

Going, going... Tim Harris on the affordable housing loss that crept up on everyone. ... p. 7

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REALCHANGE

Seattle, Get Your Goat On

Fans say pygmy goats are weed-eating, milk-making cuties— but they're also illegal within city limits. ... See page 5

A citizens' petition supports Councilmember Richard Conlin's proposal to allow the backyard grazers.



Photo by Revel/NT

Is the New Bus Tunnel Safe?

Commuters return Sept. 24 to the downtown tunnel, which presents new safety complications for drivers and passengers alike... See page 5.



Photo by Katia Roberts

Change Agent
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Joel Turner



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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 bad news: hope isn't possible in the real world. The good news: It's not needed, either

Reason to Believe

By **MARY-WYNNE ASHFORD**,
 M.D., Guest Writer

I once borrowed five hours of tapes from a popular radio series about current environmental crises, and listened to them one after another over a weekend. By Monday, I was paralyzed with despair. Onto the weight of the nuclear arms race, I had now cemented over-population, ozone depletion, drift-net fishing, destruction of the rain forests, the Great Lakes dying.

How do you find hope when there is no rational reason for optimism? How do you deal with evidence that the situation is worsening despite your best efforts? Does your life make any difference? How do you continue in the face of despair?

Albert Camus, in his 1947 novel, *The Plague*, explores the same questions, using an epidemic of bubonic plague to represent evil and suffering, specifically the Nazi occupation of France and the collusion of the Vichy regime. The protagonist, Dr. Rieux, fights against suffering and death, not as a hero, but as a weary, somewhat detached man, who through his struggle gives his life meaning. His friend, Jarrou, speaks of having had the plague when he discovered as a child that his father's role as a judge was to sentence and preside over death.

In choosing how to respond to the plague, Camus' characters are not

The planetary crises raise existential and spiritual questions we are usually able to avoid in our affluent society. I find that the question of how to face hopelessness is one I cannot answer with consistency and intellectual rigor.

motivated by hope, but by an inner imperative similar to that often described



I've made some people angry lately by saying that charity and volunteerism have fooled us into thinking that we have done enough. As we give and

give and give while things mostly stay the same, it's easy to think that the poor themselves must somehow be to blame.

Superficial evidence of progress is regularly trumped by the growing chasm

by those who chose to risk their lives saving Jews from the Holocaust. The rescuers say that they were faced with someone at the door, and simply did what had to be done. Viktor Frankl also writes that finding meaning in life is independent of hope or freedom, as he describes life in a Nazi concentration camp, where daily tasks of living often

When the monks were asked about Chinese policies and the likelihood of another period of repression, such calculations were conjecture. Since you cannot see into the future, you simply proceed to put one stone on top of another, and another on top of that. If the stones get knocked down, you begin again, because if you don't, nothing will get built.

represent a refusal to acquiesce.

Joanna Macy writes of visiting a group of monks in Tibet. The monks were reconstructing their ancient monastery, which had been reduced to rubble by the Chinese. Her heart fell at the magnitude of the task and its almost foolhardy nature. When the monks were asked about Chinese policies and the likelihood of another period of repression, Macy saw that such calculations were conjecture to the monks. Since you cannot see into the future, you simply proceed to put one stone on top of another, and another on top of that. If the stones get knocked down, you begin again, because if you don't, nothing will get built.

The planetary crises raise existential and spiritual questions we are usually able

to avoid in our affluent society. I find that the question of how to face hopelessness is one I cannot answer with consistency and intellectual rigor. On the one hand, optimism probably represents denial of the facts: The scientific research offers little evidence that nature can recover from the man-made destruction wrought in this century. I know, therefore, that I cannot rationally base my decisions on the hope that we will turn things around. On the other hand, I find that I cherish the small signs that people are taking action to promote change, and when I see them, I feel a tiny surge of optimism that I am unwilling to repress. My compromise is to work without depending on hope that it will make a difference, while at the same time treasuring the signs that I am one of many.

In spite of my despair after hearing the radio series, I found myself continuing my efforts in disarmament, not because it seemed to be the most urgent problem, or the most terrifying, but because there were things to be done in disarmament that were clear to me. Whether or not I could really make a difference, leaving them undone was a resignation to despair. At the very least, the individual can challenge the silence of assumed consensus. By breaking the silence, by refusing to collude with evil and insanity, one resists the darkness.

Breaking the silence is, I think, the most significant thing we do as individuals. Sometimes even without speaking, one can challenge the silence, as did the women in Argentina during the military regime. These women, *Las Madres de la Plaza*, refused to be intimidated by death squads. They kept their regular vigil, their presence alone a blatant accusation of murder and brutality. They also showed that the power of one is acted out in community, not in solitude. We sustain each other in dark times, sometimes simply by being present together.

The result of "speaking truth to power," as the Quakers put it, is often subtle and unpredictable. Men who left their jobs in U.S. military industries as a result of crises of conscience describe individuals who forced them to confront the meaning of their work on nuclear weapons. One senior official told of the impact of passing a solitary man who stood every day outside the entrance

HOPE, Continued on Page 6

Director's Corner

between rich and poor. While federal McKinney-Vento funding for programs serving the homeless grew by \$70 million between 2002 and 2006, between 2004 and 2006, HUD funding decreased by \$3.3 billion. Further cuts are likely this year.

It's hard to see, really, how things could be otherwise.

Given the increasingly lopsided distribution of wealth and power in this country, the math of poverty and homelessness becomes inevitable. Tax breaks, war, and legislative pork come at a price paid by the powerless.

We have come to the point that, unless these issues are addressed, government

simply does not have the capacity to adequately care for the poor.

Over the decades, we have lost our sense of responsibility to each other as a community. We have forgotten that to be human is to deserve dignity, and that we owe that to each other.

Charity is a necessary act of mercy in response to an unacceptable now. But acts of charity divorced from work for justice eventually turns to bitter ash. When we burn for justice, we generate a light that makes our way clear.

Read daily posts by Tim Harris at apesmaslament.blogspot.com

Just Heard...

Poor coverage

If you read *Real Change*, you're probably well attuned to the mainstream media and its slanted reporting on poverty. But a new study from a New York nonprofit called Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR) shows just how slanted it is.

From Sept. 11, 2003 to Oct. 30, 2006, FAIR monitored the coverage of poverty on the nightly news programs of three networks — ABC, CBS and NBC — adding up a total of 58 stories. That compares with 69 stories covering the Michael Jackson trial, in a time period, no less, when Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans.

The networks often allowed Katrina's survivors to speak for themselves and the causes of their condition. Otherwise, FAIR says, reporters used the poor as props before turning largely to white commentators. Out of 190 sources, 114 did not live in poverty — and 79 percent of them were white.

"Poor people were mainly included only to tell anecdotal stories of suffering, before the networks turned to 'experts' who discussed what policies should be pursued to address the situation," FAIR says.

The full report, which has more breakdowns of who got on the air and why, is available at www.fair.org.

Public defense

It seems redundant to have to pass a law twice. But in the battle between the mayor and City Council over Seattle's public defense services, that's exactly what's happened.

On Sept. 10, the Seattle City Council voted 8-0 to affirm an existing city law that limits the city's public defenders to 380 cases a year. The move is a response to a city audit that showed the city had failed to correct excess caseloads, leaving some attorneys unable to adequately prepare to represent indigent clients in misdemeanor city cases.

The council also amended the law to create an independent, seven-member panel that will make recommendations to the city on contract proposals from the Associated Counsel for the Accused and other nonprofit law firms that provide such services. The amendment takes direct aim at Mayor Nickels, who said last month that he had appointed his own selection panel.

If the mayor doesn't veto the legislation, it will take effect in mid-October.

—Cydne Gillis

Frozen out

Frozen foods bound for Asia were the focal point of a labor-backed shutdown of the Port of Seattle's Terminal 46 on Monday, Sept. 10, as Washington Jobs with Justice blocked the entrance to the 88-acre terminal and ILWU members stood idle. The shutdown was aimed at the Seattle-based National Frozen Foods Corporation, which workers say has illegally cut short contract negotiations at a Chehalis manufacturing plant.

—Adam Hyla

Change Agent

Eric Dunn wants to make sure his work has a broad impact.

And he's doing just that. Dunn is an attorney specializing in housing issues for the Northwest Justice Project, an organization that provides free legal services to people who can't afford them.

With so many housing cases, legal aids can become overwhelmed, according to Dunn. He says he has a responsibility to prioritize cases that will not only help an individual client but also have results that will help everyone facing the same issue.

He's currently taking on the Seattle Housing Authority. SHA administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which provides subsidies to low-income people.

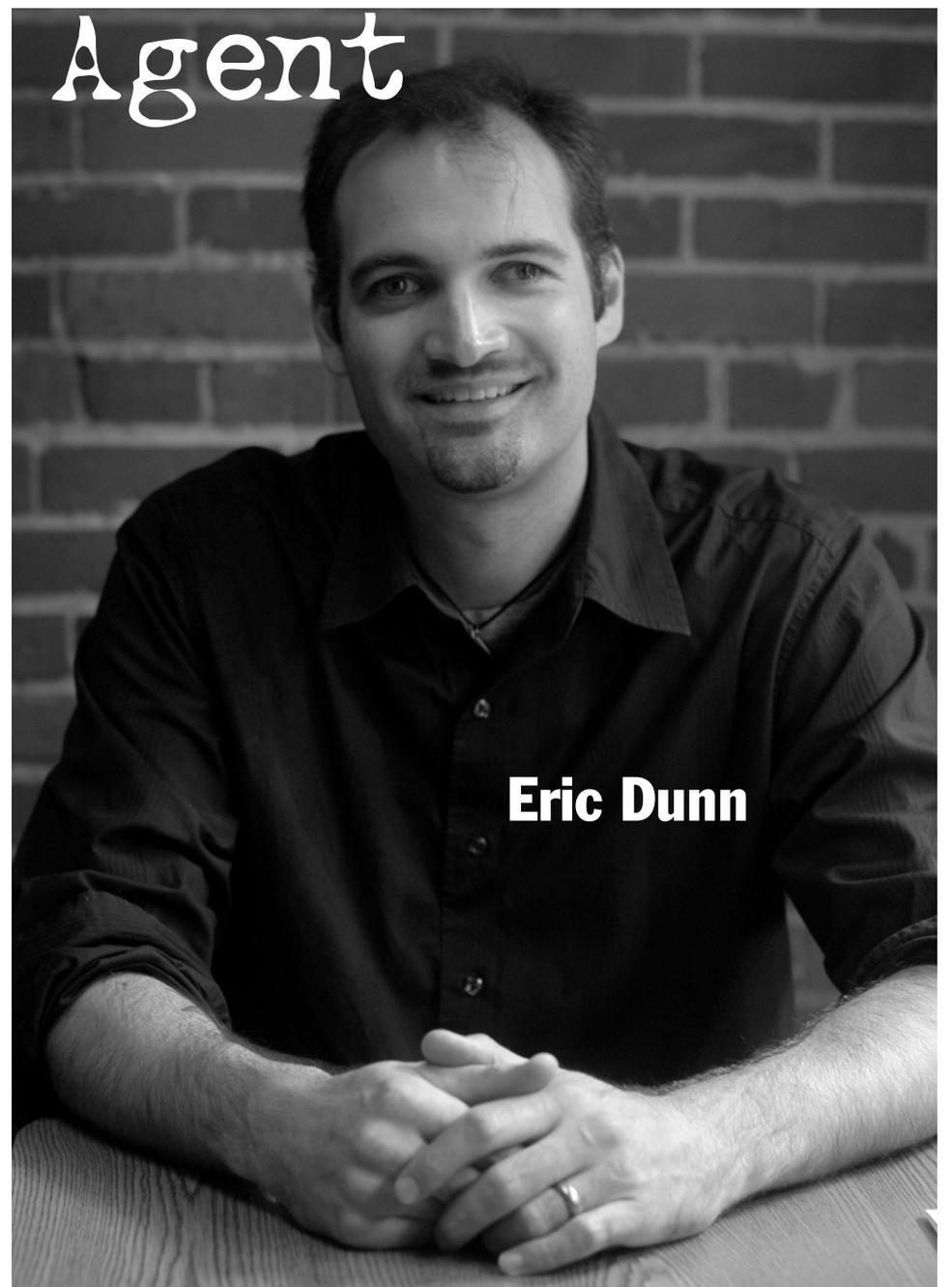
Dunn argues that the hearing process SHA provides to tenants who break rules is unfair. Tenants are being evicted for frivolous reasons such as missing meetings instead of serious offenses, such as lying about income.

"There are about 8,000 housing vouchers in circulation," Dunn says. "Each one represents a household... It's not just one person being kicked out of Section 8 housing, it's thousands of people getting kicked out without someone fighting for their rights."

Dunn says it's not a question of if, but when, the case is won.

Until then, he'll continue taking on issues that have a broad impact. The next big item on his radar is unfair tenant screening practices.

Dunn says most of the housing cases he handles have a civil rights angle, ranging from discrimination against an



Eric Dunn

individual to a government agency doing something unjustified. These are the types of issues which he has a passion for.

"Anything that involves a fundamental unfairness gets my blood boiling," he says. —Text and Photo by Joel Turner

City lobbyists could get more public airing

"The public has a right to know who is trying to influence their elected representatives," says Seattle City Council President Nick Licata. To this end, Licata is in the process of composing legislation that would require all lobbyists, employers of lobbyists, and sponsors of expenditure lobbyists to register and

file periodic reports with the Ethics and Elections Commission. But not everyone is sure that Licata's definition of lobbyist goes far enough.

At a brown-bag forum held on Sept. 11 in Council Chambers to gather information on how other governments have tackled the issue of lobbyist registration,

Licata hosted Vickie Ripple, executive director of the Washington State Public Disclosure commission, Amy Calderwood, the King County Ombudsman, and Shoshanah Oppenheim, a senior policy analyst from the Office of Portland City Commissioner Sam Adams.

But it was Chris Lehman, a political scientist who works for the Seattle Community Council Federation, who crashed the party. He had harsh words for Licata. "The Washington State government bars unelected officials from using public funds for lobbying. The Seattle city government, due to a glaring hole in legislation, doesn't," Lehman said. "If this is not going to be made illegal, it should at least be carefully tracked."

In Licata's draft proposal, however, the definition of lobbying explicitly exempts "communications by city employees acting within the scope of their employment."

But Lehman's suggestion may change all that. According to Newell Aldrich, a spokesperson for Licata's office, an expanded definition of lobbying may find its way into Licata's final proposal. "Licata thinks that it is worth looking at, and wants to discuss it further in meetings," Aldrich says.

According to Aldrich, Licata's proposal is to be formally introduced sometime in the next month.

—Patrick Reis



Mourning 9/11

Some 400 marchers led a memorial march through downtown, mourning the loss of civil liberties, civic honesty, and international goodwill since Sept. 11, 2001. The marchers began at Seattle Center and stopped outside the headquarters of major media centers, before concluding with a rally in Westlake Park. Photo by Revel Nt.

Nonprofit gets Mayor's promise of public funds to purchase Belltown property

"Fast Track" for Housing

By PATRICK REIS,
Editorial Intern

Paul Lambros is excited. In the past four years, Plymouth Housing Group, of which he is the executive director, has raised \$52 million to create affordable housing for the homeless, and the money keeps rolling in.

On Wed., Sept. 5, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels announced that the 2008 budget would allocate \$3.5 million to the nonprofit developer from the city's General Fund to help Plymouth purchase property for the construction of a Belltown housing complex.

This money is especially significant because it skipped the normal channels of allocation and went directly to Plym-

outh. Normally, when affordable housing funding is available, city government puts out a Notice of Available Funds, and various housing organizations submit proposals for what they would do with the money.

But this time the mayor's office says it felt that a fast-track approach was justified. "A number of factors combined to create a narrow window of opportunity," says Joanne LaTuchie, spokesperson for the Seattle Office of Housing. "There were some extra resources earmarked from the Mayor's [2008] budget that had to be allocated before the application deadline on Friday [Sept. 7]. And, of course, there was a quick timeline for purchasing the property, and downtown property is so hard to come by."

For Lambros, the mayor's additional funding was critical in Plymouth's decision to go ahead with the project. "To purchase the property, we had to put down a \$200,000 non-refundable deposit by the

The funding for Plymouth's new development is not in the bag yet. As part of the 2008 budget, the allocation will have to be approved this fall by the Seattle City Council, which receives the mayor's budget on Sept. 17.

end of September, and then hope we could secure the rest of funding by January 2008," Lambros says. "Our board was somewhat reluctant to make this gamble, but the mayor's funding tipped the scales."

When the money does come in, it will be used to purchase the southeast corner lot on First Ave. and Cedar St. in Belltown, where Plymouth will build a seven-story complex with 84 residential units, all of which will be dedicated to providing housing for homeless individuals. Inside the complex, residents will have access to mental health care and substance-abuse support service, as well as support from a full-time building staff and individualized attention from case managers.

The process by which Plymouth accepts tenants removes many of the prerequisites that often prevent home-

less people from qualifying for affordable housing. Plymouth takes what is known as the "housing first" approach. Applicants do not need to have clean criminal records, a stable renter's history, or proof of freedom from drug or alcohol addiction. "You take a person where they are, and then you provide the level of services they need to succeed," LaTuchie says.

Originally, this model created considerable controversy. When the Downtown Emergency Service Center opened the 1811 Eastlake Project for housing chronic alcoholics, many were outraged at the prospect of extending housing to substance users. But according to LaTuchie, the project has been cost-effective and successful. "None of the residents have returned to streets, and many of them are now employed," she says. "Those are really phenomenal results."

The success of the 1811 Eastlake Project and other projects using the housing first paradigm has convinced the mayor's office that this is an effective strategy for getting people off the street. "The mayor's office has indicated that, when allocating funds for affordable housing, priority will be given to proposals that use the housing-first model," LaTuchie says.

The funding for Plymouth's new development is not in the bag yet. As part of the 2008 budget, the allocation will have to be approved this fall by the Seattle City Council, which receives the mayor's budget on Sept. 17.

Lambros certainly hopes it will: "This project will be another big step in moving homeless people off the streets and into better lives." ■



With the mayor's pledge of \$3.5 million, Plymouth Housing Group hopes to turn this undeveloped lot at First Ave. and Cedar St. into an affordable housing complex. But before the organization gets the funds, City Council has to approve the expenditure.

Photo by Mark Sullo

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Urban sustainability debated as City Council considers lifting ban on weed-munching, milk-making livestock

Hey, Seattle, Get Your Goat

By JP GRITTON,
Contributing Writer

In about a week, the Seattle City Council will assemble to discuss the possession and cultivation of *Capra hircus*, or, more commonly, the pygmy goat. It will be the culmination of a debate that birthed a goat legalization society (the "Goat Justice League") and catalyzed proponents of sustainable and local agriculture. It will also be the culmination of a debate that has left a fair few wondering why the City Council chose to tackle this issue when would-be goat habitat will become luxury condos by Christmas.

The movement for the legalization of pygmy goats began last October, when Seattle's Jennie Grant bought two mini LaMancha goats for her backyard.

"I liked the idea of growing my own food for political and ecological reasons," said Grant in an interview at the Sept. 8 Seattle Tilth Harvest Fair. Grant's garden includes lettuce, green beans, and strawberries, and it is plentiful enough to provide her family with greens throughout the summer.

Grant found that goat's milk is an acquired taste; goat cheese, on the other hand, is delicious and a good source of calcium, protein, and vitamin B2. Besides the health benefits of goat dairy, Grant was pleased to discover that her goats, known affectionately as Snowflake and Brownie, happily ate unwanted invasive species like blackberry bushes and Japanese knotweed.

"And they make great pets!" added Grant.

But when a neighbor came down with an uncommon illness a few months ago, fingers were pointed in the direction of Grant's bleating backyard. The health department would later conclude Grant's goats could not possibly have been vectors for the disease. But in the meantime, Grant's neighbors discovered a century-old zoning ordinance prohibiting the possession of goats in city limits, and the Department of Planning and Development came a-knocking.

This antiquated legislation was originally intended, as Grant put it, "to make Seattle a more 'sophisticated' city," and it may well mean the end of her goats' days here.

Grant is down, but not out. Though eventually issued an order to dispose of her goats, Grant took her case before Councilmember Richard Conlin, arguing that her animals were a great addition to Seattle's dogs, cats, chickens, and (thanks to a recent ruling) potbellied pigs.

Since the council announced its intention to make a decision on Sept. 18, Conlin's office has been bombarded with emails, phone calls, and letters. The pygmy goat has quickly become the most controversial quadruped in Seattle history.

Besides the ecological benefits, the mini LaMancha can be housebroken and will trim (parts of) the yard. One owner wrote that she likes to watch TV with her favorite pygmy goat nestled in her lap.

But there is a downside.

The most obvious argument against goats is odor: male goat feces is pungent and, too small to clean effectively, tends to remain in soil for long periods of time. Male goats that aren't neutered can also be temperamental and loud. But those in

Besides the ecological benefits, the mini LaMancha can be housebroken and will trim (parts of) the yard. One owner wrote that she likes to watch TV with her favorite pygmy goat nestled in her lap.

favor of goat legalization counter that an ordinance could require that only female and neutered male goats be allowed in city limits.

Still, there is the question of whether Seattle is equipped to deal with the goats to begin with. Ornamental plants like rhododendron are noxious to goats if eaten in great quantity. Cute and cuddly baby goats will eventually become needy and not-so-cute adult goats. The city pound, said one critic, may not be equipped to deal with a flood of unwanted livestock whose health and space needs are totally unlike those of dogs or cats.

Seattleites on both sides of the debate agree that breeding and ownership should be well regulated were goats allowed in city limits, and several advised the council to require educational classes for those interested in having their own goats. Whether or not the city has the



Madison Valley goatkeeper Jennie Grant's pygmy goats, Snowflake and Brownie, provide milk, cheese, and lawn grooming at her home. City land-use officials told her to get rid of her pets this summer; Grant and other goatkeepers want a prohibition on the animals lifted. Photo by Revel Nt.

time, energy, and resources to do so is a debate in itself. Nonetheless, Grant is optimistic: "I think [the City Council] will pass [the ordinance]."

And if they don't? Said Grant, "I don't even want to think about it." ■

Despite Metro's engineering changes, transit operators ask: Is the remodeled transit tunnel safe?

An Accident Waiting to Happen?

By ADAM HYLTA, Editor

One of the advantages of driving a bus for a living, says Dee Wakenight, is that your supervisor isn't constantly looking over your shoulder.

But the open road is not entirely free; someone had to plot the lanes and pour the concrete. And the road and its rules are the subject of controversy between the Metro and the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 587, which represents Wakenight and 1,400 other drivers of Metro and Sound Transit buses.

More particularly, what's controversial is Metro's solution to the en-

gineering and design challenge that arose when it decided to put Sound Transit and Metro buses on the same route through the downtown transit tunnel. The county transit agency will reopen the passage Sept. 24, sending 18 bus lines that have been running on downtown surface streets back underground. They'll be running through the first synchronized bus-rail tunnel in the nation. In 22 years of driving for Metro, says Wakenight, the bus/train station setup is the worst mistake she's seen Metro make.

"In my opinion as a professional operator, it's doomed," she says.

The problems can be summed up by a measurement: 14 inches, the height from the light rail tracks embedded in the road to each station's platform. That height makes for a nearly even transition between the floor of the trains (which don't arrive until 2009) and the station platform.

But Metro's diesel-electric hybrid buses ride lower than the trains. So, to make bus floors approximately the same height as the platform, Metro poured a four-inch-high concrete bank sloping up the road bed to the curb. As they approach their stops, bus drivers must negotiate this bank, steering their right wheels up it sidelong and onto a lip. Their

BUS, Continued on Page 10

HOPE, Continued from Page 2

to the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, holding a placard opposing nuclear

Whether or not we succeed in pushing the rock up the hill, there is meaning in the journey, not in the hope that one time we'll be able to shed the rock forever and live in a perfect world.

weapons. The anonymous protester played a significant role in the official's eventual decision to resign his job.

Sometimes, we look to great individuals like Mother Theresa or Nelson Mandela to see that one person can effect change. I find it more inspiring to see the impact of ordinary people who did what they saw had to be done without becoming great symbols of resistance. I think, for example, of hearing the executive director of the Manila YWCA speaking at a peace meeting in Honolulu. She was asked whether the YWCA had had any part in the overthrow of dictator Ferdinand Marcos and the election of Corazon Aquino.

Well, yes," she admitted, "we did."
"What did you do?" the audience demanded.

"Well, I lay on the road to keep the tanks from coming into the downtown, and the other women brought food and water."

Whether or not we succeed in pushing the rock up the hill, there is meaning in the journey, not in the hope that one time we'll be able to shed the rock forever and live in a perfect world. In the end, we stay the course in our everyday actions: shouldering the burden, working in community, speaking truth to power, and refusing to join forces with the pestilence. ■

This essay was written for The Impossible Will Take a Little While: A Citizen's Guide to Hope in a Time of Fear, edited by Paul Rogat Loeb (Basic Books 2004, \$15.95, www.theimpossible.org).

Mary-Wynne Ashford, MD, is the former president of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning organization International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, and teaches at the University of Victoria. An earlier version of this article appeared in Canada's Peace Magazine.



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I focus intently without appearing to be checking out these privileged brats with the absence of color slumming in a habitat I cannot avoid

I watch them watching me bonded with them by the reciprocating nature of distrust

I feel the vibrations of hate radiating from their souls knowing this emotion is always needed in me as a response to the bullshit they invite

—Jay Cornelius

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What if Seattle paid \$11 million to replace dozens of affordable homes with open space in what's already the city's largest park?

Business as Usual

By TIMOTHY HARRIS,
Staff Writer

Over the past several months, activists in Seattle have moved heaven and earth to prevent Burien from demolishing 162 units of affordable family housing at Lora Lake. But what if the City of Seattle spent \$11 million to buy 24 acres of property with 66 units of functioning affordable family housing, only to tear it all down for green space? And no one said a thing?

This is the question I set out to answer when the September 5th *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported that a City Council Parks Committee hearing was scheduled that afternoon to do just that.

I read the article again and again.

The deal would remove 66 "Capehart" duplexes and homes in a small Navy development that has housed military families in Seattle for nearly 50 years. Military families live in them today.

The proposal, which comes after 2 1/2 years of negotiating between Seattle and the Navy, raises mixed emotions. Park advocates are thrilled at the prospect of more green space, but others say the small homes could be better used as housing for displaced veterans.

But it is a separate plan — to sell 26 elegant, historic houses that military families also are living in — that is getting the most attention.

The Navy wants to sell those homes, and the city isn't interested in buying them. They could go to private owners.

How could something like this come out of nowhere and be heading for a hearing that same afternoon without so much as a peep from anyone?

Sharon Chan from the *Seattle Times* called for comment. Why were Seattle housing activists so keen on saving housing beneath a runway in Burien, and yet so disinterested in housing in

Seattle? Didn't it strike me as odd that the city was about to pay \$11 million dollars to acquire 66 units of affordable housing as a tear down to add green space to Discovery Park. Where was everybody?

Yes, I said. The answer was yes. And as to why nobody seemed to know anything, I didn't have a clue. I'd just read it in the paper myself. And I had to go. I'd come in at seven so I could get home to a sick four-year-old by noon and my wife could leave for work.

As I drove home, it was like a post-Labor Day neutron bomb had gone off. I did downtown to Shoreline in 20 minutes.

Mica had been to the doctor that morning and the verdict was pneumonia and antibiotics. She was sitting on the couch getting nebulized when I arrived.

I nuked some leftover breakfast and started calling people who might know something. Mica sat on my lap while I Googled around on my laptop and found this from the *P-I* a little over a year ago...

After 40 years in Magnolia, the Fort Lawton Army Reserve Center is being closed, putting a rolling swath of land, several buildings and one of the best views in Seattle up for grabs by interested agencies and organizations.

The rare opportunity has sparked interest from groups that help the homeless, which will be given priority in acquiring the property. But the



Sixty-six duplexes for naval personnel and their families (above) in Discovery Park are being purchased by the city and torn down for forest and meadowland. Near the crest of the park's slope (below,) naval officers' housing appraised at \$16 million is being sold for private development. Photos by Elliot Stoller.

land offering also has been noticed by fans of Discovery Park, who see it as a chance to expand the park's open area, and by neighbors who worry that future uses could bring more traffic.

"People who live in this area will be very interested in what happens to that property," said Heidi Carpine, who lives across the street from the reserve center. "All the owners have put in a lot of money into upgrading their houses; it has become a beautiful, safe neighborhood. I know everyone is going to be very alert to what is decided for that property."

It was soon my turn to speak. Mica walked up to the mike with me, holding my hand. Dave Della stared. "I think it's amazing that nobody's here," I said. "And that there's only one person here from the committee. And in a city that has not only an affordable housing problem, but a workforce housing problem, that we are entertaining a proposal to tear down 66 units of perfectly good housing to create (pause for effect) more green space in Discovery Park?"

He'd talked to Sharon at the *Times* too but didn't know much more than I. He couldn't go to the hearing either. Yep. It was screwy. Seattle. What can you do?

I looked at the Council website. The Parks Committee is chaired by Dave Della and has Richard Conlin, Sally Clark, and Jan Drago as members. Not exactly our list of champions. I tried calling to see if there would be public testimony but no one at City Hall was answering phones.

I looked at Mica, who was happily taking bits of omelet off my fork. A sick kid is a good excuse to relive the baby years. She was happy.

"Do you want to go somewhere with Daddy?" I said. She nodded. She was looking pretty good. No fever. No coughing. I asked her again. Mica grew more excited. The house was boring. She longed for adventure.

I-5 was dead. We sped all the way to James, parked in the Municipal Building garage, and were at City Council Chambers by five minutes of two. The place was deserted. Dave Della was the only councilmember there. Only three other people had signed up to speak, and one of them meant to sign a different sheet.

Mica and I sat next to a nice lady who had seen the article too and was there out of curiosity. "Are you teaching her about civics?" she asked, smiling at Mica. "Yes," I said. "I think it's important for her to feel betrayed by democracy before she gets to be seven."

It was a conversation-stopper.

I was beginning to feel like the kid who showed up to school on a snow day. Where the hell was everybody? I looked up to see Bill Block, the head of the Coalition to End Homelessness in King County.

We chatted as Mica sat on my lap, happy as a clam. He was there on a minor

The phone rang. It was John Fox at the Seattle Displacement Coalition.

CAPEHART, Continued on Page 11



A brave, new "New World"

■ Jamestown

By Matthew Sharpe, *Soft Skull Press*, 2007, Hardcover, 320 pages, \$25.

Review by PAUL RICE,
Contributing Writer

It takes a fair bit of effort to get me to buy a new book these days. I'm usually stuck on the net reading Wikipedia until my eyes bleed, trying not to lose my train of thought as I wallow in the knowledge tempest.

But *Jamestown* was different. I actually went to a bar to read it for the first half, and swung through the second like a literary Tarzan, except on a couch, flipping pages and reading positions like I usually flip through browser tabs. You see, I'm a sucker for the post-apocalypse. *Road Warrior*, *A Boy and His Dog*, *Waterworld*: yes please. I'm also a mark for revisionist history. Philip K. Dick's *Man in the High Castle*, Bradbury's *A Sound of Thunder*, any *Star Trek* episode where a back-in-time plot caused by a rift in the space-time continuum prevents the warp drive from being invented, all those I love. Not sure if the latter counts, but you get the idea.

Jamestown, put to page by Matthew Sharpe, an appropriate surname if ever there was, is a revisionist history set in a post-apocalyptic North America. Ding, ding, ding! Sold to the hardest bidder to capture me, the minute I read a brief description that describes the story as an "ahistorical fantasia on a real event."

If you know your North American history, you'll recognize the basics of the story here, with a few minor alterations: New York City, playing the part of James' England, is rife with explosions and ter-

ror as driver Chris Newport navigates a heavily-armored bus filled with the Manhattan Company's finest to find a colony in the south to exploit for its natural resources. Rumors of non-polluted food away from the radiation of the north abound and the finest of NYC's post-nuclear-doom crowd are eager to exploit. They include Jack Smith, who doesn't give fuck-all for anyone but the mission and its grand purpose; John Martin, who has an unhealthy predilection towards losing his limbs; the skulking John Rattcliffe, whose mother Penelope is sleeping with the president of the Manhattan

As a work of fun-to-read, thoughtful fiction, *Jamestown* absolutely delivers.

Company (Jim Stuart, get it?) in order to give him a lead on life; and Johnny Rolfe, the communications director of the voyage who communicates with his future love Pocahontas via text messaging and telepathy. And then there are the "natives" (as white as alabaster, but plum crazy from excessive drug use and liberal sex lives, not to mention expert marksmen with their arrows).

Nearly all the characters are historical analogies, some more literal than others, and all effective at, well, that's the question. As a work of fun-to-read, thoughtful fiction, it absolutely delivers. The prose is novel, and the pervasive sense of humor a revelation. You will watch these characters go through hell, but a smile will rarely leave your face, save for the

moments when your jaw weakens slightly at the sentiments.

Sure the story has political merit, sure you can find the Iraq War in it and the violence of mankind and the transformation of greed and the beauty of love when it transcends our preconceived notions and and and...

And yet that isn't the point here. This is spot-on storytelling to interpret as you will, and its most important feature is the power and control that delivers it. Sharpe is close enough with his characters that he can afford to let them off the leash to go nuts, confident in his skills to reign them back in to finish

out the story. Even when the seemingly impossible is happening (telepathy, killer zombie birds, gay people being accepted without being made exotic, etc.) without any decent explanation, you aren't taken out of the loop because you know and trust your guides.

Sometimes, usually after you've been laughing steadily for pages, Sharpe suddenly puts his blade in your guts to remind you that, though this may be an "ahistorical fantasia," you are still meat that feels things, just like the rest of the



'U R SO HOT. CANT WAIT 2 CU': In *Jamestown*, Pocahontas loves to text her man. Image courtesy of www.disney.com

world. And when you laugh at the sickness of the future mired in the failures of the past, you're only laughing at yourself and the world you live in today.

That is talent, baby. I'm always happy when something is worth leaving the shell for. And now it's back to the Internet. ■

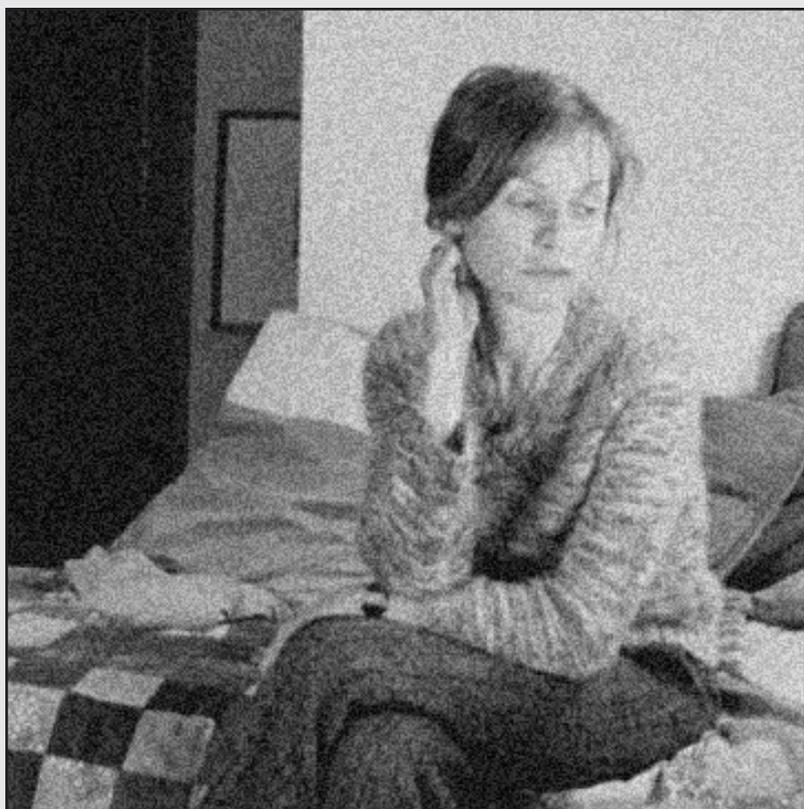
Paul Rice is a freelance writer and video game journalist with *The Escapist Magazine* (www.escapistmag.com). He lives in Seattle.

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Reviews by LESTER GRAY, Contributing Writer



■ **Private Property** (2007)
Directed by Joachim Lafosse

Pascale (Isabelle Huppert), an early middle-aged woman, looks in her mirror, cupping her breasts, accessing their gradual surrender to gravity. As she evaluates the fit of her new dress, taking measure of her new attire, she seeks a second opinion. A younger man standing near responds with assurance.

A second man appears and suggests the couture is whorish, sending both males into laughter. Pascale's equanimity in the face of the slur, suggests the regular fare of acerbic humor.

This preamble to what unfolds like a slice-of-life short story or something written for the stage, initially perplexing, is actually the proverbial thousand-word picture.

The men who could be roommates or lovers turn out to be her

late-teen paternal twin sons, with whom she even shares a bathroom while taking a shower, uncovered by a curtain. The group's casual interchange and lack of modesty reveals itself more as an absence of formality than a sign of trust or intimacy. Pascale, responsible for raising her sons and working a full-time job, has time for little else. The boys, Francois (Yannick Renier) and Thierry (Jeremie Renier), usually responsible for the cutting remarks, show little sign of initiative. As they enter manhood, they would like things to remain just

Private Property brings freshness to a contemporary dilemma, eschewing the dramatic certainty of mainstream films.

as they are.

When Pascale suggests she may want to sell the only house the boys have known and take on a male partner, emotions, long smothered, emerge for an airing.

Private Property brings freshness to a contemporary dilemma, eschewing the dramatic certainty of mainstream films. It unfolds at its own pace, which demands a savor occasionally absent. The steady performance of veteran Huppert helps to offset these lapses — a liability in this particular style of filmmaking. ■



Adventures
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning

©Dr. Wes Browning: Victory is Ours

Sen. Larry Craig is still struggling to save his term as Senator from his decision to resign. He has promised to battle on against himself, vowing to remain in office the instant he's cleared of all charges.

I think the news reports focus too heavily on Larry Craig, the man, and not enough on Larry Craig, the symbol of America's emerging victory over wide-stanced toe-tappers.

Let's not forget, Larry Craig did his wide-stanced toe-tapping in a Minneapolis Airport bathroom stall. There were massive machines hurtling about! Someone could have been hurt! What if it wasn't a policeman in the next stall, but a potential terrorist waiting for just one more crazy American homosexual to ask him for sex before blowing up a plane? What if the terrorist had a shoe bomb armed to detonate on impact? Omigod, what if a pilot was in the next stall? A flight could have been delayed.

The story gives us hope that, through vigilance, and paying cops \$30 an hour to sit on toilets, Americans can finally be free from having to verbally decline offers of gay sex. But we aren't stopping there! America's freedom is rolling on, all across this great land of ours!

In Miami last Friday, *Black Enterprise* Magazine held a Golf and Tennis Challenge and contracted comedian Eddie Griffin to do stand-up, only to have to

hear him use the N-word over and over again. No American should have to hear a Black comedian use the N-word repeatedly, not even if the comedian is paid to do it and it's mainly what he's known for. And they won't have to! Thanks to the tireless efforts of Al Sharpton and the little people on the front lines like Earl Graves, publisher of the magazine, Black America is Free! — Free at Last! — from the oppressive derogatory language of

**America is strong.
America is fighting back
against oppression.
No longer can office-
holders tap my foot with
impunity.**

one of its own people. And when Black America is free, the rest of us can be sure Our Day Too Will Come.

Freedom marched on after Jerry Lewis' thuggish behavior during his Labor Day weekend telethon for Muscular Dystrophy, when, 18 hours in, he named a piece of studio equipment "Jesse the Illiterate Faggot." Gay studio equipment all across this land rose up in outrage. Not right away, of course, because nobody was watching, but later, when the video was posted to YouTube. The uproar forced a contrite Lewis to apologize by email to someone. An unknown person or piece of studio equipment, who may or may not have been gay, who had been offended, was

reportedly gladdened by Lewis' apology, but could not be reached for comment. The rest of us will sleep better at night next Labor Day weekend, free from the fear that Jerry Lewis might dare insult the illiterate again while we didn't care.

In a way, Jerry Lewis has done me a great service. By his bad example I now know that it would be unwise of me to use politically incorrect language while insulting anthropomorphized characters in this column. I will resist the temptation, for example, to call the periods within my quotations "retarded." I will instead call them "learning challenged."

Just before I sat down to write this, Freedom rang out again, when a beautiful blond woman in San Diego was kicked off a Southwest Airlines plane for being dressed like any young woman on any daytime soap opera, but with less cleavage showing.

America is strong. America is fighting back against oppression. No longer can office-holders tap my foot with impunity. No longer can Black comedians say the N-word, even when asked to. No longer can a worn-out Jewish comedian say "faggot" in the privacy of his own telethon. No longer must our children be subjected on our airlines to as much skin as they see on our billboards on the drive over.

And, soon, in Seattle, thanks to the Downtown Seattle Association, we may be free from having to hear our own poor people beg. Hooray for us, as we bathe in sweet Freedom. ■

Sound off and read more:
drwesb.blogspot.com



Sun., Aug. 26, 12:04 p.m. S. Main St/
Alaskan Way.

Officer received a report that a male who was camped out at the listed address was defecating in public. He was described as a white male about 45 years old. Officer was aware of a man camping at that location, and had warned him to move the week before. He arrived at the location and found the suspect, a transient male aged 48, standing on the sidewalk next to his "camp" built on the planting strip west of the sidewalk in front of Pier 45. The camp consisted of a large blue tarp draped over the fence by a "No Trespassing" sign, wooden panels creating walls, and at one end a Safeway shopping cart with milk crates tied to it. Officer photographed the camp and the cart, which was clearly marked as the property of Safeway. Upon contacting the suspect the officer asked him if he remembered being asked to move last week, and the suspect said yes. He offered to begin moving, but was warned to keep his hands on the Police car — the suspect has threatened violence before. He was advised he was under arrest for trespass and possession of stolen property — the shopping cart — and stated that the cart was his girlfriend's. Suspect was interviewed and released at the scene, and left walking northbound. Officer contacted a Safeway store and was advised the cart was worth \$250-\$300.00. It was placed into evidence. Charges of criminal trespass are requested.

Sun., Aug. 26, 12:50 p.m., Rainier Ave S.

Officer on patrol on Rainier Ave. S. was contacted by the Seattle Fire Department (SFD.) They had received a 911 call from the victim, a transient white male aged 39, and had arrived to find him on the ground and disoriented. Victim could not identify himself, and stated he thought it was 2.30 in the morning. He wished to leave the scene, but SFD found him so disoriented that they feared for his safety, and requested he be transferred to a medical facility. Officer completed the paperwork for an involuntary transfer to a medical facility, and the victim was taken to Harborview by ambulance.

Sun., Aug. 26, 1:05 p.m., 28th Ave. S.

A 911 call reported a suspicious male carrying a large bag on 28th Ave. S. Witness/complainant stated that the suspect, a transient Black male aged 18 was walking into his carport. Officers arrived and found the subject — he appeared to be high as he was sweating and having difficulty breathing. He was yelling and calling the officer a "stupid bitch." Seattle Fire responded to the scene, and believed the subject was under the influence of narcotics, possibly crack cocaine. He was transported to Harborview by ambulance for further observation.

Mon., Aug. 27, 7:13 a.m., Cherry St. parking lot.

Officers were dispatched to trespass camping transients from the carpool parking lot on Cherry St. Officer contacted suspect, a transient white female aged 36, in the parking lot. She had all of her bedding material and clothes with her. Suspect verbally provided her name, and a radio check revealed she had been trespassed from the same location in March 2007. She was taken into custody, and transported to King County Jail where she was booked 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.

Bus Chick,
Transit
Authority

Carla Saulter



Bus Chick: Friends I Just Haven't Met Yet

stops or walk long distances — or, for that matter, about any particular route. Sure, there are some routes I like less than others, but I have yet to encounter one that inspires fear. And yet, for some reason

**The folks riding with me
may be strangers, but
one of those strangers
is an elder at someone's
church.**

I can't name, on the Thursday of Bus Nerd's departure, I was feeling nervous about riding the 174 late at night, alone. (I choose to blame it on the Bus Baby I'm incubating. My current condition makes me conspicuous, messes with my state of mind, prevents me from running—at least from running fast—and generally makes me feel like a big, waddling target.)

I decided to go, despite my misgivings. (What's a minor case of nerves compared to a lovely, romantic bus tradition?) After I said goodbye to Bus Nerd, I joined the crowd of airport workers,

returning travelers, smokers, and assorted other folks waiting at the SeaTac bus stop. Within minutes, I spotted a familiar face: none other than Mr. Clato Barnes, an elder at my church who also happens to work for the Transportation Security Administration. Mr. Barnes lives in my neighborhood and was waiting for the 174, too. I didn't say hi because he was reading the paper after a long day at work, and I didn't want to interrupt him, but his presence helped me relax — and remember why I don't fear buses, no matter what time of night I ride:

The folks riding with me may be strangers, but one of those strangers is an elder at someone's church. Another is someone's grandmother, neighbor, or best friend. Yes, there are occasionally troublemakers who make it less-than-pleasant to ride, but among my community of fellow passengers, I always feel safe. ■

Got something to say about public transportation in Seattle? Email Bus Chick at: buschick@gmail.com or blog.seattlepi.nwsourc.com/buschick

A few weekends ago, Bus Nerd traveled to Chicago to attend a wedding. Some couples drop each other off at the airport when one goes away on a trip, but our car-free custom is a little different. In our case, the spouse remaining in Seattle accompanies the traveler on the bus ride to SeaTac, usually saying a final goodbye at the entrance to the security line.

Unfortunately, for this particular trip, Bus Nerd's departing flight left at 11:30 PM. This meant that I'd miss the last 194 (the express airport bus) back to downtown and would be returning home—after dark, no less—on its ugly steproute, the 174. (A word about the 174: It's not on my list of favorite routes. For those of you who haven't ridden the 174 before, think of it as the 358's southern cousin: slow, crowded, occasionally plagued with illegal behavior, and seasoned with a generally unpleasant vibe.)

It's not like me to be skittish about riding at night — I happen to love it, as long as I don't have to wait at isolated

Letters

editor@realchangenews.org

Captain a fake?

Dear *Real Change*,

While doing some research online for some pictures of California National Guard unit 1498th Trans Company, I ran across your paper's article about (then Capt.) Bill Morisette ["Stuck in Limbo: Disabled reservists fight for their veterans' benefits," March 14]. I could not believe what I read. I was in the 1498th and went to Iraq with the unit in May 2003. I spent a year in Iraq and came home in May 2004.

Bill Morisette was the commanding officer (a captain) up until about a month or so before we deployed to Iraq. I believe he told General Combs that the unit was not ready for Iraq, and he would not lead the unit into Iraq. The general did not care for that, so he replaced Capt. Morisette. Off to Iraq we went and not one 1498th soldier was killed while deployed. The unit did a great job despite lack of training, shortage of parts, etc.

As far as Capt. Morisette getting hurt lifting equipment, I have never heard that story. I did hear that he was reassigned to the general's staff with a cushy job at HQ. With 300 soldiers running around, there would be no reason for the command officer to be doing any lifting and getting hurt. As far as feeling sorry for Bill because he is a Gulf War veteran, give me a break. The Gulf War lasted what, a whole 100 hours? We had at least 3 Vietnam vets in the unit that went to Iraq.

There is a lot more to this story than I can tell you or your reporter has been told. I would do some more research before printing articles like the story on Morisette. I can tell you that I have no love for the California National Guard or the bozos in charge, but to print an article saying "Oh look at poor Bill Morisette" is a slap in the face to all 300 soldiers who did put in their time overseas. I hear the 1498th is due to be deployed again in March 2008. If Bill Morisette wants a pay check from Uncle Sam, tell him to rejoin the unit and earn his pay.

Glyn Hicks

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BUS, Continued from Page 5

60-foot coaches need to come within six inches of the curb.

"It requires a lot more precision maneuvering than driving on the surface streets," says driver Joshua Laff. "You have to be close enough but not too close." Too close, he says, and the driver can't deploy the wheelchair ramp; too far away, and passengers must

Metro hasn't met all of the union's requests for safety measures. But it's a difficult time for the union to push the envelope, since it's in the midst of renegotiating the drivers' two-year labor contract.

negotiate a giant step to board or disembark.

The 14-inch platform height also means that the buses' right-hand mirrors sit at a height of about five and half feet — extending over the passenger area — within striking distance of any unsuspecting commuter.

Metro has outfitted the right-side mirrors of each of its hybrid diesel-electric coaches with a strobe light that will come on automatically as coaches approach the stations. The agency has laid yellow "tactile strip" in the floor near the edge of the platform; audible warnings, readerboard messages, signs, and security guards will also be on duty. And drivers will obey a new 10 m.p.h. speed limit at the stations. Metro Gen-

eral Manager Kevin Desmond says the likelihood of a commuter being struck by a bus is very slight.

"You'd have to be standing immediately on the edge of the platform and be oblivious to the bus arriving to be hit," he says. "I'm not saying it would never happen, but I do think the safety measures in place and the professionalism of our drivers will prevent it from happening."

And Metro's measures haven't allayed all drivers' fears. In this fall's route-picking rounds, some drivers opted for schedules that didn't require tunnel driving, says Wakenight: "They don't want to be the ones to get in an accident over something over which they have no control."

Amalgamated Transit president Lance Norton sent Desmond a letter Aug. 9 outlining the ATU's concerns. Metro hasn't met all of his requests for changes. But it's a difficult time for the union to push the envelope on tunnel safety, since it's in the midst of renegotiating the drivers' two-year labor contract, which expires Oct. 31. Union members and officials alike were loathe to be interviewed, saying they feared negotiations would sour if the union appeared to be publicly casting management in a negative light. Norton, citing the negotiations, declined to speak on the record.

Wakenight says the union is unlikely to refuse to return its operators to the tunnel. But she worries about what will happen to the driver who is dismissed over an accident that happens in the tunnel. People don't acknowledge what it takes to do this job, she says: good judgment, alertness, tolerance, and extreme punctuality. Get dismissed, and "you're unemployed, and nearly unemployable, because people think, 'You can't drive a bus? What kind of dummy are you?'" ■



On Sept. 24, some of Metro's 100,000 daily commuters will return to the downtown transit tunnel, which presents new safety and operational complications for drivers and passengers alike. Metro has made some of the changes union officials desired, but workers question whether they'll prevent a potentially fatal accident. Photo by Katia Roberts.

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CAPEHART, Continued from Page 7

matter in his role as a board member of Seattle Center. Bill didn't know anything about Discovery Park.

"Haven't researched it," he said.

He did his thing and was gone. It was soon my turn to speak. Mica walked up to the mike with me, holding my hand.

Dave Della stared.

"I think it's amazing that nobody's here," I said. "And that there's only one person here from the committee. And in a city that has not only an affordable housing problem, but a workforce housing problem, that we are entertaining a proposal to tear down 66 units of perfectly good housing to create (pause for effect) more green space in Discovery Park? Is this really the most pressing need the city has? I thought we were committed to affordable housing."

Della stared.

"And then, I read, in this morning's paper — this is apparently a sleeper issue because I hadn't heard of it and nobody else I know has either — there's 26 units of officers' housing that have been appraised at \$16 million that are being sold to private developers. Who do I have to know to get that deal? And the city says they're not interested in that housing? I don't understand why not. It kind of looks like this has been in the works for a while, and like this is a done deal, but you'll hear about this," I said.

"You'll hear about this?" I felt ridiculous before I even sat back down for having said something so completely cliché and, for all

I know, untrue. Mica crawled into my lap. I didn't even use my whole two minutes.

Michael Ruby from Friends of Discovery Park rose and gave a gracious two minutes on how this was absolutely the right decision and the culmination of a wonderful process, and then asked to see me outside.

Mica and I went. She'd been promised a cookie and was ready to go.

Michael and I sat next to each other on a small bench in the foyer as he told me that he had been following this issue since 1954. He explained that the Friends of Discovery Park had once felt "exactly as I do now," but they'd examined the housing and found it to be on the verge of collapse. They'd sadly come to accept that reverting the land to green space was the best option for all. He hoped we'd get to talk again sometime.

I put my three hours' experience with this issue up against his 50 years and decided there was more to this than I was being told.

I bought Mica a chocolate donut at the Muni building Starbucks, ate half of it myself, and wondered if I had slipped into some sort of bizarro-world, where affordable housing gets torn down for green space and no one notices or cares.

We drove home. Sharon Lee called me back and said LIHI had put in a proposal to build housing on decommissioned Fort Lawton land in a partnership with United Tribes and Archdiocesan Housing Authority, and that it had gone nowhere. After a confusing few minutes, we realized

she was talking about administrative buildings on the east side of the park. I was talking about family housing out on the western tip. She didn't know anything about that.

"How can this be?" I asked. "How can housing get torn down without anyone knowing? Without anyone getting a chance to preserve it. I don't get it."

"I don't know," she said. "I have to go."

I called Sharon Chan again to rant for a while while her fingers clicked on the other end.

"How can this be?" I asked.

"I have to go," she said.

Mica and I left to retrieve her twin sister from a first day at her new preschool. When I got back, I sat glued to my laptop while the girls performed water volume experiments on the kitchen floor. This involved various containers and the refrigerator's filtered water spigot. It's their favorite appliance.

I found the 35-year

Discovery Park Master Plan, last updated in 1986, which contained this paragraph.

It is essential that Capehart Housing site eventually become part of Discovery Park. This area is far within and very central to the interior of the Park. The housing is totally incompatible with the Park philosophy and the Long Range Development Plan. It is proposed that the housing ultimately be removed and the site converted to a meadow open space interspersed with thickets and coniferous forest.

Capehart housing is the 66 units, built in the early 60s, in which military families will continue to live until 2009. Then, American Eagle Communities — the ginormously-huge company that has the contract — will tear down the housing and deliver an empty lot in exchange for Seattle's \$11 million.

It's the fulfillment of the plan. The best part is that American Eagle does the

teardown while the ownership is still in their hands. Clever.

Ironically, when Burien says the Lora Lake teardown is part of a long-standing deal, our response is that "Things have changed." I'd say the same logic applies here.

The city says they're completely uninterested in the officers' housing. A private developer, therefore, will make boatloads of money. Right here in Seattle, under our very noses, an upscale neighborhood will get an enhanced amenity and private capital will make a killing, while housing — yet more housing — disappears off the map. It's business as usual, and that needs to change. ■

The Discovery Park deal will be on the Agenda of the next Parks Committee Meeting on Sept. 19 at 2 p.m. There will be public testimony allowed. The issue will then quickly head to the full Council for final approval.

Vendor of the Week



Larry Brinegar

Let me begin by saying that if you don't like Larry Brinegar, this week's Vendor of the Week, chances are that you're in some karmic dire straits. Brinegar takes life with a nod and a "How ya doing?" He's the kind of guy who bums you his last cigarette, the kind of guy who listens more than he talks.

Born in Plymouth, Michigan, Brinegar has also lived in Fargo, North Dakota and on the Rosebud reservation in South Dakota.

"[The reservation] was a trip... People used to call me 'Custer!'" Brinegar remembers with a laugh. He and his then-girlfriend lived in South Dakota for six years, until Seattle drew them out west in 1998.

In 2002, Brinegar was introduced to *Real Change* by vendor Roger Secourt. And he was surprised to find the job came pretty naturally.

"I used to be an introvert, but now I'm an extrovert," he says. "I love meeting people."

And for a while, things were going grand for Larry Brinegar: he had a steady job and steady housing...

Then, in August of last year it just kind of happened.

Sometimes, people become homeless because they get sick; sometimes, they become homeless because they get laid off; and sometimes, people become homeless because their landlords don't like them — such a case is Larry Brinegar's.

Brinegar had cockroaches in his last apartment, and he let his landlady know about it.

"She said, 'Are you saying that's my fault?' And it was all downhill from there," recalls Brinegar. Within a few months, Brinegar found the eviction notice on his door.

Rotten luck. But he still manages to smile, to take it easy, and to be thankful.

Brinegar, who sells at Fourth and Pike, says, "I want to tell my customers that their support and kindness have meant more than they can possibly know."

—Text and photo by JP Gritton

Who's the special person who offers you Real Change?
Nominate them for Vendor of the Week:
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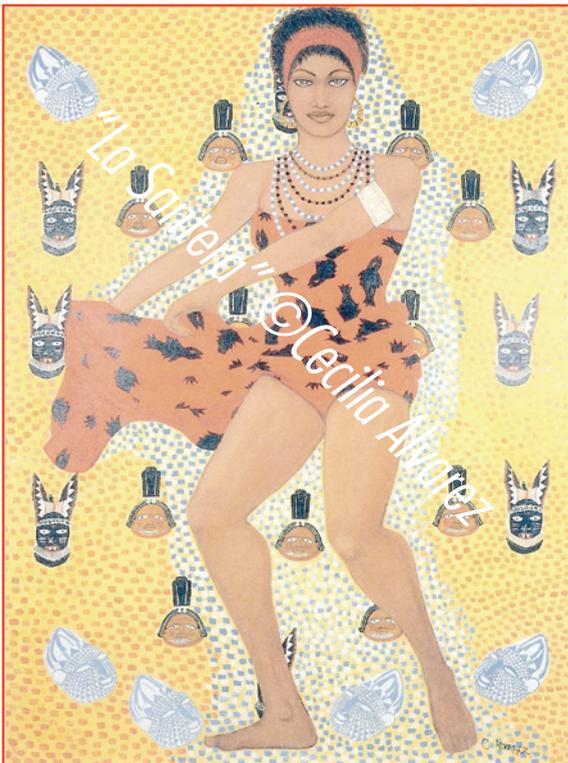
Static: Government Liars, Media Cheerleaders, and The People Who Fight Back

Join Social Justice Fund Northwest and Amy Goodman, co-host of Democracy Now!, for an exciting evening of political analysis addressing these questions and looking ahead to what progressives need to do to get ready for the 2008 elections.

Amy Goodman is the host and executive producer of Democracy Now!, a national, daily, independent, award-winning news program airing on 500 radio and television stations in North America. Time Magazine named Democracy Now! in its "Pick of the Podcasts." She recently began a weekly syndicated column with King Features.

www.socialjusticefund.org
or 206.624.4081 for info

social justice fund
NORTHWEST



Words and images will blend together beautifully on Thurs., Sept. 20, when **Chicana feminist artist Cecilia Alvarez discusses her artwork, which addresses poverty and environmental degradation in the United States and Latin America.** The talk is part of Latina/o Heritage Month. New Freeway Hall, 5108 Rainier Ave. S., 7:30 p.m. Dinner, with vegetarian option, will be served at 6:30 p.m., \$7.50.

Calendar

This Week's Top Picks

Thursday 9/13

Forget TV shows like HBO's *Oz*, which show an unrealistic view of life behind bars. Instead, check out **the play *Set Up to Fail, about the reality of prison life and release for African Americans***, put on by the organization Justice Works! For more info, call (206) 303-7559, or email justice_works@yahoo.com.

Ever wondered whether a plane ticket could be a doorway into social activism? Edmonds-based **travel writer and PBS host Rick Steves** has. Having traveled extensively throughout Europe, he forgoes the tarmac for the podium to give a talk, **"Travel as a Political Act," focusing on how travel can help Americans become better global citizens.** Town Hall, Eighth and Seneca, downtown. Tickets \$5 at the door. www.townhallseattle.org

Friday 9/14 – Sunday 9/16

True, the Western world celebrated the "new millennium" in 2000, but not everyone keeps the same calendar. This weekend, take part in **Celebration of the Beginning of the Third Ethiopian Millennium**, a local event that mirrors sister celebrations across the country. Festivities will commemorate the country's cultural heritage. Warren Magnuson Park. Call (206) 753-8035 for more info.

Saturday 9/15, Sunday 9/16

Most young people don't thrill over the first day of school, but just about every age loves a barbecue. Along with having some good eats at the **2nd Annual Back-to-School Expo**, families and children in the Central District and Rainier Valley will learn how to prepare for the future. Dallas BBQ & Soul Food, 2519 S. Jackson St., 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Contact coordinating sponsor Calm Rain Studios, (206) 860.3974 or calmrainstudios@calmrainstudio.com.

Monday 9/17

With the gap between the world's rich and poor continuing to widen, maybe it's time to look at why the planet's wealth is so unequally distributed. In his book, ***A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World***, economist Gregory Clark argues that culture is the fundamental factor in humanity's economic progress. Town Hall, 7:30 p.m., Eighth and Seneca, downtown. \$5. www.townhallseattle.org.

Wednesday 9/19

Tonight's a double bill for the environment, with two different takes:

First, there's **Wangari Maathai** who received the Nobel Peace Prize for carrying out an **innovative reforestation project in Kenya.** Known as the Green Belt Movement, the project led to the planting of 30 million trees, work undertaken by the country's women and rural poor. Maathai suffered persecution and imprisonment to educate Kenyans about social change. Benaroya Hall, 200 University St., downtown. Tickets \$15 — \$60. (206) 621-2230, x10. www.lectures.org.

Then there's **Bjorn Lomborg**, the **"Skeptical Environmentalist."** In his new book, *Cool It*, Lomborg **argues that many of the expensive actions put forth to confront global warming are based upon emotional reactions rather than sound science.** He suggests less costly efforts — eradicating HIV/AIDS and malaria, ensuring fresh water supply — could save millions more people than implementing the Kyoto Protocol. Town Hall, Eighth and Seneca. Tickets \$5, at door. www.townhallseattle.org.

Thursday 9/20

Soon after six Black students in Jena, Louisiana, sat under a tree frequented by fellow white students, nooses were hung from a branch. When the Black students confronted the white students, a schoolyard fight broke out, injuring one white student. The Black students were then charged with conspiracy to commit murder. **A local action hopes to show solidarity with the "Jena 6."** Westlake Park, Fourth Ave. and Pine St., 5 p.m. (206)264-5527.

Harper Lee's Pulitzer-winning novel, ***To Kill a Mockingbird***, comes to the stage. The story of a young girl's coming of age, it recounts her remembrances of the trial of a Black man falsely accused of raping a white woman in the Deep South. Civic dialogues and free performances occur across the area over the next two months in conjunction with the adaptation. Tonight's showing is pay-what-you-can. Intiman Playhouse, 201 Mercer St., Seattle Center. 7:30 p.m. www.intiman.org.

Calendar compiled by Rosette Royale.
Have a suggestion for an event?
Email it to calendar@realchangenews.

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