

# Works in Progress

Advocating for social justice since 1990

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## A real opportunity for renters to become owners

Sascha Fischel-Freeman

“If it were not for our community being self-managed, and maintaining the same rent since inception, there would be no way I could afford to live in this area.” That’s the happy situation of Peggy Searce, a 71-year-old retired nurse and resident of Hidden Village.

### A community of homes, not investment properties

Hidden Village is a 20 home, tenant-owned manufactured housing co-op in Olympia that offers residents shared ownership and democratic control over where they live. Peggy owns her home and volunteers as board president. Rent has not increased in the 12-year history of the co-op. Speaking to the importance of tenant ownership and control, Peggy said, “The ownership and self-governing of the park allows us a long-term place to reside without the fear of someone coming along and buying the land our homes sit on and raising the rates.”

Peggy and other Hidden Village residents had the good fortune to live in a community whose owner, when he decided to sell the property, was willing to sell to the residents in good faith.

### The demands of the commercial housing market

This is not a common situation. Instead, low-income seniors in commercial housing struggle to pay rents. They live in perpetual insecurity as properties change hands and sometimes get purchased for redevelopment. The economic shut-downs of the pandemic have made things worse. As eviction moratoriums inevitably come to an end, many people are likely to be unable to pay back rent. Owners might decide they have to sell distressed properties – or evict tenants in favor of converting to pricier condos – removing more affordable units from the market and pushing people deeper into crisis.

### “Tenant opportunity to purchase” as one solution

Washington State and Olympia communities are more than ready for a law that would give tenants a chance to ensure their housing in the immediate and foreseeable future by giving them the opportunity to purchase their homes.

A “tenant opportunity to purchase ordinance” (TOPO) is designed to give tenants a fair chance at buying and preserving their communities. All too often, tenant organizations wishing to purchase their communi-

ties are unable to compete with opportunistic private equity firms.

### Waking up to find your home sold

Most commercial housing real estate deals happen behind closed doors, and residents seldom get notice that the place they live is being sold. Large equity investment firms like

ment agencies would be given notice of sale along with a purchase price, and would be granted adequate time to obtain technical assistance and make an offer on the property.

If a tenant co-op or other qualified organization matches the listed price, it wins the bid. With that success under



the Carlyle Group and Blackstone target affordable manufactured home parks and apartment complexes with the objective of leveraging

TOPO, the new owners are required to adhere to long-term preservation of affordability requirements.

## TOPO laws give tenants right of first refusal when their homes are put up for sale.

massive profits through rent increases, and reaping speculative returns by flipping property. This allows them to drive up the market price by making exorbitant offers.

Bow Lake, a 450-home senior home park in SeaTac, was recently purchased by the Carlyle Group for \$20 million above market value. Carlyle was also the purchaser of Friendly Village, a 245-home senior community on the westside of Olympia. There, they immediately increased rents offered to new tenants by 30 percent above existing rates.



### How a “tenant opportunity to purchase” works

A strong TOPO in Olympia would leverage opportunities for co-ops, land trusts and nonprofits to better compete with private equity firms by allowing these groups the first opportunity to purchase a rental community when it comes up for sale. Tenants, nonprofits and govern-

### A track-record of success and new adopters

Washington DC’s TOPA law has been around since 1979 and has enabled the development of over 100 multi-family housing cooperatives, keeping hundreds of individuals and families from having to enter an overheated housing market. States across New England have decades-old TOPO laws offering preservation rights to manufactured housing cooperatives. In New Hampshire, a third of all manufactured home parks are now resident-owned co-ops.

In recent years, many states and cities have pursued TOPO laws as part of a long-term solution to the affordable housing crisis. San Francisco passed a version entitled COPA in 2019, and Berkeley and Oakland are pursuing strong models driven by tenant organizing. Seattle recently strengthened its “notice of sale” ordinance and Burien followed suit with their own version. Other states including Oregon and Colorado have also recently passed versions of opportunity to purchase laws.

### Co-ops in Olympia and throughout the state

Over the last 12 years, the Northwest Cooperative Development Center has helped convert 17 manufactured housing communities into co-ops by providing them with access to finance and ongoing technical assistance. There are currently 6 housing land trusts starting up around the state including the Thurston Housing Land Trust which holds a strong

commitment to democratic community ownership.

### Making TOPO a reality in Olympia and the state

The Association of Manufactured Homeowners is running dual “tenant opportunity to purchase” bills this legislative session sponsored by Sen. Patty Kuderer and Rep. Davina Duerr. Last year, a similar bill, EHB 2610, fell just shy of passing into law. The state also invested \$2 million in the last biennium to support the conversion of more manufactured home cooperatives. The City of Olympia Land Use Committee plans to explore TOPO in the first quarter of 2021 and staff are considering TOPO as a focus of the revised Housing Action Plan.

TOPO has the potential to empower low-income residents with the chance to own their homes, run their communities democratically, maintain affordability, and compete with elite investment groups buying up our city. We urge the Olympia City Council and the Washington State Legislature to make tenant opportunity to purchase a top legislative priority.

*Miles Nowlin, Student of MA Latin Am, Studies at UNM. Grace Lee, 2020 MPA Graduate, TESC, and affordable housing enthusiast. Sascha Fischel-Freeman, Housing Co-op Specialist, MA in Cultural Studies.*

TOPO 4 The People is a local focus group committed to broadening public interest in tenant opportunity to purchase. Visit [www.topo4thepeople.org](http://www.topo4thepeople.org) to learn more or to sign the TOPO coalition letter.

## A lost opportunity for housing

The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 was the biggest housing bill in the history of the United States. The Act included a smorgasbord of new ideas: Model Cities, Section 235 homeownership subsidies, Section 236 rental assistance, business insurance, a robust increase in public housing construction.

The Act also reaffirmed the nation’s commitment to a decent home and suitable living environment for every American family. Congress funded the programs at historic levels so they would succeed.

The program was working, but around 1972 it died. It was killed by Richard Nixon in response to racism and opposition to government programs. His conservative approach steeply reduced funding, disbursed responsibility to states and set up voucher programs. It was the beginning of the end for the promise of housing for every American.



**Works in Progress (WIP)**, is a community newspaper based in Olympia WA, that has been published monthly since 1990.

WIP's mission is to contribute to the struggle for justice across economic, social, environmental and political realms, and to expand participatory democracy across classes, races, and genders.

Editorial policy

Our priority is to focus on stories that are ignored or misrepresented in the media, especially those that relate directly to our mission. We seek well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities and account of personal experiences or reflections by local writers. We encourage articles that relate to the monthly theme, but material on other topics is also welcome.

Informed opinion pieces are accepted when accompanied by facts, examples, and sources. We discourage writing where a key point is stated as fact when it's unproven or in serious dispute. Writing that stereotypes groups or categories of people won't be accepted.

Once we receive a submission, we may choose to publish it or not. While the views expressed in the material we print are those of the author alone, WIP aims to print material that is consistent with our mission. WIP reserves the right to edit all submissions for accuracy, length, and clarity of expression. We will work with authors if there is a need for editing that extends beyond those areas.

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Workers in Progress

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# About the cover: things to do, 2021

Our theme for January picked up on a statement by James Baldwin: “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” It seemed to us facing a few big things in 2021 could be the first step toward changing them. We made a “to do” list.

This won't be easy. There are a lot of powerful forces committed to keeping us from seeing the extent of things we desperately need to change, let alone admitting them. The list starts with everyone who's promoting the idea that “back to normal” is where we need to go as the pandemic recedes. “Normal” is everything on our list of things to change, and more.

There is cause for optimism, though, with the emergence of new political organizations outside the neoliberal Democratic establishment, the Republican oligarchy and the right-wing vigilantes they tolerate. Candidates calling themselves “progressives” and “socialists” are starting to reach for some of the levers of power, as you can see from the solutions on our “to do” list.

❑ **End systemic racism.** In the summer of 1968, cities across the US experienced a terrible wave of social unrest. About 43 people were killed, 3500 injured and 27,000 arrested. Alarmed leaders formed a Commission headed by Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois to look deep into the racist roots of the riots. The report got it right—poverty and institutional racism were driving inner-city violence. Their recommendations were blunt—and ignored:

*“Ending racism will require a commitment to national action—compassionate, massive and sustained, backed by the resources of the most powerful and the richest nation on this earth. From every American it will require new attitudes, new understanding, and, above all, new will. The vital needs of the nation must be met; hard choices must be made and if necessary, new taxes enacted.”*

Every few years we had more demonstrations and violence. And each time leaders called for more police with “crackdowns on crime.” If we can finally face the fact of institutional racism, we can begin to end it.

❑ **New president.** Replacing Trump bought us time, but we have to face the fact that denial of the way our system robs working people of power helped to bring us Trump. We have to confront that denial and put power in the hands of working people or Trumpism will continue. Make it easier to form unions; support worker co-ops, raise the minimum wage beyond even the measly \$15/hour—too little before it's even adopted.

❑ **Finding common ground.** This means facing the fact that a lot of people who supported/voted for Trump did so because the system and the Democrats have failed them. Once we face that fact, we'll very likely be able to talk to one another again. And we can't tackle problems if we can't talk about them.

❑ **Universal healthcare.** We pretend that we have “the greatest healthcare system” in the world. The pandemic should have showed us otherwise—and

allowed us to face the fact that healthcare is a public good, where we all benefit when there is sufficient quality care for everyone. Can we make our leaders understand that? Yes to Medicare for All, community clinics offering preventive care within easy reach and designed to meet health needs instead of marketing to create needs, that encompasses public health as well as treatment of diseases.

❑ **Convert yard to food garden.** Doing this is a sign we're ready to face a lot of things: the perverseness of our corporate food infrastructure, the need to transition away from fossil

fuels and their derivatives. To demand a national commitment to a Green New Deal with jobs, renewable resources, conversion of our aged and inefficient infrastructure.

❑ **Get kids to move out.** If we faced the fact that all jobs should pay a living wage; that affordable housing is nothing but a slogan, and aging grandparents are not the solution to working parents, we could get started on decent pay, housing as a right, and free quality childcare. The kids would be happy to move out on their own!

And that's just for 2021!

## ❑ One more thing to do

To their surprise Democrat incumbents lost 8 House seats in the 2020 election, when they had expected to pick up seats. The party leadership is blaming their young candidates for backing “socialist” ideas that turned voters off and sent them to the voting booth to cast their ballots for Republicans.

Writing in *Medium*, Lauren Martinchek tells a different story:

*“Not a single co-sponsor of the Green New Deal, in a swing seat or safe blue seat, lost their re-election. Not a single co-sponsor of Medicare for All, in a swing seat or safe blue seat, lost their re-election. Not a single Justice Democrat lost their re-election. Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Cori Bush, and Jamaal Bowman all won. Katie Porter—an incredible, authentic progressive representing a swing district—won her re-election comfortably.*

*Every single seat Democrats lost in the house was lost by a center-right democrat fundamentally incapable of giving their constituents any*

*meaningful reason to vote for them. Leave it to these inept, vapid politicians to find fault in anyone but themselves. If anything, Joe Biden has Rashida Tlaib in Michigan and Ilhan Omar in Minnesota to thank for his victory in their respective states, and their tireless efforts to turn out the vote not just in their districts, but across the nation.*

If the narrative becomes Democrats lost because their proposals were “too far left,” the party powers will demand candidates who move right. Back to the comfort zone where their corporate supporters live and rely on them to deflect progressive demands like a Green New Deal and phasing out fossil fuels; cutting the military budget; significant reforms to prison and policing; nationwide paid family leave, expanding social security and medicare, etc. Back to the “normal” Democrat Party politics that slowly but surely, helped produce Donald Trump.

We can't let that happen.

—BW

## Upcoming themes

**February: Time.** The time you spend at work, commuting, in front of a screen. The time of climate change, kids waiting for school. Free time? Other? **Deadline: Jan 15**

**March: Things revealed by the pandemic.** **Deadline: Feb 15**

**April: Work vs jobs vs pay.** **Deadline: March 14**

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# On radicalization and grief

Lara Messersmith-Glavin

An aspect of becoming radicalized that I think is under attended to is the grief that, for some, comes with it. As I learned more of history, more of the theory, more of the experiences of people who have the least to gain from our system, the more I had to let go of the sense of solidity that the framework offered and turn elsewhere for answers, models and hope.

Radicalization means divorcing oneself from dominant narratives and letting go of myths that are often so deeply held they are mistaken for self evident truths—like the idea that our productivity is a measure of our worth, or that cops keep us safe.

This is obvious for some, but for others, stepping outside that story and imagining a new one is scary work, work which requires new and courageous forms of imagination.

The truth is that the old story was always rotten, but letting go of even a rotten story can be frightening, as anyone who has done the difficult work of healing trauma can attest. As radicals, I think we can do a better job of helping people mourn their stories and former sources of pride, even as we encourage them to dream up better ones.

It seems to me that many now are mourning the concept of the presidency, as if Trump has somehow broken something that was

beautiful. I understand the longing for a sense that an adult is making the big decisions; the embarrassment that comes from not having a smooth orator like Obama acting as poster child for the nation.

I get the constant sense of nauseous astonishment that slowly congeals into resigned WTFness as every tweet and headline becomes increasingly absurd. But let us remember that this story too has always been rotten. Trump has just pulled back the veil. US presidents have always been racist, imperialist, murderous, often irrational

power brokers; it's the nature of the position.

The encampments and deaths and destruction of natural resources, the stripping of power or access thereto have always been happening, but as the impacts land closer to home, we are better able to see the effects. This is an unveiling of privilege, in a sense. This grief is a big one but in letting go of the myth of this system, we free ourselves to create something much better.

Lara Messersmith-Glavin is a writer and storyteller. She wrote this brief reflection originally as a facebook post for friends.

## Readers' Alert!

WIP has received a grant designated for including book reviews in 2021. How will it work?

Each month we'll publish a list of books we'd like to see reviewed. If you're interested in reading and writing a review of one of the books, contact us at [olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com). We will buy the book and pay \$50 if the review is accepted.

We're planning to run one review each month, with a maximum length of 750 words. Contact WIP if you'd like to be considered to review of one of the following books: [olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com) and put BOOK REVIEW in the subject line.

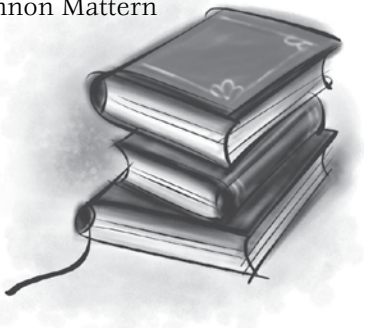
*United States of Distraction*, Mickey Huff and Nolan Higdon

*Women who Rock*, Evelyn McDonnell

*Before Trans*, Rachel Msch

*Homewreckers*, Aaron Glantz

*The New Downtown Library*, Shannon Mattern



## Then this happened

**The City of Olympia gave developers millions in property tax exemptions** for their downtown apartment buildings (WIP-June & November 2019). In response to a citizen's inquiry, the State Auditor has found that Olympia's Community Planning and Development Dept. (CP&D) has no effective program to monitor and enforce compliance by those developers with city ordinances and state law governing the exemptions. Hello CP&D—anyone home?

**Remember when Trump said he could shoot someone in downtown New York and nothing would happen?** Well you can shoot someone in downtown Olympia and go free. State Patrol arrested a Trump supporter for shooting a man in the abdomen during a demonstration, and his attorney already said he would plead self-defense. In the meantime, the prosecuting attorney declined to charge the shooter because there is not “evidence beyond a reasonable doubt.” Maybe later?

**Speaking of investigations...** The Thurston County Sheriff will take another two months to investigate the violent September confrontation where suspect Michael Reinoehl was killed by a “fugitive task force.” The sheriff sued a journalist and the DOC to stop the release of records related to the killing because it would “irreparably damage vital governmental functions.” Which would stifle any

independent public assessment of the circumstances of the killing.

**...and a Police Department at risk!** Mayor Cheryl Selby, photographed in the *Seattle Times* looking like a municipal statue, wondered why “we” tolerate demonstrators and protestors downtown: “They aren't coming to patronize our stores, so why are we putting residents and the Olympia Police Department at risk?” she fretted. Gosh, that would be terrible—police asked to “protect and serve” people who aren't shopping?

**...another arrest.** The aged Washington ferry “Evergreen State” had been sitting at the Port of Olympia since a Florida man bought the vessel for \$300,000 in 2017. This fall, the Port seized it for nonpayment of fees and US Marshals arrested it and sold it at auction Dec.8. Bart Lematta, with the winning bid of \$290,000, said “My wife thinks I'm nuts.” Lematta plans to see if the ferry can run on solar power: “If this can be converted to run on renewable energy, I'll be a happy person on the day I die.”

Port Executive Director Sam Gibboney said the port's marine terminal staff and maritime attorney have come up with a service agreement that will keep the vessel at the port through Jan. 4. The port was waiting for Lematta to sign. Pray the sun was shining on Jan. 4. And after that?

### A hope-filled greeting...

We see that sparks of hope are igniting against this war which is the same around the world. From distant geographies we turn toward each other, toward the struggle for life, which forms a language through which we recognize one another.

From all of us at Schools for Chiapas, we wish you health and happiness, courage and resilience for the year to come. And we hope that we can all turn to the wisdom and diligent work of the Zapatista communities for inspiration and guidance as we continue to work in our neighborhoods and communities.

We are grateful for contributions to our work, support for solidarity economies, and for ongoing commitment to the struggle for life with dignity for all, and a world where many worlds fit.

Schools for Chiapas came out of Grass Roots Events, Inc., as an effort to raise funds and support the construction of schools in autonomous Mayan communities in Mexico. Today Mayan children and adults throughout Chiapas work and learn in community-run, Zapatista centers that promote indigenous languages and traditions, while charting an independent path for indigenous development based on dignity, democracy, and justice. These Zapatista programs focus on education for literacy, education for health, education for ecological agriculture and women's empowerment.

To learn more, <https://schoolsforchiapas.org>

### Help us bridge the gap in home ownership.

Many of us want to contribute to an improvement in equity as the population and property values in our area surge. Thurston Housing Land Trust works to negotiate below-market rates for home acquisition so lower income buyers can realize home ownership. We are currently working on our first purchase, and need your help to keep the momentum building by joining or renewing your membership in THLT as we work toward eligibility for governmental funding.

Do you or someone you know have property to move into a land trust framework for ownership, or who would consider a cash donation supporting acquisitions? Contact us at [info@thurstonhousinglandtrust.org](mailto:info@thurstonhousinglandtrust.org) to set up a chat with a board member.

[www.thurstonhousinglandtrust.org](http://www.thurstonhousinglandtrust.org)

Join or renew by mailing \$25 to THLT, PO BOX 303, Olympia, WA 98507 or by visiting [www.thurstonhousinglandtrust.org](http://www.thurstonhousinglandtrust.org)

THLT is democratically governed: one member = one vote. Join or renew membership today!

Thurston Housing Land Trust is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We are a democratic, community-based housing land trust operating in Thurston County, Washington. Our mission is to create affordable housing for low and moderate income people as a means for building equity and pathways to ownership.



We are here for each other

# Sustaining Fund makes grants to Farm Land Trust and Bowl of Hope

Contributions from local donors allowed Olympia's Sustaining fund to award generous grants to two projects that address food needs. The Winter Grant Cycle for the Community Sustaining Fund of Thurston County (CSF) was special this year. In addition to funds received through the "Round Up at the Register" program at the Olympia Food Co-op, CFS administered money flowing from the Sue Lundy Fund. The fund was established as a memorial to Sue Lundy, long-time worker at our local Food Bank and the Kiwanis Club Garden. As a consequence, CSF had more than the usual amount of funds to disburse.

For this cycle, CSF had only two applicants. Although it is not clear why more applications were not forthcoming, one likely culprit is COVID-19. There may be less community action happening during this time of social distancing.

Criteria for distributing the funds aimed first at groups involved in mitigating difficult circumstances caused by the pandemic. Because there were fewer applicants, unlike most prior grant cycles, the CSF was able to award sizable amounts to both groups.

## Bowl of Hope—startup campaign

Bowl of Hope (BOH) has, for many months been providing nutritious and delicious hot food for distribution to the most vulnerable in our community— in shelters and outreach centers. Bowl of Hope volunteers believe all people, especially those suffering hardship, deserve the best food we can cook—the same food we serve our family and friends. It is their belief that this can be done regularly and affordably with community support and lots of TLC.

### Producing meals for shelters and others unhoused during quarantine

In June of 2020, Interfaith Works approached Linda Mewhirter to provide food for their shelters experiencing the restrictions of quarantine. By July, with some generous financial donations and a network of volunteers, Linda began to produce 300 meals a week, at first from home, but later out of the commercial kitchen at The United Churches of Olympia, where BOH is currently located.

### Volunteers and donors ramp up capacity

BOH has since become a non-profit organization. Each week they receive thousands of items from generous local donors. They then purchase packaging required to supply individual meals to the homeless. Linda believes that the group can prepare 500 meals per week, largely based on donations that come via local food banks, GRUB and other local farms.

### Becoming a sustainable organization

Their most urgent need at this time is to create a start-up budget to hire staff, purchase materials and acquire additional groceries to round out meals. In order to achieve a sustainable future for this service, they are also looking for funds to cover operating expenses related to running a business, such as outreach materials, business system software, licenses and filing fees.

Linda has been working full-time for BOH as their primary cook and organizer on a volunteer basis. Now in order for the project to continue, she must pay her own bills. Bowl of Hope thus came to the CSF requesting a \$1,000 stipend for Linda. Because of the low number of grant applicants, and the special funds available for this grant cycle, CSF was able to add an additional \$1000, for a full grant amounting to \$2000.

## Community Farm Land Trust (CFLT)

Community Farm Land Trust (CFLT) is dedicated to preserving farmland and keeping it farmed forever. They promote local food and farming systems through community-supported farmland preservation strategies, educational outreach and partnerships that increase opportunities for farms and farmers to flourish.

### A farm economy based on permanently protected land

They envision productive local farms that provide healthy food

for our community and contribute to a vibrant, viable farm economy. They work to permanently protect local farmland and to provide affordable land security for farmers. In this way, they contribute to the support of an agricultural economy that provides for local food security, builds a community that appreciates and supports locally produced food and ensures that farms can continue to provide a good financial return to those who work the land.

### An extensive Guide to local farms and their products

The CFLT requested \$2,000 toward graphic design and printing



The Community Farm Land Trust supports farms with educational outreach and partnerships that increase opportunities for the farms and farmers. Your support helped preserve 86 acres of farmland forever, ensuring that it's affordable and farmed now and by future generations of farmers in the South Sound.

Kirsop Farms (on Thurston County land preserved by the Community Farmland Trust), Harbor Roots Farms in Grays Harbor County, and many more farms in our area not only provide fresh, vibrant, local food for our community but to our food banks too.

Here are some of the things that CFLT accomplished in 2020 with donations and grants from the community:

- ◆ Acquired the 29-acre James Family Farm to be preserved and farmed forever
- ◆ Expanded the Farm Map into a 68-page free showcase for local food, farms and farmers distributed 10,000 copies throughout the South Sound
- ◆ Transformed the annual Farms Forever event into a virtual auction that exceeded its fundraising goal this fall
- ◆ Awarded a variety of grants, including work on solar panels at Scatter Creek Farm & Conservancy, presenting an emergency preparedness program for farmers in 2021 and to cover unexpected expenses due to COVID-19. For a full exploration of the many aspects of CFLT go to /www.communityfarmlandtrust.org

## Olympia Books to Prisoners

Olympia Books to Prisoners works to offset



the dehumanizing effects of incarceration by sending quality used books free of charge to prisoners all over the United States.

[olympiabtp.org](http://olympiabtp.org)

of their 2021 farm guide: "Fresh From The Farm: South Sound Farm and Food Resource Guide." (This was formerly known as the South Sound Farm Map.) This free annual publication lists local farms, farmers, farm products, agricultural and related businesses. The Guide features products, farmers markets, food banks, seasonality guides, farm and farmland statistics and interesting articles from Thurston, Mason, Lewis, and Grays Harbor Counties. In this way, the Guide helps to keep shopping dollars in our region and build our local economy.

### Highlighting women and BIPOC farmers

The 2021 Guide will offer photos and articles highlighting the growing number of women and BIPOC farmers in our area. The CFLT sees their stories as vitally important to the future of farming and our community. In a Statement of Solidarity the Guide says:

"As a Farm Land Trust, we are aware that racism, exclusion and displacement have been woven into the history of American agriculture. We know there is structural racism in many of our agricultural institutions and systems. Farming has many challenges; racism and discrimination should not be one of them. We're continuing our journey and we still have work to do together."

The Fund was able to award the CFLT the full amount of their request, half coming from CSF funds and half from the Sue Lundy Fund. The Guide will be available electronically through the CFLT website at [www.communityfarmlandtrust.org](http://www.communityfarmlandtrust.org).

Greg Black is part of the leadership team at the Community Sustaining Fund and a local musician.

91.1  
Westport

89.1  
Montesano

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# A Mason County model of mutual aid

Amanda Eichelberger

If there is anything that COVID-19 has shown us, it's that building real-world models that allow everyone to thrive via strong community safety nets is imperative in an economy that requires human beings to properly function.

Founded after the 2016 election, Elevate Mason County (EMC) is one such model. The group works “to make Mason County a sanctuary for all people who call the community home; to feel safe, welcome and hopeful for the future.” Very grassroots, Elevate is an all-volunteer coalition of Mason County residents with a diverse set of experiences. They range from non-profit and government professionals, to artists, teachers and many others.

These volunteers focus primarily on solidarity with their local immigrant community and strive to live their anti-racist principles at every level of organizing, leading from lived experience with poverty, immigration and marginalization.

Historically, Elevate has provided community events, gathering spaces and educational talks around local issues; held marches and created campaigns in support of immigrant neighbors and their rights; and worked on signature gathering for De-Escalate Washington. These projects over the past 5 years allowed them to build deep relationships across multiple community organizations and institutions.

Before the pandemic, we were all witnessing an economic crisis nationwide and on-going destabilization worldwide. This led to significant displacement of indigenous people from ancestral lands, including those that lie within Guatemala and Mexico. Many people from affected communities in Todos, Santos, and San Pedro Saloma, Guatemala now live, work and pay taxes in Mason County.

Current conditions for this community exemplify an intricate web of economic failure. Lack of a social safety net, vast economic injustices, and a framework of meritocracy are all the result of a pervasive neoliberal system spanning half a century. Neoliberal policies perpetuate environmental racism, health disparities, food and housing insecurity and numerous other barriers to thriving communities.

Mason County is disproportionately impacted by these challenges with a poverty rate of 15% compared to 9.8% across Washington, and with immigrant families in the county 29% more likely to be in poverty. This shows up as food and housing insecurity and lack of access to medical care, childcare, and transportation.

The effects of neoliberalism and austerity measures have also been exacerbated by COVID-19. When the US federal government issued

COVID-19 relief checks, mixed status and undocumented neighbors were overlooked. Mason County immigrant workers in shellfish harvesting, the service industry, and special forest products all faced an economic downturn in the pandemic. They lost work, faced higher virus risk and yet received

formed partnerships with multiple non-profits who sponsored specific components of the project.

Advocates from Sound Learning, CIELO, Shelton Schools' Student and Family Support Center and the school's bilingual homeless liaison know the needs in the immigrant and refugee community. Local or-



Above, Elevate market day in Shelton; below, poster by stacie gilkeson



no public financial support. It was this lack of support in the face of new hardships with disproportionate impacts that generated a response from Elevate.

The Immigrant Relief Fund (IRF) is an Elevate-run initiative built on a foundation of mutual aid,

organizations heard heart-wrenching stories of struggle due to COVID shutdowns and later COVID infections. The Immigrant Relief Project has raised nearly \$90,000 to date, and is set to begin a second round of grassroots fundraising. Distribution decisions remain in the hands of direct advocates and

The initiative focuses on flexible financial assistance for immigrant and refugee neighbors at the margins of the COVID crisis.

interdependence, commitment to community, and trauma-informed, relationship-based practices.

The initiative focuses on flexible financial assistance for immigrant and refugee neighbors at the margins of the COVID crisis. Currently, the IRF is made up of a group of Elevate members acting as the bridge to get needed emergency funds out into the community and to increase capacity for emergency fundraising efforts.

IRF members credit their success at fundraising to their intentional, trauma informed approach. Before beginning to raise any money, they spent significant time building relationships and strong processes for distributing funds. They worked with advocates on the ground who identified and worked with families in need in dual language to access funding. They also

organizations serving the community through IRF's structure. The money raised will go directly to individuals and families within rural Mason County.

Last Spring, Elevate members seized an unexpected opportunity to partner with Leading from the Roots (LFTR) on a two-phase grant project. This accelerated the fire already started by Elevators (as they call themselves). The Leading from the Roots grant, sponsored by the Folk School Alliance, was launched through a Community Based Participatory Action Research project to document “community members coming together, seeking to define the needs of their own communities, and then doing something about it.”

In Phase I of the project, IRF was provided a \$5,000 match grant towards a GoFundMe that attracted

small donations to build an initial \$14,749 fund. This money supported 48 families with \$300 each throughout Summer 2020. Phase II of the LFTR project maintains the focus on movement building through art and storytelling. The second half of the grant funded the creation of a short documentary by Zephyr Elise, a local film-maker about the project, plus a series of movement graphics created by local artist stacie gilkeson. The media and artwork will be used to create a joyful movement and tell an important story, and will be given as gifts for community donations to the fund.

The initial project faced some challenges—though community generosity wasn't one of them. When they unexpectedly raised almost \$15,000, the group had to figure out how to steward community funds without creating a tax burden for any one member, most of whom are working class themselves.

Once again, Elevate and the IRF called on their strong community relationships to solve the problem. Currently, the IRF is working on building a process to support Phase II of the Leading from the Roots project with Olympia POWER (Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights), an organization that emerged from the national welfare rights movement of the 1960s, which has worked for years to support grassroots groups fighting for economic justice.

Meanwhile, Elevators heard about a significant effort by All-In Washington and the Seattle Foundation to provide support to immigrant and BIPOC communities across Washington. With the help of Community Lifeline, a not-for-profit whose contributions are tax-deductible, the IRF was ultimately awarded \$75,000 in grant funding through the Seattle Foundation.

While Elevators have immense gratitude for this huge capacity builder which will support over 200 families beginning in 2021, members often talk about how their work isn't finished. They know the need is much greater than current resources. They also know that what they are doing is as much about building opportunities for community care as it is about fulfilling specific needs. That's why IRF has a goal to raise on-going local funds that will permit neighbors to be proactive about taking care of one another.

Elevate, local advocates, and the wider community want to keep showing up in every way possible, and will keep relying on intentional work to do so. What Elevators have discovered and folks around the country are beginning to see is that resilience within current systems will be created through our relationships to others. By forming durable partnerships across the community, Elevate has been able to build a significant support network in a rural county with limited resources.

Amanda Eichelberger is a community organizer based in Shelton, WA, focused on social, economic, and climate justice.

To learn more about Elevate and check on the launch of Phase II of the Leading from the Roots project go to [www.elevatemasoncounty.org](http://www.elevatemasoncounty.org).

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# PERSPECTIVE

The real work

## Bringing the people who voted for Trump to the table

Bill Fishburn

It's November 7, and Joseph Biden is projected to become the 46th president of the United States. The day has been an emotional roller coaster, as I reconcile my relief, jubilation, and disbelief: Donald Trump's presidency is coming to an end. The sensation is palpable. I feel as if a weight has been lifted from my shoulders, as if my jaw and face muscles have slackened, as if the pressure in my chest has decreased. I am looking forward to a full night of uninterrupted sleep.

Yet there's a foreboding sense that somehow the prognosticators are wrong; their projections miscalculated. A sense of dread that the dream I awoke to is a nightmare I have not yet awakened from.

And last, a realization. The sobering, acute, eye-widening realization of the Real Work we have before us. That evening, on Facebook and in a Tweet I wrote, "Today we celebrate. Tomorrow we begin the real work."

The Real Work has been there all along, but these past four years have shown me (and hopefully others) just how broken our country is and how necessary the Real Work has become. The past four years showed how perilously close we are to incendiary points of no return. They demonstrated how little was needed to lay bare the destructive potential of our differences, while ignoring the calming potential of our similarities. They showed me how deeply our collective psyche has been stained by the divisive rhetoric of despots and power seekers.

However, the soul of our great nation is marred by a great blemish -- our original sin as a country -- the subjugation of other races. On that foundation, we built into our systems and our lives an inherent racism: a deep-seated belief that worth is based on the shade of our skin. The dystopian rantings of a narcissist have emboldened those who embrace that belief to remove their hoods and parade openly in front of us, tacitly acknowledging the depth of our original sin. Those less willing to embrace that belief have been shocked by the ease with which it surfaced in neighbors and family members. Only Real Work will be able to deconstruct the foundation and create new piers, new structures, on which we can build a better nation.

I sent this Tweet to President-elect Biden:

- I voted for you all and I want you to know, we'll be watching for you to come through for the working class. We need to see:
- Immediate and decisive action on COVID-19 and healthcare
  - Children removed from cages, returned to their families
  - Free public higher education
  - Forgiveness of student loans
  - Lower taxes for those making

- less than \$100K, higher for those making above \$400K
- Higher taxes for corporations so we see them contributing their fair share
- Those will be the things I'm tracking

[Later I realized I'd left off environment/climate change]

That's the easy stuff. The President-elect is an experienced legislator and statesman. He's been around the federal government for 47 years, eight of those as second-in-command to Barack Obama. I have to believe the tactical, day-to-day-operational work is well-in-hand, and that he'll have a plan to hit the ground running. I'm convinced Trump has no intention of leaving behind anything worth salvaging. Let's face it, he hasn't fired Steven Miller who has shown he's capable of designing diabolical plans to create mayhem and discord.

## Getting beyond "the argument culture"

Working with couples who are at odds brings into clearer, sharper relief the existential struggle to have a dialogue outside the framework of "The Argument Culture" which is all over Cable News, Fox, and everywhere..

In the Argument Culture, no one wins; there's no person-to-person affirmation; no genuine affection building human bonds--quite the opposite.

What is lost is the ability to listen; to be present for oneself and for one's partner; to have an authentic connection.

More importantly, we are losing the uniquely human capacity to discern clarity from cloudiness; and more important than that, truth from fiction.

There's been a cultural, social, relational deconstruction of meaning; of the confrontation of truth and fiction; with fiction gaining a tragic, potentially catastrophic, outcome.

No, the Real Work is the hard work. Learning to speak to the pain and fear of a white majority who knows its status is jeopardized. Learning to convince social justice activists how to achieve results without alienating that white majority. Bringing the people who voted for Trump to the table - not for the purpose of holding hands and singing kumbaya, but for the purpose of joining with the population that voted for him - that's going to be the Real Work.

We need to dismantle the supporting structures that enable and propagate a bitter tribalism, and to do so in a way that makes space for their dependents to learn to live without them. We need to replace them with support structures that unify and are accessible to all tribes. That will be the Real Work.

President-elect Biden will need to reach into the bowels of a nation whose very fabric is rent. To redress the abuses of slavery and centuries of racial subjugation and then reweave that fabric into something stronger and better. That will be the Real Work.

Just as I realize I can't lay the blame for our current malaise on Trump, I also see that the Real Work cannot be laid entirely at the feet of Biden and Harris and their team. No matter how good they are and how eloquent and statesmanlike, they can be only part of the solution. The Real Work will need to be done by you and me.

To do the Real Work, we will have to set aside years of difference-building and embrace years of sameness-finding. We will have to look into our own hearts - not each others' - and come to terms with the influences, the biases, the experiences, the stories, the ugly realities and the beautiful fantasies. We will have to embrace honesty, but also actively and unerringly to reject dishonesty. Once we have accepted our own shortcomings and determined our individual path to change, then we can embark on the Real Work.

It took us over 500 years to arrive at this point in our sullied history. The work to reverse the effects of that history and address the travesties of our original sin started only 160 years ago. The path has been tortuous and littered with obstacles and impediments. Every generation has made progress, and I'm optimistic this generation will be no different. But the past four years have set us back, and our path forward will bring progress only if we are all intentional and thoughtful in our words and actions. That is the Real Work. Are you ready to begin?


*Bill Fishburn is a Spokane native who set roots in Thurston County. He ran for Olympia Port Commissioner in 2017, nearly unseating an 11-year incumbent. Among many other hats, he led the Hispanic Roundtable of South Sound from 2014-20.*

lational reality; to act on them and to transform them into pernicious, toxic policy, creates unparalleled conflict, confusion, and desperation, and with that, the deterioration of the human, social, civil, relational bonds that guide and promote human and civilized well-being, whether on inter-personal, inter-sectional, international bases.

Trump epitomizes all this though he didn't create it

*[Thanks to EF for this response to a layered question.]*

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Cooking up some political power

# First elect progressives, then hold them accountable

Emily Lardner

At our house, we’ve been watching cooking shows to help us weather the pandemic. My recent favorite actually involved very little cooking, however. The cook, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, forgot about her “salmon-cream-pasta situation” as she broke down what ordinary people need to know as we head into the next legislative cycle.

AOC’s consistent theme is not just that we aren’t getting what we need, but that we have to get better at holding elected officials accountable. Wearing her now-famous, US-made and union-printed sweatshirt that says “TAX THE RICH,” Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez grated some lemon peel and broke down the difference between laws adopted by Congress, and actions that can occur without passage of a law.

COVID-relief requires a law, she explains, reminding us of the *School House Rock* video on how a bill becomes a law. But canceling federal student debt is an action Biden can take on his own, once he’s inaugurated. An hour into the show, AOC has scraped the peel off a lemon, set some water to boil, and reminded us that elections are just one part of a longer struggle for change.

What is radical?

Midway through her cooking show, AOC pointed out that we’ve all been indoctrinated. We’ve learned to accept as “normal” the fact that people have to choose between paying rent or paying for medicine. We accept as “normal” that a person working 40 hours a week cannot pay their bills. We accept that billions of dollars in the COVID-relief act go directly to the 1%. When we challenge these practices and try to change them, we’re labeled radicals, a term used to shut people down and push them out of “normal” electoral and political spaces.

We consider it radical when elected officials in another country try to subvert a fair election, but here in the US, people on the right and even in the center carry on as if attacking the election is normal. We would think it profoundly wrong if in another country, a member of the police force could kill someone and not be investigated. Yet in the

US we still treat this as normal, and label as radical those pushing for reform.

As AOC put it, the “radical reality of a conservative corporate norm lets people die because they can’t afford insulin.” That passes for normal in this country. For progressives to succeed in advancing an agenda centered on the needs of working people, we have to get better at calling out those who, as AOC puts it, “indulge in the narrative of common sense to hide the radical nature of their ideas.”

you “should be watching all these people,” no matter what party they belong to.

It’s not radical to believe that healthcare is a human right. Healthcare that includes physical, dental, vision, and mental health, not the right to buy insurance that offers us a “raggedy bronze plan” as AOC puts it. It’s not like providing health care is harder than going to space. Nothing in the program of progressive groups like Our Revolution or Run for Something is radical. In fact, we are just trying to catch up with what is normal in other civilized nations.

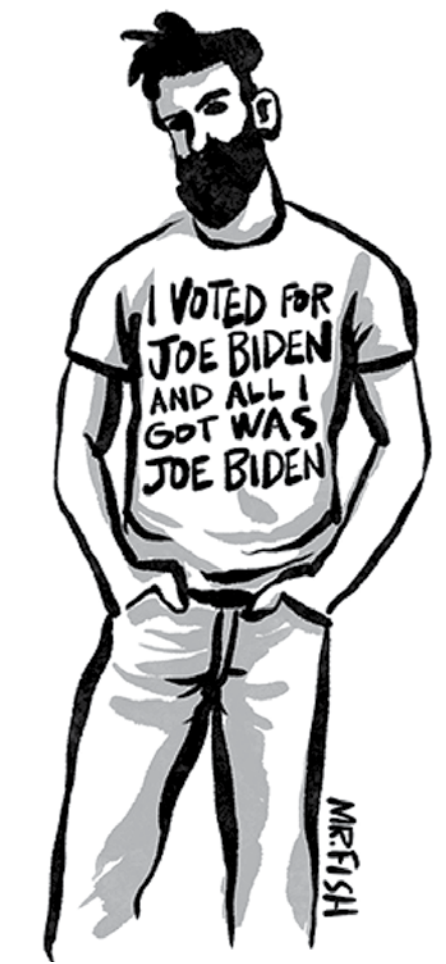
Organizing in behalf of progressive candidates

Nationally, *Our Revolution: Organize to Win* which has been mentored by Senator Bernie Sanders, successfully supported candidates and ballot initiatives in 25 states and the District of Columbia. Their four point platform:

- ✓ defeat Donald Trump
  - ✓ elect a progressive Congress,
  - ✓ build a bench, and
  - ✓ organize a movement
- Our Revolution* defines “progressive” in concrete terms. It means Medicare for All, the Green New Deal, criminal justice reform,

cancelling student debt, protecting immigrant rights, saving the post office, stopping endless wars and good jobs for all (increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15/hour, expanding the rights of workers to form unions, and ending so-called ‘right to work’ legislation).

*Our Revolution* helped to organize many successful campaigns in the



2020 election. In Washington State, seven of the nine candidates they endorsed were elected to office. These ranged from county commissioner spots, to House and Senate seats in the state legislature, and in the US House of Representatives. The ballot initiative they supported, “Sex Education in Schools,” was also successful.

In Arizona, thirteen of the fourteen candidates *Our Revolution* supported won offices from the county to the state and federal level. Statewide ini-

tiatives to increase school funding and legalize marijuana, were also successful. In Florida, *Our Revolution* candidates won offices at the city and state level as well as in the US Senate.

Another one of the many groups working to increase the presence of progressives in office is *Run for Something*. Founded in 2016, the organization backs state and local progressive Gen Z and Millennial candidates. According to co-founder Ross Morales Rocketto,

“these political newcomers reflect a generation that grew up watching Democratic leaders from Bill Clinton’s ‘big government is over’ school of politics try to solve massive social problems with small fixes and slight shifts; now, they are asking why government can’t do more.” According to the *Run for Something* website, 14,000 potential candidates entered their addresses and identified potential offices for which they could run. .

Keep showing up no matter who wins the election

A core assumption in both groups is that elected officials are public servants, responsible to address the needs of the people they represent. By centering campaigns on those needs, candidates are succeeding.

More people are running for office, and more people are voting. As the *Run for Something* website puts it, “Local candidates are like super-charged field organizers with personal skin in the game—if these candidates win, they become public servants who can use their power to make a meaningful difference for their voters.”

With roots in a family that was proudly independent, AOC is guided by the belief that you “should be watching all these people,” no matter what party they belong to. Political parties are not fan clubs and “elections are not like ‘set it and forget it.’” After an election, lobbyists and special interest groups keep showing up to work on whoever takes office. Progressives need to do the same, or we won’t get anywhere.

Emily Lardner lives in Tacoma and writes often in these pages..

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POINT OF VIEW

# Coronavirus exposure in state prisons: We can do better

Daniel Mootz

Advocates with Washington Community Action Network (CAN) gathered in Olympia on December 9 to mourn the lives of incarcerated people lost to COVID-19, and to raise awareness for prison reform. Noreen Light, a local activist whose son has been in prison for the last 18 years, said that without releasing more inmates “there is just no way to make sure prisoners have adequate space, sanitation, or protective equipment.”

She cited the recommendations of the Office of Corrections Ombuds: the only way to protect prisoners is to reduce the number of incarcerated people. That means beginning with the elderly, those with pre-existing medical conditions, those scheduled to be released soon anyway and inmates who are pregnant. “People in prisons are people,” Light said, “we can do better, we have to do better.”

In the middle of April, 2020, after the first month of COVID-19 hit the US, the Washington Supreme Court voted to deny the release of thousands of incarcerated people. In a split 5-4 decision, the judges ruled that the petitioners hadn’t proved that the Department of Corrections (DoC) failed to protect inmates from the virus.

During the hearing, Assistant Attorney General John Samson invoked the unfortunate potential for a certain number of incarcerated people to end up “homeless” as a core reason not to release offenders. The logic of this actually undermines the State’s ability to implement public health measures. Nick Straley, Assistant Deputy Director of Advocacy for Columbia Legal Services and lead attorney for the group of five Pierce County petitioners, said “uniformly, national public health and correctional experts agree that to protect people in prison from the virus, a significant reduction of the prison population is necessary.”

Straley argued that “cleaning at jails statewide has been woefully inadequate to kill virions that may be left on surfaces.” (*The News Tribune*, Alexis Krell) While the justices met—in the interests of health and safety—to announce their verdict via Zoom, they determined that even inmates at high-risk of contracting or spreading the disease, such as the elderly, those with underlying conditions, as well as those slated to be freed soon, were not exempt from completing their sentences.

Out of the roughly 12,000 prisoners affected by the court’s decision (3,400 of whom were under sentences that did not oblige them to notify their victim upon being released), only 1,100 prisoners from “vulnerable populations” received emergency commutations from the governor. Hundreds of

caused over 400 infections. According to the *Tri-City Herald*, on November 22 the National Guard was “called in to help test Connell prison inmates.” As for the situation at Walla Walla Prison, Stormo said “it is unclear if the penitentiary is also quarantining,” and her calls for verification were not returned.



Photo credit Lindsey Dalthorp

them were required to wear electronic monitoring equipment or be subject to work furloughs or other punitive restrictions.

The prosecution insisted that by March all prisons in Washington had “handed out masks, created separate sleeping spaces, [and] tested 300 inmates for COVID.” [AP, Martha Bellisle]. However, a number of reports contradicted these claims. On August 20, *The Seattle Times* covered an outbreak at The

By the end of 2020, there were more than 3750 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among people imprisoned in Washington State, affecting Black Americans more than any other demographic group. Their infection rate is about six times that of the total population. As of this writing, at least four prisoners have died of complications due to COVID-19. .

Noreen Light said that if a prisoner tests positive for the virus they are put in solitary confinement,

...the only way to protect prisoners is to reduce the number of incarcerated people.

Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla, in which proper protocol had not been followed.

According to Jedidiah Maynes, who interviewed Walla Walla inmates, “the main issues [were] lack of proper social distancing, the continuation of prisoner transfers and poor personal protective equipment.” At that time there were 114 positive, community spread cases, and a group of prisoners were organizing a hunger strike. Three months later, Allison Stormo reported that another outbreak had occurred in Walla Walla, with at least 30 additional prisoners contracting the disease.

A similar outbreak at a correctional facility in Connell, north of Pasco,

adding that those who contract symptoms may not report them out of fear of the mental strain of isolation. Light has not been able to visit her son since March, and is currently “focusing her energy on [championing] earned release time,” or parole, which Washington State does not grant. She is also working with the Black Prisoners Caucus to promote juvenile offenders’ ability to go before a review board, and to revitalize the long-standing Sentencing Reform Act which has been largely ineffective, degrading, and exploitative.

During a global health crisis it is unconscionable to hold people in unsafe conditions against their will, let alone in defiance of the advice of public health experts. It is also unconstitutional when there is the potential for greater social suffering resulting from the original sentence. The Eighth Amendment to the Constitution bars the state from inflicting “cruel and unusual punishment” on individuals sentenced to prison. In *Farmer v. Brennan*, a 1994 Supreme Court case, it was ruled that the Eighth Amendment prohibited “deliberate indifference” on behalf of the state regarding prisoners’ “serious health needs.”

However, the high court decided that the prisoners’ lawsuit was “excessive” and their plea was “an overreach,” stating they had failed

to show that the DOC’s actions “constitute[d] deliberate indifference to the COVID-19 risk. ” Five justices thus condemned, in effect, thousands of non-violent, low-level offenders to risk a punishment far greater than the one they were sentenced to. The decision left them to languish behind bars, unable to protect themselves from a deadly pandemic introduced from the outside world.

Given the alarming rate of infections arising inside correctional facilities, individual counties have moved to reduce the number of people in their jails. The ACLU reported that Washington jails decarcerated about half of their total population during the first few months of the pandemic. This provoked a response from victims’ rights advocates along with a cohort of political and social conservatives. Victims rights advocates, however,, must not be allowed to undermine public health decisions based on medical science or the sociology of decarceration.

The “biggest problem” with the victims rights agenda, according to Noreen Light, is “people basing their decisions on fear, not facts.” It takes an intelligent understanding of the gravity of the situation to realize that there must be full community mobilization in order to contain the virus. That includes freeing up the same amount of inmates currently in prison as have been released from jails statewide.

As the government fails to control the spread of the virus, It is becoming more clear than ever that Incarceration in the US is a toxic system. Who else is there to defend the convicts among us from a novel coronavirus which has come to concentrate primarily in and across social institutions to a devastating effect? It is ultimately cruel and unusual to enforce excess punishment on those already in custody. In the time of coronavirus, how will we make sure that the state, our state, is not sentencing people to cruel and unusual punishment, nor making them live in misery with the prospect of dying in vain?

There has been far too little effort to reach an ethical, and effective compromise on urgent public health issues inside Washington State prisons. The result of the State’s decision to reject the petition for large reductions in the prison population is a continuing failure to protect incarcerated people and achieve social distancing. This denies the constitutional principle of humane, and appropriate, punishment, and in doing so has placed everyone, on the inside and out, at greater risk of exposure.

Daniel Mootz graduated from The Evergreen State College and enjoys the woods, art and travel.

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BOOK REVIEW

A Pandemic Nurse’s Diary

Nurse T. with  
Timothy Sheard

Hardball Press, Sept. 2020

Reviewed by Veronica Atkinson

In her diary, Nurse T. offers a first person account of working in a public hospital as the initial wave of coronavirus swept through NYC. The diary describes the personal, physical and emotional toll on the staff as they face overwhelming conditions each day. It also tells the stories of individual patients, illustrating the deep commitment to care demonstrated by the nurses, doctors and ancillary staff. More broadly, it shines a light on the broken healthcare system in the US.

In an ICU, “now twice as busy as usual,” Nurse T describes working with a lack of PPE, with shortages of common medications, with four or more “code blues” a day, and with no room in the morgue to store the dead. Adding to that stress is the frustration of working without a clear picture of the complex of symptoms caused by the virus. The public hospital where Nurse T. works, like many across the country, serves people primarily of color and the poor; often immigrants.

The majority of clients lack access to primary care. As a result, patients present to the emergency room seriously ill, their symptoms often compounded by untreated chronic health problems. Care is provided with no questions asked to all uninsured or under-insured patients. This costly approach to health care—in terms not only of cash but also people’s wellbeing—is the norm across the country. The arrival of the pandemic has only exacerbated the problem.

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The infrastructure in many public hospitals has crumbled over the years due to lack of financial support from city, state and federal governments. Medicare and Medicaid do not reimburse hospitals at a reasonable rate, leaving poorer hospitals unable to pay for improvements, or in some cases even to remain open. The poorer clients and communities they serve suffer the consequences. Nurse T. explains, “My hospital can barely pay wages and expenses under normal times. In a crisis we are stripped bare.” Unable to update equipment, to replace oxygen delivery systems or to provide more staff, these hospitals, already financially strapped, are ill prepared for the increasing numbers of patients being admitted with the virus.

Patients with Covid need much more staff attention and often remain hospitalized three times longer than a typical critical patient. Patients with Covid also require negative-pressure isolation rooms to keep infected air from escaping into the halls and other rooms.

Each time a person enters an isolation room, they must wear PPE: gloves, gowns, masks, goggles or face shields, shoe covers, and in some cases a full hazmat suit equipped with a respirator. During the first weeks of the pandemic, Nurse T’s staff was warned by administration that they were using “too much” PPE because there were “not enough masks in stock” to supply the whole staff.

By April, the critical care department spent money from their own budget to purchase the specialized masks needed. Asking when fans might be installed to create more negative pres-

sure rooms in the ICU, Nurse T. was told a plan for upgrades was coming but would ‘have to wait until after the pandemic’.

Over the following months, the nurses worked mandatory overtime, four 12-hour shifts in a row, while the codes and the deaths continued. Nurse T writes that ICU nurses are “used to encountering death, but not so many dying in a day.” When one patient dies it frees a bed for the next patient...

Repeated requests to a pharmaceutical company to be included in clinical trials of a promising treatment were denied without explanation. The hospitals enrolled in the trial were already using the drug, leaving the people working with Nurse T. to wonder if denial was based on the financial state of the hospital or the color of the people they served. Nurse T. gives voice to the inequality, saying the cause of death listed on death certificates should read “hospital poverty due to refusal of the government to provide adequate resources and staff for impoverished people of color.”

By August the surge of Covid patients had lessened, staffing had improved and more treatment protocols were in place. With better knowledge of the complexities of the virus, the death rate was lower than it might have been.

Anticipating another surge of the virus in the fall however, Nurse T. fears by then the staff will be “hollowed out by illness, fatigue, despair and death”.

Outside the hospital, not only is the virus itself invisible but most Americans can’t see what it does to severely ill people unless that person is someone they know. Instead they see people, even themselves, recover from mild cases of Covid, or the privileged few who receive the most advanced and expensive treatments leave the hospital declaring they “beat” the virus.

Those who actually see the full effect of Covid are exhausted by the volume of patients, shortages and outdated equipment; weary of hearing “the virus will just disappear”—“it’s just a flu;” and distressed by people refusing to wear masks. They are tired of politicians playing down the danger of Covid and fighting reasonable efforts to contain it. As Nurse T. reminds us, “the resource of the healthcare system isn’t a miracle drug or a vaccine, it’s the expertise of the healthcare workers.” Nurse T. warns, “hospitals will have nowhere to treat and no one to help treat” as admissions reach capacity and nurses continue to burnout.

An addendum to the book, *Healing Meditations for Caregivers*, offers tips and exercises for self-care, as well as encouragement to channel anger by “using the energy to make a difference in your community. Individuals can begin by replacing failed leaders; working to implement public health and taking part in political associations to promote social justice, public health and equality for all.”

Veronica Atkinson, is a retired RN who lives in Grays Harbor County

"...a gifted interpreter ..."

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Hard Ball Press

After writing six crime novels featuring Lenny Moss, hospital custodian, union steward and amateur detective, Timothy Sheard launched an independent publishing company, Hard Ball Press, in order to mentor and publish working class writers. You'll find books ranging from history, memoir, YA, detective stories and more—often featuring union characters and insiders' stories of union fights. Hard Ball is the publisher of the popular series featuring shop steward turned detective Lenny Moss. For a peek at hard-to-find titles go to <https://hardballpress>.



# Remembering Rachid Benkhalti

September 4, 1955–November 27, 2020

Rachid Benkhalti was born in Marrakesh, Morocco, on September 4, 1955. He passed away at home in Olympia on November 27, 2020. We have lost a great soul, father, brother, uncle, and so much more. Rachid was a man of great spirit, with a ready smile and generosity. His zest for life was a magnet to those who knew him. He wanted to discover the world.

A friend said he was the “essence of warmth and generosity.” This was Rachid Benkhalti.

Rachid was the son of Rquia Jarari and the late Ahmed Benkhalti. He grew up with his brother, Abdellah and his four sisters, Najia, Aicha, Souad and Fatima. He attended his neighborhood school and Abou El Abbas Sebti High School, graduating in science and mathematics.

His older brother Abdellah recalls that growing up, Rachid had several passions. He was known for collecting and cherishing old Moroccan music, playing soccer, entering cooking competitions and hanging out with his immediate and extended family. He carried these passions and shared them with others throughout this life. As Abdellah wrote, these passions made Rachid “a very social person” who knew the importance and joy of family and camaraderie.

Later, a tourist in the US once asked Rachid, “So, what is it that you do?” Rachid replied, “Me? I enjoy life.”

After completing high school, Rachid worked in the vineyards of Lyon, France, where he met his life-long friend Driss Bouabdillah. They both entered University in the French town of Pau in 1980.

They shared an apartment with others who became lifelong friends: Said Fettahi, Pascale Pere, Azzedine Dahlane. As Driss wrote, their apartment was the gather-



ing place for social and cultural events, as well as political discussions. They were all members of the National Union of Moroccan Students, through which they organized travel for students and helped bring Moroccan artists and musicians to concerts.

It was here too that Rachid fell in love with Fanny Cordero. They would marry in 1986 and, as Rachid’s friend Mark Bean said recently, become parents of “Ahmed and Salima, two wonderful contributions to humanity.”

Rachid pursued his formal studies in Applied Mathematics at the University of Pau and was awarded a PhD in Mathematics. He immigrated to the United States in 1985, teaching for two years at the University of Mississippi. In 1987, he began his 33-year career at Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) as a Professor of Mathematics and settled with his family in their home in Olympia.

Besides his teaching duties at PLU, Rachid served as chair of the Mathematics Department for eleven years, participated in the

curriculum, diversity and faculty evaluation committees, published numerous journal articles with his colleague Khalil Ezzinbi in the field of differential and integral equations, wrote a textbook for Differential Equations in French, and received the Faculty Excellence in Scholarship Award.

In 1994 he received a Fulbright Scholarship and helped organize the Second Marrakech International Conference on Differential Equations. Dedicated to his students, he also coached many Putnam Intercollegiate Mathematics Competitions. These competitions, in pure and applied mathematics, provided intellectual challenges that many found exciting and beneficial.

Many of his PLU colleagues wrote about Rachid’s support for other faculty members, his “upbeat nature, his passionate discussions about university and department policies and his sense of humor in difficult times.” One colleague wrote that “he would look you in the eye and even in just a few seconds with him, you could feel loved, cared for, and valued.”

Another colleague confided in Rachid that he felt self-conscious having to shave his head when he received a cancer diagnosis. “The next day,” he wrote, “Rachid had also shaved his head in solidarity with me.” All of his colleagues wrote about his Moroccan cooking and meals in his home with Fanny and the kids.

Rachid carried his love for soccer with him when he came to the US. In Olympia, he joined a soccer club and played year round. He traveled with the team to Vegas and Hawaii in the winter and to Victoria, Portland and Snohomish in the summer. He was the team leader, wrote Stu Simpson, “He was the glue, dominating the midfield with his control and wizardry, feeding the ball to his teammates” and “letting the ball do the work.”

Stu also wrote that Rachid “always wanted to get together for an after-game ‘beer and pizza.’” Often these after-game gatherings took place at Rachid’s local pub, the Westside Tavern where, over the years, Rachid slowly introduced the world of soccer to the tavern’s many patrons.

Two weeks before his passing, Rachid was playing soccer with his team. His teammate Mo described how “Rachid was like tip toeing up the left side of the field and managed to collect the ball so beautifully and two steps later he would strike a very hard hit to the ball using his left foot. We all witnessed it curling in.” He didn’t miss that last goal, but we’ll all miss him.

Rachid Benkhalti died of a heart attack in his home. He was buried in Olympia’s Forest Cemetery on Pacific Avenue on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 surrounded by his family and friends while others, including many in Morocco, France, and Canada, participated online.

He is survived by his two children, Ahmed and Salima, his mother Rquia Jarari and siblings Fatima, Abdellah, Najia, Souad and Aisha; nieces Maria, Zineb, Rita, Soukaina, Leila, Sofia, Bedra, and nephews Mehdi, Omar and Khalid; his companion Jamila; numerous cousins in France, Canada, and Morocco. His family, friends, the PLU community and soccer community mourn his loss. He left too soon. Memories can be sent to: <https://rachidbenkhalti.com>

## DIY politics when elected politicians don’t serve the people

Last issue, we listed some citizen initiatives that would have contributed to more stable and healthy lives for families and communities. We went back to see which ones won and which ones lost:

### Housing

San Franciscans notched up the tax on real estate transfers to put money into affordable housing, and also authorized the city to build 10,000 units of low income housing. In Georgia, they decided to exempt federally qualified non-profits from paying property tax when they build low income housing. King County voters agreed that the city could sell land at below-market prices if it’s for low income housing. On the downside, voters in California denied local jurisdictions the ability to cap rent increases—but left intact a law that caps increases in commercial property taxes.

### Chipping away at inequities

Thumbs up in San Francisco for the “Overpaid CEO tax” on companies who pay their CEO a salary more than 100 times the amount

paid to their median employee. In Arizona, voters passed a tax on incomes above \$250,000 to fund increases in teachers’ salaries and improve schools. In Denver and several other Colorado cities voters overwhelmingly gave their municipalities authority to provide “fiber to the home.”

### Working to live, not living to work

Statewide paid medical and family leave won in Colorado (12 weeks for family, 16 for a new child) making the state one of only 12 (including Washington)—and of course the rest of the industrial world! Florida passed an increase to \$15/hour in the state minimum wage (oops not reached until 2025). On the downside, lots of people driving for Lyft

and Uber got stiffed when those companies funded a California referendum that overturned fair employment requirements.

### Toward majority rule in politics

Californians voted to restore voting rights to “ex-felons” including people on parole. Alaskans passed Ranked Choice Voting (it lost in Massachusetts). Oregon voters decided on new restrictions on campaign finance. Coloradans decided to make their state the 15th to join the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. This means those states’ electors will vote for the national popular vote winner, regardless of the outcome in their state. Once states equal to 270 electoral votes, the Electoral College will be irrelevant.

### Artistic tendencies? Edgy cartoons?

WIP loves to publish drawings by local artists. Covers, cartoons, caricatures, collages—send them in. Scan it, attach it, mail it. Email us for more guidance at [olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com)



[This fall, Capital High School's Climate Club proposed a "climate fiction" challenge for local students. Club VP Karina Greenlee said they had invited students to paint their vision of the world in the context of climate change. These are two of many Cli-Fi stories submitted.]

# My Life

Elsie Sabel

I'm eight years old. The US has just declared victory over COVID and everyone is celebrating. My parents take me and my sister to see the Nutcracker in Seattle. I sit enthralled the whole time. I know that's what I want to do. When the show ends it's late, my sister has fallen asleep but I talk the whole way home to Olympia. My parents finally sign me up for a ballet class starting next month.

I'm 13 years old. I arrive 30 minutes early to my dance studio for our nutcracker auditions. This is my first Nutcracker with pointe shoes. I hope I get a snowflake, or maybe a flower. There is lots of chatter as me and my friends stretch and warm up. "Did you hear what Emma said to me?" "I think she's going to be Clara this year" "He got a girlfriend?" "Oh my God, did you see her feet?" "I know! They looked so good." "I wish I was that flexible." Then "...fires are really bad this year." "What?" I ask. "The California fires are really bad this year. Almost 4 million acres burned. My cousins had to evacuate their town." Oh no, I think. Shouldn't they be doing something about that? But that's over there and I am over here. And pretty soon the audition starts and the thoughts leave my mind.

I'm 18 years old. About to graduate. My friends and I are driving to Starbucks to celebrate finishing our last round of finals. I'm going to Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle and I'm going to become a ballerina. I've worked as hard as I could since I was eight, I go to the studio six days a week, I stretch for half an hour every night and when I'm not dancing, I'm watching other people dance. But it'll all pay off because I'm going to be a ballerina.

We order drinks. Sitting with my friends I get a notification on my phone: Level 3 Hurricane to hit California for the first time since 1858. I show it to my friends. We know there have been more natural disasters and they will probably keep increasing but again, that's California. This is Washington. As we leave I see a sign over the trash can: Keep plastic out of the ocean, Use reusable cups. Oh well, I think as I throw my cup away. I mean, it's only one cup. It's not like it'll make a big difference.

I'm 21 years old. It's wildfire season again and they are raging more than ever. My college sent us all home on account of the smoke but Olympia is actually closer to the fires so my parents are driving here and we are taking a plane to my grandparent's house in California. They

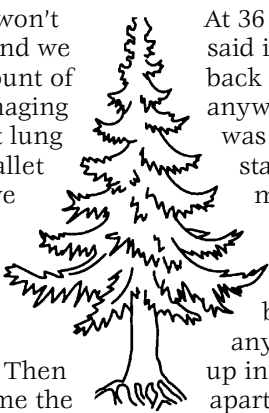
live in the desert so the wild fires won't get us. Sure, it might be crowded and we won't be able to go outside on account of the heat, but the fire smoke is damaging even when we're inside. I can't get lung damage. I already get winded in ballet classes too easily, my teachers have made that very clear. If it gets any worse, I might as well drop out. But, I remind myself, I'm not going to get lung damage and I'm trying a new workout routine and diet so I'll get better at cardio. Then Elaine won't look so smug everytime the teachers tell me not to breathe so loud. We have a month, I can definitely get better.

I'm 25 years old. After college I was offered an apprenticeship at Pacific Northwest Ballet. When I found out, I called everyone I knew and told them, I was going to be a ballerina! I didn't even care that most apprentices came straight from high school so I would be four years older than everyone else. I stayed in the program a year too long, but I eventually got promoted to the corps de ballet. I'll get to be onstage. I'm driving home to Olympia for the holidays. I haven't been back for at least a year.

As I crest a barren hill I get my first look at Olympia. It's less green than I remember, Almost all the forests around have been reduced to fields of stumps. Driving through downtown, I see more tin sheds lining the streets than ever. The equator has become practically uninhabitable. That means more immigrants from places like Brazil and Ecuador. Most of them aren't legal but it's not like we would have enough housing anyway.

At the beginning, the police tried to stop them, but there were just too many people, and they didn't have anywhere else to go. As I go up the bridge, I look down at Puget Sound. It's almost red in the daylight. There's a poisonous algae bloom in season. It's such a pity. I remember when I was young, I loved looking at the water. It was already too polluted to go in by that time, but I liked seeing if I could spot a seal, or maybe I would get lost in thought, trying to fathom how much water and life it held. But life goes on, and soon the excitement of seeing my family crowds out my mourning.

I am 30 years old. By now, we have to evacuate from the smoke every year. Seattle and Olympia are still standing, but how many lives has it taken to keep it that way? I'm driving down to Olympia again to get my parents so we can evacuate to Maine, we can't go to California anymore. Downtown has flood walls at least 5 feet tall, but the pier has been abandoned anyways. And the water is almost acidic to the touch, we haven't had salmon through here for years.



At 36 I fell and broke my ankle, the doctor said it would take years to build my strength back up and by that time, I would be too old anyway. No one wants to hire an old dancer. I was never Sugar Plum Fairy or Odette, I just stayed in the corps, I was treated like a human backdrop for 10 years and now I can't even do that. I move to Olympia and start working at Bayview. Their new location of course, the old one has long since become housing for those who don't have anywhere else to go. My parent's house went up in flames a few years ago so I moved into an apartment with them.

And now I'm 52. I'm in my R.V. watching T.V. The announcer says And now a startling new prediction made by top scientists at Yale University, according to a new study, the world will become nearly uninhabitable for human life in the next 200 years due to man-made climate change. I shut the T.V. off. It's just a bunch of stuck up prudes acting like chicken little, pretending the world is crashing down around us. They've been doing this for decades, and we're still here. I mean, sure, a few species have gone extinct but that's just what happens, the world changes.

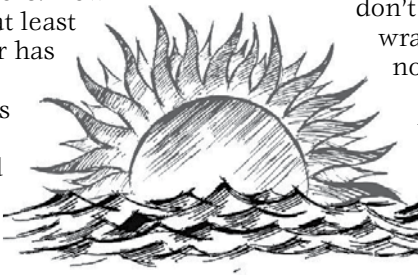
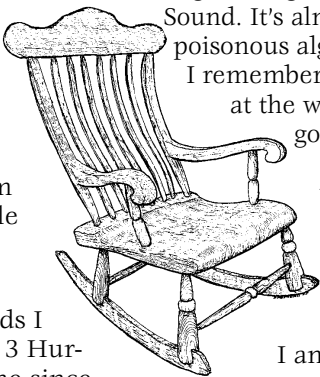
My phone dings. Great, fire season is starting in April this year and we'll have to flee to the east coast in five days. A memory tugs at the back of my mind. I remember talking to my friends back at dance about the California fires. It seems so weird that we were worried about that, those seem like candle flames compared to the fires now. And then I remember hearing that fires would worsen by those same cuckoo scientists. But that did happen.

Now I'm unearthing memories that I don't remember having. Running through the woods, swimming in lakes, watching a whale jumping in the ocean. I remember every year we would go to our grandparents cabin in the mountains. I would find this grove of trees and pretend I was onstage and all the trees were watching me perform. Now the wilderness is hard to come by, and it's even harder to find old growth like that, with the trees reaching up into the sky for what seems like forever. I didn't realize that I missed them.

And I remember snow. I used to open the blinds every day from November to February expecting it to be there. Of course it almost never happened, but when it did, I would immediately call all of my friends. We would get all dressed up in our winter gear and play all day. Then troop inside cold, wet, and utterly exhausted but happier than I've been in a long time. I remember not having climate refugees, downtown wasn't choked with them.

I hadn't realized the change because of how slowly it had happened, but looking back I don't see how I could have missed it. Was I so wrapped up in my own life that I didn't even notice what was being taken from me?

Elsie Sabel is 15 and this story is what she fears will happen in her lifetime



# A breath out for a breath in

"Your first breath took mine away."

Islo read the last sentence on the wrinkled letter. His mom wrote it about ten years ago, with no inkling of what was to come. Since then, Islo was always sensitive around the topic. He didn't know her very well, but his heart hurt as he read the letter. He sat in silence waiting for a miracle.

Maybe the snow would somehow cancel school, though it was online now so there was no way that would happen. Maybe the internet would go out and he could do the things he loved, the things she loved. But that was only his hopes and his watch would beep any minute now— Meep! Meep! Meep!

\*hugh.\* Islo takes his time climbing down the attic ladder, and makes his way to the laptop. He begins his classes, bored all the way through and focused on something entirely different. School in person was always his better fit, but he had no choice this time, just like all of the other kids. He would much rather face impor-

tant problems in school instead of learning geometry. His friend Anfa was a nice girl who had been by his side through school. Online school would have all but separated them if they hadn't lived in close neighborhoods. He could see her on the other side of the screen, and he planned to go straight to her house after school.

His classes dragged on from 9:00 till 2:00, but when they finally ended, he could run over to Anfa's house. He grabbed a bag of gluten free pretzels and rushed out the door. He had never felt disconnected from his mother, and had always mourned for her instead of acting. So on this new day, he had an idea. He didn't have a way to contact Anfa beforehand, yet she was already waiting for him at the window! They met in the yard and he excitedly filled her in.

"Wow." She replied. "Islo, that's great! You really are connected to your mom, aren't you?"

He grinned, "I didn't want to have to wait, when I can start on my own!"

They started to contact their few friends and painted signs with real issues on them, masks as well. Their friends spread the word. Soon they had a large group, and even Islo's father joined, and he was mostly working hard for them both. This big group stood in the downtown square and fought for their world, just as Islo's mother had done.

"Islo, your mom is really proud of you." Anfa smiled.

"Yeah, I guess she is." He replied softly. "It's what she would have wanted."

"Totally."

"I'm proud of me too."

"If you can't reuse it, refuse it!"  
"One crying baby keeps a family awake. A mass of a Gypsy children will wake up the entire world!"  
"We are skipping our lessons to teach you one!"  
"There is no planet B!"



# Money spent: Some Olympia PPP loans under the March 2020 CARES Act

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has released names of entities awarded Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loans of less than \$150,000 under the CARES Act. In Olympia, 1,680 entities received these loans. Only loans above \$107,000 are shown here. For the full chart go to [www.olywip.org](http://www.olywip.org) January 2021

The chart shows only the 115 recipients of loans above \$100,000. These 115 loans totaled \$14,321,642. The recipients were generally concentrated in the professional sector such as dentistry, medical services, law firms and technical services. However, there were numerous recipients in construction, as well in agriculture and forestry.

Heritage Bank (31) was the most active lender followed by Timberland (14), Commencement Bank (9), Key Bank and Bank of America (7), Twin Star Credit Union (6), etc. The initials “N.A.” in the chart stand for “National Association.”

SBA data also shows the number of jobs retained (JOB), with a total of 953 reported. The top twelve job-retaining firms accounted for 35% of that total or 333 jobs. These jobs were concentrated in four food service firms (104) and two senior care firms (69).

“Governors” listed are from the Secretary of State’s office. However, the list gives only the first person listed, not all governors. “Not found at SOS” means the author of the chart did not find a name.



## PPP forgivable loans in Olympia: \$100,000–\$150,000

Loan	Recipient	GOVERNOR: SOS	JOB	LENDER
\$149,639	Roosevelt Logging Inc	Nathan Murray	10	WCLA CU
\$149,088	Sequoia's Treehouse, LLC	Lia Bender Hartman	28	Boeing Employee CU
\$148,977	Washington Forestry Consultants	Galen Wright		Heritage Bank
\$148,945	Bark and Garden Center Inc.	Sidney Clausen	0	Heritage Bank
\$147,500	Vogelgesang PLLC	Ross Vogelgesang	13	Umpqua Bank
\$147,218	Achieve Consulting Team, Inc	Kimberly North	10	TwinStar CU
\$147,102	Fosbre Academy of Hair Design	Noah Fosbre	15	Commencement Bank
\$147,000	Suneet S. Bath, DMD, PS	Para Bath	14	First-Citizen Bk&T
\$146,700	Risk Finance and Investment Co.	Kathrine Kohler	10	1st Security Bk of WA
\$146,552	Foreverlawn of Puget Sound LLC	Steven McDaniel	15	TwinStar CU
\$145,833	South Sound Anesthesia Assn.	Matthew Shiveley	7	KeyBank NA
\$145,687	E.P. Restaurant Corp.	Mildred Fung	30	Bank of America, NA
\$145,514	Olympic Truck and Auto	Patricia Bullinger	0	Heritage Bank
\$145,200	Music 6000, Inc.	Steve Lewis	0	Timberland Bank
\$145,010	Custom Carpets Inc.	Blake Woodland	12	Commencement Bank
\$144,702	Skillsnet Enterprises Inc	Christian Skillings	0	Heritage Bank
\$142,000	Canterbury Park Operations, LLC	Emmett Koelsch	30	BOFK, NA
\$141,462	McNeese's Plumbing, Inc	Kalynda Winkler	8	WSECU
\$141,417	KBH Construction Company	Danny Kirkpatrick		Wells Fargo, NA
\$140,396	ESN Northwest Inc	Michael Korosec	12	Bank of America, NA
\$140,000	Patricia Bliss & Co., PS	Jaime Tuttle	11	Timberland Bank
\$140,000	Arc Weld Inspection LLC	Randy Carpenter	10	Red Canoe CU
\$139,303	JLP Enterprises Inc.	Jamie Ponthier	18	Kabbage, Inc.
\$138,585	Church Rietzke Johnson PLLC	Terry Church	0	Heritage Bank
\$138,456	Black Hills Gymnastics	Troy Jenkins	0	Heritage Bank
\$138,141	Memories Unlimited, Inc	Elizabeth WittgowStyles	7	Bank of America, NA
\$138,000	Olympia Gospel Mission Assn.	Andrew Christensen	0	Heritage Bank
\$136,666	Wash. Association of School ...		0	Heritage Bank
\$135,639	Smith Family Senior Care, LLC	Kari Smith	39	TwinStar CU
\$134,747	WCLA Insurance Agency, Inc.	Pete Wikstom	10	WCLA CU
\$134,700	Andrea M. Vancleave, DDS, PLLC	Andrea Vancleave	0	Timberland Bank
\$134,230	Black Lake Bible Camp	Phil Ewert	20	TwinStar CU
\$134,085	Dickey's Incorporated	Mark Barton		KeyBank, NA
\$133,687	Spruce (Gift), LLC	Annie Johns	12	Commencement Bank
\$133,379	Pacific Education Institute	Lisa Perry	10	Bank of America, NA
\$133,100	KGY,Inc	Anne Marie Hauschild	7	Umpqua Bank
\$132,329	Wee Love Learning	Marguerite Austin	0	Heritage Bank
\$132,600	Concrete Recyclers, Inc	John Specht	10	Cache Valley Bank
\$132,200	Associated Environmental Group	Michael Chun	8	Readycap Lending
\$131,940	Lifespan Construction, Inc.	Chris McDonald		Fundbox, Inc.
\$131,800	Robert G.R. Lang MD, Inc. PS	Robert Lang	17	1st Security Bk of WA
\$131,740	Alpine Ductless, LLC	Cory Eckert	0	Heritage Bank
\$130,732	Lew Rents, Inc	Jamie Ecklund	0	Heritage Bank
\$130,700	Cushman Law Offices, PS	Joseph Scuderi	7	Wash. Business Bank
\$129,995	Prestige Truck Accessories, Inc.	Angela Olmsted	12	KeyBank, NA
\$129,245	Line-X of Olympia, Inc.	Clinton Owen	15	KeyBank, NA
\$128,925	Second Wind Foods Inc.	Cheyenne Hayes		Heritage Bank
\$127,600	Buds and Blades Landscape Co	Rick Longnecker	13	Timberland Bank
\$126,570	Thai Garden Restaurant and	Duc Tan		Radius Bank
\$126,442	Dynamic Systems Technologies	Deborah Inglin	9	KeyBank, NA
\$125,000	Broco Investments LLC	Scott Berka	19	Fountainhead SBF
\$125,000	Safeplace	Addie Gray	0	Timberland Bank
\$124,882	Ziegler's Welding, Inc	Chad Smith	0	Heritage Bank
\$123,595	Garcia Sanchez, Inc	Juan Rodriguez	23	Bank of America, NA
\$123,557	Fields Weatherly, LLC	Dustin Fields	28	Commencement Bank
\$123,272	El Sarape Inc.	Juan Rodriguez	0	Heritage Bank
\$121,702	Dove Development Inc	Larry Bunn	8	Commencement Bank
\$121,368	American Pump and Electric, LLC	Michael Brewer	10	Commencement Bank
\$121,022	Kitchen Garden Project	(Not found at SOS)	0	Heritage Bank
\$120,000	Derma PLLC	Bessie McCann	19	1st Security Bk of WA
\$119,900	Libby Environmental	Cherry Chilcutt	12	Readycap Lending
\$119,840	Trimtek, Inc.	Daniel Pritchard	9	US Bank, NA
\$119,600	P&P Investments	(Not Found at SOS)	0	Timberland Bank
\$119,451	3D Systems	Peter Diaz	33	Commencement Bank
\$119,349	Pacific Northwest Eye Care, PS	Ben Wong Jr.	0	Heritage Bank
\$118,600	3 Cities, Inc	David Rauh	12	Readycap Lending
\$118,500	A-L-S American Landscape Serv.	Andreas Karrer	16	Timberland Bank
\$118,400	Kyle E. Winter, DDS, PLLC	Kyle Winter	0	Timberland Bank
\$118,245	Al Foley III MD, Inc. PS	Arthur Foley III	7	Commencement Bank
\$118,000	Marys Residential Cleaning Serv.	Mary Zielinski	18	Customers Bank
\$116,700	I.A.M. Construction Inc	(Not Found)	7	Timberland Bank
\$116,338	Motorsports of Olympia	John Gyls		Columbia State Bank
\$116,062	Looking Glass Analytics, Inc.	Joseph Kabel	0	Heritage Bank
\$115,356	Quality Parking Lot Services LLC	Jeff Grubbs	0	Heritage Bank
\$115,222	Thomsen Timber, LLC	Kenneth Thomsen	7	WCLA CU
\$114,800	Food Service Equipment Inc.	Tara Hayes	9	HomeStreet Bank
\$114,392	Controller Bay, Inc.	Richard Miller	10	US Bank, NA
\$114,127	Washington School Principals	Cameron Grow	0	Heritage Bank
\$114,072	Columbia Granite, LLC	Carthy Gilmore		Columbia State Bank
\$113,795	Capital City LLC	Jessica McKeeganJensen		Heritage Bank
\$113,600	Callahan Law PS Inc.	Linda Callahan	0	Banner Bank
\$113,100	Gritton Building Co Inc.	Jordan Gritton	12	Oly Fed S&L Assn.
\$112,160	Knapp Prosthetics Corp	Garth Knapp	8	Commencement Bank
\$111,667	Cielo Project	Mary Ferris	12	TwinStar CU
\$111,637	Richard C. Downing DDS PLLC	Richard C. Downing	0	Heritage Bank
\$111,417	Advanced Tooling Company Inc.	Diane Smith	0	Heritage Bank
\$111,191	Beaver Creek Dairy LLC	Cornelius Doelman	15	Cross River Bank
\$111,165	Friendship Diversion Services	Thomas McIntyre	0	Heritage Bank
\$110,475	Steamboat Physical Therapy Inc	Heid Oksendahl-Byers	0	Heritage Bank
\$109,992	West Olympia Internal Medicine	Eric Klein	0	Heritage Bank
\$109,800	Cap City Law PS	Jessica McKeeganJensen	8	Umpqua Bank
\$109,735	United Way of Thurston County	Jon Tunheim	0	Heritage Bank
\$109,093	Han Jo Ro, LLC	Cham Ro	24	KeyBank NA
\$108,590	Lew Rents West	Dale Eklund	0	Heritage Bank
\$107,635	Advance Environmental, Inc.	Cathy Venable	0	Heritage Bank
\$107,600	Capital Oral & Maxillo Facial	(Not Found at SOS)	0	Timberland Bank
\$107,750	Castaneda Painting Inc	Vidal Castaneda	15	Bank of America, NA



# Outside/Inside— Propagating the vision of a new society

I hate to spell out gloom and doom, but the fact is that the presidential election demonstrated how politically dangerous is the situation in the United States. Sure, we succeeded in voting Donald Trump out of office (though at the time of writing he's trying to avoid leaving), but only by the slimmest of margins with a middle-of-the-road candidate. Biden seems forthright about mitigating climate change and he called for addressing the “original sin” of our country's founding on Black slavery and indigenous peoples' genocide. But in 2016 some could hope that Trump would be a decent, albeit conservative, president, in his four years in office he has appealed to, and gained mass support from, the worst of America: explicit white supremacy, misogyny (especially respecting reproductive freedom), attacks on “The Other,” attacks on the mass media as “the enemy of the people,” contempt for persons who oppose or disagree with him, blatant lying. He dismissed as “fake news” evidence contradicts him, promoted irrational thinking through total distrust for science, he completely disregarded the rule of law, and promoted public demonstrations by armed, far-right-wing “patriots.”

## LOOKING FORWARD

### Dave Jette

Given all of this, plus the support of the political/ideological “establishment” for the Democrat, Biden should have been a shoe-in. But the predicted Blue Wave came to naught: white women, white suburbanites, and white retirees did not desert Trump. The white electorate voted for Trump in the same percentage as in 2016 (57%). Probably Trump lost the election only because of his total mishandling of the pandemic, which ruined an otherwise bright economy.

Where does all this leave progressives and socialists seeking to transform our society into a humanly decent one? Trump was a fool, but “Trumpism,” accepted by almost half of the electorate, remains. As neoliberal capitalism in the US is disintegrating, will not the bourgeoisie be ready in 2024 to promote for president an autocrat, but competent, candidate like Pence or Pompeo, if need be?

Hopefully the 2020 election woke many of us who saw it as just another instance of the “lesser of evils” trap. Fortunately, third party voters' refusal to support Biden in closely contested “swing states” evidently did not create a win for Trump, and in fact the electorate overwhelmingly rejected their “politically correct” strategy. In Washington State, for example, the Green Party's Jill Stein took 1.82% of the presidential vote in 2016, but

this year their candidate Howie Hawkins garnered only 0.44%.

In this dangerous situation, let me present two key ideas for what we may be able to do to counter our slide into autocracy and possibly even outright fascism.

**Progressive mass struggle** The only way to fundamentally transform our political/economic system in a progressive direction is through mass struggle. Electoral work can be important in facilitating and strengthening such struggles, but it cannot substitute for them. However, we must disabuse ourselves of the notion, ingrained in classical Marxism, that it is the working class that will undertake this struggle for a decent life, and that the amorphous “middle class” will have only an auxiliary role to play.

To the contrary, individuals in both these classes must have an (equal) say in shaping the future society. In the US, huge portions of the working class accept Trumpism—where did the bulk of Trump's 70,000,000-plus votes come from? The role of progressives and socialists must be to support and help develop the self-organization of those working toward genuinely progressive social change regardless of their class.

**Electoral strategy.** Building an independent progressive party to challenge the hegemonic two-party system here is, for the foreseeable future, a dead end. This is illustrated by the Green Party with its excellent platform and its organizational presence in most states. Yet after decades of existence, it's clearly going nowhere. On the other hand, working within and seeking to transform the Democratic Party is also a fool's errand. The Democratic Party just like the Republican Party is controlled by the bourgeoisie and its function for countless decades has been to absorb and destroy progressive struggles that threaten the economic system.

What we propose to do is to use the Democratic Party to propagate our vision of a new society. We can take steps towards fulfilling that vision by supporting truly progressive candidates in Democratic primaries. This does not imply watering down our own politics in hopes of winning a primary nor falling into the trap of trying to transform the Democratic Party.

We should play the game straight, in order not to (justifiably) be prevented from engaging in this tactic: if our candidate loses the primary, she/he should cease to criticize the winner. She/he may even support that person in the general election if that person isn't clearly bad (such as being anti-abortion). This is what Bernie Sanders did in the last two presidential elections. The movement he helped to generate brought the concepts of socialism to a far greater audience.

## The great state of California Where it's illegal to carry a loaded gun in public

California's Mulford Act prohibited anyone outside of law enforcement officers (and others explicitly authorized to do so) from carrying loaded firearms in public. It was enacted largely in response to the militant activities of the Black Panther Party.

What's more, the bill was written by a Republican legislator, California Assemblyman Don Mulford of Oakland, and was passed with the full backing of Republican governor Ronald Reagan and the National Rifle Association.

The bill was introduced in April 1967, six weeks after it had been reported that an armed group of Black Panthers acting as an escort for Malcolm X's widow, Betty Shabazz, were involved in tense, nonviolent confrontations with airport security officers and police in San Francisco.

In an article in *Ramparts* magazine, Sol Stern reported, “Local cops were dumbfounded to discover that

there was no law which prohibited the Panthers from carrying loaded weapons so long as they were unconcealed, a legal fact which the Panthers had carefully researched.”

In a statement quoted by Associated Press, a Panther spokesman said, “The cops asked us what we were doing and we told them. ‘We're exercising our constitutional rights and we're not going to take any bull.’”

The Mulford Act was designed to impose a limit on those very constitutional rights in the state of California, establishing that “every person who carries a loaded firearm on his person while on a public street, or in a public place within any city or in a vehicle while in any public place or on any public street in an incorporated city or in an inhabited area of unincorporated territory is guilty of a misdemeanor.”

The law is still on the books.

[With thanks to Aristede Pappidas]



## Rethinking Everything

### *The American Dream was more than a house and car*

The very phrase “American Dream” comes from [the Great Depression], and was coined in 1931 by historian James Truslow Adams in his book, *The Epic of America*. An early selection of the Book of the Month club, it was a runaway best seller. What made the country unique, Adams argued, was opportunity. America, he proclaimed, was not like the Old World of Europe, where vast sums of wealth passed from kings, queens and lords as a result of their noble birth.

“The American dream,” he wrote, is a “dream of being able to grow to the fullest development as a man or woman, unhampered by barriers which had slowly been erected in older civilizations, by social orders that had developed for the benefit of classes rather than for the simple human being of any and every class.”

That might seem like a call for unfettered capitalism, but Adams believed the government should intervene to make sure everyone had the chance to live the American Dream. “The project is discouraging today, but not hopeless,” he wrote, as leaders “begin to realize that because a man is born with a knack for gathering vast aggregates of money and power for himself, he may not on that account be the wisest leader to follow...” nor the best to propound a way of life.

This vision of the American Dream wasn't against money making per se, but it was against amassing money simply for money's sake. It was in favor of a certain type of moral capitalism where people worked hard not only to make money but also to help their families and their communities. For Adams, the stakes in curtailing the power of gluttonous billionaires were high. Allowing them to effectively own the country would be “the failure of self-government, the failure of the common man to rise to full stature, the failure of all that the American Dream has held of hope and promise for mankind.”

—Quoted from Aaron Glantz, writing in *Homewreckers* where he tells the story of the looting of American homes by vulture capitalists like Trump Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin.



# A foreign policy “to do” list for President Biden

Medea Benjamin and  
Nicolas J. S. Davies

Donald Trump loves executive orders as a tool of dictatorial power, avoiding the need to work through Congress. But that works both ways, making it relatively easy for President Biden to reverse many of Trump's most disastrous decisions.

Here are ten things Biden can do as soon as he takes office. Each one can set the stage for broader progressive foreign policy initiatives which are long overdue..

**1) End the US role in the Saudi-led war on Yemen and restore US humanitarian aid to Yemen.**

Congress already passed a War Powers Resolution to end the US role in the Yemen war, only to have Trump veto it. Biden can immediately issue an executive order to end every aspect of the US role in the war, based on the resolution that Trump vetoed.

The US should also accept its share of responsibility for Yemen's deep humanitarian crisis and provide funding for Yemen to restore this devastated country. Biden can expand USAID funding and recommit US financial support to the UN, the WHO, and to World Food Program relief programs in Yemen.

**2) Suspend all US arms sales and transfers to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).**

Congress passed bills to suspend arms sales to both of these countries, but Trump vetoed them too. Both countries have massacred civilians in Yemen. While mostly ignored at the behest of weapons companies, there are US laws that require the suspension of arms transfers to countries that use them to violate US and international law. The Leahy Law prohibits the US from providing military assistance to foreign security forces that commit gross violations of human rights as in Libya and Yemen; and the Arms Export Control Act, which states that countries must use imported US weapons only for legitimate self defense.

Once these suspensions are in place, the Biden administration can review the legality of Trump's arms sales to both countries, with a view to canceling them and banning future sales.

**3) Rejoin the Iran Nuclear Agreement (JCPOA) and lift sanctions on Iran.**

After reneging on the JCPOA, Trump slapped draconian sanctions on Iran and brought us to the brink of war by killing its top general. The Biden administration will face an uphill battle undoing this web of hostile actions and the deep mistrust they have caused, so Biden must act decisively to restore mutual trust: immediately rejoin the JCPOA, lift the sanctions, and stop blocking the \$5 billion IMF loan that Iran desperately needs to deal with the COVID crisis.

**4) End US threats and sanctions against officials of the International Criminal Court (ICC).**

Nothing so brazenly embodies the US government's enduring, bipartisan disdain for international law as its failure to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). If President Biden is

serious about recommitting the US to the rule of law, he can submit the Rome Statute to the US Senate for ratification and join 120 other countries as members of the ICC.

**5) Back President Moon's diplomacy for a “permanent peace regime” in Korea.**

President-elect Biden has reportedly agreed to meet South Korea's President Moon Jae-in soon after he is sworn in. Trump's failure to end sanctions and offer security guarantees to North Korea doomed his diplomacy and became an obstacle to the process underway between Korean presidents Moon and Kim.

Biden can start by drafting a peace agreement to formally end the Korean war, and initiate confidence-building measures such as opening liaison offices, easing sanctions, facilitating reunions between Korean-American and North Korean families and halting US-South Korea military exercises. .

**6) Renew New START with Russia and freeze the US's trillion-dollar new nuke plan.**

Biden can end Trump's dangerous game of brinksmanship and commit to renewing Obama's New START Treaty with Russia. It freezes each countries' nuclear arsenals at 1,550 deployed warheads. He can also freeze Obama and Trump's plan to spend more than a trillion dollars on a new generation of US nuclear weapons.

In 2017, 122 countries voted for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) at the UN General Assembly. All 9 of the existing nuclear weapons states ignored it. Here is a visionary challenge for President Biden for

his second full day in office when the TPNW will go into effect. He can Invite the leaders of the other nuclear weapons states to a conference to negotiate signing the treaty to remove the danger hanging over every human being on Earth.

**7) Lift illegal unilateral US sanctions against other countries.**

Economic sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council are generally considered legal under international law, and require action by the Security Council. But unilateral economic sanctions that deprive ordinary people of necessities like food and medicine are illegal and cause grave harm to innocent citizens.

The US has used executive orders to impose sanctions on Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, North Korea and Syria. UN special rapporteurs have compared them to medieval sieges. Since most of these sanctions were imposed by executive order, President Biden can lift them the same way on his first day.

**8) Roll back Trump policies on Cuba and move to normalize relations.**

The Trump administration overturned the progress towards normal relations made by President Obama. Biden should work with the Cuban government to allow the return of diplomats to their respective embassies and lift restrictions on remittances, among other measures. They would represent a down payment on a new era of diplomacy and cooperation

**9) Restore pre-2015 rules of engagement to spare civilian lives.**

In the fall of 2015, as US forces escalated their bombing of ISIS targets in Iraq and Syria to over

100 bomb and missile strikes per day. The Obama administration loosened military rules of engagement to let US commanders airstrikes expected to kill up to 10 civilians without prior approval from Washington. Trump may have further opened the door for strikes that kill civilians. Biden can reset these rules and start killing fewer civilians on Day One.

We can avoid these terrible civilian deaths altogether by ending these wars. Biden should set a date, no later than the end of December 2021, for all US troops to come home from all these combat zones. This policy may not be popular among war profiteers, but it would certainly be popular among Americans across the ideological spectrum.

**10) Freeze US military spending, and launch a major initiative to reduce it.**

At the end of the Cold War, former senior Pentagon officials told the Senate Budget Committee that US military spending could safely be cut by half over the next ten years. That goal was never achieved; the peace dividend gave way to a “power dividend.”

Military and industry leaders exploited the crimes of September 11 to justify an extraordinary escalation of arms spending, far outstripping its peak Cold War levels. The military-industrial complex is counting on Biden to renew a Cold War with Russia and China as the pretext for feeding record military budgets.

Biden must dial back the conflicts with China and Russia, and instead begin the critical task of moving money from the Pentagon to urgent domestic needs. He can start with the 10 percent cut supported this year by 93 representatives and 23 senators.

In the longer term, Biden should make deeper cuts in Pentagon spending, as in Representative Barbara Lee's bill to cut \$350 billion per year from the US military budget, approximating the 50% peace dividend promised after the Cold War—freeing up resources to invest in healthcare, education, clean energy and modern infrastructure.

Medea Benjamin is a co-founder of CODEPINK and the author of many books on history and politics. Nicolas J. S. Davies has written about the invasion of Iraq and “Obama at War” in *Grading the 44th President*.

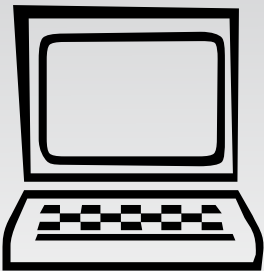
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a community where everyone feels safe,  
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# Community Spotlight



## Stories of Resilience: Graduate Micro-Business Showcase

### Enterprise for Equity (E4E)



E4E has been helping people with limited incomes and others start small businesses in the South Sound since 1999. They provide people with limited incomes with access to training, support, and funds to develop their own small businesses, motivated by the belief that people can and do transform their lives as they bring their strengths, initiative and dreams to their entrepreneurial efforts. The organization was initiated when local volunteers brought together representatives of low-income serving agencies in the South Sound such as the Food Bank, Refugee and Immigrant Services Center, and the Housing Authority to learn about the self-employment needs of the people they serve.

As part of their 20th Anniversary celebration, E4E produced a film showcasing recent graduates of the program talking about their businesses. Inspired new entrepreneurs from Aberdeen to Raymond and places in between confirm the value of E4E. You'll find the video and more information about this extraordinary Olympia-based program at "news and events" at [www.enterprise-for-equity.org](http://www.enterprise-for-equity.org)

## Shuruq 4.5 - Annual Arab Festival for online viewing

### Rachel Corrie Foundation



This year's rich and varied Arab Festival, Shuruq 4.5, brought riveting films, dance events, cooking demos, live readings, a theater performance and more on-line in November. Now you can tune in for a few minutes or an hour to see individual events at the Writing Showcase Archive <https://rachelcorriefoundation.org/shuruq-writing-showcase> and the Events Archive <https://rachelcorriefoundation.org/shuruq-4-5-events-archive>. Dip into the smile-inducing folk dancing by a Vancouver BC based troupe engaged in a high-energy choreographed frolic; take a front-row seat at a deep discussion of Seattle's Arab feminism; consider the theater of "unlearning" colonial narratives. There's lots more at your fingertips, thanks to the organizing work of the RFC.

## "Leave no trace" Leonor R. Fuller Gallery Postcard Exhibition

### South Puget Sound Community College

Artists have been asked to decorate up to three postcards, using the medium of their choice according to the theme "leave no trace." Throughout the month of January the postcards will be on view to community members either online <https://spscc.edu/gallery> or in person which requires a private appointment (see website above). The event is also designed as a fundraiser, so people can bid on postcards through an online auction portal (see website above) beginning on January 8 when there will be a virtual opening reception and ending at the closing reception on February 5. <https://spscc.edu/gallery>



## Educate, Agitate, Organize

**Bowl of Hope** was started by members of the community to act on the reality that everyone needs good, nutritious food. Also delicious. *Bowl of Hope* serves and supports the homeless population through meals and daily essentials. Since this summer, volunteers under the direction of master chef Linda Mehvirter have networked with local groups to create organic meals for less than \$1 per meal. As the weather turns colder, hot meals are needed more than ever for people living outside. *BoH* is inviting everyone to join their \$1 MEAL CAMPAIGN -- donating once or monthly. If you can donate \$100 for 100 meals, they will send you an enamel pin designed by Jessica Thornton.



## Regional Housing Action Plan Forum

January 13, 5-6:30 pm

The public is invited to a virtual forum where officials from Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater (in collaboration with Thurston Regional Planning Council) will describe the findings of a consultant's report about housing needs and "gaps" in our housing inventory. The cities received a grant and have been working on an "action plan" for some time. Now they're ready to announce what actions they are contemplating that might encourage developers to construct more types of housing. The event will start with the officials and maybe staff making a presentation and then they will take questions from the zoom participants. This is not an event to gather input To participate you must register here: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Jzzdi-vQIQ7S22x5jF9p\\_vw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Jzzdi-vQIQ7S22x5jF9p_vw). The event will be recorded and posted to the project website <https://www.trpc.org/1002/Housing-Action-Plan> for those unable to make it. One completed element of the grant is a housing "needs assessment," including a 25-year projection of housing affordable at different income levels (see details here <https://www.trpc.org/DocumentCenter/View/8067/Housing-Needs-Assessment?bidId=>).



## FairVote Washington Thurston County Monthly Zoom Meetup

FairVote Washington meets every first Saturday of the month at 9 am over zoom. **January 2** and **February 6** upcoming. Join fellow ranked-choice voting (RCV) supporters. Bring your devices, your creativity and your passion to make RCV a reality in Washington State. Potential topics include: sharing updates about state and national efforts, reviewing RCV basics, planning RCV outreach events for our chapter, letter writing and training/practicing for canvassing. he ranked-choice voting movement is growing and we need you! RSVP is not necessary, but it helps us to plan accordingly. Please feel free to contact Betsy or Becky with agenda suggestions or questions at [thurstonchapter@fairvotewa.org](mailto:thurstonchapter@fairvotewa.org) RSVP for one (or all!) of our upcoming Zoom meetings here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8067Housing-Needs-Assessment?bidId=>



## "Glen's Parallax Perspectives"

The January 2021 TV interview with Mary Lou Finley proposes specific changes in public policies -- affirming that ordinary people can organize from the grassroots up to put bold, positive visions in place locally and nationally. Many of our nation's problems existed even before Trump came along and made them worse. Our long-standing problems include racial injustice, economic inequality, environmental degradation, a foreign policy both cruel and violent, and some dysfunctional aspects of our electoral systems. Finley has decades of experience working for peace, racial justice and a variety of other key issues. She has taught and written extensively to help people discover the power of nonviolent grassroots organizing to solve the kinds of problems described here. The interview airs on cable channel 22 of Thurston Community Media ([www.tcmedia.org](http://www.tcmedia.org)) at 1:30 pm Mondays, 5:00 pm Wednesdays, 9:00 pm Thursdays. Watch the interview and get a summary of the program plus more information at [www.parallaxperspectives.org](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org), in the "TV Programs" and "Health Care Reform" categories

Questions? Contact Glen Anderson, producer/host at (360) 491-9093 [glenanderson@integra.net](mailto:glenanderson@integra.net)

## Thurston County Food Bank

TheThurston County food bank continues to be a vital support to many people and places in our community. In Olympia, the food bank at 220 Thurston is open in January every **Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11 am to 3 pm, EXCEPT Monday January 18**, Martin Luther King Day. On **Wednesday January 13** there will be THE OTHER BANK open from 11-3 with non-food items such as toiletries, diapers etc available.



Even during the pandemic, you can still volunteer at the Thurston County Food Bank, and they are in need of help now more than ever. They have a variety of volunteer tasks available, from food sorting and delivery, to office support, to facility and equipment maintenance. Call us for details: (360) 754-5703 x105. For more details about how to contact them and what is involved, go to [www.thurstoncountyfoodbank.org](http://www.thurstoncountyfoodbank.org)

## WIP is looking for copy editors!

If your friends are always rolling their eyes as you correct their grammar, if you find the difference between "your" and "you're" to be worthy of notice, WIP will have a place for you. Make corrections and format articles for our "production department" each month and come to our proofreading meetings the last Sunday of the month -- depending on pandemic protocols. Let's connect -- send us an email if you're interested in checking out this fun volunteer job. Put COPY EDITING in the subject line: [olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com)

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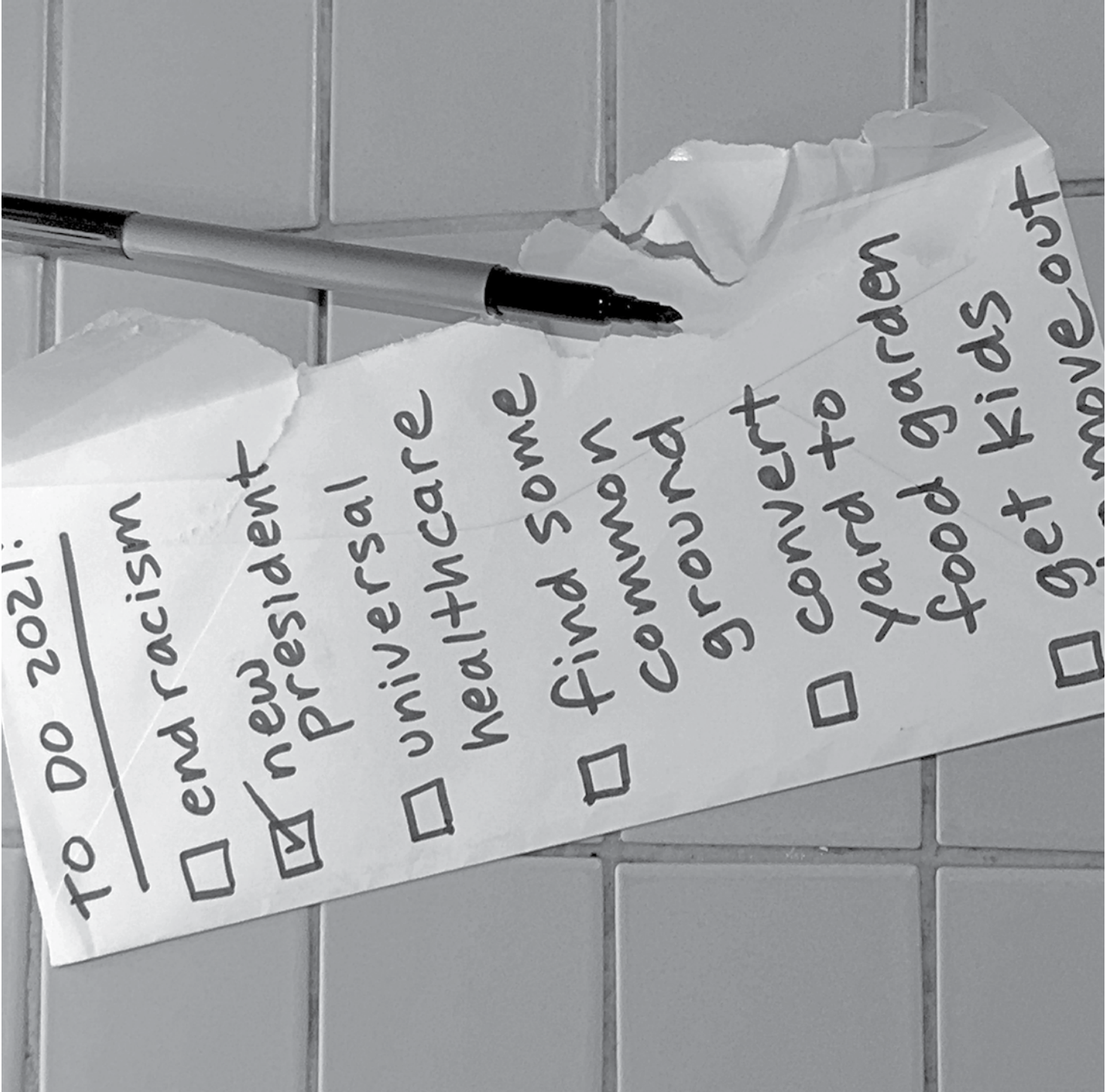
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## Consent of the governed: *A true picture of the 2020 election result*

(figures are 000s)

Candidate	Major party votes	Number who cast a ballot	Number eligible to vote (2)	Number at voting age (1)	US population represented
		159,633	239,247	255,200	328,000
Biden	81,238	51.8%	33.9%	31.8%	24.7%
Trump	74,233	46.5%	31%	29%	22.6%

The numbers repeatedly stated as the result of the 2020 election are 51% for Biden and 46% for Trump—giving the false impression that a majority (although a slim one) of the country chose Joe Biden.

Those numbers are coupled with boasts about the high voter turnout in this election—67% of eligible voters—reinforcing the impression that this election came closer to representing the will of the people.

In fact, this election, like preceding elections, did not produce a government that represents the “will of the people,” and especially not “the consent of the governed.”

All 328,000,000 of us are governed by the men (mostly) who win elections. They represent the choice of about a quarter of us. Even if we look only at the consent of the citizenry, our government represents the consent only of a third.

The task is clear and urgent: enfranchise all citizens and register everyone eligible to vote. Then offer a program of government that meets the needs of the vast majority of Americans and will bring them to the polls.

(1) US Census data for 2019

(2) From the Council on Foreign Relations

*The number excludes ineligible “felons” (3,280), residents of Puerto Rico (2,620) and noncitizen residents.*