

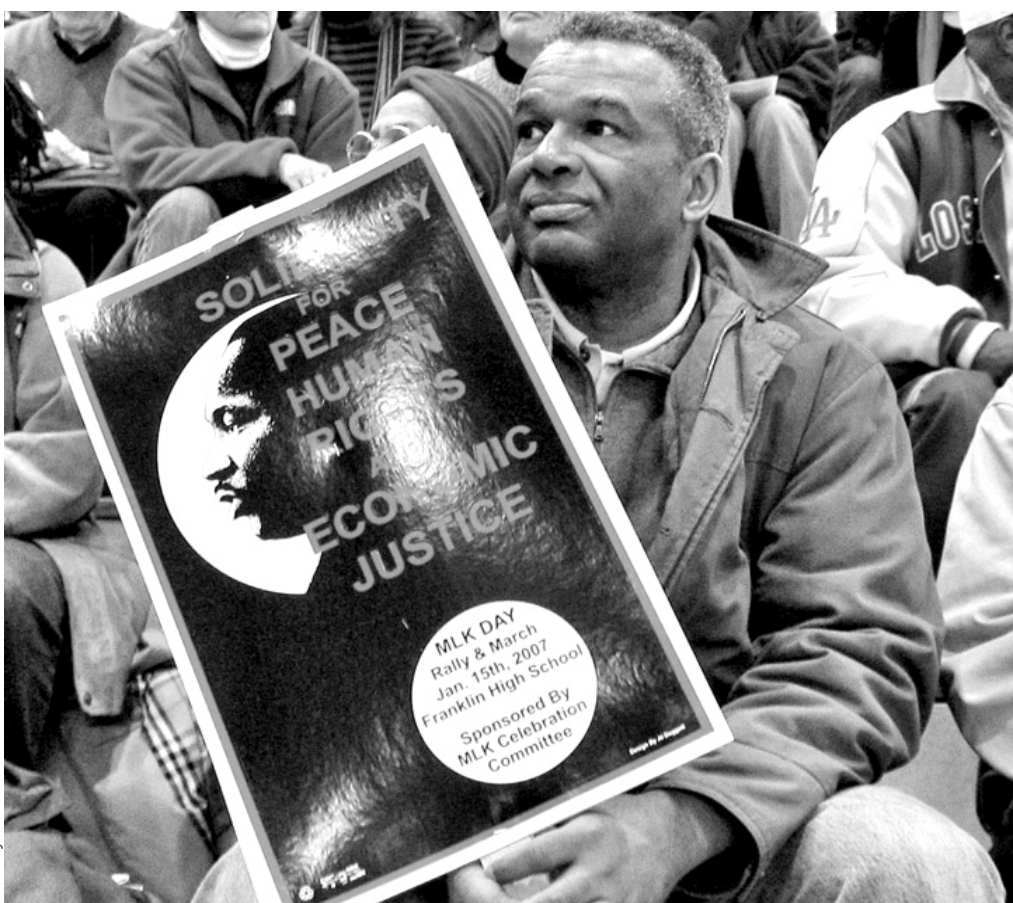
\$1 REAL CHANGE

VOL 14, NO. 20
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Have anti-war posters delayed his passport?



Activist Thomas Hays needs a passport to cover a G8 Summit in Germany, then document globalization's effect on Mexico's poor. The State Department says he needs more documentation...see page 4.



The mentally deserve a place among us

King County Executive Ron Sims says that housing solutions require everyone to say, Yes. "We cannot say we want to end homelessness if we are not willing to be part of the solution."...see page 2.

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

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

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The *Real Change* Homeless Empowerment Project is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Programs include the *Real Change* newspaper, the 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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Ignorance and fear are driving a NIMBY effort against housing for the mentally ill. Knowledge and understanding can stop it.

If We Say No, How Can We Ask Anyone to Say Yes?

By **RON SIMS**, King County Executive

I have lived for many years in Southeast Seattle and love Columbia City, a vibrant and growing part of our community, with a rich diversity of residents, faith communities, and businesses.

Currently, our community is divided on a proposed new housing project to be sited on Rainier Avenue South that will provide housing and onsite services for previously homeless people with mental illness. Much has been written and said about this project, and about the individuals who will be its new residents. Fear is a powerful emotion, and fear of the unknown is human nature. Knowledge and understanding are the antidotes.

We are not as far removed from homelessness as some might like to think. Those who are homeless include our neighbors, and often our own family and friends. A public opinion poll conducted last spring by United Way of King County found that 23 percent of the responders reported that someone in their immediate family had been homeless at one time.

Mental health disorders and mental health problems affect people of all ages,

Rainier House is not a shelter. It is not a drop-in center. It is a home — for 50 poor and disabled people who have long been without one.

all backgrounds, and at all stages of life. The National Alliance for Mental Illness estimates that mental illness affects one in five families in America.

Unfortunately, however, when many people hear “homeless” or “mentally ill,” they think of sensational news stories or movie plotlines involving danger and aberrant behavior. Despite last month’s tragedy in Virginia, this is largely a stereotype. The reality is very different. There is simply no statistical evidence that people

with mental illness are more dangerous than the general population. In fact, current research shows that people with mental illness are 2.5 times more likely to be the victims of violence than other members of society. The nature of their illnesses often leads more to isolation, rather than to aggression. The stereotype is even more wrong when applied to people receiving treatment in supportive settings.

For several years, King County has worked with our community partners to develop housing and supportive services to help people with mental illness get off the streets and into stable living environments connected to the treatment and other services they need to achieve recovery. Recovery doesn’t mean a cure. It means a normalization of life in a community, with meaningful relationships, employment, and housing. To accomplish this, we need whole communities to come together.

One of our strongest partners for more than 20 years has been the Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC), a non-profit agency dedicated to serving the most vulnerable and challenging of our citizens. They have won major national awards for their ability to do this in a way that is safe for the community and successful for their clients.

The Rainier project will provide 50 rental studio apartments with 24-hour supportive services for men and women with mental illness transitioning out of homelessness. DESC has been very clear as to their commitment to screen all applicants and exclude from residency anyone convicted of a violent felony, including sex offenders. All will have access to on-site treatment and other programs.

I learned about homelessness from the very best teachers: men and women living on the streets of Seattle. As a lay



Photo by Katia Roberts

Ron Sims, left, at a Martin Luther King Jr. Day rally.

minister with Operation Nightwatch, I spent many nights talking with people from all walks of life who found themselves with little money, no home, and waning hope. I was moved and humbled by their challenges, and my experiences then fuel my determination now to find solutions to homelessness, not temporary stopgaps.

Our goal in King County, and it is an ambitious one, is to end homelessness by creating permanent housing for low-income and disabled people, along with the supportive services they need to maintain that housing. We have a 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County. It represents years of *community* effort and planning.

This is an exciting and pivotal moment in our response to this important issue. We have made real progress. We must keep that momentum moving.

Supported housing for people with major mental illness is a proven practice for helping build stability. Rainier House is not a shelter. It is not a drop-in center. It is a home — for 50 poor and disabled people who have long been without one.

We cannot say we want to end homelessness if we are not willing to be part of the solution. This is true, not just for Columbia City but for communities and neighborhoods across the county. We can and we will eliminate homelessness, one person at a time and one project at a time.

If we say no, how can we expect anyone else to say yes? ■



It's May, a time of year when an Executive Director's thoughts turn to money, why we need money, how can we get more money, who can give

us money, and so forth.

We launched the Summer Fund Drive last week, and so far readers have responded with

\$7,315 in donations. That's a great start, but a long way from the \$140,000 we need to raise in the next seven and a half weeks.

Here's why it matters. Right now, lots of people are talking about ending homelessness and reducing poverty. The issue is on both the local and national agendas. *Real Change*, as a respected and effective longtime leader on these issues, has an unprecedented organizing opportunity that is limited only by our capacity.

“Capacity” is a fancy way of saying “money.” Organizing for social justice takes staffing, and staffing takes money.

Director's Corner

Meeting our goal will allow us to hire additional organizing staff, consolidate our news team, and end our chronic overextension. We've always been the sort of organization that operates a little past the limits of what we can reasonably do. That probably won't change, but we need your help to push those limits further.

If you're already a supporter, look for a letter soon. If you haven't taken that step yet, visit our website at www.realchangenews.org to learn more about our work and how you can help. Please do your part to get us up to the speed of change.

Just Heard...

The kid's not all right

The 2006 One Night Count found nearly 800 children ages 6 and under homeless in King County. A few of them are being represented on the streets this Thursday as a local non-profit takes life-size cutouts to downtown sidewalks.

For Family Services' "Don't Just Look Away" campaign, child models posed with cardboard signs scrawled with statements like "We live in a car." Printed up at life size, the cutouts furnish visual reminders of those who are homeless but often hidden from view.

"Every [charity] is faced with the same dilemma; parents call us in desperate need, saying 'We're sleeping in our car,'" says Family Services' Patricia Gray. The agency was able to find housing for 296 families last year; they turned away many more.

The guerrilla stunt has the tacit sanction of Nordstrom and the state Convention Center, whose sidewalks will feature some of the 300 cutouts.

Housing the middle

Councilmember Tom Rasmussen wants to secure places to live for Seattle's middle class: those making 80 to 120 percent of the area's median income.

Rasmussen's asking the city to revise the city's Comprehensive Plan so its housing goals "better reflect the income demographics of the city," he wrote in a May 1 memo. Doing so could lead to an alteration of the city's \$86 million Housing Levy, currently targeted to the poor, when it comes up for renewal in 2009.

The Council's Urban Development and Planning Committee discusses this and other amendments Wednesday, May 9, at 2 p.m. at City Hall. Rasmussen couldn't speak to the amendment before press time.

—Adam Hyla

Quixote abroad

Camp Quixote is looking for a new home. The Olympia tent city has been housed on the property of a Unitarian church since early February, a week after it formed in protest of the city's new anti-homeless Pedestrian Interference Ordinance.

"We don't have an official place yet," says Rob Richards, an organizer with the Poor People's Union, which started the tent city. If all else fails, they'll head to the woods. "The campers are dedicated to keeping the community together; that's number one in their minds."

The group's 90-day agreement with church leaders is about to end, and though at least six other congregations have said they want to host the campers, says organizer Rob Richards, nobody's ready yet.

"If we get a location for the 19th, we're good for the rest of the year," says Richards.

Olympia city officials are working out a means of legitimizing the camp with a temporary land-use permit.

—Cydney Gillis and Adam Hyla

Change Agent

"Most people are aware of the health problems that can be caused by outdoor air pollution, but few aware that pollution in their own homes could also have an effect on their health," says John Roberts, one of the founders of the Master Home Environmentalist program at the American Lung Association of Washington.

Roberts designed this program in 1991, along with a team of volunteers, after a study he conducted in the late 1980s for the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency indicated home air-quality levels were lower than those outdoors.

Poor indoor air quality can result in allergies, asthma, and other health problems. Volunteers attending this program become knowledgeable about a variety of indoor air quality issues and are given simple guidelines for reducing their exposure to lead, allergens, pesticides, and carcinogens in the home.

"The risks of house dust are high and the costs of monitoring and control are low," explains Roberts. "By teaching people the best ways to protect themselves, we can truly improve the health of individuals and their families."

—Amy Besunder

Know people who've made all the difference? Tell us about them:
editor@realchangenews.org

Parks strikes again

Another new plan at Occidental Park. Another case of déjà vu with the Parks Department.

In April, the City Auditor issued a report citing some of the Parks Department's poor practices at taking public input, such as declaring a valid topic off-limits for discussion at public meetings. At a meeting last week in Pioneer

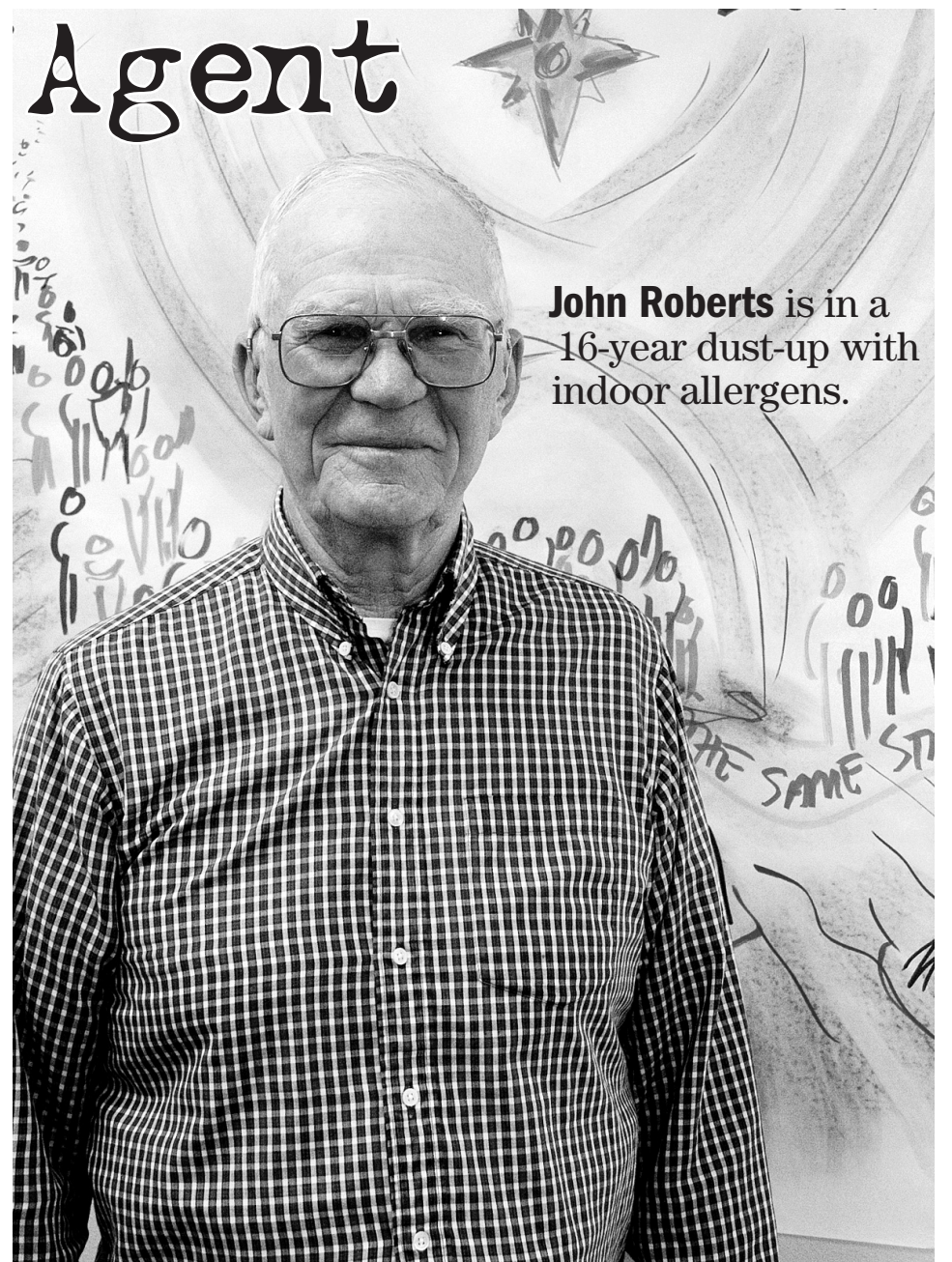
"It's ironic and somewhat obscene with respect to public process."

—Fritz Engebretsen,
Occidental Park litigant

Square, Parks staff did it again, telling participants who called for the return of Occidental Park's historic pergola that the matter wasn't part of the agenda.

The glass pergola was removed last year during a controversial remodel in which Parks cut down 17 of the park's 60 trees. On April 16, a Superior Court judge ruled that the city had violated both environmental law and historic district code in Pioneer Square, where a structure cannot be removed without an approved replacement.

An information booth stands at the site today. In its place, Parks wants to put a 625-square-foot retail kiosk, for which it unveiled two utilitarian designs



John Roberts is in a 16-year dust-up with indoor allergens.

Photo by Mark Sullo.

last Wednesday. Most of the meeting's 17 attendees immediately objected, with Pioneer Square Preservation Board Chair Tina Bueche noting that the board had required Parks to box and save the pergola so it could be reused.

Designer Peter Watson of Otak told the group, however, that Parks had asked his firm to design an enclosed kiosk, with Parks project manager Patrick Donohue describing the pergola as a legal issue beyond the scope of the meeting.

Parks spokeswoman Dewey Potter says that reusing the pergola will be discussed at the next meeting, which is not yet scheduled.

"It's ironic and somewhat obscene with respect to public process," said Fritz Engebretsen, one of the Occidental Park litigants. The meeting, he added later, showed that "the city and Parks decided it was OK to ignore public process. But the judge said it was not OK."

Whose Voice?

Some public housing residents read *The Voice*. Others think it's only good for lining bird cages. Either way, the Seattle Housing Authority is going to have to find a new way to pay for its monthly tenant newsletter: On April 10, a committee of SHA tenants voted to yank the housing authority's entire budget for *The Voice* — \$65,000 — after tenants balked at SHA using their Resident Participation Fund to pay for it.

The fund, which totals \$130,000, comes from a \$25 subsidy that U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development kicks in for each public-housing unit. The money is intended to foot the bill for resident council activities, interpreters, leadership training, and other programs that promote community involvement. But in the wake of federal cutbacks a few years ago, SHA started using half of the resident fund for *The Voice*, which it pays an outside editor to produce on a contract that ends Sept. 30.

Using the fund for *The Voice* had been approved each year by a tenant committee made up of council presidents from each SHA building. But two years ago, says resident activist Lynn Sereda, tenants started getting more organized and reading more of the HUD regulations, learning that they didn't necessarily have to pay for a newsletter that many see as the voice of SHA, not residents. "The perception of the residents is that the newspaper is controlled by SHA and a lot of people don't read it; it ends up in the recycling bin," Sereda says.

In the past two years, SHA has tried to encourage more resident participation in *The Voice*, says Virginia Felton, the agency's communications director. Now she's trying to find new funding or figure out another way to communicate with tenants after Sept. 30. After years of tenants simply signing over their money to SHA, Sereda says, "I'm really excited they stood up."

—Cydney Gillis

Thomas Hays, co-founder of the Replacements Needed poster campaign, thinks his political views have delayed his passport

Your Passport? It's in the Mail

By ROSETTE ROYALE, Staff Reporter

When Thomas Hays applied for his passport in February, he wasn't expecting any trouble. Then the U.S. Department of State sent him a letter.

Dispatched on Feb. 27, the letter thanked Hays for his application, but noted that, unfortunately, the identification he provided was insufficient. To "further establish [his] identity," he was asked to submit additional documentation that had been issued prior to 1997. The government gave him 30 days.

"They wanted employment records, tax records, all my earning statements," says Hays. "They wanted everything."

A student at Evergreen State College, Hays scrambled to find the required records. Receiving the passport is essential for two college-approved trips Hays has scheduled: the first, detailing the response of peaceful

"[The State Department] wanted employment records, tax records, all my earning statements. They wanted everything."

protestors to protective forces at the G8 Summit, slated for June 6-8 in Germany; the second, traveling around Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, documenting how the region's poor are effected by G8 policies.

With the fate of a bachelor's degree hanging in the balance, Hays returned the requested information by the March 27 deadline. As of May 7, he was still waiting for his passport.

"Allegedly," says Hays, "it's on its way."

It's easy to chalk up his waylaid blue billfold to the massive delays in the issuance of new passports that have thousands of would-be travelers fretting. But Hays points to another cause. "I think the posters had a lot to do with it," he says.

Ah, yes: the posters.

Part of a visual campaign called Replacements Needed, the posters feature arresting, at times gruesome, imagery of the War in Iraq. Placed beneath a photo that changes every week, white text provides a running tally of dead U.S. soldiers and Iraqi civilians. (The most recent poster laments 3,357 American deaths and "723,796+" Iraqi.)

The Replacements Needed campaign, says Hays, was the collective brainchild of a number of people sitting around a Capitol Hill apartment in April 2004. The posters were slapped onto telephones poles. "And much to our surprise," says Hays, "they caught on."

And from some quarters, Hays caught hell. Some on Capitol Hill maintained the posters amounted to visual clutter. In late 2005, an email sent to the state Department of Transportation claimed the posters were adhered with glue, an illegal act. But Hays says he never put those posters up, and that it was probably done by people who'd downloaded them from www.replacementsneeded.com.

Unease generated by the posters may have spread from one Capitol Hill to another. A summer 2005 Replacements Needed exhibit at Seattle's Museum of the Mysteries led Hays to come up with an idea: Why not mail postcards promoting the show to every member of Congress? Even though no Congressional reps attended, he's pretty sure the invitations



Photo by Brooke Kempner

Thomas Hays wonders if his political views, typified by the Replacement Needed posters he helped create, have slowed the receipt of his passport.

garnered some attention. "It doesn't make it to that level without someone in the State Department noticing," Hays says.

State Department spokesperson Leslie Phillips asserts Hays' beliefs are not the cause of the red tape. "Absolutely not," she says. Phillips says there are laws pertaining to the adjudication of passports and, without a liability waiver, she's unable to talk about the specifics of any individual case.

Hays says he's hoping the State Department notices he's sent in all that's been

asked of him, and posts his passport before May 28, the date of his non-refundable airline ticket. While he's still hopeful, he says that tracking down the added documentation and obtaining a lawyer have drained his funds to such a degree, he doesn't know if he can afford the trips. He says friends are considering throwing him a benefit.

But no matter the cause of his passport delay, Hays says he's committed to Replacements Needed. "We've got to do more than just sit on our couch and take bong hits and bitch about [the war]," says Hays. "That's not changing anything." ■

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Judge orders documents released that could cast doubt on SPD's internal investigations

Officers, Video Tell Different Stories

By CYDNEY GILLIS, Staff Reporter

Two police officers say they arrested a wheelchair-bound man Jan. 2 in downtown Seattle after collecting crumbs of crack cocaine from his lap. But in a surveillance video released of the incident, the officers never examine or collect anything in the suspect's lap.

In the 22-minute video, taken by a Walgreen's drugstore camera at Third Avenue and Pike Street, Officer Gregory Neubert pulls off the suspect's sock cap, examines it, then bends Troy Patterson flat in his wheelchair with a hand to his throat. The attempt to force any drugs out

Despite the conclusions of Chief Gil Kerlikowske, video footage of the Jan. 2 arrest "directly impacts the believability of these officers," says public defender Ramona Brandes.

of Patterson's mouth lasts four minutes without result — a tactic that, along with the presence of a handcuffed witness standing three feet away, is not mentioned in either officer's incident report.

The discrepancies between the video and the police reports put the reliability of Neubert and partner Michael Tietjen front and center Monday in a King County Superior Court hearing in which a judge said she sees no reason not to order the release of internal police investigation reports on the incident — a move that could raise doubts in 17 other criminal

cases that hinge on the testimony of the two downtown bicycle officers.

Judge Catherine Shaffer ordered a second hearing for prosecutors and defense lawyers to continue arguing the matter this Friday, with no final ruling expected before then. But the discrepancies, she said, "make a sufficient showing of materiality" that could affect the other cases.

Defense attorneys in at least seven cases demanded the internal reports in late March after receiving letters from prosecutors informing them that police were investigating Neubert and Tietjen's conduct in the arrest. The investigation stemmed from a Jan. 5 complaint that Patterson filed with the police department's Office of Professional Accountability, claiming that the officers roughed him up and planted the drugs on him.

In his police report, Officer Neubert notes that he retrieved a rock of crack from Patterson's waist area — an event not captured by the camera, which Neubert's body blocks during the chokehold. Neubert proceeds to search Patterson's pockets, putting a wallet and other effects in the hood of Patterson's jacket with no indication of when or where he finds any drugs.

After the search, Neubert gets on his bike and briefly rides away from the scene. When he returns, he stands behind Patterson, pokes him between the shoulders, then digs around in the hood of Patterson's jacket for no apparent reason.

After the video's recovery, King County dropped the charges against Patterson, a 26-year-old with a felony record involving firearms and drug possession. Neubert's 14 years on the force includes a 2001 internal investigation that cleared him and another officer in the controversial Central District shooting death of Aaron Roberts.



Video is a worth a thousand words: A recent showing of an arrest caught on video reveals a different story than the one offered by Seattle police officers. Here, a photo captures an unrelated arrest on Capitol Hill.

In early April, James Bible, president of the Seattle-King County NAACP, called for a special investigation into Neubert and Tietjen's conduct after receiving reports from African Americans about the officers. One of them, Claudette Thomas, says she had been trying to collect similar reports from community members in 2004 when Neubert arrested her son, James Pulliam. Like Patterson, Pulliam claims Neubert planted the drugs that put him in prison.

In a press conference April 9, police Chief Gil Kerlikowske refuted Patterson's claim, saying that an extensive internal review showed the officers had done nothing wrong — except for failing to report that they had detained a second man at the scene. But that, say Lisa Daugaard and other public defenders seeking the internal investigation file, is no small omission. In failing to identify the other man, Kareem Thomas, she says the officers denied Patterson's access to a vital witness.

Daugaard represents Toby Christian, who was charged last September with attacking police officers after a game at

Memorial Stadium — an incident that civilian witnesses recall differently than Tietjen and his fellow officers. Daugaard argued Monday that Tietjen's omissions in the Patterson case could force open a critical door in Christian's defense.

City attorney Ted Buck countered, however, that the defense attorneys are asking the court to "take a humongous leap into a bottomless cavern" of reopening cases. If that happens, Buck told Judge Shaffer, "You've thrown not just a monkey wrench but an entire petrified forest in the wheels" of justice.

Ramona Brandes, the public defender who represented Patterson, says that's something the police will have to work out. After seeing the video, she says, she finds it disturbing how little it matches Neubert's and Tietjen's reports.

"The inconsistencies in the police report and that video are clearly the reason why the prosecutor dismissed the case, and these are not insignificant differences," Brandes says. "I believe it directly impacts the believability of these officers." ■

Housing discrimination reviewed

April was Fair Housing Month, and local historians and city officials took the occasion to look back to the decade-long campaign of sit-ins, marches, and moral suasion that persuaded the City Council in 1968 to bar discrimination from property owners and realtors.

The problem was restrictive covenants inserted into local deeds typically stating that "No person or persons of Asiatic, African, or Negro blood, lineage, or extraction shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property."

Realtors refused to show houses to families of color. Bankers refused to lend money to them. African Americans seemed to have only one option, and that was to live in the Central District, says Dr. Quintard Taylor, ethnic studies professor at the University of Washington, who discussed the campaign at City Hall April 12.

"In an attempt to move it was like watching a fly buzzing around in a closed jar," Seattle resident Gerald Hatcher said.

In 1961, the NAACP asked the City Council to pass an ordinance prohibiting discrimination in housing. Opponents included the Seattle Real Estate Board and the Seattle Apartment Operators Association. When the Council didn't act, 400 people marched on City Hall; a multiracial group of young protesters sat in on the Mayor's office for 24 hours.

The ordinance was referred to voters in 1964, who opposed it more than two-to-one; the City Council passed it April 19, 1968.

Today, we face different problems, says Taylor. "It is not so much where to buy a house today, but if we can afford to buy a house," he said. "Seattle is becoming Europeanized: the wealthy live in the city and the poorer live outside."

To file a complaint if you are victim of discrimination, call the King County Office of Civil Rights (206)296-7592 or the Seattle Office for Civil Rights at (206)684-4500.

—Laura Cruikshank

Hangover remorse

Muhammad said, "Three kinds of people are particularly pathetic. The powerful man out of power, the rich man with no money, and the learned man laughed at."

Yet these are those who badly want change!
Some dogs sit satisfied in their kennels.
But one who last year drank ecstatic union,
the pre-eternity agreement, who this year
has a hangover from bad-desire wine
the way he cries out for the majesty
he's lost
o, give me that longing!

—Stan Burriss

Jim O'Donnell isn't in it for the money. He sells *Real Change* to help make a better world.

Vendor of the Week

Fresh out of papers, Jim O'Donnell stands outside the University District Trader Joe's as a regular customer approaches.

After explaining he sold his last copy, the customer hands Jim a dollar in exchange for a paper the next time she sees him.

"The money is not important. The important part is trying to get people's rights back. I'm fighting for human rights, trying to change things like getting more health care and low-income housing."

"I'll give you the current issue and next week's as well. It's interest," Jim responds.

Jim says selling papers is not about the money, it's about spreading a message.

"The money is not important," he says. "The important part is trying to

get people's rights back. I'm fighting for human rights, trying to change things like getting more health care and low-income housing."

Jim has been selling *Real Change* for the past year. His brother, John, who sells papers in front of Scarecrow Video, introduced him to the paper. A little over a year ago, the two were living in Jim's car; now they share a small apartment a short walk from Trader Joe's.

"*Real Change* took me off the streets," Jim says. "I started selling papers and things just kind of clicked together."

He's grateful for each of his customers. He tries to help them as much as they help him by collecting the shopping carts.

Jim, 60, arrived in Seattle from Butte, Mont. on his 21st birthday and has been here ever since. He worked as a glazier for 25 years, but is now more than content selling papers.

"I'll probably sell 'til I retire; I'll probably sell then too," he says, shortly before walking off to retrieve a cart.

—Joel Turner

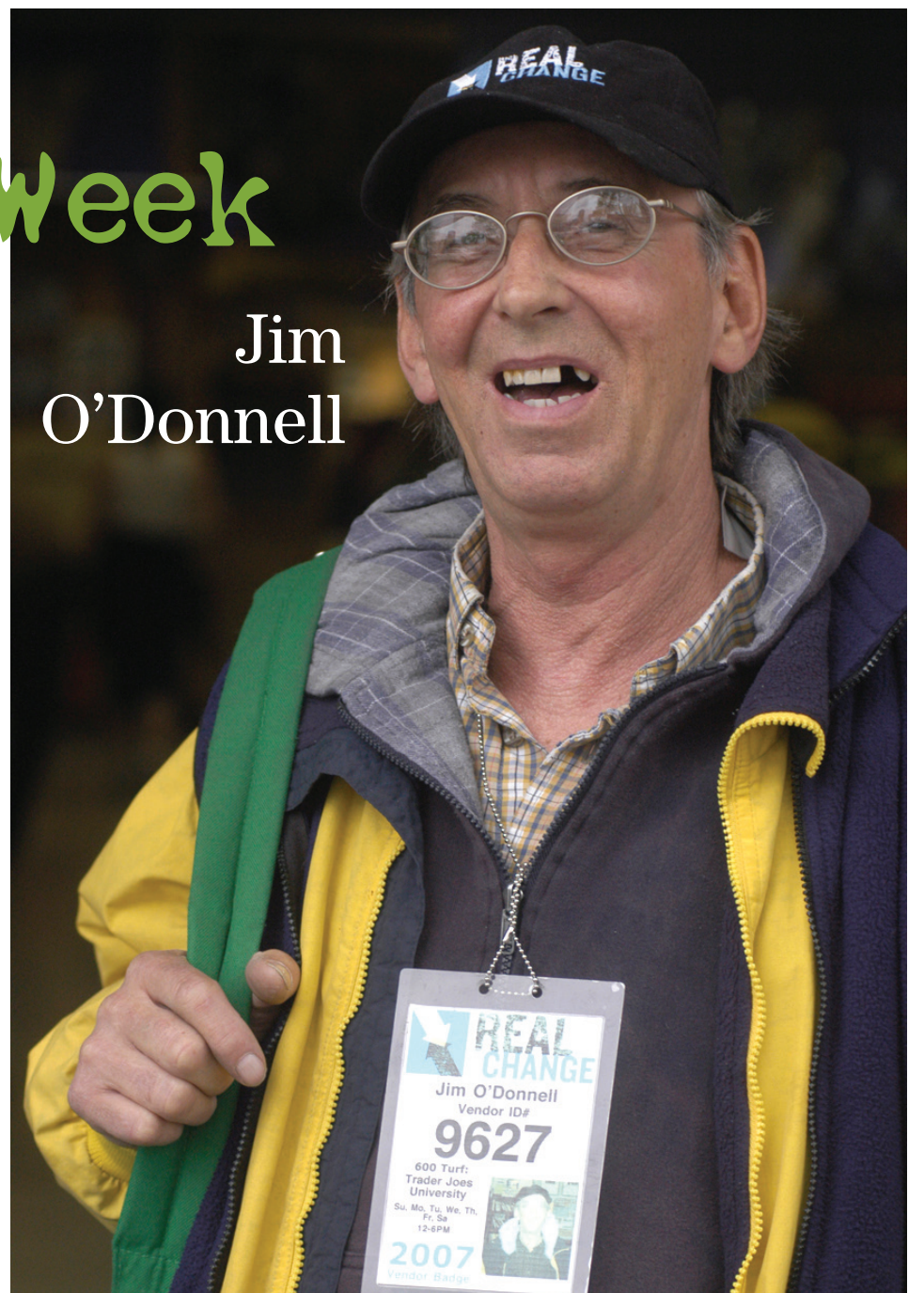


Photo by Joel Turner

Who's the special person who offers you *Real Change*?
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Writer and activist T.J. Parsell tells the world about prison rape, by delving into his own life experiences

Heading Back Upstream

By ROSETTE ROYALE, Staff Writer

What T.J. Parsell went through one day when he was a Michigan teen could be deemed a shame: At 17, an impulsive act led to his being arrested. What followed the arrest can only be qualified as a nightmare: Hours after being placed in an adult facility, Parsell was plied with moonshine laced with Thorazine, a sedative prescribed for the mentally ill. Then he was brutally gang raped.

It's the kind of real-life story that, for most of us, feels too impossible to imagine. But due to Parsell's willingness to tell his tale — an act he does with unflinching honesty in *FISH: A Memoir of a Boy in a Man's Prison* (Carroll & Graf, 2006, \$24.95) — what could have been a heartbreaking, too-difficult-to-bear autobiography somehow becomes a compelling and ultimately uplifting read.

But make no mistake: There's a wealth of heartbreak and tragedy in these pages. An alcoholic father. A mother who left because she couldn't take it. A brother who served time and struggled with heroin addiction. A hostile stepmother. A stepbrother also caught up in the criminal justice system.

And then, Riverside Correctional Facility, where Parsell was sentenced to 4.5 to 15 years. A target there due to his youth and inexperience, he became the "property" of a Black inmate, an act that, while probably keeping him alive, thrust him center stage into the sexual and racial theatrics of prison life.

Now 46, Parsell, who has worked with such groups as Stop Prisoner Rape, has managed to transform the violent events of his youth into an opportunity to educate legislators and prisoners about the dangers of prison rape. Speaking from his Sag Harbor, N.Y. home, he talks about his mistake with a toy gun, the near obliteration of his soul, and the dangers of being a "fish" — prison slang for a new inmate who's completely out of his element.

So how about we start off talking about what caused you to be imprisoned at 17?

I was at a party where I had a few beers and I was walking home. I found a toy gun and was playing with it: just being a silly kid, really. At that point, I crossed the street and went to a parking lot where there was a Photomat booth. There was a woman inside. I walked up and she slid open the window and, joking, I stuck the gun in. I said, "Your money or your life," something stupid like that, and she calmly turned to the cash register, opened the drawer, and started taking money out. I didn't intend to rob her, but in that moment, I thought, "Oh." She handed me the money and I ran. You know, it was that little, simple, impulsive moment that changed my entire life.



Photo by Emanuela Gardner

While sentenced to an adult facility when he was 17, T.J. Parsell was brutally gang-raped. In *FISH: A Memoir of a Boy in a Man's Prison*, Parsell tells the story of how he survived a world where life, he says, is "like a photographic negative."

But you had been arrested for something else before, correct?

Yeah, I had an after-school job in a hotel, which my friends worked at, including my stepbrother. We had pinched [stolen] keys to several of the rooms. I got caught and the hotel prosecuted me and I pled guilty in exchange for proba-

"Kindness is a weakness in there. The more treacherous somebody could be, the higher a standing they have among their fellow inmates. In this particular area — sexuality in prison — they don't view what they're doing as rape."

tion. So I was awaiting sentencing [for stealing hotel keys], when I got pinched for the Photomat.

When I went back to court for the hotel, the judge gave me 2.5 to 4 years. When I went inside, because the armed robbery [charge] was pending, the prison system had to treat me as if I had the

maximum sentence for armed robbery, which is life. So it was the timing of the two things that caused me to be placed in Riverside Correctional Facility.

So let's just get to it: You're so honest about the sexual violence you experienced there. How hard was it to revisit that for a book?

Oh, my God: It was like therapy on steroids. In therapy you can talk around an issue. But with writing, you gotta go there and really report back from that place.

At the time [of the first rape], I was drugged, so I think that some of the physical agony was deadened by the alcohol and the drugs. My own denial was pretty strong at the time: There were only flash-glimpses of how it made me feel about myself, 'cause at the time, I just shut down.

Not only were you dealing with sexual violence, you were also dealing with your own sexuality. Was that something you could separate at the time?

Ever take a Coke bottle and put sand in it, and then you turn the bottle over, and the sand gets caught in the bottleneck? I think that's part of what was happening with me: There was so much going on that it was just too overwhelming for me to be able to process

it. So it created a real challenge with me in writing about the extent to which my sexuality and my hidden fantasies informed my choices that led me to prison. I mean, I can sit back and think about hearing some of the stories from my older stepbrother, and being titillated by them, but I'd never admit that to anybody. Or even myself.

You suggest in the book an irony about people who commit rape on the outside and come into prison where that outside crime is frowned upon; meanwhile, there's rape going on inside prison.

It's sort of one of those double standards that go on inside of a prison: Guys don't view raping another inmate quite the same way, because of that whole distorted notion of masculinity and manhood they hold. I spoke to a group of inmates in San Francisco and one of the inmates said, "In the California system, we don't really have inmates to rape: We just have volunteers." The group really got into a conversation about what's consensual sex in prison, and the sad reality is that it generally takes one or two violent rapes before a guy starts making

Narrow-minded view, fast-growing society

■ Planet India: How the Fastest Growing Democracy Is Transforming America and the World

by Mira Kamdar, Scribner, February 2007, Hardcover, 336 pages, \$26

By BONNIE OLSON, Contributing Writer

Mira Kamdar's supposition in the book *Planet India* is that our modern dilemmas are all magnified in India, and that it uniquely holds the potential to solve them and be an example for the world. An intriguing idea, given India's 5,000-year history and its ancient spirituality and mysticism. But *Planet India* holds about as much promise as a franchise Planet Hollywood store.

Mira Kamdar is of Indian and American heritage and spent part of her childhood in India with her Indian grandparents. She has published a memoir about her family, *Motiba's Tattoos* (Plume, 2001), and is a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute. Ms. Kamdar's hypothesis can be summarized as follows: India is in the midst of a renaissance, emerging as a major cultural and political force, and Indian "compassionate capitalism" will be revolutionary.

Kamdar spends the first three chapters among India's rich and famous, using adjectives dripping with star lust. She is obviously enamored with the "cultural cream of Indian society," using the word "elite" so often one would think it the highest of compliments. She fails to detect any irony in her own position as she describes passing barefoot, dusty children in her air-conditioned car on the way to a dinner party.

The author obviously has pride in India's meteoric rise in all things Western and India's ability to "beat the West at its own game." Why can't India come up with its own game, or change the rules by which we play?

Kamdar conducts thorough research in the narrow spectrum of her known world

— the business sector and movie industry. Assuming that wealth and technology will lead us out of self-destruction, she asserts that capitalism with Indian sensibilities will be the answer. "One hopes," she says repeatedly, as she finds a handful of entrepreneurs who espouse visionary ideals of capitalism with social responsibility. Her naiveté is obvious when she's stunned by Deepak Chopra's negative assessment of where India is headed.

Kamdar does cite the massive problems of poverty, illiteracy, AIDS/HIV, and inequality based on caste and gender. Traveling with a reporter to rural India with its alarming rates of farmer suicides, she acknowledges Monsanto is selling GMO seeds that produce crops that don't regenerate themselves — a true wonder not found in the natural world — without a hint of corporate culpability. She notes India's militarism and its warm welcome to Wal-Mart. After citing evidence that India is repeating many mistakes of Western capitalism, she states what India must do, while glossing over the reality: They aren't.

Kamdar's book leaves many contradictions unexplored, her analysis tightly circumscribed by class and capitalist allegiances. "India has within its grasp the technology to find solutions [to global warming]" (no hint of what they might be); India's potential as a superpower is heralded without considering that a "superpower" itself is a problem. Perhaps most illustrative of the blinders of her class, Ms. Kamdar states that India has an inclusive vision for transforming its megacities. "Indian cities have the potential to be role models. Hyderabad was one of the first Indian cities to renovate, widening streets... clearing sidewalks of vendors and beggars."

With its deep reservoir of culture, India may indeed create new alternatives to address urgent contradictions, but one will find little evidence of this in *Planet India*. ■



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■ The Unbinding

by Walter Kirn, Anchor Books, 2007, Paperback, 165 pages, \$13.95

Walter Kirn began writing his novel online last year, he says in the introduction to its receipt-like paper counterpart, with a surge of naive faith in the capacity of cyberspace to do for long-form fiction what it has done already for journalism, music, gaming, and the graphic arts. *Slate.com* published him serially, week by week, the copy entering the public sphere within days of leaving his hands. He rolled out a potboiler about — what else? — the consequences of letting technology's lidless eye gaze into our private lives. The spy vs. spy plot is substantial enough, and Kirn doesn't let his epistolary form of storytelling interfere with good prose. In the world of *The Unbinding*, even emails and blog entries feature good, sharp dialog. —Adam Hyla

WORTH SEEING

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Reviews by LESTER GRAY, Contributing Writer

■ Violette (1978); Comedy of Power (2006)

Both directed by Claude Chabrol

The French are, by consensus, masters at making love, wine, and films. Unfortunately, I can only attest to the latter two, but those in themselves provide enough worldly pleasure to make them criminal in more than a few societies. Since we are at liberty to indulge, I suggest a glass of Bordeaux and two films by Gallic auteur Claude Chabrol, both featuring actor Isabell Huppert. The two works were produced almost three decades apart, and are testament to the long and fruitful working relationship between the actor and the director.

Violette, based on the true story of a notorious crime occurring in 1930s France, deals with a young girl (Huppert),

who from age 12 displays an unusual degree of deviant and rebellious behavior. At home she is reasonably compliant with the puritanical norms imposed by her parents. But in surreptitious visits to Paris' Latin Quarter, her actions fall somewhere between those of a vamp and a prostitute.

If you have never heard of this infamous crime (most Americans haven't), the purposeful lack of specificity in Chabrol's narrative leads us to believe that there may have been a miscarriage of justice. Most available news accounts suggest that *Violette* was incontestably guilty. Chabrol's fly-on-the wall perspective omits expository guidance, suspending us by inconclusive and conflicting evidence. It makes for a very accomplished if somewhat dark and moody picture.

In *Comedy of Power*, made 28 years later, both Chabrol and Huppert have matured,

the director having acquiesced slightly to commercial pressures, but still building his suspense through deft insinuation and nuance. The actress has simply refined her more than ample and singular talent.

She plays a magistrate in the French judicial system, who takes her job seriously, and — even more confounding for her superiors — literally. To her this means taking on the blatant corruption infecting government at almost every level. As bright as she is, she appears genuinely oblivious to the toes on which she steps, no matter that the footsteps lead back to those who pay her salary. And when she does become aware of the hostilities aroused by her investigation, she remains indifferent.

The familiar subplot to this narrative is the judge's suffering marriage due to her obsessive allure to the game of cops and robbers. Chabrol refreshes this hackneyed police-drama storyline, bringing a novel approach to this threadbare theme.

Comedy of Power is a reconfirmation of the skill of an artist who has served the world of film for over four decades. While his work will never pass muster with the Hollywood focus groups, that is one sign of his artistic integrity. ■



Adventures
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning

Yesterday I made spaghetti from leftovers, and rejoiced. I'll try to explain why.

The point is, when I was urban-homeless, making spaghetti from leftovers was almost impossible. Oh, yes, there were leftovers. I might have been able to eat at a free community meal, and they might have had something like what I fixed three days ago that "seeded" the spaghetti. In fact that had been just exactly the sort of food I've gotten at free community meals.

Being poor, I went to one of those stores where they specialize in selling me packaged foods that haven't been fully unloaded from their boxes. Since I don't mind the clutter, I reap the savings! Such aesthetic neglect netted me 12 ounces of meatballs PLUS two red bell peppers for half what the meatballs alone would have cost me in a neater store. I already had an unmarked pound of white rice of undetermined extraction from a food bank. Pearls? Peeweese? I had 49 cents worth of tomato sauce and a yellow onion.

The seed meal was that. A rice-meatball-tomato-sauce-onion event. I'm not a great cook. I collect ingredients to critical mass and combine with heat. Nevertheless, cooking is extremely important to me. Assembling my own food for my own consumption is a sacred act, even if I do it badly, whether the results are edible or not.

Speaking of sacred acts, when I'm dead I want everyone to eat domestic Limburger in memory of me. You don't have to do it every year. Once would be sufficient.

Actually, I was cooking as usual for both myself and Anitra "On Whose Kitchen Floor I Have Sometimes Slept" Freeman. Cooking food for her own consumption is NOT so sacred an act for Anitra, so I get to do most of it and

You'd be surprised how quickly the police show up when you build an illegal fire anywhere in the city limits. They come the quickest when you're hungry or cold.

hog all the cooking sacredness to myself, while she does sacred emails.

Even with both of us eating it, the rice-meatball-etc. event would not disappear. The meatball-onion-sauce was half leftover. As I said, this could also have happened at a community meal. They use cheap ingredients too. If Anitra and I were still homeless, we could have been at one of those meals and could have each had a half serving of meatball-onion sauce left over, which we might have dumped into a container and saved.

Then, we could have done much of what I did later. Since more sauce was needed for spaghetti, we would have obtained a can of spaghetti sauce. I got mine this time at a food bank. When

we were homeless, we would have got the spaghetti sauce with food stamps. Since garlic was essential, we would have bought one bulb of that vegetable variety, peeled it, and stuck slices of it in our extra sauced leftovers, using a sharp knife. I always had a sharp knife when I was homeless.

Then what? The directions for making the spaghetti now call for the heating of the meatball-laden sauce so as to mellow the garlic and disseminate its flavor, and to cook up a pot of spaghetti to put the sauce on. This means boiling water.

Ouch. The army has heating pads for MREs that we could have used in theory to heat the sauce, but they wouldn't boil water. Well, we could have built a fire. But you'd be surprised how quickly the police show up when you build an illegal fire anywhere in the city limits. They come the quickest when you're hungry or cold.

You'd think the military would hurry up and come up with a flameless heater that our soldiers can use to boil water, as opposed to just heat stuff up. I mean, we've got a war every minute, let's put our wars to good use, spurring the technology that will make being homeless bearable, since we will be draining our country's resources to make so much of it.

Then those of us in housing won't be the only ones who get to enjoy the thrill of making spaghetti from leftovers. ■

Sound off and read more:
drwesb.blogspot.com



Mon., April 16, 5:05 p.m., Goodwill Store,

S. Lane St. Officer responded to a shoplifting incident at the Goodwill Store on S. Lane St. Complainant, a store employee, called 911 to report a theft and trespass issue. When the officer arrived he found the suspect, a transient Black male aged 34, in handcuffs inside the store security office. The security officer stated that the suspect had entered the Goodwill store and had taken a wallet worth \$0.99, an extension cord worth \$0.99, and a clock radio worth \$2.99 from the shelves, concealed the items, and walked out without attempting to pay for them. The second witness, another employee of the Goodwill store, confirmed that the suspect had concealed the items upon his person and then exited the store without paying. The officer contacted the suspect and identified himself as a police officer verbally and with his badge, and instructed the suspect to return to the store. He then retrieved the stolen items from the suspect's person. The officer brought the suspect back into the security office and ran a records check. He found that the suspect had been previously trespassed from this location for one year on Jan. 25. Suspect was arrested and transported to the West Precinct, where a copy of the original trespass card was located. Suspect was booked into King County Jail for burglary.

Fri., April 13, 8:10 p.m., Rite Aid, Broadway Ave E.

Officer responded to the area of Broadway Ave E. when Seattle Police radio broadcast that a theft/shoplift had just occurred at the Rite Aid at that location. Complainant, a security officer for the store, identified the suspect, a transient white male aged 35, and stated that he was wearing a blue and white windbreaker and had left walking northbound on Broadway. Officer notes that he has had numerous contacts with the suspect during the course of his police duties along the Broadway corridor, and has arrested him several times. The officer contacted the suspect on Broadway, and the complainant/witness arrived to identify the man. The witness stated that he apprehended the suspect for shoplifting on April 7, and the suspect was trespassed from the store for one year from that day. He provided a copy of the notice Rite-Aid issued barring the suspect from the store, and stated he has often seen the suspect inside the store looking around and not purchasing any merchandise. Tonight the suspect was observed inside the store, committing criminal trespass due to the trespass admonishment. He admitted to the office to being in the store, and said he was doing a price check on razors "for a friend." Officer notes that Rite Aid is a participant in the Retail Theft Program and is authorized to make their own theft and trespass reports. Suspect was arrested and booked into King County Jail for criminal trespass.

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.

Pine Box Derby

Another cruel indignity foisted upon me this time
through cub scouts
my pine box racer
they all look the same out of the box
mine remained the same
until the day before the big race
when i remembered i was supposed to do something to
it

I sanded down the edges some
and painted it black
flat black
the kind they use in theatres to make things disappear

My mother attended race night with me
the only single mother in a sea of mothers and fathers
but mostly fathers
fathers with power tools and sanders and high gloss
paint
and, perhaps allowing their sons to touch their racers
for the first time
each boy placed his racer on the wooden downward
track

I lined mine up among the others
many of which had decals and numbers to distinguish
them
Mine, however, did not require any such superficiality
it stood there like a crow among peacocks
an Edsel among Porsches
like the guilty among innocents

The gate rose and these little cars
succumbed to gravity and aerodynamics
and greased wheels and
well

mine was out in the first round
There was no prize for originality
or minimalism
I took my racer from the track
I wanted to light it on fire and send it
down a dark San Franciscan hill
I didn't though
I don't remember what i did with it
now to forget the rest as easily

—Larry Crist

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Faith communities are extending their compassion and protection to their communities' victims of global economic liberalization

A New Form of Sanctuary

By MICHAEL RAMOS, Church Council of
Greater Seattle

Alexander was four months old when I met him in 2003 before the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. A U.S. citizen born to a Jamaican mother, Maria, he was the youngest rider on the 13-day bus trip through cities and towns throughout the U.S. on the way to Washington, D.C., and New York City.

I did not know Maria's legal status, but like any non-citizen she could fear deportation. Still, she had the courage to come on the bus with her baby and share her story.

Some had doubts that bringing a baby on such a strenuous trip would be a good idea. But Alexander's

Many immigrants in Washington State live in fear and still are not able to participate fully in community life — though ... they contribute to our economy and in so doing make the U.S. strong.

good-natured smile and his ability to sleep through singing in more than a dozen languages won us all over. His presence also became our most telling testimony: Wouldn't his future be enhanced by a reasonable policy allowing Maria a pathway to citizenship? So that, instead of working as a \$96 per week nanny in the Southeastern U.S., she could achieve her dream of becoming a public speaker in the Pacific Northwest? Also, wouldn't deporting Maria without her baby be a most inhumane outcome of a tragically broken immigration system?

Four years later, immigration enforcement authorities have stepped up workplace raids sevenfold. Those caught in the raids — nearly 1,000 of them are sitting in a privately run Tacoma facility — suffer lengthy detentions without due process and eventual deportation. Four thousand people died trying to cross into the United States from the south over the last 10 years. In the absence of immigration reform, national policy is limited to building 700-mile border fences and new, privately run prisons.

Many immigrants in Washington state live in fear and still are not able to participate fully in community life — though as hotel and construction workers, day laborers and farm workers, janitors, computer programmers, and nonprofit service administrators, they contribute to our economy and in so doing make the U.S. strong.

At the initiative of the Comité Pro-Amnistia General y Justicia Social (Committee for a General Amnesty and Social Justice), faith communities are joining community organizations, labor unions, and immigrant rights advocates in announcing a new Sanctuary Movement as a humanitarian effort to alleviate suffering among immigrant families at risk of separation because of deportation and as a declaration of solidarity with people from all over the world who migrate here.

The new Sanctuary Movement aims to broaden the call for a just, comprehensive immigration reform that respects their human dignity and affirms the basic rights of all people. It's inspired by the 1980s Sanctuary Movement of congregations hosting El Salvadorans and Guatemalans fleeing violence and

government-sponsored and U.S.-backed repression. This new effort is intended to involve congregations providing an intensive level of family support — legal, spiritual, and material — that highlights a broken immigration system and galvanizes advocacy and organizing for policies that humanize rather than criminalize immigrants.

The new Sanctuary Movement is rooted in the fundamental tenets of compassion, faith and human dignity. A sanctuary is a sacred space of worship that also guarantees compassion, protection, and the love of God. The concept of churches, mosques, and synagogues opening their doors to those who are new to the country or in need is not new. What is distinct about this effort is the urgency to give public voice to the hopes and dreams of immigrant families who represent the experience of millions of vulnerable people seeking refuge in this country. Congregations locally are now considering their role, including that of legal hospitality, as part of the new Sanctuary Movement. Community organizations and labor unions are applying the concept of sanctuary to short-term policy objectives, such as calling for a moratorium on workplace raids and passing ordinances in municipal jurisdictions that ensure that immigrant communities can contact local authorities without fear.

The issue of immigration is complex. In the beautiful film *Life and Debt*, Jamaicans subjected to the results of trade liberalization and international

The concept of churches, mosques, and synagogues opening their doors to those who are new to the country or in need is not new. What is distinct about this effort is the urgency to give public voice to the hopes and dreams of immigrant families who represent the experience of millions of vulnerable people seeking refuge.

finance were moved out of subsistence farming and into dire poverty while tourists luxuriated oceanside. No wonder people like Maria would come to the United States to survive and sustain herself.

At this time, families from countries such as Haiti, China, and Guatemala are being welcomed into churches in New York City and Los Angeles. They will speak to the experience of what a more just immigration system might do for millions like them. They'll underscore the danger of separating some 3.1 million minors, citizens all, from their non-citizen parents. These families are the prophets of a future that their children, like Alexander, might enjoy, giving new meaning to the Statue of Liberty as a beacon of freedom and justice for all. ■

Michael Ramos is Director of Social Justice Ministries for the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

PRISON, Continued from Page 7

compromises just out of the need to survive. So, if you've been "turned out," as they view it, you've lost the status of manhood, whether you're gay or straight. And once you've lost your manhood, you need a man. So you go into one of these protective-pairing scenarios, and that's what these guys are considering as volunteers.

That's a point I was trying to make early in the book, when I talked about prison being like a photographic negative, where all the values are inverted: What's bad is good, and what's good is bad. Kindness is a weakness in there. The more treacherous somebody could be, the higher a standing they have among their fellow inmates. In this particular area — sexuality in prison — they don't view what they're doing as rape.

In another part of the book, which really surprised me, were your struggles with race.

I grew up in an all-white neighborhood, with a racist mayor, who would arrest African Americans for just driving through town after dark. You can't talk about Detroit in the late '60s, early '70s without really talking about, or looking at, race, because it's such a racially segregated area. Even today, it's very divided. So at Riverside Correctional, I was in the minority for being white.

How long were you at Riverside?

I was there from 17-21, the age that most kids are away at college: That was my education. I think my "higher power" knew I'd be able to handle it, that I'd be able to survive, and I'd be able to do what I'm doing now.

But there are some people who are in that situation and they don't necessarily survive it, or they come out severely scarred.

I think that most who go through it come out severely scarred. I was. That's the tragedy of what's going on in these

"The sexual violence there is so devastating to the sense of self, and over 95 percent of all prisoners are eventually released. So, this is everyone's problem."

places. The sexual violence there is so devastating to the sense of self, and over 95 percent of all prisoners are eventually released. Most of them don't have the resources to get the treatment they need to recover from what they experience, and the states aren't providing that treatment either. So, this is everyone's problem. I was a walking time bomb for a long time. I bottomed out from alcohol and drugs

when I was 27, and that was really what sort of set me on a road to recovery and therapy. I don't know how I went from 21 to 27: I was just drinking and drugging and trying to forget what happened.

How did you come to the point where you could talk or even write about it?

I went into a Manhattan video store, and there was a past episode of *Oz* [the HBO series about prison life] playing on a TV. An inmate had been raped and the young men behind the counter were laughing. That was the crystallizing, defining moment for me. My older brother, who I write about in the book, had died of a heroin overdose. The combination of the two things put me in that place where I was ready to write.

Those things led to your involvement with the Prison Rape Elimination Act?

Well, when I decided that I was going to write, I got online to see what existed and there wasn't a lot. But I found Human Rights Watch was working on a study about prisoner rape and getting the bill through Congress, so I got swept up in this whole movement.

Can we really eliminate prison rape?

I think that it's probably too ambitious of a goal, but I think we can greatly reduce it by doing some of the obvious things, like not putting teenaged boys with adult predators, for one. We know who are typically more vulnerable in-

mates: the non-violent first-time offenders, the young men that do not have gang affiliation, the mentally ill, gay inmates.

There are a lot of physical areas that can make a difference. The physical layout of jails and prisons, eliminating blind spots, providing and installing cameras, things like that, and changing attitudes of corrections personnel is an important element of it. The homophobia in corrections is a major contributing factor.

You've said you tell your friends who have a hard time reading the book it has a happy ending.

In some ways, prisoner rape and sexual assault are dominant factors, but that's not what the book is about. Ultimately, it's a coming-of-age story. It's a story of survival. It's a story of redemption. I ultimately was able to survive that experience and I was able to build a life for myself: put myself through college and have a successful career in software. It would have been very easy for me to just continue on with my nice middle-class life and not look back, but when people found out I had been there, they always had two questions: What was it like and how did you survive? And those are two primary questions that I hope the book addresses. ■

To learn more about prison rape and what's being done to reduce it, check out <http://www.spr.org/en/factsheets/basics.asp>

CALL TO ACTION

Tally up the casualties in the War on Drugs

Issue: The War on Drugs has been called a war on people of color, the new Jim Crow, and according to retired Chief of the Seattle Police Department Norm Stamper, "the most dysfunctional policy since slavery." Although the increased rate of incarceration in the United States, and particularly of nonviolent drug offenders, has caused concern among various factions, the idea of changing the emphasis of drug policy from law enforcement to public health is controversial.

Background: Drug addiction, drug selling, and the direct effects of incarceration are tearing apart communities of color. However, the answers offered by the government — increased arrests and more police — beg the question: "Will more of the same enforcement bring a change?" We know that once a person is brought into the criminal court system, a number of significant barriers arise. The disruption of incarceration, the driver's license suspensions, the fines associated with courts, the exclusion from loans and subsidized housing, and the difficulty of obtaining employment are just some of them. Thus, changing the way we deal with the underlying issues to a public health model should be considered more seriously.

Looking at drug addiction from a public health model is not so difficult to imagine. Treatment on demand, both inpatient and outpatient, would be the defining quality of this model. The current practice of shuttling people through the court system, where access to treatment is guarded by the state, should cause us concern. "Accountability" is the word generally used by the state to justify the court's overseeing of treatment courts. "Accountability," however, is often a euphemism for incarceration. Until we begin

to question the effectiveness of placing people in custody for this disease of drug addiction, we will continue to spend an inordinate amount of our budget, over 70 percent in King County, on an ineffective public safety model.

Allowing for a public health model would also begin to address many of the issues facing our communities of color. If people are selling narcotics in our communities, we have to ask why. The financial incentive to sell drugs is so great that people are willing to subject themselves to the likelihood that they will be incarcerated. What if there were no money to be made in selling drugs? Are we willing to start that discussion in an honest manner, or will we decry the effects of the War on Drugs without questioning the financial incentives for law enforcement and those who sell drugs?

Action: There are few public forums where the ineffectiveness of the War on Drugs is discussed openly. However, on **Thurs., May 17, at the Rainier Valley Cultural Center from 6:30-8:30 p.m.**, such a discussion will occur. The community panel will feature Stamper and King County Councilmember Larry Gossett. It's free of charge, with dinner and childcare provided. Please join us on the evening of May 17 to address the failed War on Drugs.

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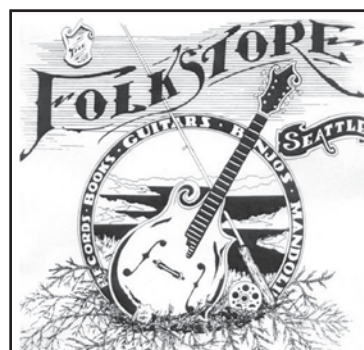
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Starting at age 20, Paul Hawken dedicated his life to changing the relationship between business and the environment. He comes to town to discuss his manifesto of hope for the 21st century, *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming*. While some people see a wounded world, Hawken points to the scores of people working for justice, community, diversity, and health. Tickets \$5. Wed., May 16, 7 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave.

Calendar

This Week's Top Picks

Saturday 5/12

The Lifelong AIDS Alliance presents *Come As Your Mother Gay Bingo*. Win cash and prizes, help raise money to fight HIV and AIDS, and have a blast. Tickets \$20. 6 p.m., South Lake Union Park, Naval Reserve Building, 860 Terry Ave. N. Info: www.lifelongaidsalliance.org

Narrated by Keanu Reeves and Alanis Morissette, *The Great Warming* examines the lack of leadership in the impending environmental crisis. Trekking across the world to show how global warming is affecting lives everywhere, the film gives us a glimpse of the Earth our children will inherit. 7 p.m., Queen Anne Manor, 100 Crockett St.

Residents of the city and camp of Jenin witnessed horrific violence as their homes were flattened and loved ones killed by the Israeli army's Defensive Wall operation. Many human rights groups accused Israel of war crimes in the 2002 attack. The film *Jenin Jenin* shows the Palestinian's bitterness and grief caused by years of prolonged oppression and terror. 7 p.m., 1423 10th Ave.

Saturday 5/12 and Sunday 5/13

"The Myth of Global Democracy and the Pursuit of Happiness" is an open dialogue fostering a deeper awareness of social justice in the world today. The eminent Michael Parenti will speak on empire in the context of global policies. David Korten, who has written *The Great Turning*, will employ evolutionary theory in his discussion of the "Earth Community." 7 p.m., Antioch University, 2326 Sixth Ave. Tickets \$10-20. Info: (206)268-4716.

Monday 5/14

Julia Whitty reads from her book of stories, *A Tortoise for the Queen of Tonga*, which is both a memoir of her travels and an introduction to the ecology of coral reefs and the Polynesian peoples. 7:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St.

Thursday 5/17

The National Geographic film *Whales in Crisis* documents the widespread threats

against and the battle to save the world's gentle giants. It features interviews with those who know whales most intimately: the scientists in the Florida Keys struggling to save a pod of pilot whales and, in the Arctic, the people risking life and limb to understand the real effects of military sonar. 7 p.m., NW Environment Education Council, 650 S Orcas St., Suite 220.

The U.S. is the only developed nation that does not guarantee access to medical care as a right of citizenship. Jonathan Cohn, author of *Sick: the Untold Story of America's Health Care Crisis*, delivers a passionate analysis of our ailing medical system. He uses anecdotes and hard facts to reveal the catastrophic effects on our well being and pocket books, and he argues that universal health care, while not perfect, is far superior. Tickets \$5. 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave.

The community panel "The Time is Now! End the War on Drugs" features King County Councilmember Larry Gosset and former Seattle Chief of Police Norm Stamper. The U.S. has 260,000 people in state prisons on nonviolent drug charges, and more than 70 percent of them are Black and Latino. 6:30 p.m., Rainier Valley Cultural Center, 3515 S. Alaska St.

Friday 5/18

In response to the critical lack of reliable and affordable transportation for millions of Africans, David Peckham formed the grassroots organization Village Bicycle Project. The film *Ayamey* shows the people of rural Ghana walking miles through heat and spending 50 percent of their income on car fare for the crippled. Peckham's shipments of used bikes from the U.S. to Africa offer a path to improving the quality of life by fostering easier access to education, health care, and jobs. Peckham will lead a group discussion following the screening. 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl. N.

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

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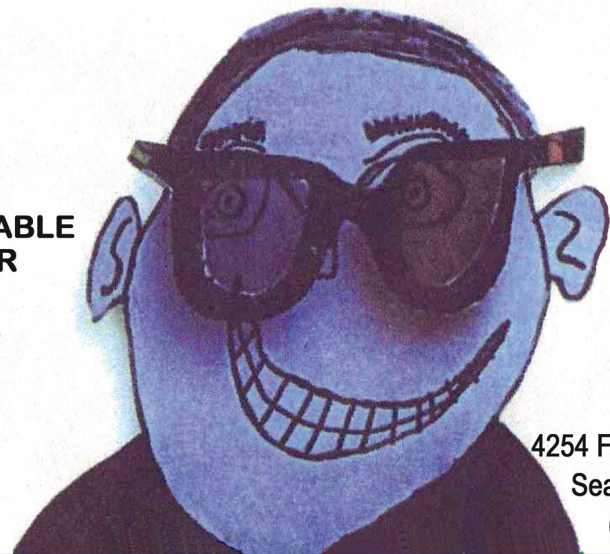
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Norwegian 17th of May Parade to celebrate Ballard's rich Scandinavian heritage. Thursday, May 17, 6 p.m., Ballard Chamber of Commerce, 2208 Market St., Suite 100.

Panel discussion: "**Dawn of a New Order: A Discussion on Recent Elections in Latin America.**" Thursday, May 17th, 7 p.m., University of Washington, Kane Hall, Room 110.

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