Port of Seattle to Raze Homes

Nikole Dispenza appreciates her old apartment for the backyard where her 2-year-old romped.

The Port of Seattle plans to tear down its 234-unit apartment building in Burien...see page 5.

A cop framed my son

Claudette Williams says James Pulliam didn’t do what landed him a felony conviction. Seattle officer Greg Neubert says he did...see page 5.

School of Hard Knocks:
Bay Area writer redefines scholarship...pg. 4

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

Scrabble Hotshots epitomize E-C-C-E-N-T-R-I-C, p. 8
Real Change is one of the key supports for the very big tent that is Seattle’s progressive community. We very much need to broaden our base of support and readership to bring ourselves up to speed.

We’re Counting on Our Friends. That Means You

By TIMOTHY HARRIS, Executive Director

This summer, Real Change needs to get ahead. Over the years, this newspaper has built an amazing base of support in our readership. Last year, more than 1,000 people contributed more than $245,000. About 45 percent of our budget comes directly from reader support, and every bit of it matters.

Our content is driven by readers, not advertisers. If you want entertainment journalism about things to eat, watch, and buy, there are several other local papers who have that niche covered. If you want to know about your community and how we can be part of the quiet revolution that is taking place everywhere, you read Real Change.

Your support allowed us to expand last year, our budget of $535,000 paid for weekly publication of a quality progressive newspaper, support staff for more than 800 homeless and low-income vendors, and organizing staff that, among other things, raised the bar for downtown developers’ support of affordable housing.

Our first week brought in, $7,311. We have set a very big fundraising goal of $140,000. We hope to step things up over the next few weeks to be at least halfway to our goal by the end of May. Here’s what will make the difference. We need you who know how important Real Change is to this community to take the 20/20 Challenge. By asking 20 of your friends to donate 20 to our work, you will help us step forward our immediate goal of raising $140,000 while you broaden our circle of friends for the long haul.

At our Web site, www.realchangenews.org, you will find the tools you need to make this easier. There are cards to download and print. There is an email postcard form to send your friends. There is a secure online donation service that makes giving easy.

By clicking on the 20/20 card on our Web site’s front page, you will be taken to more information about our goals and how you can help. Thanks for your help. Real Change needs every single friend we can get.
Clinic reprieve

You say you don’t have health insurance? You’ve got lots of company. So finding an extra $5 million in the county budget to fund two Public Health clinics that provide primary care in Northgate and Bothell is good news. At least for 2008.

Bob Ferguson, chair of the King County Council’s budget adoption committee, said earlier this month that he worked with County Executive Ron Sims to come up with the extra funding, which will keep the clinics open through next year. The executive also said he had set aside another $12 million that could be used for Public Health or jail health services in 2007.

It’s the second reprieve for the two clinics, which had been slated for closure this year. The bad news is that a task force appointed as part of the health department’s long-range planning is currently weighing whether the county can afford to run any primary-care clinics going forward.

—Cydney Gillis

Streetcars named

“Welcome to the Evergreen Bank streetcar. Next stop: the Discover South Lake Union station.”

Something like that is what passengers aboard the neighborhood’s new ride will hear when it opens at year’s end. The city last week announced that it has garnered “sponsorships” — private funding that buys naming rights for in-vehicle displays, as well as for more extensive documentation, including his elementary school transcript. Hays wondered, instead, if it was his Replacements Needed poster campaign that caused the delay.

While receiving the passport represents a victory, it may be bitter sweet. The costs to meet federally ordered demands have tapped his wallet. Hays is hoping he’ll be able to raise enough funds to travel by month’s end.

Want to help? Visit www.replacepersonsneeded.com

—Rosette Royale

Supporters say proposal would hurt the music scene

Regulating Seattle’s Nightlife

By CHRIS MILLER, Contributing Writer

N

irvana played its first show in Seat-

tle at the Central Tavern in Pioneer Square. The Shins and Death Cab for Cutie started off as just a couple of local bands doing time in Belltown. At midnight on April 19, what the Nightlife and Music Association dubbed “The Night the Music Died,” clubs, bars, venues, and taverns coked their booze and pulled the plug on their performers for five minutes as a statement against Mayor Greg Nickels’ Nightlife Ordinance.

“Our fear is that the new legislation could discourage small clubs from opening,” says the Nightlife and Music Association’s Tim Hatley. “Fifty- to seventy-five-person venues are essential for the ecology of home-grown bands.”

The controversial proposal — pitting neighborhood residents against watering holes, venues, and dance clubs — would give ample authority to the Mayor’s office to deal with what are seen as “problem clubs” by forcing nightclubs to apply for a nightclub licence.

This, in probably "the most regulated industry in the city," says Tim Hatley of Seattle NMA. “If we already have existing laws on the books to regulate this, do it.”

Nickels made the proposal in response to three violent crimes associated with nightlife, told aide Regina LaBelle at a City Council Economic Development and Neighborhoods Committee (EDNC) meeting. City Councilmembers Sally Clark and Richard McIver, who sit on the overseeing committee, question whether Nickels’ proposal is overly burdensome.

Club-owners will be responsible now for all litter within 50 ft. of their establishment, something arbitrary in assessment. Clark says, if passed, councilors will need to “make sure the threshold is high enough that it’s not a cigarette butt in the wrong place.”

“The nightlife ordinance gives an awful lot of leeway to the police department in determining who they might enforce and how they might enforce,” says McIver.

But the bass-saturated, neon-bloom ordinance is forcing the police department to travel on two college-accredited trips: one to the G8 Summit in Heil-

northgarden in early June; the second, a trip to the Yukon to study how GI policies affect the region’s poor.

Hays had expected no trouble with his application, but the State Department, citing concerns of identity theft, asked for more extensive documentation, including his elementary school transcript. Hays wondered, instead, if it was his Replacements Needed poster campaign that caused the delay.

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One additional offer to the trains’ sponsors, says city streetcar program manager Kim Nunes: they’ll be able to occasionally close their cars to the public and host hour-long, rolling private functions.

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By PAUL RICE, Contributing Writer

T

iny’s voice lives up to her name, a soft purr that occasionally defies itself, exploding into hysterical laughter as her words carry her from thought to thought, unfolding her stories and the soul of her work. Her work could also be called her life: As someone who’s lived through weighty situations most would fold under, she’s been learning how to survive and help others survive since she was 11, when her mother Dee lost her job and Tiny became the backbone of her family unit.

Tiny, a.k.a. Lisa Gray-Garcia, is the “co-mama” of POOR Magazine, a glossy lit mag with a twist: It is by and about poor people and their struggles. The other co-mama was Dee, her mother, who passed away last year. Working together, they became a pair rarely separated. Tiny grew up by her mother’s side, and Helen Jo and mother Dee (nee Mary Jo) wrote about being 12 and hearing children playing after the last school bell: “Each shrill, excited thread of their voices shattered the blank stillness with a momentary drop of life in a sea of empty air. Oh how I longed to be them for even a second, to have friends, to worry about my clothes, homework, boys.”

School or not, she’s still a scholar. Everyone who has lived through poverty and come out alive is a scholar, or an expert, according to Tiny. “What even is a scholar, and who defines that?” she wonders. “Usually people with a formal education from a formal institution of learning who have had very little if any direct experience with some of the issues that they’re actually studying.” Referring to people who live through diabolical circumstances in their everyday lives as scholars as opposed to just homeless or low-income people is a way to buck the language of oppression. “It’s a political statement — we have solutions but nobody listens to us.”

The “Don Quixote-style” scholarship in her book is a headlong tackling of North American cultural windmills — specifically what she sees as the myth of independence that’s been perpetuated on us. You know: Go to school, get a job, get a house, start a new family from scratch, or else. “All of these notions, like if you don’t leave the house you’re a bum! And who benefits from this shit but furniture companies and landlords?”

The causes of poverty run deeper than lack of money. For her, it’s the loss of indigenous family structures that are built to support, not alienate. She sees the need to teach poor people to use their knowledge to become scholars and speak their stories, as well as look at the outside world for context. “Poor people got caught up in our notions of what we deserve,” she says. “For instance, we don’t know that in Canada and most of Western Europe, they give people child care.”

Tiny is trying to put together a new issue of POOR Magazine for 2008, but they’re still short 5 grand. Almost all of her income is going to keep the magazine and website, Poor News Network (a web clearinghouse for poverty-related news), alive.

Everyone who has lived through poverty and come out alive is a scholar, or an expert, according to Tiny. Out of the Bay Area as an activist-artist-author-publisher, Tiny is wearing many hats these days.

She also swears like a sailor, which fits me instantly at ease, remembering my own father’s liberal use of the f-word. “I’m so over it right now, I don’t think I can handle this crazy-ass life.” She might complain, but I can tell she’s going to keep going. When you’ve walked out of hell, you don’t stop walking.

Activist-artist-author-publisher Lisa Gray-Garcia, a.k.a. Tiny, with her son. At age 11, Tiny held her family together after her mother lost her job.

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"After her mother lost her job, Tiny, with her son. At age 11, Tiny held her family together after her mother lost her job."
Ending homelessness gets harder, activists and officials contend, when public agencies tear down affordable housing needlessly

Port of Seattle to Raze Housing Near Runway

By CYDNEY GILLIS, Staff Reporter

“I’ve been depressed on and off for three months because I don’t want to move,” Dispenza says. She and the majority of tenants have already left, as the Port of Seattle, which owns the 234-unit complex, plans to tear it down entirely, even though only 72 of the units are within a buffer zone.  

Mother of convicted man seeks others arrested by SPD officer

More Question Veracity of Police Testimony

By CYDNEY GILLIS, Staff Reporter

“Just to the south of Lora Lake is a large vacant lot where there used to be a grocery store,” says Burien resident Cherisse Luxa. “If this is such a hot commercial area, why has no one sited there?”

can ride his tricycle. But by May 31, she has to be out.

Dispenza rents from the King County Housing Authority, whose director, Stephen Norman, is also mad. Since March, he’s been leading a heated fight to get the City of Burien and the Port of Seattle to save some of Lora Lake’s 22 buildings, which the Port owns in an area near SeaTac Airport and leases to the housing authority. But, so far, the port isn’t budging on a plan to redevelop the site, potentially as a big-box store.

A "crumbs" of crack cocaine found at the scene. Another Black man busted. The police had arrested her son for crack possession once before, but Claudette Thomas says what happened to him in 2003 with Seattle Officer Gregory Neubert wasn’t right.

Last week, Thomas stood with members of the Seattle-King County NAACP as they called for the badges of Neubert and another downtown Seattle police officer, Michael Tietjen, whose facts have been called into question in the Jan. 2 drug arrest of Troy Patterson ["Officers, video tell different stories," May 9].

Like Patterson, James Pulliam, 33, has insisted that Neubert planted the drugs he was charged with possessing—one reason, Thomas says, that her son demanded to go to trial. Despite a prior drug conviction and two incidents of bail jumping, she says, he believed he could prove his innocence and refused to take a plea.

But it was his word against the officer’s, and the jury sided with Neubert. For three-tenths of a gram of crack cocaine, Thomas says, her son got three years and is now serving six.

The lighter sentence was revoked, she says, after he complained about conditions in his prison rehab class and was pulled from the program.

Neubert arrested Pulliam in Belltown late in the evening of Nov. 18, 2003. In his incident report, the officer says he had observed him dealing drugs on Third Ave., then followed him down the street, where he says he saw Pulliam drop the three-tenths of a gram on the ground.

Neubert says he collected the crack and ordered Pulliam to stop. When he didn’t, the officer got in his squad car and went after him, reporting that, when apprehended, Pulliam stated, “Do me for obstruction, just don’t put nothing on me.”

The remark and one other — “don’t do me for dope” — would later serve as a basis for the prosecutor to argue that Pulliam had admitted guilt at the scene prior to being arrested. But Thomas
REAL CHANGE, Seattle’s activist community newspaper, is asking you and 20 friends to donate $20 or more each to help us strengthen our voice. Visit www.realchangenews.org
Four winters in war-ravaged Afghanistan showed journalist Ann Jones the daunting task of national recovery — and how the United States’ millions don’t help

Phantom Aid

By MARTHA BASKIN, Contributing Writer

Immediately after 9/11, Afghanistan became the first target of U.S. military retaliation in the so-called War on Terror. After the bombs stopped falling on Kabul, award-winning journalist and women’s rights activist Ann Jones set out for the shattered city. There she spent the next four winters working in humanitarian aid, determined to bring help where her country had brought destruction. Her recent book Kabul in Winter: Life Without Peace in Afghanistan (Picador, 2007), is a trenchant report.

Often called the crossroads of Central Asia, Afghanistan is a livestock- and agriculturally-based country. Devastated by decades of war, poverty, and oppressive political rule, the country’s economic, political, and social structures have been characterized by instability and turbulence. Jones brings a firsthand look of a nation trying to rise from the ruins of decades of proxy wars fought by both the U.S. and the former Soviet Union. She goes into the streets, the prisons, and the schools to meet everyday men and women and recount their harrowing stories.

I interviewed Jones, a clear-thinking journalist who’s not afraid to advocate for the oppressed, on a recent visit she made to the Puget Sound. Jones remains outraged not just by the predication of Afghanistan’s people, but by privatization scams tied to U.S. humanitarian aid — most of which goes into the pockets of private American contractors for work, she says, “that is often done very unsatisfactorily, very inappropriately, or not at all.”

In a recent article, you describe the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan and a resurgence of the Taliban. You blame George Bush and the U.S. military. Why?

After the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001, international ambitions were reached that held that international peacekeeping forces would be confined to Kabul. The U.S. would be responsible for security in all the rest of the country. But within a matter of weeks we withdrew most of our forces from Afghanistan. We never had extensive forces on the ground. We mostly attacked Afghanistan thinking they were going right into some very heavy battles and had been doing. Instead, they walked right into some very heavy battles and took a lot of casualties. They called for reinforcements. The U.S. response was to support with them with bombing. More Taliban are coming across the border and join the fray. So you have civilians caught in the crossfire of what is once again a very hot war, spreading throughout southern Afghanistan. Approximately 4,000 Afghans died last year in that conflict. It’s estimated officially that 1,000 of those were innocent civilians, many of them women and children. President Karzai, who has been trying to bring about some kind of peace and reconciliation in the country, has been unsupported in these efforts by the United States. When he tried to speak publicly about the issue he did just break down and weep about what’s happening to his country.

Taliban and Al Qaeda were able to pick off humanitarian workers who came to the provinces to try to initiate development and help the people. The NGOs [non-governmental organizations] had to withdraw to the relative safety of the capital, and that left most of Afghanistan with very little, if any, development.

You recount a recent incident in which President Karzai began to weep over thousands of dead women and children trapped between U.S. bombers and NATO troops on the one hand, and Taliban forces backed unofficially by Pakistan on the other. Could you describe the geopolitical realities that are fostering this situation?

Last summer, because things were beginning to fall apart in Afghanistan, the U.S. arranged for NATO to take control of security. NATO peacekeeping forces, led by the British went into southern Afghanistan thinking they were going to continue peacekeeping that the U.S. had been doing. Instead, they walked right into some very heavy battles and took a lot of casualties. They called for reinforcements. The U.S. response was to support with them with bombing. More Taliban are coming across the Pakistan border to join the fray. So you have civilians caught in the crossfire of what is once again a very hot war, spreading throughout southern Afghanistan. They died, of course, all the way through the Soviet occupation, but certainly the U.S. is giving massive amounts of aid to the Pakistan government. Our relationship with Pakistan is really not clear because everyone in the area knows that Taliban are coming across the border all the time.

From 2002 to 2006, you spent considerable time as a volunteer for a small nonprofit dedicated to assisting the country’s thousands of war widows. Madaar, or “mother.” Madaar was based in Kabul. The work of Madaar seems nothing less than life-affirming for many Afghan women. Could you talk about its history and its work?

It was founded by an American woman who had lived in Kabul since the 1960s. She knows the country very well. Everyone who works with Madaar is Afghan. It’s very small. But it conducts localized programs that offer life saving aid to a lot of women by helping them gain ways of supporting themselves after they’ve lost the men in their families. Because of course, especially during the Taliban time, women were not allowed to leave their homes to work. So this organization really saved some lives.

I’m critical of some of the bigger organizations and particularly of America’s official funding, administered by the Agency for International Development (USAID), because for the most part it’s a scam. Most of the aid that we citizens think is going to people in Afghanistan is actually going into the pockets of private American contractors. Jones details what she witnessed in Kabul In Winter.

“Most of the aid … is actually going into the pockets of private American contractors.”

Over the course of four winters in Afghanistan, journalist Ann Jones saw that millions of dollars donated to help the people instead found its way into the pockets of American contractors. Jones details what she witnessed in Kabul In Winter.
True North

■ Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name
by Vendela Vida, Ecco/HarperCollins 2007, Hardcover, 226 pages, $23.95

By AUSTIN WALTERS, Contributing Writer

Vendela Vida’s sweeping new novel is a multilayered page-turner about a young woman who suddenly finds she is not who she thinks she is and nothing is as it seems. The author’s talent as a storyteller shines through in unexpected ways as her remarkable protagonist confronts the demons of her past and future.

Vida’s haunting and unadorned prose frees the reader from the standard cliché of a woman lost in her own life. The plot, set mostly above the Arctic Circle in northern Scandinavia, twists and curls effortlessly around themes of loneliness and despair and finally centers on what it means to break a familial pattern not unlike a cycle of addiction or abuse and become free again.

After her father’s sudden death, Clarissa learns that the man who raised and loved her was not, in fact, her biological kin. Turning to her mother for answers is not possible, as she disappeared from a shopping mall when Clarissa was 14. Confused and alone, the only clue Clarissa has about her identity is the name of a priest who lives above the Arctic Circle.

Clarissa travels to Lapland, home to the indigenous Sami people. She hopes to find answers among them, and in the surrounding bleak landscape — who was her father? What caused her mother to flee from here, and is it possible that she’s returned? And ultimately, where does she belong?

Arriving on the priest’s doorstep, Clarissa lets herself imagine growing up in his warm home; trudging to school in the cold, eating reindeer meat and Wasa crackers, and gathering with the family around the fire. Instead, what the priest reveals about her personal history is “a nasty fairy tale with no moral.”

The journeys of the primary characters, if they were to be peeled away from the landscape, would be a less special experience for the reader. The story’s setting adds dimension and complexity, and this additional layer is what pushes it beyond an ordinary tale of broken families and lost identities.

The natural wonders of the far north, like the neverending darkness, the never ending light, and the Arctic cold, become allegories for the emotions and experiences of the characters. The Northern Lights are believed to be the ancestors of the Sami people, protecting and guiding them through their lives. Clarissa sits alone on a train and watches the sky brighten and pulse “as though hiding a beating heart.”

It’s difficult to put this book down because Vida, author of Girls on the Verge and And Now You Can Go, so expertly allows the glimmers of lightness and hope to shine through Clarissa’s undoing and despair. Together with artful plot twists, Vida has written another unforgettable work of fiction.

WORTH SEEING

NOW AVAILABLE ON DVD:

■ Word Wars: Tiles and Tribulations on the Scrabble Game Circuit (2003); Directed by Julian Pettro

“This sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” This proverbial admonishment against verbal abuse, while well intended, falls short in accuracy. Words can hurt. In fact, words can be addictive to the point that people — bright, intelligent men and women, forgo employment, dating, and standard social protocol to memorize every two- to eight-letter word in American English.

In Word Wars, an exciting voyeuristic journey into the ecclectic world of the country’s top scrabble players, we meet what might be called the “professionals,” a word that belies the nominal prize money at stake. These devotees have taken a family board game and developed sophisticated strategies, applying such everyday words as A-E (one), E-A-U (transparent liquid), A-S-P-I-R-E-Y (plural of aspirin), and B-E-Z-I-Q-U-E (a card game).

The real fun in Word Wars is in observing the lives of these perpetually penniless and colorful competitors, ranging from the Black and somewhat militant Marlon Hill to Joel Sherman, constantly beset by gastrointestinal issues, to Joe Edley, who actually has a family and a job. Unlike the recent crossword documentary Wordplay, which focused mostly on crossword competitions, Word Wars looks at lives gone slightly dysfunctional due to an obsession that can only be indulged by minds obviously capable of more productive activity. Enhanced by some deft cinéma vérité, this is a film you may want to buy and keep around the I-S-B-A (the hut).

■ Wordplay: A Natural History of Your Health

“We eat by the grace of nature, not industry, and what we’re eating is never anything more or less than the body of the world.” So concludes The Omnivore’s Dilemma, author Michael Pollan’s epic journey into the varied American food systems making up our country’s diet. Along the way he takes a clearer to your perspectives on just what it is we’re eating for dinner, leaving you open to new ruminations and maybe even, gasp, lifestyle changes. These changes aren’t simple or specific, though — Pollan cuts into all deeply held beliefs about food. If you’re a meat eater, you may find your complicity in cruelty and public health hazards too much to bear. But vegetarians and vegans aren’t safe either — they will be confronted with logical arguments that hurl their leafy and supposedly nonviolent habits into moral peril. This is a testament to the book’s strength; while Pollan is not advocating for any specific agenda (he’s an avowed carnivore himself!), he says we must begin to pay more attention to where our daily bread comes from, else we get poisoned by our food ignorance.

Now put that in your salad bowl and toss it.

— Paul Rice

Your book purchases can benefit Real Change. For more information, go to www.realchangeonline.org, click on the Powell’s button, and browse a list of books recently featured in our pages.
Dear America,

I really hate putting you down. I know how self-righteous, selfish, and arrogant you are, and how, because of that, if I ever put you down, you will never listen to me again. You only listen to flatterers like George Bush, who lie and tell you every day how great you are.

I've tried to be your best friend, America. I really have. When you got into that illegal war four years ago, I tried to hold you back. That's what best friends do. When they're making a stupid mistake, you try to hold them back, to save them from being stupid. But you didn't appreciate it. You cursed me. You screamed, 'I'M NOT making illegal war! I'm killing terrorists! Give me my keys or I'll make you a_Public Enemy No. 1!'

Meanwhile, for years me and all my LIBERAL buddies have been telling you that capital punishment doesn't work. We did study after LIBERAL study (all study is liberal to you) to find out that capital punishment has no deterrent effect. Also, the only places where execution costs less than life imprisonment are Third World countries that are overrun with murderers. You didn't care. Fine.

But last week something just drove me over the edge. A guy, Philip Workman, on death row in Tennessee, asked that his last meal be pizza served to some homeless person. The Tennessee authorities refused, BECAUSE IT WOULD COST MORE THAN $200.

Philip Workman is a creep. He probably didn't commit the murder he was sentenced for, because the Medical Examiner who testified against him is a pathological liar. But Workman's still a creep. Besides, you already know I'M LIBERAL, so I'm pro-death, having no respect for the sanctity of life. So I say kill Workman, make him hurt, and bring that Third World on.

But the refusal to honor Workman's last meal request is more than sad, and I'll tell you why, America, and you're not going to want to hear me tell you why, and you'll cover your ears, America, and shout "La la la, I'm not listening to you, LIBERAL!" But here I go.

All the Tennessee authorities had to do to get a homeless person fed for free WAS TO GO PUBLIC AND ASK PEOPLE TO HELP BY DOING IT FOR THEM.

This is what American Civilization has devolved to. America, you are SO SCREWED UP that your petty officials don't even THINK of asking your citizens to help them do anything. You are full of hatred for common people, that stick up with authority and band together with petty bureaucracy channeling hatred of the lower classes, that it doesn't even occur to the people running your prisons that the people outside the prison walls could be asked to do what they couldn't.

A city so degenerate that it treats its own people as useless, space-filling trash can't last a generation. ■

Sound off and read more: drwesb.blogspot.com

Dr. Wes: Someone Somewhere Deserves Pizza

Dr. Wes Browning

America, you are SO SCREWED UP that your petty officials don't even THINK of asking your citizens to help them do anything.

Part I: Great Expectations

Just as we were settling into car-free married life, Bus Nerd and I got a surprise: We're (rather unexpectedly) car-free married life, Bus Nerd and I got a surprise: We're (rather unexpectedly) car-free married life, Bus Nerd and I got a surprise: We're (rather unexpectedly) car-free married life, Bus Nerd and I got a surprise: We're (rather unexpectedly) car-free married life, Bus Nerd and I got a surprise: We're (rather unexpectedly) car-free married life.

Pike Place Market, Seattle Center, and Grandma's apartment — with waiting for an available adult to drive me.

• It will have exciting adventures. What's more exciting for a five-year-old than pulling the bell or sitting in the bendy part of an articulated bus?

• It will teach you how to interact with people of different ages, cultures, and levels of income and education.

• If we're very lucky, it will develop compassion for its fellow human beings.

• If only answering all the other new parent questions were so easy. We're still trying to decide if we should find out the sex.

Part II: Not-So-Great Expectations

The joys of busing while pregnant:

• All bus riders have experienced the odoriferous unpleasantness known as the funky bus. Unfortunately, when you have the nose of a bloodhound, every bus is a funky bus. Perfume, lotion, hair products, food smells — to say nothing of the less pleasant scents associated with humans — all can cause an olfactorily nauseous nightmare at least as offensive as a crowded 4 on a summer afternoon.

• Walking? OK. Sitting? Very OK. Standing in one place for more than a minute? Not OK. Hence, benchless stops and crowded buses are not a pregnant bus chick's friend.

• New, important addition to the bus chick bag: A sturdy, leak-proof plastic bag, to be used in cases of extreme nausea emergencies when exiting the bus is not possible. (Fortunately, I have yet to use mine.)

• Jeans are no longer a wise fashion choice, as opening a top button (or two) of one's fly when seated is generally frowned upon by other riders.

• There is no event or destination (with the exception, perhaps, of a Prince concert) worth running to catch a bus for. Important meeting? Court date? Sweating in ceremony? They'll get along alright without you until the next bus arrives.

Real Change
May 16 - 22, 2007

Street Watch

Thurs., May 3, 3:15 p.m., 200 block Stewart St., Ailey to N. A transient Black male aged 51 was contacted for trespassing in an arcade to the back door of an unoccupied building on Stewart St. A routine name check found an outstanding warrant, which was verified and a warrant was issued and booked into King County Jail.

Thurs., May 3, 3:30 p.m., Third Ave.

Officer was dispatched to an address on Third Ave. to investigate a report of an assault and was informed the suspect had left the scene. When he got to the location he found another officer had detained the suspect, a transient Black male aged 57, and was speaking with him. The reporting officer waited for the complainant/victim to arrive and spoke to them. Complainant arrived and stated that the suspect was trying to lay down his blanket to get ready to sleep in the doorway of his business. The suspect advised him not to do that. The suspect then got up and punched the complainant with the left hand and right fist. Complainant stated that the suspect then raised a can of soda as if to throw it at the officer, but didn't.

The other officer stated that he had spoken to the suspect, who told him that the Seattle Police had been following him every day wherever he goes. He also said that an unknown woman in jects him with a dose of 200,000, which makes a tulip grow out of his back. He said he removed the tulip and left no mark. He could not climb walls and ceilings. The officer called an AMR ambulance, filled out a mental health evaluation form, and the suspect was transported to Harborview Medical Center.

Thurs., May 3, 3:30 p.m., 1900 block Pike St. Subject, a transient white female aged 44, was observed by officers walking on Pike St. She was known to have an outstanding warrant and was contacted, arrested, and booked into King County Jail.

Thurs., May 3, 4:05 p.m., Western Ave., Victor Steinbrueck Park

Suspect, a transient Hispanic male aged 28, was observed by officer in Victor Steinbrueck Park, and was known to him as having previously trespassed from the location. Officer contacted the suspect, and during a routine name check, found that he was under active Department of Corrections (DOC) supervision. A condition of his probation was that the suspect "remain within or outside of geographical borders as specified. Before stopping the suspect, the officer contacted his DOC officer and asked about his status. The DOC officer stated that the suspect needed to be arrested because he was supposed to have been deported. The officer stopped the suspect a few blocks later and arrested him. After the arrest the suspect, a transient white parole violation — the consumption of the alcoholic drink Tilt — and was issued a DOC detainer. He was then 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.
moving backward

supreme court’s ruling patronizes and endangers women

moving backward

by marcy bloom, contributing writer

now work for a reproductive rights organization in Mexico City, where abortion has just been decriminalized. But here in the United States, our judges have barged into our exam rooms and knocked down our physicians.

the U.S. supreme court recently turned its back on women and rejected its own long-standing adherence to historical legal precedent. Using patronizing language and showing absolutely no recognition of women as moral agents capable of making our own reproductive health decisions, the court has tragically bought into anti-choice lies and rhetoric. By banning a specific abortion procedure that trained doctors have determined to be at times the best and safest method of preserving a woman’s fertility, the court is telling us that the foundation of Roe vs. Wade is up for grabs.

The ongoing disrespect and disdain for women’s lives and reproductive justice we have seen both domestically and internationally under the Bush administration continues to move along.

by Marcy Bloom, Contributing Writer

The ongoing disrespect and disdain for women’s lives and reproductive justice we have seen both domestically and internationally under the Bush administration continues to move along.

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Close this decision, which bans some abortions after 12 weeks, and could be interpreted to affect earlier procedures as well, was held back by successful legal challenges for more than three years because this new law makes no exception for the health of the woman. In the past, the Court has always considered women’s health to be paramount — a core foundation of Roe vs. Wade — and that physicians were considered to be the best trained persons to decide on the type of procedure safest for a particular woman.

This is the first time that the Court has failed to affirm that restrictions on abortion must make exceptions to protect a woman’s health. It’s a seismic shift in the discussion about abortion and exceptions to protect a woman’s health. It’s a truth, and justice. Now women and their families will lose even more.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, who wrote the decision, stated that the law does not violate the constitutional right to abortion as laid out in Roe vs. Wade, which declared abortion to be a part of a woman’s constitutional right to privacy. In descending and sexist terms that show no understanding that women are capable of choosing motherhood, the Court’s 5-4 majority have now banned a procedure that the Court found to be disturbing, gruesome, and never necessary.

Having worked in abortion care for more than 30 years, I have been honored to witness, and aid in the provision of, safe and compassionate abortion care for many thousands of women. I fully understand that much of the public would be disturbed by many abortion procedures. Of course, many aspects of medical care/procedures are upsetting to the untrained eye. Do we then ban them for this reason? The answer, naturally, is no.

Only in the arena of abortion care and women’s lives is this even entertained.

We will soon see further attempts to restrict safe abortion care and reproductive health services on a state level. Older women who may experience high-risk pregnancies are especially vulnerable, because prenatal tests such as amniocentesis are often not available until mid-pregnancy. The law also puts younger, and frequently poorer, women and girls at even higher risk because they may be unaware that they are pregnant, and/or have inadequate funds to have abortion procedures earlier in the first trimester, which is when the vast majority of safe abortions occur in the United States.

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AFGHANISTAN, Continued from Page 7

You estimate that 86 cents of every dollar administered by the USAID goes into the pockets of private American contractors.

Yes, or go to waste in one way or another. Often what’s counted as success goes to build fortress-like American embassies or serve American interests.
The U.S. doesn’t fund the Afghan government directly. We set it up as a government, and yet we fund our own private enterprises over there and require Afghans to buy American goods to fulfill the terms of these contracts. How is the government going to compete with that? So in a way our aid program serves to undermine the very government that we ourselves helped to create. You could blame incompetence or a very ill-informed foreign policy, or you could see this as really serving the ends of this administration — because many Afghans themselves believe that what America really wants out of Afghanistan are permanent military bases.

You conclude that the underlying purpose of American aid is to make the world safe and open to American business rather than to educate the population so they can be self-sufficient.

Yes, absolutely. And American aid has now gone under the direct control of the State Department as an instrument of our foreign policy. I think this is a shame for Americans, because I believe that the average American really would like to do something to help Afghanistan. And I think it’s hard for people to understand how this country can be in such terrible shape when we’re sending them all this aid.

The Bush Administration boasts that five million Afghan children now go to school — boys and girls. But that’s less than half of the school-age children in the country and it’s less than a third of girls who are eligible to go to school. And most of the girls who do go back to school drop out after a year or two. Those dropout rates are increasing as security gets worse. One of the chief techniques of the Taliban in the last couple of years has been to burn or bomb schools or murder teachers, sometimes in front of the students.

I’m leaving out, perhaps deliberately, because it was very hard for me to read, the violence against women that permeates the culture.

It’s a big part of my book because so little has been written about it and because this administration has made claims to having liberated Afghan women and fixed their situation up just fine. That’s very far from the truth. Afghan culture separates men and women so effectively that most men who go to Afghanistan as journalists or to write books about it never even meet an Afghan woman. It’s not permitted. So if you think about books that you’ve read about Afghanistan, you’ve been reading about Afghan men.
The women’s story is a very different one and it has not really been told. So I tell a lot of stories about the work I did with women in the prisons and the hospitals in Kabul, trying to care for female victims of suicide attempts. That tells you much more about the status of women in Afghanistan; that so many young women are trying to kill themselves. There are a number of those very grim stories in my book, but I think it’s important that we know about them.

And what are the solutions then to the whole situation of the international community helping Afghanistan? You’re not supposed to be trying to “help people”, but assist in providing the tools to help themselves.

There aren’t any easy answers to these very complex situations, which is perhaps something our government should think about before it goes messing with other countries. But I would say that where aid goes away is in its intention. And for aid to be effective, efficient, helpful, it has to come out of genuine motivation to give assistance to the people of the country and to make their lives better in very fundamental ways — like providing them with clean water and electricity and sanitation, or helping them find the means to provide those things for themselves. When aid is delivered by countries who are just trying to look out for their own interest, that doesn’t help people at all.

[Resource]
Doctors Without Borders and Oxfam are two aid agencies with reliable records of service in Afghanistan. There’s also Women for Afghan Women.org, a New York based resource led by Afghan and Afghan-American women that is developing a family guidance center for survivors of domestic violence.

CALL TO ACTION

Haiti Needs a Debt-Free Future Now

Issue: In the world’s most impoverished nations, most of the people do not have access to clean water, adequate housing, or basic health care. These countries are paying debt service to wealthy nations and institutions at the expense of providing basic services to their citizens. In 2003, the UN estimated that 30,000 children die each day due to preventable diseases. Debt cancellation frees up resources to reverse this devastating reality.

Jubilee USA, an organization committed to relieving the debt of poor nations, is working this week to build support for House Resolution 241, which would immediately cancel Haiti’s debt and give its people an opportunity to build a stable democracy and work toward a future free from poverty.

Background: Haiti is the most impoverished country in the Americas. Eighty percent of the population lives in abject poverty and one out of nine children dies before reaching the age of five. Life expectancy is 53 years, and nearly half the population cannot read. Haiti’s government is forced to divert $56 million per year from fighting this poverty to reimburse international financial institutions that were established to help countries like Haiti fight poverty. Over half of Haiti’s $1.3 billion debt is for loans granted to Haiti’s dictators.

Social spending has risen by 75 percent in countries that have received debt relief, with funds used to abolish school fees, provide free immunizations, fight HIV/AIDS, and improve access to safe drinking water. Cancelling Haiti’s debt could increase the environmental budget tenfold to reverse the degradation that leaves Haiti vulnerable to tropical storms and mudslides. Alternatively, the amount could double resources spent on education or triple funds spent on AIDS prevention.

In 2006, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund added Haiti to its heavily indebted poor countries debt cancelation program. That won’t cancel Haiti’s debt for several years, though, and it comes with strings attached that will make Haiti’s poverty worse in the short term, and possibly for the long term. Haiti’s onerous debt load cannot be canceled immediately without conditions, as a matter of justice and as an essential tool in the global fight to end poverty.

Action: You can help by contacting your member of Congress and urging him or her to co-sponsor House Resolution 241 to help cancel Haiti’s debt immediately and without strings. Call (202)224-5212 and ask for your Representative’s office, or email:

Rep. Rick Larsen – 2nd Dist. Rick.Larsen@mail.house.gov

For more information on relieving the debts of the poorest countries, visit www.jubileeusa.org

9/11: DEBUNKING THE DEBUNKERS

Dr. David Ray Griffin
At Town Hall
1119 8th Ave, Seattle
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www.jubileeusa.org
OFFICER, Continued from Page 5

says her son is adamant he dropped no drugs and that, when the officer confronted him with crack, he essentially pleaded for mercy.

“We’re trying to get not only [Pulliam’s] case reopened, but anybody that [SPD officer] Neubert came into contact with,” says Thomas.

“Certain things [Neubert] said on the stand didn’t make sense,” she says. For example, “It was dark where he said he dropped the drugs. But how can you see in the dark?”

Before her son was arrested, Thomas says, he became active with the October 22 Coalition, a group that fights police brutality and had already single out Neubert for his behavior. In 1995, the officer shot a suspected drug dealer downtown, nearly killing him, and in 2001 he was involved in a Central District traffic stop that led to the shooting death of Aaron Roberts.

Neubert was cleared in both incidents. But Thomas and the NAACP have little faith in the police’s internal findings. With the discrepancies that public defenders have unearthed in Neubert’s arrest of Troy Patterson, Thomas is hoping to connect with others he has arrested.

“We’re trying to get not only [Pulliam’s] case reopened, but anybody that Neubert came into contact with,” she says. “We need to get together and find out who Neubert has put in jail over the years.”

CALENDAR

This Week’s Top Picks

Saturday 5/19

The Black Child Development Institute and Praxis Institute host the conference Eliminating the Pipeline: From School to Prison. Councilmember Larry Gossett and Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome author Dr. Joy DeGruy-Leary will give keynote speeches. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., African American Academy, 8311 Beacon Ave. S.

University of Washington professor and translator of Walter G. Andrews reads from his newest project—a translation of the highly praised contemporary Turkish poet Himi Yavuz. Seasons of the World is 87 pages on our natural surroundings, difficulties expressing ourselves in language and culture, and love of the earth and each other. 4:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St.


Sunday 5/20

Associate Editor of the Black Commentator and founder of the Haiti Information Project Kevin Pina screens and discusses his recent film Haiti: We Must Kill the Bandits. Pina’s writings and documentaries reveal the human rights abuses and suppression of democracy following the overthrow of elected President Jean Bertrand Aristide. Noon, Bethany United Church of Christ, 6230 Beacon Ave. S. Info: (206)725-7535.

Tuesday 5/22

As the classic American musical West Side Story marks its 50th anniversary, the continuing relevance of gang violence and youth alienation has catalyzed a series of community conversations for all ages. Join Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske, child behaviorist Eric Trupin, and child welfare advocate Bobbe Bridge for The West Side Story Project. Tickets $5. 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 Eighth Ave.

How severe is the threat of a nuclear Iran? Christopher Preble, director of Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, delivers his lecture Iran: The Grand Bargain. He argues that the danger is immediate, and instead of remedying the situation, the U.S. has painted itself into a dangerous corner. Preble will shed light on how methods such as economic sanctions and “preventative” strikes are futile, and will present an alternative route for clearing this frightening impasse. Tickets $10 World Affairs Council Members, $15 general. 7 p.m., Broadway Performance Hall, 1625 Broadway.

Wednesday 5/23

Andrew Lam’s writing picks at his double-nature; he grew up as both an American and a Vietnamese soldier’s son. He will read from his book Perfume Dreams, which focuses on the significance of the Vietnam War to the people who once lived there. 7 p.m., Seattle Library, Central Branch, Microsoft Auditorium, 1000 Fourth Ave.

Thursday 5/24

William Langewiesche takes on the proliferation of nuclear weapons in his sixth book, The Atomic Bazaar. He examines the chances and consequences of nuclear terrorism and why we must avoid another Hiroshima and Nagasaki. 5:30 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Company, 101 S. Main St.

Lindsay Palmer of the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center and Merrill Cousin of the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence engage in a frank talk about sexual assault and domestic violence in Seattle. 6:30 p.m., Asian Art Museum, 1400 E. Prospect St.

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

REAL CHANGE

May 16 – 22, 2007

CLASSIFIEDS

JOB LISTING

BABES Network/YWCA, a sisterhood of women facing HIV together, seeks Peer Counselor/Newsletter Editor to support other HIV+ positive women. High school diploma or eqv. Details www.ywcaworks.org.


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