



PERSPECTIVES

# A successful Hearing Examiner system depends on an informed City Council

Bethany Weidner

Olympia council members decided this June to review their Hearing Examiner contract with an eye toward opening another RFQ “to get a gauge on the market.” This could lead to appointment of a new hearing examiner.

This is the right time to look not only at the current hearing examiner (HEX), but more importantly, to explore how the examiner interprets the city’s plans and rules to shape the community. As policy-makers and legislators, Council members need a solid grasp of how the Comp Plan and the Municipal Code play out on the ground—and the Hearing Examiner can tell them.

Hearing Examiner Mark Scheibmeir has wielded a substantial influence over the shape of Olympia for the past 8 years. Since he was appointed in 2013, Scheibmeir has approved dozens of residential developments ranging from the most consequential to the relatively insignificant.

Among the most controversial, he approved all proposed downtown market rate apartment buildings, some of which required conditional shoreline permits; he denied standing to people challenging the city’s rezone known as “missing middle;” he rejected a request that the City be required to conduct an environmental impact assessment before giving West Bay Yards a 15-year exemption from complying with new development regulations; among many less well-known subdivisions and other development approvals.

Olympia has chosen to give its hearing examiner the most discretion possible over development decisions. He has authority over public hearings for permit or other land use approvals; and he decides on appeals of staff actions or decisions. Under Olympia’s code, the hearing examiner’s decisions are final. An appeal must be submitted to the Superior Court, not to the City Council. This contrasts with Thurston County actions, where rules provide for an appeal of a hearing examiner decision to the elected County Commissioners.

Because they stand-in for elected City Council members, Hearing Examiners are appointed by Council and responsible to them for their performance. The Hearing Examiner and the City Manager are the only two city officials answerable to the City Council—the only ones they hire and the only ones they can fire.

In order to maintain their responsibility as the policy-making body,

many councils require an annual report from the staff and hearing examiner summarizing the nature, frequency and disposition of matters the examiner has heard.

again this June. These briefings lasted 40 to 45 minutes and focused on the importance of having a hearing examiner. Council members asked no substantive questions.



Olympia City Council Chambers. From their website.

After being appointed in 2013, Mr. Scheibmeir didn’t meet with the Olympia City Council until 2018. There was a briefing in 2019 and

Mr. Scheibmeir observed in 2018 that appeals were “on the rise,” but did not discuss the significance of this. In 2021, for the first time, he

provided a (3-page) written report. It enumerated his duties in Olympia and assessed the success of remote hearings. About land use issues adjudicated in 2020 and going forward, he said there was nothing much to tell, except that established neighborhoods “struggle with infill...but this is simply a by-product of urban development.”

Who is Mark Scheibmeir?

Scheibmeir is an attorney with a firm in Chehalis who in 2013 described his practice as involving primarily real estate, business and municipal contracts. He is the registered agent for a number of LLCs that own property and car dealerships in Olympia.

Scheibmeir was one of four finalists interviewed in 2013 to replace Tom Bjorgen who won a seat on the Court of Appeals. Interviewers (two Council Members, the City Attorney and a retired judge) were provided with an evaluation matrix containing criteria drafted by the staff and approved by the Council.

The first criterion was knowledge and experience, with 12 substantive areas ranging from Growth

► **Hearing Examiner**, continued on page 8

# Rum & Coke: Cuba in the American imagination

Enrique Quintero

Not Russia, China, North Korea, nor even for that matter Israel or Palestine, is able to focus the American mind the way Cuba does.

Simultaneously, the official American right and the official American left (with a few honorable exceptions among the latter), have overcome the self-righteous character of their respective political discourses and — like secret lovers holding hands under the table — found a point of convergence that needs no explanation: the censuring of Cuba.

This focusing of the American mind against Cuba is at least 60 years old, that is to say, as old as the Cuban revolution. This stance most recently appeared in the position assumed by the US Government, politicians in both parties, and mainstream media regarding the anti-government protests that broke out in Cuba a few weeks ago.

The first question we should ask ourselves is: how is it that so many of us so easily swallow the assumptions about Cuba presented to us by the official ideological narrative, and in doing so, censure our capacity to think and act critically? What is it about Cuba that makes so many of us succumb to the usual distributors

of opinion that on other topics, we might question?

The sounds of silence

In contrast to the widespread anti-Cuban sentiment fanned by popular media and politicians on the left and right, no one in the US seems to notice the huge and mostly peaceful protests taking place in Colombia against state violence, poverty, inequality, lack of opportunity, and the discriminatory tax proposals of President Ivan Duque. (So far, 83 fatalities have been registered among the protesters and over 3,200 arbitrary detentions have been reported.)



Why are politicians and government officials ready to show indignation against Cuba, while remaining silent regarding the events in Colombia—or the similar protests that took place in Brazil, Peru and Ecuador? A caustic yet revelatory answer

explaining the double standard of American foreign policy was provided by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the 1930s, when, in defense of Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, the American president candidly declared: “He may be a son of a bitch, but he is our son of a bitch.” Throughout US history, this favoritism for “our son of a bitch” endures.

All this effort to stifle one small country

Pointing to the existing double standard and hypocrisy of our politicians and the media is not enough to explain America’s over 60 years of political, economic and military animosity towards Cuba. The intention of this article is not to enumerate the long list of American aggressions against the small sovereign nation just 90 miles from Florida’s coast (more miles separate Olympia and Portland). It’s asking how to explain the multiple assassination attempts against Cuba’s political leaders, the use of chemical weapons to sabotage agricultural production, the direct military invasion of the Bay of Pigs, the permanent mediatic war of misinformation and interference (which is vigorously questioned in the US when the Russians do it to us), and the bombing of airplanes and ports. Not to mention what the current Cuban First Minister Diaz-Canel describes as the “cruel” and “genocidal” long lasting blockade designed to strangle the Cuban economy regardless of the cost in human suffering and endless violation of human rights?

► **Cuba**, continued on page 9



**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 corporate media, especially those that relate directly to our mission. We seek well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities and accounts 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.

Unless copyrighted by the author, all original material printed in WIP is under Creative Commons license CC-BY-NC-ND.

- Workers in Progress Publishing Committee**  
Emily Lardner, Lori Lively, Kevin Pestinger, Enrique Quintero, Bethany Weidner
- Treasurer** Ann Vandeman
- Managing Editor**  
Bethany Weidner
- Associate Editor** Lori Lively
- Production & Design** Lee Miller
- Community Spotlight** Melissa Roberts
- Art & Photography** Lindsey Dalthorp, Ricky Osborne, Paul Peck, Lori Lively
- Editing:** Sarah Keefe, Hanna Broback
- Proofreaders** Fred Silsby, James O’Barr, Scott Yoos, Matt Crichton, Charlotte Persons, Lori Doron
- Distribution** Kevin P, Dave Groves, Mike Pelly, Scott Yoos, Sandia Slaby, Matt Crichton, Fred Silsby, Bruce Larson
- Website** Carolyn Roos, Heather Sundean
- Social Media** Heather Sundean

**Advertising Rates**  
\$10 per column inch  
Business card \$25/30  
Quarter page \$160  
Discounts for 6-12 months  
**Contact WIP:** olywip@gmail.com or by snail mail at PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507 or donate at our website: www.olywip.org



# All of a sudden we look around...

It’s like Chatham Strait writes in his article about the Evergreen State ferry moored at the Port of Olympia. The boat is daily decaying at its berth, but to us it looks the same as it looked 66 years ago.

Incremental, day-to-day changes escape our attention—until all of a sudden we look around and everything has changed.

Like Olympia. Turn to page 4 to hang out for a moment in an Olympia where 4th Avenue was alive with food, music and socializing. Or check out page 6, where people indulge in recalling things that made Olympia unique—before there were Starbucks, Capital Mall and dollar stores.

Back then (1990) the majority of households in Olympia owned their own home (52%).Forested land covered 55% of Thurston County. A bit earlier, kids waded in Capital Lake and there were boat races. *The Olympian* was a local paper. The skyline was a silhouette of evergreen trees.

As noted by Mark Scheibmeir in more than one of his decisions approving new market-rate apartments, there are “dramatic changes downtown.” A new “Urban Waterfront” zone is bringing high-end apartments to line the edges of Budd Inlet. The city is investing millions in street-scape improvements and providing incentives for investment in “market rate” mixed-use projects in hopes of attracting a clientele who will spend to support new businesses.

By 2019 the proportion of renters vs homeowners had flipped: Olympia is now a majority renter town (53%). City policies ensure that the proportion of renters will increase. The new residents will not be the ones benefiting from the rising price of housing—they will only be subject to rent increases and potential eviction.

The proportion of forested land dropped to 46.5% in 2016 and continues to fall. Developers have been permitted to cut acres of mature trees. The proposal to develop a subdivision at Green Cove included eliminating a quarter of the 10.400 mature trees on the site (read the saga of community success at Green Cove on p.7) . In the meantime, we have programs to encourage kids to “fight climate change” by planting trees that will take 30 years or more to mature (see Community Spotlight).

Here’s what Olympia’s leaders wrote about the city in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan that guides development in the city:

Olympians want to feel connected to each other and to our built and natural environment. We want to live in a friendly and safe community where we know our neighbors and shopkeepers, and run into friends along the sidewalk. We value harmony with nature, thriving small businesses, places to gather and celebrate, and an inclusive local government.

This year, the staff of the city proposes to amend the Comp Plan to eliminate the term “neighborhood character” or define it by these generalizations: accessible, sustainable and culturally inclusive. Next time you look, will any of those qualities named in 2014 be present?

Finally—let’s name the elephant in the room: climate change. It’s

missing from these pages, just like acknowledgement of it is missing from our policies. All of a sudden we’ll look up and see that it’s here.



This issue is my last as Managing Editor of Works in Progress. It’s astonishing that this paper has successfully relied on volunteers to do most everything from submitting stories, graphics and photos to producing a recognizable newspaper delivered by a team of dedicated distributors—for 30+ years.

Lori Lively will become the Managing Editor, responsible for finding and nurturing stories that are neglected or misinterpreted and producing the paper each month. I’ll be around as a member of the Publishing Committee and contributor. I hope you’ll be here too.

—Bethany Weidner

## Upcoming themes

**September. Back to school.** In every way you can think of. Deadline: August 15.

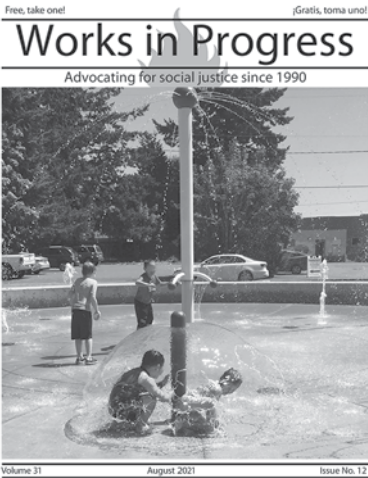
**October. Reap what you sow.** It’s a metaphor for harvest, elections and more. Deadline: Sept. 15

**Nov-Dec. Gimme shelter!** It’s a winter theme, but check out the lyrics to the Stones’ recording. Deadline: Nov 10

## About the cover

It’s hot and the water is cool and wet! A new spray park in Olympia’s Westside has become a gathering place for people from nearby neighborhoods. From toddlers to elementary schoolers and up—that’s the action in Woodruff Park this summer. There’s a picnic shelter, restrooms and trees making enough shade for folks to spread out for picnics. It’s the kind of place where kids make new friends and grown ups meet neighbors they might never have encountered though living just a few blocks away. It’s also the kind of place that will be increasingly important as climate change brings repeats of the 110 degree temperature that hovered over our towns in June.

*Photo by Lori Lively*



## In this issue

Olympia’s Hearing Examiner system.....	1
Cuba in the American imagination .....	1
Remembering Hali Panneton.....	3
Review a book! Get \$50!.....	3
Bringing clean energy to the Farmers’ Market.....	4
Hang out in a different Olympia .....	5
Three towns before Dollar Stores.....	6
Clean-up at Green Cove .....	7
The aged ferry at the Port of Olympia... ..	9
Nobody’s workin’ on the railroad.....	10
Frito Lay and other worker strikes .....	10
Community spotlight .....	11
Key tax rules .....	Back Page



# Remembering Hali Panneton

Patti Imani

Olympia lost beloved community member Hali Panneton on March 12, 2020. Hali was 63 and passed unexpectedly at home from a cardiac event. Due to limitations on gatherings during the pandemic, her memorial celebration was held this summer on June 22, which is Hali's date of birth.

Hali was a much relied on WIP proofreader, photographer, distribution volunteer and writer for over a decade beginning in the early 1990s.

She did long-term outreach in the Olympia area to grow awareness of the political imprisonment of Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu-Jamal. Hali is perhaps best known and honored for holding a four week hunger fast and vigil in 1994 on the Washington State Capitol steps supporting clemency for Leonard Peltier. Hali ended her fast after then Governor Mike Lowry



Hali Panneton, Bucerias, Mexico, 2010. Photo: Bruce Fortune

sent a letter to the President supporting clemency for Leonard.

Since her arrival in Olympia in 1988, Hali participated in a myriad

of actions towards social and environmental justice. In her 40s, she did frontline forest protection, participating in human blockades to stop the killing of trees above the Dosewallips River in the Olympics. Hali organized to save a low-income trailer park in East Olympia from being demolished and developed into a Walmart. That effort led to creating a land trust of Candlewood Manor, securing it as low-income affordable housing.

In addition to *Works in Progress*, Hali volunteered her time with many organizations including Safe-place, the Olympia Food Co-op, the Capitol Theater, Media Island, Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace and United 4 Peace of Thurston County (to name just a few!) She was an advocate for animals and land. Hali was a gifted community activist and organizer. She made natural connections between different groups of people, always striving towards movement building.



## A win for the “bubble up” approach to politics

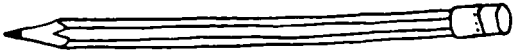
India Walton—a self-described democratic socialist, former nurse, and founding executive director of Fruit Belt Community Land Trust—shocked the Buffalo NY establishment by defeating four-term incumbent Mayor Byron Brown in the Democratic Party primary by a seven percentage-point margin (51.9 percent to 44.8 percent).

If Walton prevails in November, she will become the first socialist mayor of any US city of over 100,000 people since 1960.

When asked on election night whether she was a socialist, Walton

responded “Absolutely.” She elaborated that “the entire intent of this campaign is to draw down power and resources to the ground level, to the hands of the people.

When we think about socialism, we’re perfectly fine with socialism for the rich. We will bail out Wall Street and banks and give a billion dollars in tax incentives to one of the richest people in the world to build an empty Tesla factory in South Buffalo. And when it comes to providing the resources that working families need to thrive, socialism becomes scary at that point.”



## Then this happened

**...remember how the City Council** signed a contract on March 31, 2021 protecting the developer of West Bay Yards from having to comply with changes in regulation for 15 years? West Bay Yards is a shoreline development and, surprise!, just three months later, Olympia updated the program that protects shorelines. The updates won't apply to West Bay Yards.

**...remember how two votes make a majority** at the Port of Olympia's three-member governing Commission? Well, the Chamber of Commerce and other members of the “good ol’ boys club” (yes, women are members too) are nervous

that voters might fill two seats on the Commission with people who aren't members of the club. In hopes of maintaining control, there's a move to fast-track the process to expand the Commission to 5 members.

**...In a victory for the climate** and a coalition of community groups, Northwest Innovation Works officially abandoned its fracked gas refinery and pipeline proposal, terminating the company's lease with the Port of Kalama. A frightening prospect for port commissioners who continue to pursue “economic development” based on fossil fuel and resource extraction.

## Readers’ Alert— Review a book! Get \$50!

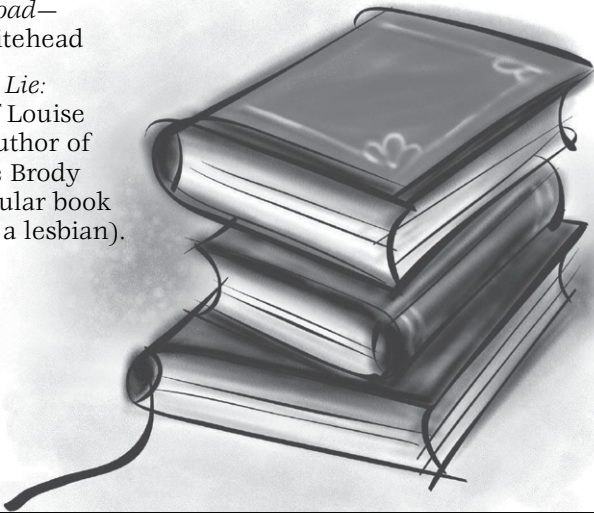
WIP still has funds from our “Readers Review” grant. Each month we publish a list of books (see below). If you'd like to be considered to review one of them, email us and put BOOK REVIEW in the subject line. We will buy the book (or reimburse you if you buy it) and pay \$50 if the review is accepted. If any of these books looks interesting, let us know. Or propose a book yourself.

*The Underground Railroad*—a novel by Colson Whitehead

*Sometimes You Have to Lie:* The Life and Times of Louise Fitzhugh, Renegade Author of Harriet the Spy, Leslie Brody (About Fitzhugh's popular book and her hidden life as a lesbian).

*When Machines Can Be Judge, Jury and Executioner:* Justice in the Age of Artificial Intelligence, Katherine B. Forrest (Discover how Artificial Intelligence works).

*One Person, No Vote:* How Voter Suppression is Destroying our Democracy, Carol Anderson (The latest shenanigans on the electoral front!)



Like us and share on facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/OlyWIP>



Let the sunshine in!

# Bringing clean energy to the Farmers’ Market

## Olympia Community Solar

On a misty, cool Saturday morning, vendors at the Olympia Farmers Market begin their weekly routine of arranging produce, preparing their displays and drinking their coffee before the market opens.

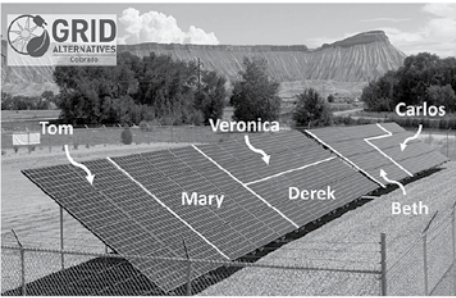
### Solar on sale!

Among them, an unfamiliar sight. The only stall at the market that isn't vending crafts or produce instead hosts a large solar panel propped up on a display stand. For decades, local farmers and crafts-people have been selling their wares at this community center, and now, for the first time in the Market's 46-year history, some-thing entirely different is on sale: solar energy.

### Washington-made panels

People from Olympia Community Solar are there to share informa-tion about a brand-new commu-nity project called Sunflower. The Sunflower Project will include 200 Washington-made solar panels right above the entrance of the Olympia Farmers Market. Local solar in-staller South Sound Solar has been contracted to design and install the system which will generate enough electricity to offset 100% of the market's needs.

## Join the Sunflower Project at [olysol.org](http://olysol.org)!



**What is a Solar Unit?**  
A Solar Unit represents a portion of a community solar project's capacity. Sunflower project Solar Units represents 180 Watts, or one half a solar panel.

Each Sunflower Solar Unit will generate about \$14 dollars of electricity per year. Participants will receive 2% interest on their units before Sunflower is donated to the Farmers Market.

Purchase or donate solar units. You or the non-profit of your choosing will receive an annual payment for the value of the unit's electric generation!



payment for the solar unit's pro-duction. Some of the organizations that have signed on to receive unit donations include GRuB, the Thur-ston County Food Bank, Salmon Defense, the Dispute Resolution Center, Homes First, and several more.

### A group effort with many outcomes

The Sunflower project will bring cost savings to the Market, reduce pollution, create educational op-portunities and help support local business! Participant's and donors' names will be featured on a plaque commemorating supporters of the project.

### Honoring Steve Wilcox, a market founder and solar enthusiast

The Market was the location of Thurston County's first community solar project thanks to the leader-ship of Steve Wilcox. Steve was a founding member of the Friends of Olympia Farmers Market – he started Sea Blossom Seafood and was a vendor at the Market for many years. Steve was the driv-ing force behind the creation and management of the original solar installation at the market. It was removed in fall of 2020 and is con-sidered an over-all success.

Steve passed away in 2017 at the age of 72. The Sunflower Project is dedicated to Steve's memory. Do-nations in his honor may be made to the Friends of Olympia Farmers Market.

You can support the project by participating or donating online at [olysol.org/sunflower](http://olysol.org/sunflower) or by mailing a check to Olympia Community Solar at 112 4th Ave E, STE 208, Olympia WA 98501.

Olysol.org  
[infor@olysol.org](mailto:infor@olysol.org)

### Spreading the benefits

Community solar happens when a group of community members join together to create a solar project and share its benefits. The Sun-

flower Project is already at 35% enrollment, which leaves only 260 solar units remaining. Units have been selling fast and construction of the project is scheduled to begin this fall.

Any member of the public can own a unit of Sunflower. Each unit re-presents half of a solar panel. The value of the electricity produced by each unit will be distributed across unit owners in the form of an an-nual payment that can be donated to a nonprofit organization.

Sunflower's unique model sup-ports broader social equity in this fashion—by allowing donations of solar units to local non-profit organizations. Donations are tax deductible, and the non-profit of your choice will receive the annual

## I don't know

I don't know how the mud flats  
or how the prairie grasses. I don't  
know how the garlic scapes or the beet  
greens above the soil. I don't know how the blue  
berries. I don't know how the wind picks up  
and carries on in a maelstrom. I don't know  
how the night mares or the morning dews. I  
don't know how the river knows its way to the sea  
but I do know gravity. The weight and heft of the thing,  
of living that is. How tenderly one can fall into the grass  
and just hope, despite all signs otherwise, that the world  
(meaning all of us) will turn though I don't know how the world  
turns, only that it does.

—Kathleen Byrd

## Where to find Works In Progress

- |                                |                                     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Olympia Post Office            | Capitol Campus                      |
| Olympia Farmer’s Market        | The Pit Stop                        |
| Thurston County Courthouse     | Vic’s Pizza (both locations)        |
| New Traditions Café            | Entry to Westside Center (box)      |
| Batdorf & Bronson              | Ramirez Restaurant on Capitol Blvd. |
| Ralph’s Thriftway              | South Puget Sound Community College |
| Bayview Thriftway              | Lacey Transit Center                |
| Blue Heron Bakery              | Lacey Library                       |
| Orca Books                     | Steamboat Island Grocery (box)      |
| Olympia Library                | Shelton Post Office                 |
| Bar Francis                    | Shelton Library                     |
| Jay’s Fruit Stand              |                                     |
| Eastside & Westside Food Coops |                                     |

# chill out with a sweet treat!

**WESTSIDE STORE & GARDEN CENTER**  
921 Rogers St. NW  
Olympia, WA 98502  
360.754.7666

**EASTSIDE STORE & DELI**  
3111 Pacific Ave SE  
Olympia, WA 98501  
360.956.3870

open 9am – 9pm daily  
[www.olympiafood.coop](http://www.olympiafood.coop)





# An invitation to a brief hang-out in a different Olympia

Mark Drummer

Those who grew up in Westside Olympia during the 50s through the 70s had few restraints on the length and breadth of their society. The Null Set was a particular sort of off-beat joint for our band of underage youths to partake in an Olympia underground of poets, artists, musicians and the like. We would grab a packet of Drum tobacco and rolling papers at Ray's grocery on Harrison, cross the street to The Null Set to listen to lyrical artists while we drank tea or coffee, knowing we'd need to be in class at Jefferson Junior High the next morning.

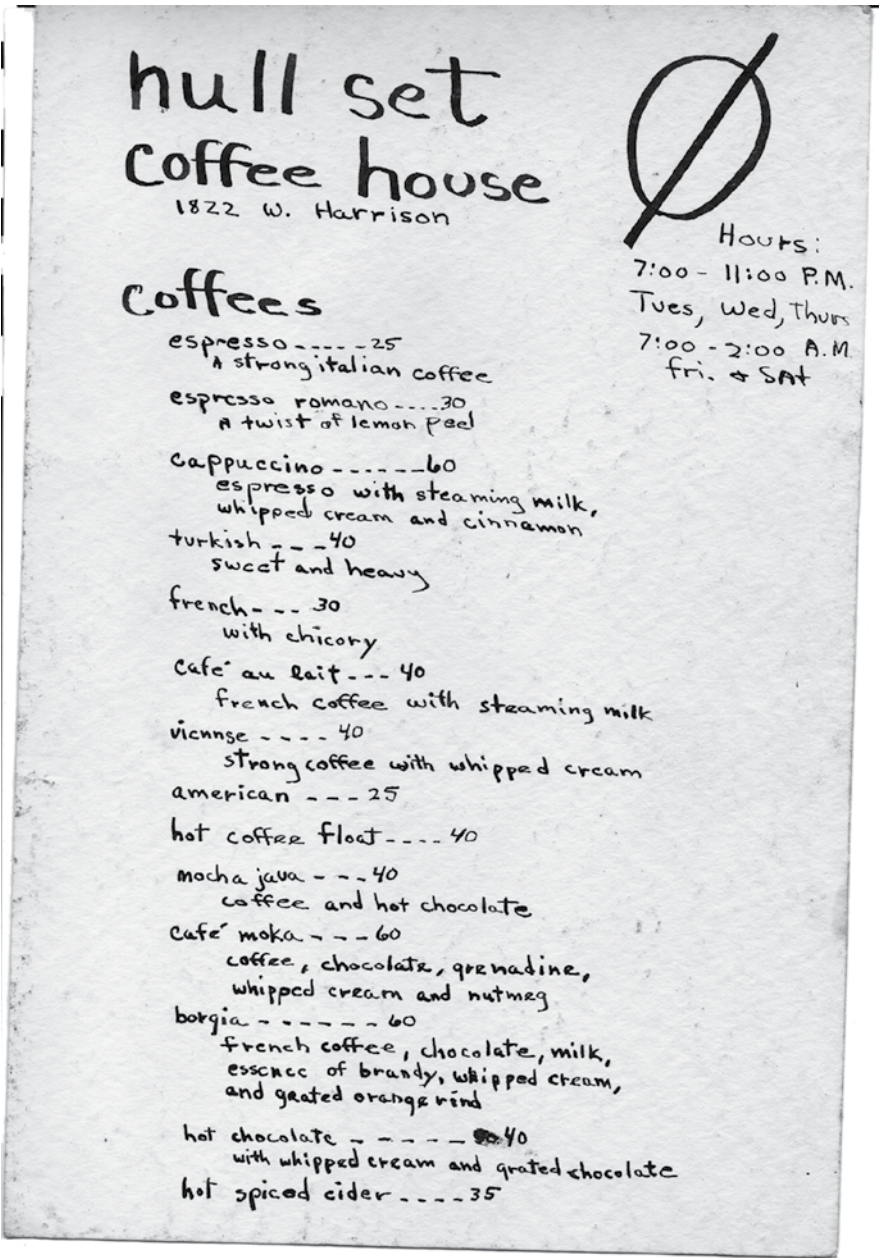
Things have changed. Today, parents fret over their offspring's activities and ride herd on their whereabouts. Our experience as youths was different, and maybe that was just how the times were imbued. We remember our parents' love in the fact they allowed us to grow and learn by our own devices. This wasn't neglecting us but respecting our modest freedom to explore. We knew they were there,

if we needed their guidance. Their strictness. Their trust. We repaid this grant by developing open

We listened to lyrical artists while we drank tea or coffee, knowing we'd need to be in class at Jefferson Junior High the next morning.

minds and critical thinking. Downtown Oly in those days contained many places for food, music and socializing. Crane's Café was on Capitol Way near today's Olympia Federal Savings. The Brotherhood was a nice dive owned by Curly Francis who made us a burger or breakfast on the grill behind the bar. Of course, we were of age by then. Patrons for an early morning wake-up attended the place at its six o'clock opening.

The Spar, of course, provided breakfast, lunch and dinner to



The menu from the Null Set, posted by Pat Holm on her Facebook page



4th Ave in the 1960s: The Reef, a drugstore, shoe store and more

a cross-section of working-class Olympia, pols, and some of the ruling class. The Highclimber Room in the back was its watering hole. There you could hear some good local jazz musicians like Jack Percival or Mike Moore, son of Ben Moore.

Fourth Avenue was alive then, called "The Funway" by my acquaintances. There was Ben Moore's with its dark paneled, low-lit bar, Adams Bowling Alley (next to the Reef) where my cousin might buy us a quart of Oly by slicking his hair back to allow his receding hairline to give him the look of a forty-year-old, then the Fourth Ave Tavern and the Eastside Club. The Coral Room in the rear of the Reef was a good spot for a quick cocktail between sets when we were playing at the Fourth Ave Tav.

Owner Axel "Babe" Haumann manned the Eastside beer taps from 1942. Babe's co-owner and wife, Agnes, also held court behind the bar. She had an eye for miscreants. We'd grab a booth or long table, drink beer, play pool and discuss where "Hours" (after-hours) would be held. There'd be politics, the war, or school matters sprinkled through the continuing conversations.

No one spent time looking into the screens of their devices. The devices and the malls had not yet arrived.

Mark (Drummer) Bean grew up in Olympia playing music and roaming the Westside.

A book by Pat Holm, The Null Set Remembered: A Memoir of a Coffee House 1964-1967, is available at Orca Books.



## Supporting the Art and Soul of Olympia since 1996!

The store is open  
Tuesday-Sunday 10-5  
Café open 9-4



## The café is open!

Shop with us to support Indigenous communities,  
Women's empowerment, economic opportunity,  
and Cultural survival

See our new site at [NewTraditionsFairtrade.com](http://NewTraditionsFairtrade.com)

## Seeking allies in the fight for fairness, justice and the rights of working folks.

Since 1990, Works in Progress has reported on important local and national issues other news outlets don't cover. Want to support independent journalism? We're looking for more volunteers to fill these positions:

- Fact Checker
- Distribution Coordinator
- Section Editors
- Photographer
- Cartoonist



To volunteer or submit articles, photos, graphics or cartoons, write us at [olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com) with VOLUNTEER in the subject line.



# Before there were Dollar Stores and chains galore

*Before there were Dollar Stores, before there were Starbucks, before there were cinemas in the Mall, before there were Target and Walmart and Netflix—there were three towns with quirky entrepreneurs and room for everyone.*

*We grabbed some memories from Reddit and elsewhere to give you a hint of what we're missing—in the words of some who were there—a scrap, an image, a haunting taste. It might spark a conversation about changes—or a few reflections of your own.*

There was a time when all roads led to Downtown Oly.

Back when the Olympia Yard Birds was called “Sea Mart,” J.P. Patches and Gertrude made a public appearance there. It was great to see them live.

Making my mom take me to Yard-birds because they had a coupon for a 9-cent goldfish. Boy Scout badges and rubber boots. Bought a rabbit there and my first puppy (\$10). Used to spend my allowance on GI Joe's and fishing tackle there.

the freight train leaving downtown over the I5 trestle to Union Mills, dank brewery smells, shopping at yardbirds, \$1 State theater.

The farmers market on the train platform at Plum and Union. How about the farmer's market when it was stalls in a parking lot. There was a point in the year when my Dad would take me and I would get to hold baby chicks.

The State was the dollar movie, then the \$1.25 movie, then closed.

Various local BnBs from pre-internet days: The Oasis, Mandrake-Belladonna, Columbia Crest.

That warehouse behind Capitol Lake grocery where Eddie Vedder played.

The Spar was a sketchy cigar bar full of grizzled fishermen. And the Highclimber room! Bar with local musicians on tap.

Under 21 staying up after hours with bad coffee in the tolerant booths at King Sol's.

Thekla “Enter in Rear” posted at the front door. ” Before that it was the Vortex. Then later briefly a bank??

Downtown with no fucking parking meters!

I really miss the old downtown parking strategy: two hours free, once a day. It kept people from camping the spots near where they worked, but still made it easy to hop downtown for something.

That “Sketchy Safeway” but it was right there.

Bulldog News when it had a second floor you could go up there and read, or meet someone. It had an area for local zines and newspapers from everywhere. I worked at Bulldog News and would go to the Spar for breakfast before my shifts. They had the best breakfast.

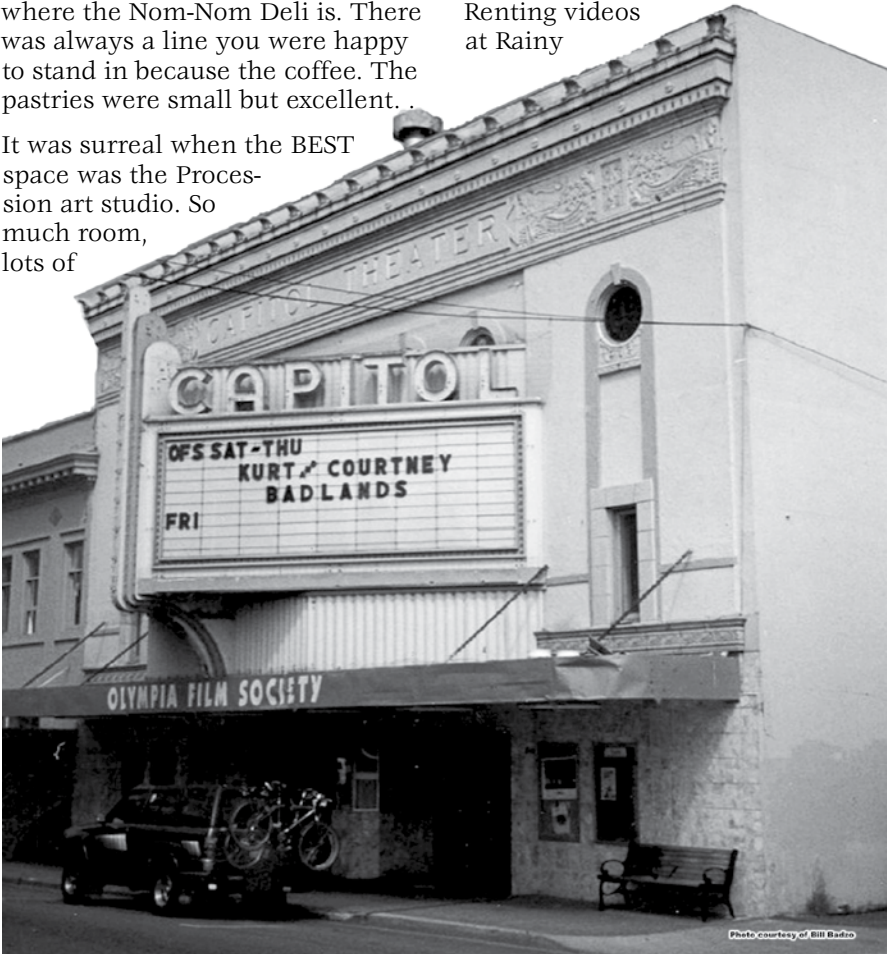
Backstage at the Capitol Theater. We used to pile in that joint, torn jeans and flannels, at \$5/head a couple times per week to rock out. Clinging desperately to that shitty couch perched precariously above the crowd, as we learned why chugging mad dog 2020 and then smoking a joint was a terrible idea. I saw Gas Huffer, Tall Toad, Sea-

weed, a ton of bands at the Capitol Theater.

Swimming and sailing lessons for kids on Capital Lake. Families bringing a picnic and kids wading in the lake.

Batdorf and Bronson in the space where the Nom-Nom Deli is. There was always a line you were happy to stand in because the coffee. The pastries were small but excellent. .

It was surreal when the BEST space was the Procession art studio. So much room, lots of



OFS in 1998, with an iconic band playing

the old merchandising stuff left.

The Angelus Apartments. First I shared a one-room with kitchen. Then I had my own one-room with a kitchen. And then I had a one-room with a kitchen and full bath. That place was creepy and awesome.

What about positively 4th Street? The 4th Ave Tav when everybody went there after work and stayed for the music and dancing. Ben Moore's where the owner gave everyone a huge burger and fries for \$5.

Ate at Crackers. Ate at Alice's out off the Skookumchuck. Ate at 7 Gables.

k records valentines party. Al Larsen of the band Some Velvet Sidewalk was part of the K Roster. In 1989, he wrote an article for the Snipehunt zine that distinguished K's approach to “punk” music: “It's a scary world, but we don't need to be scared anymore. We need active visionary protest, we need to grab hold and make the transformation, from complaining that there is NO FUTURE to insisting there be a future.”

The Smithfield Cafe where S.J. made massive soup every day and an amazing hummus burrito with cheese and avocado. I had an ac-

count there so my son could stop and eat after his summer job cutting tansy ragwort and S.J. would just subtract the bill.

The pool hall by Westside Lanes and Giggling Goose, taken over by the Dollar Store.

Renting videos at Rainy

There was this little Chinese place in the Capitol Mall food court that had the best noodles and it was like \$2 for a whole plate of them. It was a middle schooler's dream. We'd ride Intercity Transit there to hang out and eat those noodles! Omg yes!! They put in Asian allspice that made it unique. I can still taste it. Best noodles ever. I REMEMBER THIS. I still think about it sometimes.

Cutting Christmas trees in the forest where Top foods/Haggens is now.

Does anyone remember the gravel pit down by Hansen Elementary? That was the hang-out spot in high school.

Super Saturday at Evergreen graduation. Ahhhh. I really miss this.

I miss that “cereal” smell from the brewery. The whistle would go off at 8 am, noon, 12;30 and 5 PM-Sat. I could hear it inside, over the shower.

Bigfoot bumper boats during the summer where Taco Bell is now at Southgate, when Black Hills High was being built.

When Tumwater Hill was a beautiful forest.

South Sound Mall! People's and the Red Bull and the green tile fountains and Buster Brown shoe store that had a little fish tank in the wall!!!! And Nordstrom Place II.

Still miss that huge rock that used to sit where the Dominos pizza is now. (College & Martin Way)

Lacey Blvd and Pacific weren't one-ways.

How many people remember going to the drive in theater that used to be where the Lacey Fred Meyers is?



THE

brotherhood

LOUNGE

daily happy hour 3–7 pm

119 capitol way • [www.thebrotherhoodlounge.com](http://www.thebrotherhoodlounge.com)



Birthing Roots Midwifery

Home Birth Midwifery Care

Stacey Callaghan

LM, CPM, ICCE, CD

360-789-9969

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

[Stacey@birthingroots.org](mailto:Stacey@birthingroots.org)

Centralia Square Antique Mall

Antiques • Restaurant • Hotel

Directions from Olympia

South on Interstate 5

Off at Exit 82 (Factory Outlets)

East on Harrison

Right on Pearl

201 S Pearl & Locust

Open 7 days

10am–5pm





# Clean-up at Green Cove due to community research and persistence

Esther Kronenberg and Jerry Dierker

It's official. The developer who proposed to turn the Sundberg industrial site in West Olympia, into the "Green Cove Park" housing subdivision was informed by the Department of Ecology that the site will be listed under the Involuntary Cleanup category of the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). The letter named the developer, Jerry Mahan, as the Potentially Liable Person (PLP).

### It took a village

Getting to this point took extensive effort by individuals in the community, including a final hurdle last winter. This 16-year journey involved three LLCs; five incomplete land-use applications; nearly 1500 pages of reports; undocumented and uncountable hours of taxpayer-funded City staff time. It was tracked by committed members of the public who conducted research, filed hundreds of comments in opposition, signed petitions and submitted formal complaints.

As a result of this investigation and ongoing public involvement, in July 2020, the Department of Ecology put the project site on its Confirmed and Suspected Contaminated Site List (CSCSL), making it subject to the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA).

The City of Olympia returned Mahan's most recent project application as incomplete, and gave him 6 months to submit the additional information needed for a No Further Action (NFA) determination under MTCA.

Mr. Mahan then hired a toxic cleanup consultant from Hawaii (who is not legally registered in the State of Washington), and improperly approached Ecology in an attempt to enter their Voluntary Clean-up Program (VCP) in order to obtain an NFA determination without filing an actual application. Ecology refused to consider Mahan's request because, in the absence of a formal filing, such a request is illegal.

Meeting with the authors of this article and several neighbors, Ecology made firm commitments to put the site under the Involuntary Cleanup Program. This will require Mahan to pay for extensive independent investigation, reclamation, cleanup and monitoring of the site.

### Ecology makes a commitment

Ecology has promised extensive public involvement in the planning, investigation, cleanup and monitoring process. The Department is working on a fact sheet describing this process for interested parties and will accept testimony from anyone who has knowledge of activities at the site.

According to Ecology, negotiations for an Agreed Formal Order normally take about 4 months, followed by a 30-day comment period. The order will include a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and draft Cleanup Action Plan (dCAP). Ecology and the public will then review the draft plan to identify gaps, and allow public comment.

The RI/FS will be finalized after public comment and Ecology will prepare a draft Cleanup Action Plan and negotiate a new Order with Mr. Mahan to begin the cleanup process. Given the duration and amount of contamination, this will be a long and complicated process.

### 60+ years of contamination free of oversight

Current and former owners and operators of businesses and other activities on this site have put up to 60' or more of commingled fill into the old gravel pit and former canyons on this site. The Sundberg gravel pit only had a legitimate permit for mining from 1972-1979. The County didn't issue subsequent permits for gravel mining or excavation after the 1979 permit expired until the site's annexation into the City in 2006.

Despite issuing dozens of violations, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) never took enforcement action. The 1979 DNR Reclamation Permit, which is routinely re-issued and requires all non-native materials be removed from the site and the mining excavation be

reclaimed with clean materials and vegetation, has yet to be fulfilled.

A permit was neither requested nor issued for allowing disposal of solid and hazardous waste on this site. Yet, City, County, DNR and Ecology records show it served as a convenient place for the City, County, Port and developers to dump solid and hazardous waste from projects on other sites in this area, just 4 minutes from the Port of Olympia and downtown.

Without persistent investigation ... by dedicated citizens and strong public pushback, there is little doubt the City would ultimately have approved the project.

For example, in 2005, City staffers received several reports that the then owner, Ted Sundberg, had accepted materials for disposal from off-site and the Port, including fill from around underground storage tanks.

The City's Engineering Plans Examiner noted that he knew the City had dumped the excavation material from the crosstown gas main onto the Sundberg/Mahan waste site. No permit was ever requested or issued for Weyerhaeuser's log yard and bark removal and disposal operation from the 1960s until 1990. By that time, Weyerhaeuser and Mr. Sundberg had filled entire canyons with bark laden with Agent Orange-type herbicides.

The City, like the County, did not collect taxes on the commercial mining, log yard, or waste dumping operations on the site. When neighbors complained to the City about work being done without permits, the City said they would issue a permit after the fact—something they cannot legally do.

### Approve a residential development on a toxic dump site?

The City spent years working with Mahan on his proposal to build family homes on top of a hazardous waste dump. What's more, the site is in the middle of an environmentally sensitive area in the City's extended capture zone for one of its primary wells, connected to the State's Strategic Groundwater Reservation. The Reservation drains into two inlets of the federally protected yet impaired waters of Puget Sound, home to endangered and threatened species.

Yet the City went out of its way to assist Mahan



as he repeatedly failed to provide required information, instead submitting five separate and deficient land-use applications to develop the Sundberg site.

### 1-Sept. 2004 Canterwood Investments LLC, applied to build 204 units.

At the time, Mahan didn't own the property and it was outside the City limits. In 2006, City Attorney Bob Sterbank noted that the "City lacked jurisdiction to review or approve the application until the property was legally located within the City." Staff helped Mahan by annexing the property into the City, accepting his application as complete and reviewing almost 500 pages of documents.

### 2-Early 2007 Westbrook Investments LLC application.

When the annexation was complete and the project vested, Mahan submitted a new application. City staff determined that the accompanying reports made claims not supported by data and lacked site specific detail, especially in regard to hydrogeology and water quality information, which was "particularly important as the site lies within the extended capture zone of one of the City's primary public groundwater supply facilities."

Instead of supplying the data required by the City, Mahan withdrew his application. He received a refund of \$51,141, 50% of the fees paid to the City for 4 years of staff time, including a court case with the Boundary Review Board to complete the annexation.

Further, because the 2007 project was an integral part of the 2006 annexation, the City should have completed a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review including an analysis of the impacts from this project, but it did not. Nor did it consult with agencies with jurisdiction and expertise, such as DNR and Ecology. The City's annexation action unlawfully ignored the potential impacts of the project and concomitant urban redevelopment in the rural Green Cove Creek Basin Area.

### 3-2015, an application to build 157 houses.

In 2014-15, neighbors had been following truckloads of fill that were being dumped on the site from other building projects in the area and submitted photos of fume-emitting floating docks from Swantown Marina and rusty barrels of solidified resin and other industrial waste to the Department of Ecology in a formal complaint. Mahan let the application lapse rather than provide the necessary data.

### 4-2016 Green Cove Park LLC to build 177 houses.

This time, Mahan submitted a SEPA checklist that falsely claimed that the hundreds of dump truck loads of waste reported in 2015 had been removed. Reviewing almost 500 pages of documents, the City again noted the developer had neglected to include enough information about contamination and the effects of the project on critical recharge areas and groundwater. Mahan again let the application lapse rather than provide the necessary data.

### 5-2019 Green Cove Park LLC to build 181 houses.

This final application contained the same deficiencies that had been present since the original submission in 2004. The reports had minor updates, none of which addressed the key contamination issues—despite the 562 pages of documents. Heather Burgess, Mahan's lawyer (and attorney for the Thurston Chamber of Commerce), went so far as to send a letter berating the City for treating Mahan as if the development site were subject to the Model Toxics Control Act. Ironically, a few months later, it was on MCTA's Confirmed and Suspected Contaminated Sites List.

### More help for the developer and potential liability for the city

In late 2019, with no public review, the City of Olympia purchased a 5-acre toxic site for a "neighborhood park" from Sundberg's heir, apparently as an amenity for the Green Cove housing Project. The City's consultant stated there was no contamination evident, but failed to contact the neighbor who had witnessed asphalt, asbestos, sheetrock and concrete being buried on the City's "park" site.

As part owner of Sundberg's old contaminated industrial site, the City is now, in effect, a partner in liability with Mahan, as a known Potentially Liable Person (PLP) under MCTA. The City becomes jointly and severally liable for the cost of the toxic cleanup of this site along with Mr. Mahan and any other PLP's, such as the Port,

► Green Cove, continued on page 9



# Hearing examiner

From page 1

Management, SEPA and shoreline development to public works and engineering standards. Another five criteria focused mainly on legal and procedural knowledge. In response to a request for records about the selection of the new hearing examiner, the City provided application materials submitted by the finalists, but could find no trace of the interviews nor of the scoring matrix the interviewers used to evaluate the candidates.

Scheibmeir’s application listed neighboring jurisdictions where he served as Hearing Examiner, but was missing the required “method and approach” that would have covered such things as handling of public participation and conflicts of interest—issues significant for the role of hearing examiner.<sup>1</sup> Despite the absence of this required document, Scheibmeir was put on the full Council Consent Calendar with a unanimous recommendation, and was duly given a 2-year contract. It has since been renewed through 2022, now for an hourly rate of \$225.

### The Hearing Examiner’s decisions

While it’s true that the HEX has a lot of authority over how Olympia develops, he shares that power with the staff. The Community Planning and Development Department (CP&D) staff reviews all development proposals. For major land use projects, the staff makes a recommendation to the hearing examiner who is required to give “deference to the expertise and experience of the staff” in making his decision, which is final.

The staff has authority to make final decisions about certain other land-use matters, including SEPA threshold determinations. Those can be appealed to the hearing examiner. In practice, most if not all of Scheibmeir’s decisions adopt or ratify the staff position. There are no appeals from the hearing examiner to the City Council. Any appeal of a hearing examiner decision in Olympia goes to a state tribunal (Superior Court, or special state boards).

### A meaningful role for the community in development decisions?

Public comment. Olympia provides for a public hearing when the HEX is making the development decision. Members of the public who take time from work or daily activities to research a proposal and submit comments should understand

that neither their views nor their knowledge and experience related to a given proposal will matter.

Scheibmeir explained to the City Council this June that he cannot take into account the feelings or comments of members of the public in making his decision about a project: “it’s not a popularity contest.” He also does not report significant levels of public response with City Council Members who might take this into account when making policy.

## As it considers opening the Hearing Examiner position, the City Council has an opportunity to explore the role of that official, and to evaluate its own responsibilities

For example, in development approvals where the staff has recommended new street connections, public comment based on community impacts is generally overwhelmingly opposed. If the Council members were made aware of this, it might prompt a reexamination of the City’s commitment to traffic flow embodied in its “connected streets” policy.

Appealing a decision. Once the staff or the hearing examiner has acted on a development-related proposal, the only recourse is to accept or to appeal the decision. The barriers to making an appeal are substantial. An appeal is costly, as anyone the Hearing Examiner rules against quickly discovers. It starts with \$1000 to the City; the expenses mount from there—for transcripts, for attorneys, etc.

Once you have paid the fee and hired an attorney, your appeal might be denied before it even gets heard because the hearing examiner finds you lack standing. Generally, you only have the right to appeal if you can show that the proposed action or development personally and directly harms you. There is no avenue for demonstrating harm to a community or the environment.

### The Growth Management Act ushered in a new era for land use decisions

In 2018 a group of neighbors (Olympians for Smart Development) appealed the city’s decision that changes to Olympia’s zoning code known as the “Missing Middle” would have no significant environmental impact. Scheibmeir denied the appeal, and—wrongly—

informed the group that a challenge to his decision would need to be made Washington Superior Court. He cited “provisions of RCW30.70C” but that chapter of Washington laws actually establishes that appeals like the one Scheibmeir denied are made to the Growth Management Board.

This isn’t a trivial error, as the Growth Management Act of 1990 ushered in Comprehensive Plan requirements and changed the focus of certain land use appeals from individual projects to “legislative” challenges like the Missing Middle appeal. The Act created the Growth Management Board to hear appeals about whether local

governments were meeting the requirements of the Act.

Of all things, a hearing examiner must be deeply versed in the distinction between development projects and legislative acts, and the role of the Growth Management Board.

When the Smart Development group took their appeal to the Growth Management Board, it found the City had violated the Growth Management Act and based its finding of no significant environmental impact on insufficient information. The Board invalidated elements of the Missing Middle rezoning and directed the City to make revisions. The City rejected the Board’s instructions in favor of appealing the ruling to Superior Court. After two years, the case will be heard on November 5, 2021.

When the city is faced with a project that is subject to the State Environmental Policy Act, it makes an initial determination as to whether the project is likely to have a significant environmental impact. The City routinely finds that none have a significant impact. (In response to a recent request, a city official couldn’t locate anything where there was a finding of a significant impact.) Many of these findings of “no significant impact” have been appealed to the Hearing Examiner, who uniformly rules in favor of the City.

As it considers opening the Hearing Examiner position, the City Council has an opportunity to explore the role of that official, and to evaluate its own responsibilities related to that role. The community—residents, developers and professionals—has a role to play as well.

Bethany Weidner is a frequent contributor to Works in Progress.

### Note

(1) There is also an unexplained discrepancy in his letter of qualification. It states that he graduated from the University of Kansas with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 1987 and then moved to Washington to “attend the U.W. Law School and graduated from there in 1981.” Did Mr. Scheibmeir graduate from the University of Washington Law School six years before he received an undergraduate degree? A typo possibly, but worrisome in a letter of application from an attorney.

## Ongoing monitoring by the City Council is basic to the HEX system

It should be remembered that every decision [by the hearing examiner] is governed by the applicable land use policies and code standards that are adopted by—the city council!

To that end, a council’s time and attention to land use matters is best invested in adopting clear and effective policies and codes that govern all permits, including quasi-judicial ones.

Several cities also require an annual report from their staff and hearing examiners summarizing the nature, frequency, and disposition of quasi-judicial permits.

Such ongoing monitoring enables them to identify land use policies or standards that should potentially be revised. By playing this legislative role, a role for which they are uniquely suited and which only they can play, a city council can more effectively provide needed direction to the development of their community without exposing the city to needless financial risk.

—from the article Should Legislative Bodies Conduct Quasi-judicial Hearings, Joseph Tovar, August 2016, available at MRSC



REDUCE  
*pain*  
RESOLVE  
*trauma*  
RESTORE  
*grace*

FREE  
CONSULTATION

360.559.5680

Call Jazmine the Rolfer™  
to see what  
Structural Integration  
can do for you!

bodyliteracyproject.org

STYLING • CUTS • COLOR • PERMS

FREE CONSULTATIONS • FREE BANG TRIMS

DEEP CONDITIONING • MANICURES • PEDICURES • MASSAGE • ASTROLOGY • TAROT

"We'll trim it,  
rub it,  
or read it"

JAMIE LEE  
&  
COMPANY

309 E. 4TH AVE.  
OLYMPIA, WA 98501

360-786-6027  
JAMIELEEANDCOMPANY.COM

KAOS patron business.

BOTANICAL HAIR CARE PRODUCTS

VICS  
PIZZERIA

233 Division St NW  
(360) 943-8044

Wildwood  
(360) 688-1234

Key in your  
story.

Then send it to  
our editors at  
olywip@gmail.com

WORKS IN PROGRESS  
Advocating for social justice since 1990.



# How long will the Evergreen State be at the Port of Olympia?

## Chatham Strait

In 2017, the new owner of a retired Washington State Ferry arranged to moor the vessel at the Port of Olympia's Marine Terminal while he arranged to take it to the Caribbean. The Florida businessman had no previous involvement with boats.

Three years later, the Evergreen State Ferry was still at the Port but the owner was gone. In June of 2020, the Port seized the boat. Department of Natural Resources officials with the Derelict Vessel Program (DVP) asked the Port to follow the protocols designed to prevent the vessel becoming derelict, prior to any sale.

The DVP officials wanted the Port to pay for a survey of the 66 year old vessel to determine its seaworthiness. They also wanted the Port to take out insurance that would cover the boat in case the new owner failed to take care of it. DVP also encouraged the Port to vet winning bidders for their ability to maintain a vessel, before finalizing the sale. The Port never responded.

### Derelict vessels are a problem

As part of their work, the DVP keeps a list of abandoned and derelict vessels in Washington waters. Some get on the list after being passed from owner to owner until they become worthless.

That was the case with the fishing vessel Deep Sea. The Deep Sea was abandoned by its owner at the Port of Seattle. The Port sold it to a man with no capacity to take care it. Some time later it was abandoned, caught fire and sank. It cost Washington State nearly \$5.4 million for clean up and disposal.

When older boats are left to decay they become a major problem, polluting waters, causing environmental damage and costing taxpayers. DNR has a Derelict Vessel Removal Program but it is underfunded and can only remove a portion of the derelict vessels added to our waters

each year. They also offer a Vessel Turn-In Program for boat owners to voluntarily surrender boats before they become derelict.

### A pilot program to recycle some vessels

In 2021, the legislature authorized a pilot program for recycling derelict wood and fiberglass vessels up to 200 feet long. According to Troy Wood of the Derelict Vessel Program, the pilot will run from July 2021 to July of 2023. The hulls of old boats are sent through a series of pulverizers, separators, and grinders to reduce them to different grades of materials and grinds. These are then sold as commodities to manufacturing industries that can use them.

DNR is working on the pilot with SeaGrant at the UW and as well as

the Port of Everett and the Port of Townsend with whom they have good relationships.

### Meanwhile, back at the Port of Olympia

The ferry Evergreen State, still tied up at Port property in Budd Inlet, was sold to the highest bidder at auction. At the time of the sale he was quoted as saying "My wife thinks I'm nuts and I think I may be as well." His moorage is paid until May of 2022, and he reportedly acquired a \$1 million dollar bond at the direction of the Port. He reportedly intends to convert the vessel to solar power or other renewable energy source.

The Derelict Vessel Program can't scrap a large, steel-hull vessel like the Evergreen State. That's why the DVP tried to work with the Port to complete due diligence prior to the auction. Instead, the Port is collecting moorage on a vessel of unknown seaworthiness, owned by someone of unknown abilities and resources. We watch as the Evergreen State decays at her berth.

*Chatham Strait is the pen name of a professional mariner. He lives and works in the Puget Sound area.*

It is every boat's destiny to sink. The only question is when and where.



# Cuba

From page 1

All this effort to stifle one small country, in the middle of an era when—after the fall of the Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall—American capitalism boasts of being the triumphant subject and sole protagonist of human history

### The root of the matter

What is it about Cuba that so threatens the US? What precisely about the small island must be repressed, regardless of the cost in human rights? The answer lies not in the economic resources of the island, nor in its strategic geographic location, nor in its military might, nor in any other traditional geo-political consideration.

Rather, the provocation that Cuba presents to the US is the evocative power of a rebellious imagination that reminds us that a better world is possible and that capitalism (under the US or any other power) is not the only conceivable way to achieve that world. It is the deep and urgent desire to eradicate this revolutionary possibility that provides the point of convergence, leading Republicans and most Democrats to amorous hand-holding under the table.

Conversely, it is exactly this liberatory evocation, albeit with human imperfections, made visible by the Cuban experience that has served, and continues to serve, as a source of inspiration for progressive and revolutionary movements in Latin America and other parts of the world. The recent victorious election of Left-Wing Trade Unionist Pedro Castillo as president of Peru constitutes the most recent example of

this frame of mind in the Latin American political imagination. That is why Cuba is important. That is why Cuba is attacked, and why it must be defended.

### Rum without Coke

While anti-government protests in Cuba have a material base in reality given the tough conditions of the economy, it would be wrong to attribute total responsibility for these conditions to the Cuban government. We can make that error only if we close our eyes to the long and present history of economic strangulation caused by the American embargo supported by Republican and Democrats.

The effects of the embargo have been amplified by the negative impact on the tourism industry caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the collapse of oil supplies from Venezuela (also caused by direct and indirect US intervention in the international oil market). A UN resolution calling for an end to the Cuban embargo was adopted for the 29th time on June 23, 2021. 184 countries voted in favor of ending it, three abstained and just two voted to continue it: the US and Israel.

Cubans, as much as Americans, are entitled to self-determination, to forge their destiny with their own hands without foreign intervention of any kind. Isn't that exactly what we hope and expect to occur in the US? Let Cubans decide if the rum they produce is to be mixed with the Coke we sell. So far, they clearly have mostly preferred rum without Coke. *¡Salud!*

*Enrique Quintero is a member of the Publishing Committee of Works in Progress.*

# Green Cove

From page 7

City and others, whose waste will be identified in the course of investigation. The initial price tag for the 5-acre "park"—\$138K—just got bigger.

### Local residents' actions protected the public

The City needs housing and revenue, and Mr. Mahan offered both. The Green Cove Park Project would have brought in millions of dollars of impact fees and property taxes. But at what cost?

From the time of annexation in 2006, there was strong and consistent opposition to building homes on a hazardous landfill. Each neighborhood meeting was well attended with citizens voicing reasoned concerns about their water, their health, the environment and the future liability of the City. Some provided extensive research on the history of the site, on toxins and on state and federal laws designed to protect the public from harm.

Hundreds of letters and emails from individuals and civic groups including the League of Women Voters of Thurston County, the Sierra Club, OlyEcosystems and the Squaxin Island Tribe argued against the project. Besides the Applicant, there was no public support for locating family homes where dangerous toxins were likely to be found.

Without the persistent investigation and critique of this land use application by dedicated citizens and strong public pushback, there is little doubt the City would ultimately have approved the project. Instead, the site may need to be monitored for years, perhaps decades, and it is unlikely that housing will be built there anytime soon.

*Esther Kronenberg & Jerry Dierker are residents of the Green Cove Watershed.*

## Thurston County Food Bank

Food Distribution at the Downtown, Client Service Center

**Regular distribution 11:00 am – 3:00 pm  
Mon, Wed, Fri**

**All food is prepacked and distributed through either the Drive-Up or Walk-Up distribution model.**

Follow the signs for the vehicle line—please stay in your car—and friendly staff and volunteers will bring your food out and load it into your vehicle.

If you are on foot, line up along the Thurston Ave wall where there are marked spots to help with safe, social distancing. Your food will be brought out to you once you check in.

*For more information go to our website:*  
**<https://thurstoncountyfoodbank.org/80-2/grocery-distribution/>**  
**220 Thurston Ave. NE  
downtown Olympia WA**

**Advocating  
for justice in housing  
Supporting  
the survival of the homeless  
Helping  
with basic encampment needs  
Building  
a community where everyone feels safe,  
valued, and respected.**



**Just Housing ▲ 360.562.0239**  
**For information on Rolling Refuse Removal,  
Mutual Aid Mondays, and weekly meetings:  
[contact@justhousingolympia.org](mailto:contact@justhousingolympia.org)**



More wailing about workers

Labor shortage for railroads that have slashed workforce by 33%

"No way did I realize how difficult it was going to be to try and get people to come to work these days..." CEO of CSX.

Wolf Richter

There are few hiccups in the US economy right now. James Foote, the chief executive of CSX, one of the largest railroads in the US, put it this way:

"In January when I got on this [earnings] call, I said we were hiring because we anticipated growth. I fully expected that by now we would have about 500 new T&E [train and engine] employees on the property," he said. "No way did I or anybody else in the last six months realize how difficult it was going to be to try and get people to come to work these days."

"It's an enormous challenge for us to go out and find people that want to be conductors on the railroad, just like it's hard to find people that want to be baristas or anything else, it's very, very difficult," he said. So even though we brought on 200 new employees, we fell short of where we thought we would be by now...."

Railroads are grappling with a weird phenomenon that is a combination of "labor shortages" and 12.6 million people still claiming some form of unemployment compensation, amid stimulus-fueled demand.

This comes after railroads had spent six years shedding employees in order to tickle Wall Street analysts and pump up stock prices. The North American Class 1 freight railroads combined—BNSF, Union Pacific, Norfolk Southern, CSX, Canadian National, Kansas City Southern, and Canadian Pacific—have tried to streamline their

operations, using fewer but longer trains and making other changes, including the strategy of "precision scheduled railroading," implemented first by Canadian National, then by CSX.

The resulting deterioration in service triggered numerous complaints from shippers. But one of the big benefits was that the workforce could be slashed, which fattened the profit margins at the railroads. Wall Street analysts loved it, and it was good for railroad stocks. By now, precision scheduled railroading has become the new religion at all Class 1 railroads except at BNSF, which has not officially adopted it, at least not completely.

In the process, over the past six years, the Class 1 railroads have axed 33% of their workers through layoffs and attrition. According to the Surface of Transportation Board (STB), an independent federal agency that oversees freight railroads, the Class 1 railroads slashed their headcount from 174,000 workers in April 2015 to 116,000 workers in June 2021.

Before the railroads blame the 33% cut in the workforce on the pandemic, let's point out that by February 2020, just before the pandemic, their headcount had already been cut by 46,000 workers, or by 26%, to 128,000. Only 12,000 workers were cut during the pandemic.

During the pandemic, some of the workers were put on furlough, to be recalled more easily. But it turns out that not all of them are eager to return to work on the conditions offered by the railroads, including relocation to new assignments.

These cuts in the workforce, and now the scrambling to hire people amid "labor shortages," is contributing to issues in meeting heavy transportation demand: Union Pacific temporarily suspended traffic from Los Angeles into Chicago, and BNSF has started to meter traffic into Chicago, to allow them to catch up unloading the trains that are stuck in their Chicago rail yards. The resulting pot-banging by frustrated shippers has gotten the attention of the STB.

"The railroads cannot strip down to bare-bones operations," STB chairman Martin Oberman told the Wall Street Journal. "It'd be like a professional football team only having one quarterback."

The American Chemistry Council—which represents companies in the chemical industry, such as BASF, Chemours (the DuPont spinoff), Chevron Phillips Chemical, DuPont, ExxonMobil Chemical, etc.—lamented in a letter to the STB, cited by the WSJ, that railcars were waiting at railyards for over a week and travel times for some routes more than doubled. Some factories were running out of materials because shipments had gotten hung up and were approaching the point where they'd have to close, and other factories have cut production.

The railroads "clearly weren't as prepared as they should have been for the increase in traffic," Jeff Sloan, senior director of regulatory and technical affairs at the Council, told the WSJ. The deteriorating service shows that the railroads cut too deep before the pandemic and were unable to catch up, he said.

This is an excerpt from an article in Railroad Workers United News.



Hear that lonely whistle

Throughout Olympia's history, railroads have crisscrossed the city's landscape. As James Hannum notes in "Olympia's Railroad History," (an essay in the People's History of Olympia) at various points in our city's history, we hosted three "common carrier" lines, two logging railroads and a trolley line.

While the last remaining segment of one historic line is still owned by the Burlington Northern Sante Fe (the modern successor of the old Northern Pacific), any trains you see operating on it are owned by Tacoma Rail, which is operated as a public utility by the City of Tacoma. The second railroad still in operation in Olympia is the Union Pacific. This rail line comes into an urban portion of our community up the Deschutes River valley, passing through the old Brewery Complex, under Capitol Boulevard via a tunnel and then into downtown Olympia, terminating at the Port of Olympia.

Excerpted from Emmett O'Connell's article History of the RR Lines that Cross Through Olympia, in Thurston Talk, 2014.

Who thought up such a thing as "squeeze shifts"?

Maryjo Dolis

Not much news about working people makes the news. We hear about the stock market every day: Dow Jones—up today! Lookin' good. Oops, Nasdaq—down today! Disappointing result. Oops, S&P-500, up, as investors look past poor economic data. And drilling into our brains despite us.

On the other hand, we have no clue as to what's going on with people producing the things that underlie those stocks. The Bureau of Labor Statistics kept track of work stoppages involving six workers or more and lasting at least a full shift until 1982, when cuts by the Reagan administration cut funding for labor research and statistics. Today only strikes that involve at least 1,000 workers and last a full shift are recorded. Since nearly 60 percent of all private sector workers are employed by companies with fewer than 1,000 employees this data tells us next to nothing.

We can't make up for that, but we can offer a mere glimpse into the current working scene, with a little indication of what's changed, generally not for the better.

Union membership has neared all-time lows across the US, while income inequality has widened,

according to the Economic Policy Institute, a progressive think tank.

A report from the organisation



earlier this year found that the annual median income for a full-time worker is \$3,250 less than similar work in 1979 amid declining union enrolment.

But some people are so stretched that they actually went on strike.

Frito-Lay. In June, 600 people working in a Frito Lay plant in Topeka, Kansas went on strike calling for better pay, stronger workplace protections, an end to unpredictable overtime schedules, and staff shortages that workers say have endangered their lives on the job and stretched them too thin despite years of warnings. According to

long-time employees, "Fifteen, 20 years ago Frito-Lay had a really good reputation" You needed a high

school diploma and a work ethic. Slowly that has been whittled away.

The company's two-year agreement with the union expired in September 2020 and was extended through the end of June, but the union voted against a new contract with a two percent wage increase and 60-hour work week cap. Workers said they had been forced to work seven days a week, including what they called "suicide shifts" and the company called "squeeze shifts"—back-to-back 12-hour shifts with only eight hours off in between.

Since when is a 60-hour work-week something that corporate opera-

tives could offer with a straight face? Workers fought for and won the right to devote 40 hours a week to work so they could raise their families and sleep! Faced with the strike and calls to consumers to stop buying Frito-Lay related snacks (Pepsi, Gatorade, Starbucks, Lipton, Tropicana and Stacy's products, all under the Frito-Lay and Pepsi umbrella) until the company increased its offer slightly.

The company and the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers, and Grain Millers union in late July agreed on a new two-year contract that eliminates the "squeeze shifts" and provides a 4% pay rise, up from the 2% stated in the previous contract offer.

Other strikes: last month, there were more than 74 strikes and labor protests across the US. The longest strike was by nurses at St. Vincent Hospital in Massachusetts and the largest strike was by Volvo workers in Dublin, Virginia. An on-going strike is by a thousand Alabama mineworkers who went to New York to picket in front of the offices of BlackRock, the largest shareholder in WARRIOR MET COAL.

Maryjo Dolis worked all her life and never made much money.



# Community Spotlight



## Art ‘N The Alley

Sat, Aug 7, 11am-7pm.

Local artists offer their new creations in a neighborhood setting, with music and performance. Seven artists and several performers including Erin Finch, Juicebox Theater, The Common Thread, DJ Vampire Squid and much much more! Walk on over to the alley running behind 509 Decatur St. SW, between 4th and 5th Avenues SW. More info at Art ‘N The Alley Arts & Entertainment Olympia facebook page. You will meet someone you should know!



## Music at West Central Park

Thursdays through Sundays, depending

WCP is hosting music every Sunday, and sometimes Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons and evenings, Music in the afternoon starts around 2 pm, evenings generally at 7.. Bring your blanket or chair and your ears. Leave your worries behind! Drum Circles from 6-7, bring your shakers, rattles and drums. Masks and social distancing encouraged. Family friendly and free! 2103 Harrison Ave. NW



Events include: Jerry Garcia Celebration, Van-Dylan and Maggie's Farm, Backlash, Wandering Kind, Strawhat Revival, Jacked Lords and friends, Black Satin and more, more, more!

Check here for dates and times [www.westcentral-park.org/music](http://www.westcentral-park.org/music)

## Empowerment camp for girls

August 16 - 20, 9:30 - 4 pm each day

These week-long Empowerment Camps offer girls age 9-16, an opportunity to deepen their unique character, cultivate self confidence, develop core life skills and implement daily self-care through an innovative journey toward self-discovery.



August Empowerment Camp Includes: ice breakers, intros, art projects, yoga poses, meditation techniques, breathing exercises, positive affirmations, wellness tips, All About Me Collages, self care tools, sound healing, dance, health lectures, talking circles, theme based guest speakers, outdoor activities, organic snacks/ lunch, cultivating sisterhood and lots of fun!

At the Historic Coach House, 211 21st St. SW, Olympia 98501. There's a fee of \$395 - partial and full scholarships are available so don't fail to apply for financial reasons. Register at : [www.empowerment4girls.com/camps.html](http://www.empowerment4girls.com/camps.html). Or contact:Kristen Rubis at [hello@empowerment-4girls.com](mailto:hello@empowerment-4girls.com) or 360-878-2043

## History in the Garden Tour of Bigelow House

Sunday August 15, 1 - 3 pm.

This is a special, all-outdoor History in the Garden Tour on at the Bigelow House Museum, 918 Glass Avenue NE in Olympia. Visitors will walk through the garden, meeting costumed interpreters relating the history of the house, its residents and their relationship to women's voting rights in Washington. Suffragist Susan B. Anthony visited Bigelow House in 1871. Most Washington women won the right to vote in 1910 but nationally most women didn't attain the

right until the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified in 1920. Admission to the event is by donation. Masks are required for unvaccinated attendees.

## “The global fight for reproductive justice”

Saturday, August 28, 1pm PST (2pm MST, 3pm CST, 4pm EST).

Celebrate Women's Rights Day with activists in the forefront of the struggle for abortion rights. Panelists from Argentina, Ireland and the US will discuss on-the-ground organizing campaigns and international connections. Register in advance for the zoom event at <http://bit.ly/WRD-RW>. For more Information: Call the office of Radical Women at 206-985-4621, [RadicalWomenUS@gmail.com](mailto:RadicalWomenUS@gmail.com), [RadicalWomen.org](http://RadicalWomen.org). Everyone welcome.

## Trees Action Group: Trees please!

August 17 at 4 pm for monthly zoom meeting

Promote tree planting and forest protection, research current plan to protect mature trees, work with other local organizations, and explore developing a “Plant for the Planet” type group for middle school students. We focus on promoting tree planting and forest protection, drafting and lobbying local ordinances that protect mature trees, working with other local organizations. Get directions to the zoom meeting at <https://thurstonclimateaction.org/calendar/> For more information, contact [lynn@thurstonclimate-action](mailto:lynn@thurstonclimate-action)

## Olympia City Council resumes in-person meetings

Tuesdays at 7 pm for regular meetings

Council Chambers at City Hall, 601 4th Ave. E.

There will no longer be an option to view and participate using video conference technology, but employees are working toward a system that will eventually allow both in person and virtual attendance at meetings. You can still see Council meetings live on TCTV Channel 3, the Thurston Co media website and after the meeting you can see them at <https://olympia.legistar.com>

## Regenerative bioregional culture project

August 8, noon - 5pm

This is an online “open space” conference that's part of digital gatherings in the Salish Sea to network in support of regenerative bioregional culture. At this meeting, we will set the agenda on the spot, and self-organize into conversations (all using a mix of free google, wonder, and jisti platforms). You can share your work, meet people, or collect ideas.

Here's our query for Harvest 2021: “How shall we offer our youth a role in a regenerative bioregional culture during next school year?” This murmuration is to support folks that are working with children and youth, in school or out of schools. This is not asking what someone else should do sometime in the future but about what you and I might do now. The focus is personal, practical, and immediate. Invite yourself with this form. Visit the webpage <https://eco-systemguild.us18.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d4253466c058399cee711452&id=4554a564ec&e=0d27d2f805> for the event and feel free to come chat on the Facebook group.

## Bicycle Commuter Contest Rider Survey for 2021

Complete the survey by **December 1, 2021**

Help us improve the Bike Commuter Contest. This annual survey tells us how you feel about the BCC challenge and helps guide the BCC into the future. You are the bicycling community in Thurston County! Send in the survey by Dec. 2021 and you'll be entered to win a pair of Ortlieb Waterproof Panniers! Click here (online) to access the survey BCC 2021 Rider Survey <https://bcc.intercitytransit.com/news/another-bcc-rides-sunset>

## Free movies and stuff on the Olympia waterfront at NorthPoint

Saturdays, Aug 7, 14 and 21

Movies in the evening but come early for live music, food trucks and beer at the Port of Olympia's NorthPoint waterfront area -- at the lot next to the Swantown Marine Boat Launch parking lot -- near KGY Radio. Free and family friendly.

## South Sound senior centers are newly open

New hours 8:30 am - 4 pm, **Monday, Wednesday and Friday**



Both Olympia Center and Virgil Clarkson Lacey senior centers are offering classes , meals and meeting opportunities. Proof of vaccination will be required. There's more information and guidelines on their website.

## Glen’s Parallax Perspectives

*Impacts of US nuclear tests on Marshall Islanders, 1946-1958*

August on TCTV.

Guests Jack Niedenthal and Alson Kelen will discuss how US nuclear tests caused problems that continue to affect the health of Marshall Islanders, harm the environment and disrupted their traditional culture. Niedenthal is the Secretary of Health & Human Services for the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Alson Kelen is a former Mayor of Bikini and former Council member. Both guests are part of the Bikinian people's community in the Majuro Atoll.

The program airs on Thurston Community Media ([www.tcmedia.org](http://www.tcmedia.org)) at 1:30 pm Mon, 5:00 pm Wed, 9:00 pm Thurs. View the program or get a summary at [www.parallaxperspectives.org](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org) under “TV Programs” and “Nuclear Weapons” Questions? Contact Glen Anderson at (360) 491-9093 [glenanderson@integra.net](mailto:glenanderson@integra.net)



To be featured on the Community Spotlight, send 120 words about your program or event to [olywip@gmail.com](mailto:olywip@gmail.com) before the 4th Thursday

in the month. Send regular meetings and other items for posting on our Community Calendar (LocalMotive) online – and be sure to look for events there too. We can also feature items on our Facebook page and instagram. Check our twitter feed for pithy comments on the current situation. Above all, read and share Works in Progress!.



## Key tax rules

If someone does not pay taxes, or pays less than his or her share, someone else will have to make up the difference (p.24)

All tax laws distribute income. The issue is in what direction (p.9)

What Washington, DC says it is doing about taxes and what is really done, are seldom the same. (p.101)

When corporations pay a smaller share of overall taxes, individuals must make up the difference. (p.140)

For multinational corporations, the amount of taxes they pay is flexible; for small and medium sized U.S. businesses, it is mandatory. (p.190).

Special Interests abhor a tax-law vacuum. If the purpose for which a tax break originally was enacted no longer exists, new reasons will be found to perpetuate it. (p.236)

When a member of Congress, or an official in the executive branch of government, talks about “simplifying” the tax code, hold on to your wallet. (p.251)

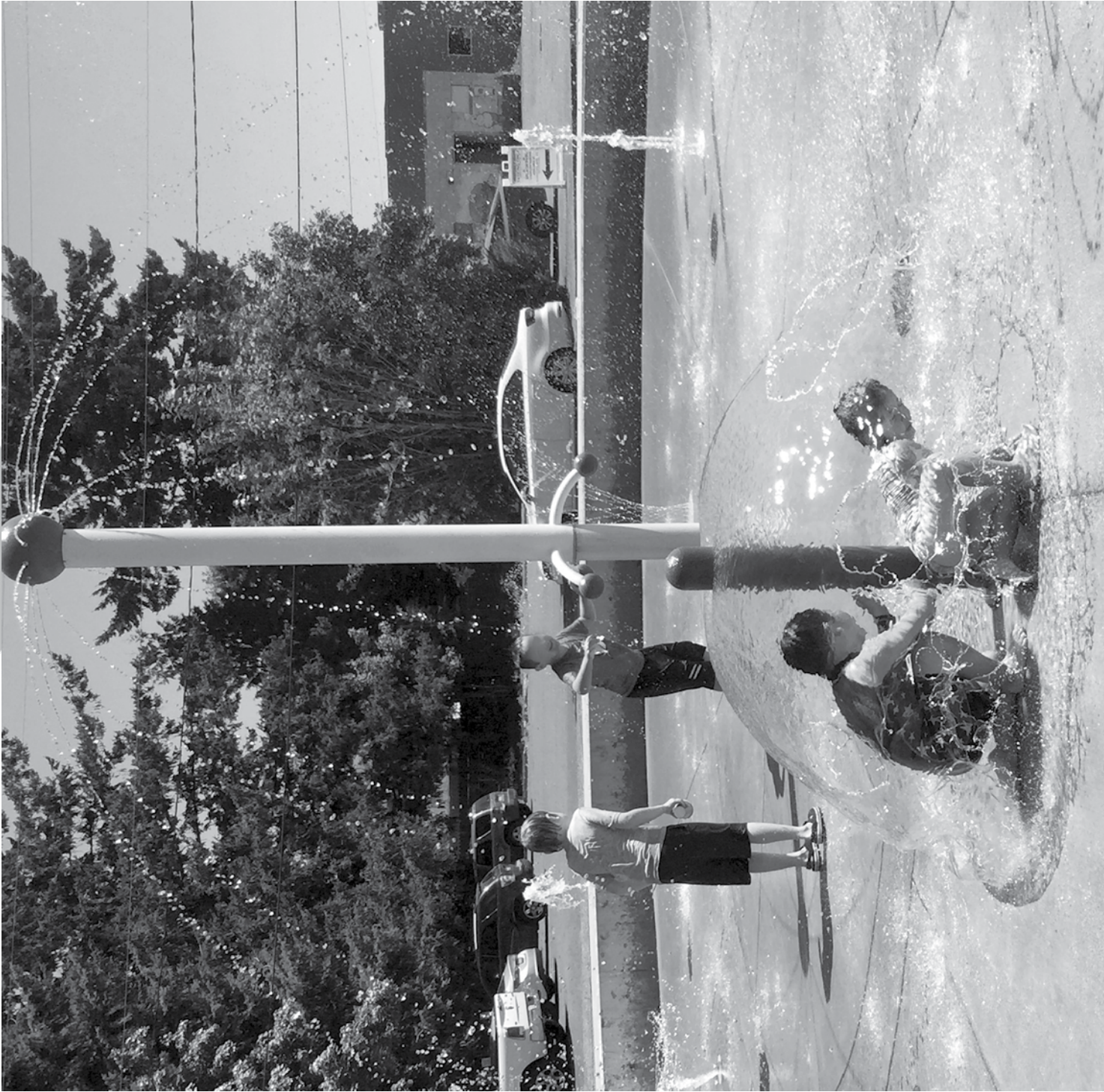
When members of Congress talk about cutting federal spending and enacting new federal programs, they are raising your local and state taxes. (p.293)

*These “tax rules” were excerpted for a graduate class at TESC by Dan Leahy from*

**America: Who Really Pays the Taxes**, by Donald Barlett and James Steele, March 1994.

***A list of tax legislation passed since then shows the continuing applicability of the rules:***

*Tax cuts and Jobs Act of 2017—Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015, - Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014—American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 - Middle-Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012....and so on.*



# Works in Progress

Advocating for social justice since 1990