a time to strike in the garbage business. You want to strike in the summertime when it's hot and the garbage will smell, pile up, and make it difficult for the city. But this crushing of two Black men in the back of a sanitation packing truck combined with another incident, in which workers were sent home with only two hours of pay because it rained — and the white workers were allowed



to stay at work and make a whole day's pay— those two incidents together pushed people across the line. The city claimed it was a plot by the union, but it wasn't at all. The workers had a meeting on a Sunday night and said, "Well, hell, let's not go back to work." And that was the start of it.

RC: You write about the sanitation workers and the local leaders as well as Dr. King in the vein of a people's history, as in the works of Howard Zinn.

Honey: Part of history is telling people's stories, particularly people who have been left out. To tell this history, you can't rely on the official sources, because African Americans are hardly found. So oral history became important to this project, where I could find the workers and have them tell the story as they remembered it.

RC: You stress that Dr. King was a champion of workers.

Honey: I tried to show a side of King that nobody has written about: His strong ties to organized labor and his lifelong support for unions. He had been involved in a strike in Atlanta in 1964 that he helped to win. He had spoken before most of the major international unions of the country. He had strong allies among Black and white labor leaders.

RC: A few days before his death, on March 28, 1968, Dr. King led a march in Memphis that became violent. Did you find any evidence that police or the FBI instigated that violence?

Honey: The House Select Committee on Assassinations, I believe, said that there were undercover agents possibly involved in that disruption on March 28. There might have been

University of Washington professor Michael Honey gathered accounts of the Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike by drawing on contacts from his youth in Tennessee. Photo courtesy of the author.

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Continued from Previous Page

some undercover police involved. I don't think we'll ever know, but clearly a lot of people were ready to do that, and this had never happened to King before. He'd never been in a march where discipline broke down like that.

RC: And the police response to the marchers was extremely violent.

Honey: It was a police riot more than anything. There was vandalism and some store windows broken, but the real violence was done by the police. And they killed a 16-year-old named Larry Payne who, witnesses said, had his hands in the air when a police officer stuck a shotgun in his stomach and pulled the trigger. It was a police attack on the movement, but the media played it up quite differently, saying the police were very restrained and prevented worse things from happening.

RC: This must have been a low point for King with his advisors, Black Power advocates, and mainstream Blacks questioning his actions.

Honey: King was the man in the middle. The more conservative people in the Civil Rights Movement had been attacking him for his opposition to the Vietnam War, and they didn't support the Poor People's Campaign. And the people in the Black Power movement in Memphis believed that the way to get a settlement was to increase the fear in the people who ran the city.

RC: Did you find evidence of FBI or police involvement in the death of Dr. King?

Honey: The incredible thing is that there were police all over the area where King was shot at the Lorraine Motel. There were 40 police cars roaming the downtown and central portions of Memphis. There were FBI [agents] posted around the Lorraine Motel. The Military Intelligence Division of the U.S. Army had operatives in the city. So you had all these law enforcement and military agents operating, and yet this one person — supposedly James Earl Ray — was able to penetrate all of that, shoot King, and get away.

As soon as King was shot, police poured into the courtyard at the Lorraine Motel. So the question people have is, where have you been? Why was there no protection for King? And there were a lot of reasons why there wasn't. King never asked for protection, but also, the FBI never offered it. They could have been operating quite differently, but J. Edgar Hoover, the head of the FBI, wanted to destroy King politically. That didn't mean he wanted to kill him, but he definitely was doing nothing to protect or help King.

RC: Dr. King was under scrutiny and threatened every day, yet kept going despite the harassment and threats.

Honey: He knew either he or his aides were being wiretapped, and anything the FBI dug up could be used against him. He had faced death many times in the movement. I think he adopted a mode of operating where he was definitely fearful — anybody would be — but also aware that this was out of his control, that it was something he had to accept — that he was probably going to be killed somewhere.

King made speeches throughout the movement,

not just in 1968, saying the most liberating thing is to get over the fear of death, and if you are not afraid to die for something, you are not fit to live. He had a sense that he was an instrument of history and had to just do his part, and whatever the consequences were he was going to accept. In his inspired speech the night before his death, he had a premonition of death, but he had a premonition of death all the time. That's a hard way to live.

He told his parents shortly before he came to Memphis that there was this reward out to kill him, and he thought that he would be killed. Yet he just carried on.

RC: And you credit his wife, Coretta Scott King, with calming marchers in Memphis on April 8, 1968 — just four days after his death.

Honey: Yes. After King's death, 135 cities went up in flames in the United States. It was the biggest military occupation in the United States since the Civil War, with 50,000 troops in the streets. But in Memphis, people believed that King wanted to prove he could do this mass march with no violence. Coretta King courageously picked up the mantle, and went to Memphis. She led this march of about 20,000 people from all over the country. Her incredible composure helped people remain non-violent. While other cities were blowing up, Memphis was not. People remained disciplined and continued to support the strike. That went on for another couple weeks, and finally the strikers won.

RC: What are your thoughts on how Dr. King would see the United States today?

Honey: I think King would be appalled at where things have gone since 1968. He really had high hopes. He said that the United States [could] abolish poverty, and the way to do that is to change our priorities, and specifically stop spending all this money on war and military production and tax breaks for the rich, and begin to redirect income towards social and human needs. That was his platform when he died, and that's right where we are today. As long as our government pours money down the drain through military spending and gives unbelievable amounts of wealth to people who already have unbelievable amounts of wealth, we can't solve the human problems of poverty and racism and injustice, either at home or abroad.

Robin Lindley is a Seattle attorney and writer who covers international affairs, human rights, politics, law, medicine, and the arts. He was a staff attorney with the U.S. House Select Committee on Assassinations on the investigation of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



DECADES BEFORE THE MILLION MAN MARCH, THERE WAS THE MEMPHIS SANITATION WORKERS STRIKE OF 1968. HUNDREDS OF WORKERS, AS A PART OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S, LAST CAMPAIGN, DEMAND TO BE SEEN AS MEN. PHOTO COPYRIGHT: RICHARD COPLEY.

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French History, as Fantasy

Ysabel
Guy Gavriel Kay
Viking \$24.95
Book Review

By SALLY JAMES
Contributing Writer

This fantasy novel set in France delicately weaves a modern juvenile's ennui with Celtic history, situating a pouting teenager on the hills and inside the Saint-Saveur cathedral of Aix-en-Provence.

When our narrator, Ned, gets frightened, he thinks of a video game. "There was a silence; no one moved. This would be a good time to save the game, Ned thought. Then restart if my character gets killed."

Ned is gawky and ignorant and petulant and turned on by women much older than he is. Some of the women he sighs over are just a decade older, and others are thousands of years old, as it turns out.

One particular woman, Ysabel, according to legend, was the daughter of a Celtic chief. When she picked a visiting Greek trader as her husband, it ignited anger among her tribe. Ned sees her image first, mislabeled, on a pillar. Later, when he stands before her, he has a different impression.

"He thought of the sculpture in the cloister... showing her as half gone from the beginning, even before time began its work. Eluding as she emerged. He understood it now. You saw Ysabel as you stood before her,

heard that voice, and you felt loss in the moment because you feared she might leave you."

Repercussions from that night disturb the tourist dark of a rented villa, summoning a pale, giant wild boar to wander through the warm nights near the spring solstice.

"It really was massive. The size of a small bear, practically, with short matted bristly hair, more gray than white. The tusks were curved and heavy. There was mud on them, and on the body, caked and plastered to the hair. The boar was dead center in the road, and there was no way around it."

Ned and his teen friend, Kate, have found the other side of an historic looking glass. They meet oversized warriors from long-extinct civilizations and become snared inside a developing drama. Typical fantasy powers emerge for Ned, bringing him occasional strength and, at other times, excruciating vulnerability:

"... [A] Swiss army knife was just about useless against a wolf. He [Ned] had his blade ready in time — he had it open in his pocket not long after the druid appeared — but unless you were good enough to stab a hurtling animal in the eye your knife was a distraction, nothing more."

Love plays an unusual role in the book, more sophisticated in defining

character than simple romantic love frosted with glamour. Ned's love for his mother, respect for his aunt, and fascination with his female friend all factor in the way he makes decisions. His ancient friends are in thrall to a lust that threatens lives, but hearkens back to the roots of their civilizations.

The author, Kay, reveals his own love of this serene and savage part of France. He makes a mountain important to the painter Cezanne play a crucial role, suggesting that seeing Montagne Sainte-Victoire differently, from another time and a different side, can literally save someone's life. Sainte-Victoire looms above the last third of this tale, bringing some of the lonely majesty that Cezanne saw, but a lot of other themes. There is blood in the soil of the battlegrounds, even if tourists troop across them obliviously. Kay makes us see the people who fought, died and faded. His hero's history lesson transcends any classroom experience. Ned "imagined a ship sailing from Greece a really long time ago, passing dark, forbidding forests and mountain ranges that hid whatever was inland from view, leaving it shrouded and mysterious.... He imagined those native warriors with their druids and rituals and forest gods, and goddesses of still pools, pictured them coming through the woods to see these strangers." n

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In Ysabel, author Guy Gavriel Kay makes us see the people who fought, died and faded. His hero's history lesson transcends any classroom experience.

It Goeth, Before the Fall

By LESTER GRAY
Arts Editor

Pride
Directed by Sunu Goner
Opens in theaters
March 23

A film evocative of the true agony of racial discrimination and enmity is rare, if it exists at all. Most often depicted as an event, bracketed by time and space, the enduring haunt of such trauma is most often lost. But in real life there is no such evaporation, and even a repressed memory insists on an emotionally erosive vigilance against further attacks.

Pride, based on a true story of an African-American swim team fighting for the right to compete in the early 1970s, succeeds in bringing a bit more of this emotional hue to the screen. Although it is never stated in the film, integrated swim meets are unsung and underrated milestones in the struggle for civil rights. Racist mythology always includes a perverse pathogenic component; in this case, "What disease might one contract?" from sharing a swimming pool with Negroes.

Bink (Tom Arnold) confronts Jim Ellis (Terrance Howard) and Elston (Bernie Mac).

Jim Ellis (Terrance Howard), an African American and former collegiate swimmer with a degree in mathematics, is looking for a job, hopefully as a coach or teacher. In the minds of some, the fact that he has designs on such positions questions his intelligence to fulfill either one.

The employment he settles for involves preparing a dilapidated, ghetto recreation facility for demolition. The welcoming committee is anything but. Outside the building, Jim encounters an impudent group of Black teenagers who gather daily on the basketball court. Inside, he finds the crotchety old janitor, Elston (Bernie Mac), holed up in the basement, having given up on himself and the dissipating edifice he is paid to maintain.

In the process of packing up what little redeemable equipment remains at the community center, Ellis comes upon a swimming pool. Coincidentally, the outdoor basketball rim comes down with the dismantling of the building. With a bit of coaxing, and a healthy exchange of trash-talk, the erstwhile hoopsters are soon swimming laps and practicing strokes — an actual swim team.

But finding organizations willing to compete with Blacks is a task exceeded only by the difficulty of convincing schools to attend a meet at the inner-city facility. By fits and starts, the team begins to find competition and itself.

Bernie Mac, usually seen in comedic roles, is superb in his role as the dour maintenance man. Terrance Howard is solid as the proverbial trailblazer, and Tom Arnold is average as a cookie-cutter racist coach.

What could have been just another serving in the steady diet of Black-athletes-overcoming-racism films, *Pride* manages to transcend its predecessors. It captures the dignity that was once associated with the resilience and courage to take racism's best shots, while maintaining one's equanimity and keep on keepin'-on. n

What could have been just another serving in the steady diet of Black-athletes-overcoming-racism films, *Pride* manages to transcend its predecessors.





**Adventures
in Irony**

©Dr. Wes Browning

Can You Say, "Conservapedia"?

I looked up "Algebra" on Conservapedia to see algebra defined as arithmetic with letters used to stand for numbers. That's like defining brain surgery as the rearrangement of brains

I have never contributed to Wikipedia because I don't know anything more than, say, Socrates. Like Socrates, I know that Socrates knew nothing except that he knew nothing, and that Plato was his bitch. That would make a heck of a Wikipedia entry wouldn't it?: "Socrates, circa 470-399 BC, self-acknowledged ignoramus. Everything Plato knew, he learned from Socrates."

But don't do as I do, do as I say: Know things. Some say all you have to do is read the Bible, and then you'll know everything you need to know. Since I've read it, that would make me cool, but I can shoot this notion down with just two words: April, fifteenth. Not in the Bible! But you need to know it! Joseph and Mary knew that taxes were due the same time she was. They wouldn't have if they'd only gone by what was in the Bible in their day.

A woman I met was incensed when told to appear at a later hearing after pleading innocent to a minor charge. She said, "That's not fair, I said I was innocent, why didn't they believe me? Why are they making me do more stuff?" I guess it wasn't enough that other people all around her have had this happen to them, throughout all of her life. It had to happen to her before it could get her attention. Don't be that way. Pay attention to how others are being rooked, you're in the same line.

One of the redeeming features of Conservapedia is its creators clearly agree on the point that I've been making, that it's important to know stuff that isn't in the Bible. That's why they don't only quote the Bible in their articles. Another redeeming feature is that it

is still an open wiki, like Wikipedia. So anyone can edit it.

I am sorely tempted. Whenever I see a new encyclopedia I always check its math entries. So I looked up "Algebra" on Conservapedia to see algebra defined as arithmetic with letters used to stand for numbers. That's like defining brain surgery as the rearrangement of brains with knives, as opposed to sledge hammers. There were no footnotes or references to direct the reader to more information. All that hard work, all those centuries, reduced to "algebra uses letters that stand for numbers."

I'm also tempted to delete thousands of excess uses of the word "great." Plutarch "wrote Plutarch's Lives and many great essays." "Cervantes wrote Don Quixote, a great satirical novel." The United States "is widely considered one of the greatest and most powerful nations on Earth." It recalls the old Chris Farley Show on SNL. Farley to Paul McCartney: "...you remember when you were with The Beatles?" McCartney: "Yeah, sure." Farley: "That was awesome!"

Anitra found this bit concerning George Washington: "Washington is perhaps the only person other than Jesus who declined enormous worldly power..." That should be amended to "Washington is perhaps the only slave owner who ever declined other enormous worldly power."

My favorite article on Conservapedia is the "Greek empire" entry under "Ancient Terms G." Except for the initial definition (the Greek empire was the land controlled by Ancient Greece) the entire article consists of answers from contributors to the question "For what would you thank the Ancient Greek Civilization?"

Answers include such gems as "the insightful literature of Plato and Aristotle, especially The Republic, which I have read several times," "I would like to thank the classical Greek civilization for the catapult," and, best of all, "I would like to thank classical Greek civilization for the invention of man-boy love affairs."

That's some damn fine stupid writing! n

Memorial

Driving a white county car
to weigh a baby,
to lend an ear to a mother three days old,
the nurse is stopped by a motorcade—
engines rumbling, lights sparkling
to the horizon of Pac Highway
like an angry Christmas tree.
Near the cemetery, men and women
in stiff jackets, green and gold,
line the sidewalk,
faces tightened, hiding tears.
White gloves rise up in the air.
The coffin comes draped in a flag.

The young mother's aunties and her own mother
live across four countries' borders.
Her neighbors come and go, 747's
leaping from the tarmac.
Her husband is her only one
and he is always working.
But the baby's fine. Eyes are white,
diapers wet, her lungs are strong.
The nurse tells secrets of the first milk,
checks her watch
and promises to return.

In the breakroom, she reads headlines
skipped since Sunday
about the lawyer who came home to White Center
to become a cop,
beloved by all accounts.
Even addicts and delinquents
who sat handcuffed in his backseat
cry outside the precinct. She reads headlines
about the man who shot him.
They say in the afternoon
he made another man lie down naked in the street
and shot him too.
Before dawn, he aimed a bullet at himself.

What makes a man thirst for blood,
for others' and his own?

What blows received this child?
What hunger? What hatred?

What happened to his mother?
And to her mother?
And to hers?

—JEREMY O. SIMER



Wed., Feb. 21, 1 p.m., Third Ave., sidewalk. Officers observed suspect a transient Black female aged 37, walking in the 500 block off Third Ave. Suspect was known to be in violation of her SODA (Stay Out of Drug Area) order by being on Third Order was verified and suspect was contacted, arrested, and booked into King County Jail.

Thurs., March 1, 5:17 p.m., First Ave. and S. Atlantic St. Officers driving on S Atlantic came across an unoccupied vehicle blocking the right lane. They checked the license plate and found an outstanding warrant listed on the owner of the vehicle. At around 5:40 p.m. suspect a transient Black male aged 59 arrived and identified himself as the owner of the car. The warrant was verified, and the suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail. His car was towed to the impound yard.

Fri., March 2, 2:38 p.m., E. Madison St. and 22nd Ave. ~~Supernatural~~ The male aged 54, was observed by officers walking slowly westbound on E. Madison. Officers recognized the man at once as he has a mole fitting below the knee, uses crutches, and wears a hat and hood. The officer has contacted the suspect before and is aware the man is a crack cocaine user. Officer states that the suspect has generated numerous complaints in the area recently, and that he had been verbally trespassed from Madison in November for one year. He contacted the man, arrested him and searched his pockets; they found a glass pipe which tested positive for the presence of cocaine. Suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Fri., March 2, 12:57 a.m., Aurora Ave. N., Quality Inn. The manager of the Quality Inn on Aurora Ave called officers to assist him in removing two transients sleeping in one of the hotel rooms. The room was currently under renovation and was not available to rent. The officers succeeded in entering the room and found the suspects asleep on the floor. Both provided ID, and one of the suspects, a transient Black male aged 44, was found to have an outstanding warrant. This was verified, and suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail.

Sat., March 3, 5:48-6:00 p.m., Broadway Ave. A transient Native American male aged 38 was observed drinking the alcoholic energy drink TIL in a private stairwell on Broadway. When contacted by the officers she gave a false name and date of birth and claimed to be from Alaska. Officers could find no record of the man. They noticed a wallet in his jacket, and asked if that contained ID—the man handed it over, and officers found an ID with the man's correct name and date of birth. A name check revealed two outstanding warrants, which were 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.

GRASSY, Continued from Page 1

This year, Swain and two others — youth organizer Carol Kejick and Warren Ashopenace, one of the original Grassy Narrows blockaders — drove 3,000 miles for a protest March 13 at the Built Green Conference in Everett. While representatives of Quadrant were inside receiving a Built Green award from the Masters Builders Association, protesters from the Rainforest Action Network donned cardboard caribou antlers and sprawled on the sidewalk to demonstrate the destruction in the Whiskey Jack Forest.

Ashopenace says Weyerhaeuser buys about half the site's wood for a mill it operates in Kenora, Ontario. Rainforest Action members say products made there under the Timberstrand label are currently being used at Quadrant construction sites in Bothell, Lynnwood, Kent and other cities.

Quadrant is one of five home-building companies that Weyerhaeuser owns in the U.S. Last year, according to Weyerhaeuser's latest annual report, the companies sold more than 5,800 homes for \$2.9 billion, with the company clearing an overall profit of \$453 million in sales.

Ashopenace says more than half the forest in their territory is now gone. With its loss, beaver, deer and moose have moved on, he says, devastating the hunting and trapping that many Grassy Narrows people once depended on in winter. After the clearcuts, the three say the logging companies spray herbicides that kill everything but the new trees they've planted, making it unsafe to gather traditional medicines such as bitterroot or sage.

"We're basically left with nothing now. A lot of people are on welfare," Swain says.

See GRASSY, Continued on Page 12

Letters

editor@realchangenews.org

That Goose is Cooked

Dear Real Change,

I just purchased the March 7-13 issue of Real Change, as I always try to do. But if I listen to you ["Say Yes to No and No: the tunnel and the elevated are solutions of a bygone era"], this may be the last one I can afford.

In case you haven't noticed, the money that I use to purchase the paper, the money that I come up with to pay taxes (a lot) and the money I donate to worthy non-profits (also a lot) come from one place: commerce.

While it may be an admirable objective to become less energy-dependent, doing so at the cost of killing commerce is to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. And for the homeless population you purport to serve and represent, who are dependent on the tax-supported and donor-supported services of others, you are killing it in spades.

You see, we are not just automobile dependent. We are freight dependent. We are commerce dependent. If commerce and freight don't move, then economic activity stops. You'll have a wonderful environmentally friendly region without emissions. And poor as a churchmouse.

It is easy to say "choke the roads" and people will find other ways to move. You're right. They will move to Long Beach, or Oakland, or Vancouver BC or the state of North Carolina — places that invest in transportation infrastructure not only to move people, but to move goods.

No, the answer is not to get people out of cars. The answer is to force cars to have lower emissions. China has tougher emission standards than we do. Brazil has the highest percentage of ethanol-running vehicles in the world. It is an uphill battle to reduce vehicle traffic without damaging the regional economy.

If you want to see what could happen, go to Downtown Memphis. Go to Downtown Detroit. Even go to Downtown Los Angeles. When cars can't get there, the downtown area dies. If downtown Seattle dies, so does the vibrant commerce that is headquartered there. And when the economy suffers, the homeless and the poor feel it first.

So, if you know economics, and you really want to serve your constituents,

eschew the knee-jerk easy solutions and advocate for the tough but doable ones: the ones that will preserve the golden goose that is serving the low income, homeless and poor in your mission statement. Surface plus transit will not work. Dream on if you want, but if you look at the whole transportation system, it simply will not work....even if you are successful in reducing some of the vehicular traffic.

As for me, if people like you prevail and my income goes down, you can bet that I'll stop buying Real Change before I curtail many other less discretionary purchases. Pardon my sarcasm, but I hope you see the point.

Skip Kotkins
Seattle

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

LEGISLATURE, Continued from Page 3

vocacy director at Seattle's Solid Ground (formerly the Fremont Public Association).

But Lee says the House did follow the governor's lead in increasing the Housing Trust Fund, which supports construction of low-income housing, from \$100 million to \$140 million, making the extra \$40 million a sure bet in the final budget's passage.

The remaining bills must make it out of the house they were passed to last week by March 30. n

[Keeping Score in Olympia: Still in play]

Source of Income: HB 1956, which would prevent landlords from discriminating against renters because they receive welfare, disability or other public benefits, passed the House.

Public Health: HB 1825 was aimed at providing an extra \$50 million a year for public health services, but passed the House minus the dollar figure, which Speaker Frank Chopp says will have to be worked out with the Senate.

[Out of the game]

Condo Conversion: A bill that would have extended protections to renters facing redevelopment of their buildings failed to get a vote in either the House or Senate.

Health Security Trust: Rep. Sherry's Appleton's bid to create a universal health care system in Washington state died, but will return next year.

Payday Loan Interest Cap: "The bad news is that all the payday lending bills died," says Marcie Bowers of the Statewide Poverty Action Network. "But the good news is the bad ones died as well."



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Community Brainstorming Session for Design of "Homeless Place of Remembrance." Tues., March 27, 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m., 1911 First Ave. (between Stewart and Virginia). For info, call (206) 956-0334.

Annual Art of Self-Defense Auction Fundraiser. Original art, music packages, travel, fashion jewelry, culinary packages, unique experiences. Sat., April 14, 6 p.m. www.homealive.org or call for info 206-323-HOME

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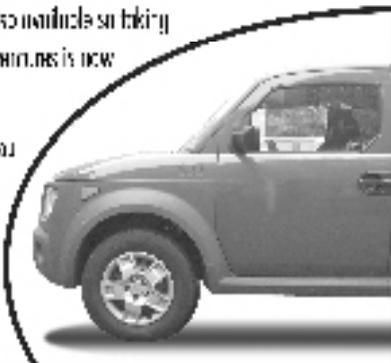
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Calendar

This Week's Top Ten

Wednesday 3/21

Psychotherapist Valerie Tarico, an existentialist Christian and author of *The Dark Side: How Evangelical Teachings Corrupt Love and Truth*, will be giving a presentation at the Annual Meeting of Americans United. 7 p.m., Rainier Unitarian Universalist Center, 835 Yesler Way.

Seattle, Eighth and Seneca.

"Poetry is what maintains our capacity for contemplation and difficulty," says Carolyn Forché, a poet as well as a human rights advocate, who has spent her life combining a deep social commitment with an attention to letters. 7:30 p.m., Intiman Theater, 201 Mercer St. Tickets: (206) 269-1900.

Friday 3/23

Hop Scotch, née Hops on Equinox, is a local beer and scotch festival that benefits the Northwest Folklife Festival. Featuring over 50 different styles of hoppy brew, plus several different styles of well-aged scotch (with the friendly addition of an expert scotch hand-holder to guide you through your sips), you'll be supporting a good cause while tipping the best. Ben Franklin would be proud. 5 p.m., Fremont Studios, 155 N. 35th St. Info: (206) 633-0422.



Rebecca Walker, outspoken third-wave feminist, published author, not to mention daughter of *The Color Purple* author Alice Walker, had a baby. Now she has written a book about it, titled *Baby Love: Choosing Motherhood After A Lifetime Of Ambivalence*. Considering the struggles she went through with child in utero, including being shunned and ultimately written out of her mother's will for choosing to have a baby, Walker may have a few enlightening sentiments to share on motherhood. Thurs., March 22, 7 p.m., Douglass-Truth Branch, Seattle Public Library, 2300 E. Yesler Way.

Thursday 3/29

Lolita was captured in 1970 and has been performing in Florida for 30 years now, much to the chagrin of certain activists, who claim her removal from the wild, forced imprisonment, and almost daily performances are inhumane. No, Lolita is no Nabokovian conjuring now dancing the rumba in Sarasota: She's a killer whale. Lolita: Slave to Entertainment is a documentary detailing her capture, and subsequent efforts to free her from a life in captivity. 7 p.m., Camp Long Environmental Learning Center, 5200 35th Ave. SW.

In this age of infinite possibilities for recording self and others, when

do we stop being participants in our own lives and become documentarians? Some of these questions may be answered by Robert Zverina, as he leads us through his presentation entitled "AUTOBIOANTHROPOLOGY," featuring his films, described as, "1 to 30 second works that explore moments of grace within the quotidian," whatever that means. 7 p.m., Henry Art Gallery, 15th Ave. NE and NE 41st Street.

Sunday 4/1

Fresh from singing for Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, the Soweto Gospel Choir makes its way to Seattle to throw down some licks, chops, and good old South African boogaloo. 3 p.m., Paramount Theater, 911 Pine St. Tix: (206) 467-5510.

Monday 3/26

Bob Woodruff was an embedded anchorman for ABC in Iraq, until an IED blew up his ride, leaving him with head trauma so bad he had to have part of his skull removed. Now more or less recovered, he's touring the country with his wife, Lee, to promote their memoir *In An Instant*. 7:30 p.m., Town Hall

Calendar compiled by Paul Rice. Have a suggestion for an event? Email to calendar@realchangenews.org.

Director's Corner



Having a successful journey begins with being excited about the destination and having some idea of how you're getting there. That's why I'm thrilled to say that Real Change has completed our strategic plan for the next three years and to get all colloquial by you, it pretty much kicks ass. We find ourselves living in a time of growing inequality and political polarization. As Seattle grows increasingly gentrified and—a direct consequence—less diverse, local government has committed to ending homelessness within the next decade.

These contradictory realities form the context for our work. This plan is our best attempt to meet the challenges and opportunities offered at this difficult time. Our work over the next three years will build upon our strongest assets: the power of our unique advocacy niche and our vendor/reader relationships, our credibility as an activist community newspaper, and our authenticity as a voice of the poor.

New directions include regional expansion, development of neighborhood-based organizing model, deepening the access our vendors have to services and other employment options, and building a stronger and more unified voice of the poor. We are committed to deepening our identity as a cross-class, multi-cultural organization, and this goal is expressed in each of the program areas as well as in the anti-bias aspect of the plan itself.

A preliminary version is ready for release and available on our wiki at realchange.wikispaces.com.



First Things First

Get Involved • Take Action

Ending Homelessness Takes Real Money

Issue: Homelessness can't be ended—oreven reduced significantly—without adequate resources being devoted to solving the problem. The state legislature is in the process of writing the 2007-2009 biennial budget, and they are considering a number of proposals that would increase funding for affordable housing and supportive services. One proposal, part of E2SHB 1359, would raise \$13 million to help end homelessness.

Background: During the last one-night count, more than 24,000 homeless people were counted in Washington State. In January, more than 2,000 were found surviving outdoors in just Seattle and King County. Thousands more were living in emergency shelters and short-term transitional housing, and undoubtedly, many more were not counted at all. Over the course of a year, at least three times as many people experience homelessness as are counted on any one night.

In 2005, the legislature passed the Homelessness Housing and Assistance Act. This added a \$10 surcharge to certain document recording fees collected by county auditors during great state transactions. Funds are divided between counties and the state, and it raises about \$16 million a year. Funds are used to implement 10-year plans to end homelessness and to fund housing and services to accomplish the goals of the 10-year plans.

This funding is important to our local efforts to end homelessness, but it's not enough. When King County sought applications for use of the money collected from the \$10 fee, it received over \$32 million in requests for just over \$6 million in available funds. 78 projects applied and 16 were funded.

E2SHB (Engrossed—which means that it's passed one chamber of the legislature already)—2nd Substitute House Bill) 1359 adds an additional surcharge of \$8. Local governments would get 90 percent, and the remaining 10 percent would go to the state for ending homelessness.

The amount of the fee is consequential in a real estate transaction. To put it in context, the median price of a home in King County is \$405,000, and on that sale there is \$7,209 excise tax, plus brokerage payment, loan fees, lawyers, etc. Another \$8 won't make a difference in any real estate transaction, but \$13 million will make a difference in ending homelessness.

Action: The bill has been referred to the Senate Consumer Protection and Housing committee and has been scheduled for a hearing on March 22 (a good sign). Friends in Olympia tell us that it will need a strong collective push in order to pass. Please call the legislative hotline at 1-800-562-6000 and leave a message for your State Senator asking her or him to help make sure that the document recording fee in E2SHB 1359 is passed because we need the \$13 million it would generate to end homelessness.

If your senator is on that committee, it is especially important that you call this week. Committee members are Brian Weinstein (D-Mercer Island), Claudia Kauffman (D-Kent), Jim Honeyford (R-Sunnyside), Jerome Delvin (R-Richland), Mary Margaret Hauger (D-Camano Island), Ken Jacobsen (D-Seattle), Derek Kilmer (D-Gig Harbor), Bob McCaslin (R-Spokane Valley), and Rodney Tom (D-Bellevue).

Find out who represents you, or find your senator's email address: www.leg.wa.gov.

BROOKS, Continued from Page 1

questions, he was placed, for no reason he can determine, on suicide watch.

The next afternoon, in court at a first appearance — wherein a judge, upon examining a police report, determines whether there's probable cause in an alleged charge — bond was set for \$25,000. Unable to raise the funds (Brooks works as a dishwasher at Elysian Fields in SoDo, bringing home \$9 an hour), he was left to share a cell with close to 20 others, which Brooks said only had bunks for 14: Those without beds slept on the floor. There he remained until he was eventually released on Feb. 8. No charges were filed at the time.

All told, from the moment Brooks was picked up to the moment he was set free, he'd been held for just shy of 72 hours.

That was over a month ago. But for Brooks, the humiliation of and confusion surrounding those three days remains fresh. He says he's got questions for the police. "I want to know why I was arrested, and why I had to stay in there so long," says Brooks. "And why I was just dropped off in the system."

To help ferret out answers, Brooks has obtained pro bono legal assistance from Sunil Abraham, staff attorney at the Racial Disparity Project, which sits within the Defender Association. Abraham says that they've tried to obtain a copy of the incident report from police, to view the Seattle Police Department's perspective. But they were informed, says Abraham, with the case still being open, the only way to release the report is for Brooks' legal counsel to initiate a discovery process. But such an undertaking, counters Abraham, represents a Catch-22, as Brooks would have to be charged with a crime in order for the discovery process to be set in motion.

"It's not clear what it's going to take [to obtain the report]," says Abraham, who adds that Brooks has written to the police specifically requesting parts of the report that pertain directly to him.

A media relations officer for the SPD says police investigators have

sent the case across the street, to the prosecutor's office. Senior deputy prosecuting attorney Dan Donohoe acknowledges his office has received the case and that it's under review. As there's still some follow-up investigation going on, Donohoe says, as of March 20, no decision has been made as to whether charges will be filed.

Abraham says that even though Brooks was told he was not being charged at the time, he wonders what will happen if Brooks, at any time in the future, is arrested again. Will the arrest be expunged from his record, or, asks Abraham, "Is this incident going to come back to haunt him?"

Haunting Brooks now are his feelings over how he was treated during those three days from arrest to release. He says that when he was being driven to the East Precinct — during which time Brooks says an officer commented that he had a "squeaky clean record" — he suggested to the officers they take him to SCCC, to have someone in the computer center verify he'd just been there. "But that never happened," says Brooks.

Even with all his concerns — including the monetary strain produced by two days' lost wages — Brooks says he wants people to know about what happened to him, so that people are aware how race played a part in his arrest. I want people to know, says Brooks, "that innocent Black men and African-American men in the community are being stopped for nothing. And just being taken off to jail." n

GRASSY, Continued from Page 10

Mercury poisoning is also a problem. A pulp mill caused the poisoning in the 1960s, but Ashopenace says the clear-cutting disturbs contaminated dust, keeping mercury levels and health problems high among his people.

Swain, for instance, was born without one kidney. Her granddaughter has epilepsy, which she says is a growing problem among Grassy Narrows newborns. To make matters worse, her daughter and two nieces are facing trial in July after being arrested last year for what Swain says was a peaceful road blockade.

Inside Weyerhaeuser's stockholder meeting on April 19, supportive shareholders plan to urge other investors to pass a proposal they have filed with the company. It calls on Weyerhaeuser to study its commitments at Whiskey Jack and report on what options it might have for getting its wood elsewhere.

In a written reply to the proposal, Weyerhaeuser notes the Kenora mill

provides jobs for aboriginal people and that "no comparable timber sources are available within reasonable transport distance."

Weyerhaeuser also says it's a government matter: "We believe that treaty claims must be addressed by the provincial and federal governments directly with the First Nation leaders."

Swain and Ashopenace respond that provincial and federal officials each say

it's up to the other to resolve. In the meantime, the clearcutting and herbicide spraying continue.

"We're not just doing it for ourselves," Swain says. "Every day you hear about global warming.

You have to think about what's being lost up there [and] all the fancy homes they're building as a result of what we're losing." n

[Resource]
More information is available at www.freegrassy.org.

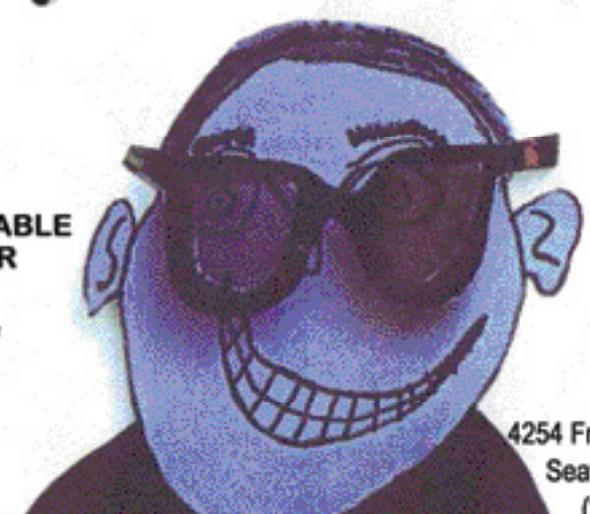
"We used to pick blueberries. We can't even do that now because of the contaminants."

—Maria Swain, member of Ojibway tribe

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