



Works in Progress

Advocating for social justice since 1990

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A city of renters

Turning Olympia into an asset class for investors

Mary Jo Dolis

This is not a story about the broad swath of Olympia residents who spend half their income to pay for a place to live. It's not about how "market rate" rents and housing prices have increased to a point where employers complain that they can't get workers to locate here. It's not about the extraordinary public expenditures on the homelessness generated by all of the above.

It's about reshaping the City of Olympia for investors

In 1970 about 30% of the households in Thurston County lived in rentals. In the last decade, for the first time ever, construction of new multifamily dwellings has outpaced single family homes. A great deal of that growth in renting is in Olympia, 52% renter-occupied housing—and increasing. According to information provided recently to Olympia Planning Commissioners, the development pipeline is full of multifamily units: Downtown—441 units, Eastside—505 units, Westside—678 units.

A city of renters—the policy of Olympia's planners, politicians and private developers

In 2020, the City amended its municipal code to add multifamily structures—duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes—to existing residential zones. These are expected to be rentals, not for sale to people looking to own a home. These same amendments removed a requirement that the owner of a residential lot with an Accessory Dwelling Unit occupy the premises. This makes it possible for an investor to offer two rentals where previously, one was required to be owner-occupied.

Other changes to the municipal code also favor investors. The city's rules for "short-term rentals" invite investors to own up to two dwellings and rent them out by the night. That there can be a higher return on investment from these rentals is an incentive for buying up units (houses, condos) otherwise available for homes. There is no need for the investor to live on the property—or in Thurston County. Or even in the US.

Olympia Planning Staff recently initiated two more projects that promise to expand investment opportunities in the housing sector. The Olympia Comprehensive Plan calls for "neighborhood centers" that offer access to day-to-day needs within walking distance for nearby residents. Based on outreach so far, the staff model for such centers is an extensive commercial area supporting new apartment buildings—rentals—up to four stories.

Another project is the "Capital Mall Triangle Subarea Plan," which is projected to transform the big West Olympia mall area, adding housing organized around a denser grid of connected streets. Included as a likely option is converting office or retail to multifamily housing. When Planning Staff presented its work program for the Subarea recently, Councilmembers emphasized the need "to connect with investors and developers when the Plan was complete."

How investors see this new asset class

Small landlords may complain about limits to their ability to make money, buying and renting hous-

ing is seen as a solid investment with great returns overall. Two big benefits come from government subsidies and appreciation. The tax code allows investors to deduct expenses, interest and "depreciation." It is possible to show an accounting loss even when you're making money. Certain landlords can write off losses. In Washington, landlords can receive funds from a "Landlord Mitigation Program." Olympia (like other jurisdictions) gives developers a tax exemption for building housing in specified areas.

As for appreciation, when rents cover mortgage and related costs, the investor ends up with a tax-free asset to sell at a price far above the amount invested.

Another sign of the zeal for this asset class comes from Amazon's new "Arrived Homes." Amazon will acquire single-family homes to use as rental properties, then sell shares to investors through its online platform. The demand in these shares is reported to be growing "exponentially."

What this means to private developers and investors

As long as Olympia officials choose to depend on developers and investors as the source of the community's housing stock, those interests will be in a position to compel policies.

For example, Olympia's Housing Action Plan discusses adding

► City of renters, continued on page 12

Cooper Crest forest is no more State logging permit voids decades of community planning

Esther Kronenberg and
Jerry Dierker

Until the last week of this July, there was a forest of 80- to 100-year-old trees in a residential neighborhood, on Cooper Point Road between 20th and 28th Streets. "Cooper Crest" was a legacy forest, thriving in the middle of Green Cove Basin on a steep hillside alive with springs that supply Green Cove Creek. A 25-acre stand of Douglas Firs and cedars presided over a critical area for aquifer recharge, provided habitat for diverse species, stabilized slopes to reduce landslides—and contributed to slowing global warming by sequestering carbon.

DNR issues a quick permit

That forest is gone now, clearcut by the investors of Silvimantle LLC under a permit granted by the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The private landowner was able to gain DNR approval for the permit in less than a month, overriding a plan for the area adopted by Olympia and Thurston County in 1998, and based on a map that falsely eliminated one of two streams on the property. By accepting the doctored map, DNR gave the investors a gift of public land, allowing them to log in a riparian area that would otherwise have required protection.

Silvimantle bought the northern 17 acres of the property in March 2021 for \$150,000 then bought an adjoining parcel in May 2022, giving them the 20+ acres needed to apply for

a DNR logging permit. Marty Wickland, a representative of Silvimantle, quoted in the online journal JOLT on August 5, claimed his group had wanted to sell the property intact but couldn't find a buyer.

Time to get the money

"At the end of the day, we ran out of time for our investors. We have four of them and they were all like, 'Hey, we need to get our money back.' The log market's very strong. And we needed to move forward," Wicklund said. [*Who will repair the damage?* See sidebar at right.]

They came in and clearcut the trees before the period for appeal was over. The community surrounding the site became aware of the project only after a two-week comment period ending May 27 had passed, denying the public any opportunity to weigh in. The City of Olympia however, had provided comments, disputing data presented in the Forest Practices Application (FPA) that DNR used to issue the logging permit.

City of Olympia shut out

The City noted that, while Silvimantle's Application claimed there was only one stream on the property, there were, in fact, two. Both were shown on a Department of Fish and Wildlife study that had been done for a project proposed previously for the site, and on DNR's own map. Other discrepancies the city noted were that this was a fish-bearing stream,

► Cooper, continued on page 4

Real investors vs speculators

OlyEcosystems, a local non-profit, focuses on strategic acquisition of open space, ecosystem restoration and advocacy. They were able to purchase the Cooper Crest property from Silvimantle for \$225,000 with the support of the Angela J. Bowen Conservancy Foundation—making an investment that promises to offer dividends for the future of our community.

What took a hundred and more years to produce—with myriad benefits for the climate, the habitat, and the people who live here—was eliminated in five days, with benefits of several hundred thousand dollars to just four investors.

OlyEcosystems will start what promises to be a long commitment by doing critical erosion control and then taking on the task of planting 350 trees per acre as required under the Forest Practices permit. Planting needs to occur by the end of the year to benefit from winter moisture. OlyEcosystems is a community effort. To volunteer or donate go to <https://olyecosystems.org/>

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

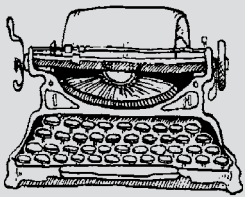
Informed opinion pieces are accepted when accompanied by facts, examples and sources. We discourage writing where a key point is stated as fact when it’s unproven or in serious dispute. Writing that stereotypes groups or categories of people won’t be accepted.

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.

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THOUGHTS ON THE THEME

Better ships than citizenship

Many stories in this issue say that our governments’ priorities don’t reflect the priorities of the governed but instead serve the demands of profit. Their decisions direct public resources—and even the modest resources of workers and other members of the public—into the hands of investors for their private gain. Illustrating this are articles about turning Olympia into a city of renters, about selling off the trees needed for shade and slowing global warming, and an interview describing the status of local Starbucks’ workers after they voted to form a union.

Increasingly, our governments’ priorities don’t even reflect the priorities of voters. Articles about neighborhood centers and the one about the tax for a Cultural Access Program, illustrate how voters’ consent can be manufactured. (Measures in state legislatures to restrict access to the vote are another approach, allowing politicians to choose voters rather than the other way around.) Annabel Gregg’s article on abortion also

shows how decisions by elected officials in other states play out in Washington.

Articles about the implications for democracy come from the Supreme Court’s decision on abortion (“Ordered liberty”) and a book review on the history of free speech. Enrique Quintero’s column on our habit of violence against black people is all too clearly illustrated “The strange case of Sheriff Troyer.”

There are better ways. One is described in “Making affordable housing a reality.” The program “puts land planning, acquisition, and the actual building of housing units into the public’s hands” because “a local administration which can build its own housing can never be held hostage by developers expecting an unreasonable profit margin again.”

Some possibilities for a better future can be glimpsed in the center spread featuring stories by students of a TESC class on “The Peoples’ Epistemology” and in Thad Curtz’s conversation about

reducing your carbon footprint.

But in my opinion, real hope lies in this reply by a young woman when asked whether citizenship could be redefined to produce a culture of care:

“Better ships than citizenship include friendship, relationship, or even a pirate ship, where unauthorized motley formations are bound together to disrupt notions of the private, of property, of wealth and its concentration. ...one of the worst aspects of citizenship is that it needs authorization or that its expression is tied to what is given by a governing (or, more precisely, ruling) body. The kind of citizenship I dream of is one where we acknowledge our attachment to each other, desire to be attached to one another, in relations other than property relations. Where serving the other is a way of serving the self. It sounds romantic, but isn’t that the origin of all the things we want to make and bring into the world? The power of a love letter that is written without a guarantee of a response?”

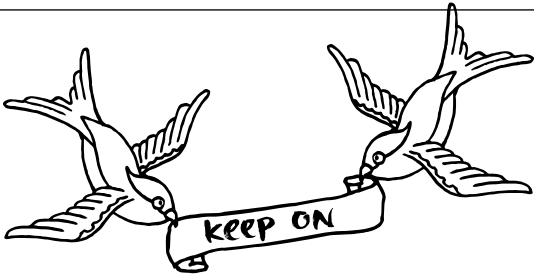
—BW

December theme: Hostages to the future

It’s moving ahead, with or without us. Who’s keeping track? Is change the same as progress? Is being human still a good thing? Who gets to decide?

WIP will produce a December issue. The deadline for contributions is November 1 to allow sufficient time for production. We welcome contributions related to the theme. We continue to seek

volunteers interested in guest editing two to four pages of the paper. A guest editor rounds up content (perhaps writing themselves but also recruiting related pieces from others) and does the initial editing for that section. If you are interested in guest editing a section of the December issue, please contact WIP at olywip@gmail.com.



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The strange case of Pierce County Sheriff Ed Troyer

Emily Lardner

In 2020, the same year Ed Troyer ran for Sheriff of Pierce County, Pierce County Executive Bruce Dammeier commissioned a study of use-of-force incidents committed by the Sheriff's Department. Published in November 2021, the report of the Pierce County Criminal Justice Work Group noted that black residents of Pierce County experienced 5.62 times as much police use-of-force as white residents. Black children experienced force seven to 12 times more than white children. Black or African Americans experienced deadly force at a rate close to three times that of the white population.

In an interview with conservative talk radio staff for KTTH in March 2022, Troyer—who is white—responded to the study by criticizing the methodology used:

"Somebody gets arrested for, say, domestic violence. And we tell them they're under arrest, and we put handcuffs on them, even though they're being cooperative, we stick them in the patrol car. That's three uses of force—it's not excessive force or unlawful force. They're not clarifying that, they're just saying 'use-of-force.'"

In other words, there's nothing to see here.

But there's something to see here

On January 27, 2021, around 2 am, Sedrick Altheimer—who is black—was delivering newspapers for a route that included Sheriff Troyer's house. In an interview published by King 5 News last May, Altheimer explained that he's worked that route for eight years—since he was 18. He delivers more than 400 papers, six nights a week in the predominantly white north Tacoma neighborhood. That January night, Altheimer said, he noticed someone following him. Altheimer got out of his car, approached the other driver, and asked three questions: "Are you a cop? Are you following me? And is it because I'm black?"

According to Altheimer, Troyer didn't identify himself as law enforcement—but said his wife was black, and accused Altheimer of being a "porch pirate." Right after the confrontation, Troyer called an emergency dispatcher and claimed that Altheimer had threatened to kill him. The dispatcher sent an alarm to all law enforcement in the area—ultimately, 14 officers converged on the scene.

Altheimer said in the interview with King 5 that he feared for his life: "Every time you drive in that neighborhood you look at that one spot and you're like, man, I almost lost my life."

An investigation and charges—against Troyer

In April 2021, Governor Inslee asked the Attorney General's office to investigate the incident. In October 2021, AG Ferguson's office filed two misdemeanor criminal charges against Troyer—one for false reporting and one count of making false or misleading statements to a civil servant. In addition, an investigation commissioned by the Pierce County Council and conducted by former US Attorney Brian Moran found Troyer's conduct had "violated policies on bias-free policing and other professional standards."

Troyer was placed on Pierce County's "Brady List," a list of police officials who have engaged in misconduct or given false or misleading statements. The *Seattle Times* describes the Brady List as "a roster of law enforcement officers with credibility problems that could impact their ability to serve as witnesses in criminal cases."

But wait, there's more

Altheimer claims Troyer has approached him on several occasions since the initial incident in January, in spite of an anti-harassment order. At a hearing in July 2022, Judge Jeffrey Jahns determined that Troyer represents "a substantial danger to the community, especially Mr. Altheimer" and noted the power differential between the two men. Jahns said there was a likelihood that Troyer would

"seek to intimidate witnesses and otherwise seek to interfere with the administration of justice." As a result, Jahns ordered Troyer to post \$100,000 bail while he awaits trial on the false-reporting charges.

But not enough to end Troyer's position as Sheriff

Troyer claims the charges against him are politically motivated by anti-cop forces who see racism everywhere. Back on KTTH radio, Troyer claimed that "we can either have a safe community where police are allowed to do their job or we can have the cops handcuffed and the criminals run free. I ask for your support in standing up to bullies in power," he said.

Troyer understands how to play the power game. As Libby Denkman and Sarah Leibovitz point out in an article published on KUOW's website in June, Troyer can't be fired—only voters can remove him from office: "The sheriff is still elected. And with two years left in his term, Troyer has plenty of time to prepare for a re-election campaign."

King County voters opted to change the role of sheriff from elected to appointed in 2020. That means a sheriff in King County can be fired. Thurston and Pierce Counties still elect their sheriffs. Last summer, the Pierce County Council voted down a proposed ballot measure that would have asked voters whether to turn the sheriff's position into an appointed one.

Ed Troyer remains in office awaiting trial. Sedrick Altheimer has resigned from his job as a newspaper carrier. He awaits an October 2022 trial on the suit he filed in Federal Court against Troyer. The section of the Pierce County website where the report on use-of-force was published has not been updated.

Emily Lardner is a long-time member of the WIP Publishing Committee.

About the cover

A City of Renters, as well as graphics for articles on pages 14, 15, and 16, were created by Wyatt Gaer, an artist and designer interested in vulnerability, bodies, and personhood. Wyatt is local to the Olympia/Lacey area and enjoys staring at pictures of robots. Follow Wyatt at @wyatt.gaer or contact her at wyattgaer@gmail.com.



Then this happened...

Maybe they'll drive electric cars?

Kicking off Pride Month, the City of Olympia on June 2 met with representatives of the notorious anti-LGBTQ corporation. They okayed a plan by Chick-Fil-A to demolish the Japanese Steak House at Cooper Point Road and Capital Mall Way and cut down half of the 143 trees now growing there. That will make room for two drive-thrus so people can get to the chicken strips, nuggets and sandwiches without leaving their cars.

Maybe we didn't need new taxes.

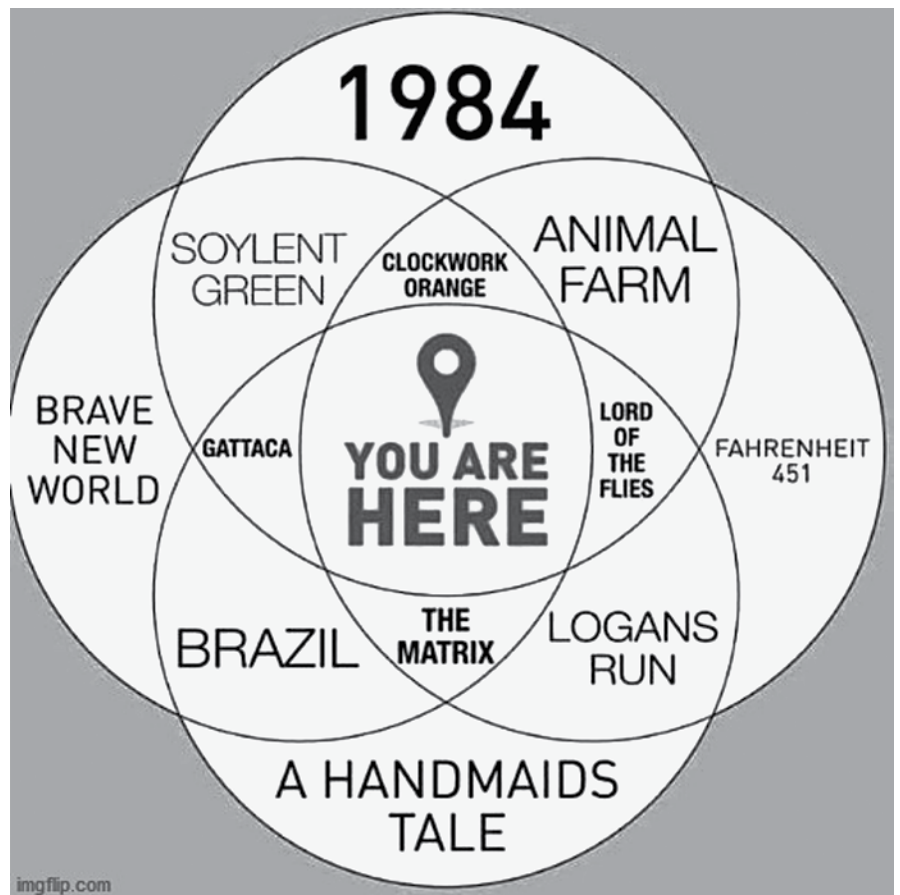
The City of Olympia ended the year with a \$10.2 million surplus mainly due to collecting more in sales tax than projected. Council members agreed to spend \$7.5 million of the money on items listed by City Manager Jay Burney at a May council meeting. There wasn't a lot of discussion... "extra" money tends to seem easier to spend. One modest item: \$190,000 for the climate program and the legal department because they have a lot of work so they need additional

staffing support...

Maybe it's worth fighting.

After losing to Olympians for Smart Density (OSD) at the Growth Hearings Board, the City of Olympia chose not to revise their Missing Middle rules to comply with the Board's directives. Instead, they appealed to Superior Court. That Court just ruled for the city on the grounds that OSD did not have standing. OSD has appealed that decision to the Court of Appeals, out of serious concern that the denial of standing could be used by the City attorney and their Hearing Examiner against other residents attempting to challenge city actions. A decision by the Appeals Court could come early in 2023.

Maybe Washington could address the wage end of the "affordable housing" crisis. California legislators are working on the Fast Food Accountability and Standards Recovery (FAST) Act. Among other things, the Act would establish a state council to create minimum working standards for fast



food restaurants. Food and accommodation businesses in Thurston County account for 5.7% of all jobs and pay the lowest wages, averaging \$22,700 a year (psst—they don't offer full-time work).

Maybe ensuring everyone has access to basic needs is scary.

Community organizer India Walton beat the four-term incumbent by large margins in the Buffalo NY mayoral primary last summer. She

campaigned on "good living-wage jobs, affordable housing, a quality education and access to basic needs" for the whole community. Frightened by that prospect, establishment Dems and Republicans rallied together, funding a successful write-in campaign for the incumbent. The new (old) mayor's first act after the Tops Grocery shooting was to add new money to the police budget.

Washington will feel the impact

By eliminating the constitutional right to privacy for women, six justices gave state legislators the right to make abortion a crime

Annabel Gregg

The day the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, eliminating a constitutional right that had stood for nearly 50 years, much of Washington revolted. Thousands of pro-choice protestors took to the streets of Olympia and Seattle in response to the Court's June 24 decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson's Women's Health Organization*.

Katie Rodihan, Communications Director of the parent to Olympia's Planned Parenthood, told me that the day that the *Dobbs* decision came out, dedicated activists in Olympia put together an emergency action at the Capitol:

"We had to put out a quick last-minute ask to our most dedicated volunteers in Olympia. We expected something small, but... we ended up getting a full rally, filling the Capitol steps."

Washington state law protects a woman's privacy right

Washington is considered a "sanctuary state" for abortion access, with more than 50 facilities throughout Washington that offer abortion services. According to the Pew Research Center, more than 60 percent of adults in Washington State believe abortion should be legal in almost all cases (these are pre-*Dobbs* statistics.)

Chapter 9.02 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) protects abortion for Washington residents in broad strokes. Abortion is legal up until the point of viability—a term that references the point in pregnancy where a fetus could survive outside the womb without medical assistance, usually between 24 and 26 weeks. The law imposes no waiting period for those seeking an abortion, and minors do not require parental consent.

Blurring the line separating church and state

The six Catholic justices who decided *Dobbs* reflect the position of a Catholic church that, according to Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore in an interview with the Religious News Service, "has prayed for *Roe*'s reversal for years." The church has been "working for the cause of life by providing services—medical services, pro-life pregnancy centers, educational services, charitable services, adoption services," not unlike services provided by Options Pregnancy Clinic in Olympia.

Options Pregnancy Clinic (OPC) in Olympia is the only alternative to Planned Parenthood shown when you search online for "abortion" in Olympia. However, this religious organization, like certain other "birthing centers" in the state, does not actually perform abortions or refer pregnant women to places they can get an abortion.

According to their website, OPC is "an outreach ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ through His church." OPC "wants to be the first contact made in challenging pregnancy situations" so as to be "your go-to source as you deal with your unplanned pregnancy. Via their self-reported statistics, over 1,800 people visited the clinic in 2018, and over 300 pregnancy tests were conducted.

They claim to give "the latest and most accurate information" on abortion for educational purposes. However, the information provided in the abortion education section of their website offers no citations or sources, instead warning women of the "risks and consequences" of abortion, urging unsure women to "talk to someone on our knowledgeable staff" to make an informed "pregnancy decision."



"If men could have abortions, they'd be available at Jiffy Lube."—Betty White

What they urge is adoption, highlighting claims that adoption will remove financial burdens and give you "peace of mind" if you are uncomfortable raising a child at "your current stage of life."

In case there is any doubt, Options affirms the strict religious basis for their pregnancy counseling. In a press release from this past May, Options representatives stated that "the premeditated killing of an innocent life is the destroying of an image bearer of God and is expressly prohibited in Scripture." Above all else, they want their visitors to birth their child, no matter what.

With each state now able to "regulate abortion as its citizens wish," the doors are open to Republican-controlled legislatures acting on religiously motivated beliefs to determine their state's abortion laws. Even in the Evergreen State, abortion is not as cut-and-dry a proposition as one might think. In 2019, a handful of Washington legislators put forward the "Abolition of Abortion" Act, classifying abortion as murder and making it a felony. The bill, which died in committee, was similar to criminalization laws newly adopted in other states.

Washington will feel the impact of *Dobbs*

Many states are implementing trigger laws to ban abortion once the decision overturning *Roe* becomes official. Some states are including criminal measures aimed at abortion providers as well as other penalties that would affect women seeking an abortion. One result will be to push desperate pregnant people to Washington's borders.

According to The Guttmacher Institute, Washington will likely see a 385% increase in the number of out-of-state patients coming here for abortion care. With a location in reach of Idaho, Utah and Wyoming, all states that severely restrict abortion access, Washington laws offer out-of-staters the opportunity to receive a safe and legal abortion.

Following the *Dobbs* decision, Governor Jay Inslee affirmed that the state would serve as a sanctuary for out-of-staters seeking abortion services, issuing an executive order that prohibits the Washington State Patrol from aiding investigations of non-residents seeking abortions in Washington.

Thurston County's most prominent and trusted provider is Planned Parenthood Olympia. To get a

"It's been heartbreaking to listen to the hurdles that some of these patients are overcoming to get what should be basic healthcare. We've already seen patients coming from out of state—Texas, Tennessee, Alabama. Everywhere."

As the post-*Dobbs* dominos start to fall, Planned Parenthood's throughout Washington brace for an increase in patients from all over. "We're expecting the biggest increase to come from Idaho," explained Rodihan. A "trigger" ban on abortion access recently went into effect there. So, "we can start to see that surge in the fall."

It's not the end...just a setback

By rejecting the reasoning in *Roe v. Wade* as "egregiously wrong," Justice Alito, writing for the Court majority, rejected any constitutional right to privacy and set a new precedent that could be used to overturn other foundational rulings related to intimate life matters, ranging from same-sex marriage to birth control and potentially more. "Abortion rights, access to birth control, gay marriage—all of these things are potentially on the chopping block," said Rodihan.

Rodihan talked with me on the phone while juggling her "kiddo" on her arm after a long day of navigating Indiana's legislative threats to abortion. "Don't give up," Rodihan tells Olympians worried about the current state of abortion and the right to privacy. "It's not the end, it's just a setback. We're going to be here for the long term. We've got some wonderful organizers in Washington turning our emotions into real action. Stay hopeful."

Annabel Gregg is a graduate student at NYU Wagner School of Public Service. Annabel was a reporter for three years at the Greenwich Journal in Upstate New York and lived in Olympia this past summer as a policy intern.

Olympia Food Co-op Is Turning 45

45 Years
And Still Spinnin'

1977-2022

45th
Anniversary

Sid A

Come Party With Us & Celebrate Our Working Members

Sept 10, 2022

2pm-5pm Heritage Park

www.olympiafood.coop

Olympia
FOOD
CO-OP

Another investor-driven strategy “Neighborhood” centers— or centers of commerce?

Judy Bardin

Most Olympia residents would welcome a coffee shop or small grocery store into their neighborhood, yet plans for such Neighborhood Centers have been in talks for years with little to show for it. Being able to get to a slice of pizza or head to a bakery without a car adds quality, sociability and identity to where you live.

Now the City seems to be angling to take advantage of the public's desire for Neighborhood Centers to allow three- and four-story apartment buildings in broad swaths of residential neighborhoods. The City risks turning a “Yes in my back yard” (YIMBY) proposition into a divisive “Not in my back yard” (NIMBY) proposition.

Diverse housing types and existing centers

City zoning already allows for townhouses, cottages, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and ADUs in most neighborhoods. What is not allowed are three- and four-story apartment buildings.

Olympia defines Neighborhood Centers as “small walk, bike, and transit-friendly business clusters within residential neighborhoods that serve the day-to-day retail and service needs of local residents and foster community interaction.”

Olympia has designated 17 areas as “Neighborhood Center” areas—some exist already and some are “aspirational.” Existing designations among the 17 areas include two successful examples: Olympia Food Coop on Bowman and Rogers NW, and Wildwood on Capitol Way. Each fits the definition above: small-scale local businesses, tucked into a limited area and fostering relationships among local residents.

Who was consulted

To kick off its “neighborhood centers” work, the City hired two firms—for a combined \$85,000—Makers Architecture and Leland Consulting. They were charged to look at “barriers” to Neighborhood Center development. The consultants produced a market analysis and a neighborhood center profile. While business stakeholders and commercial property owners were consulted early and often, local residents—that is, people who live in these neighborhoods—were markedly not consulted.

Despite the report noting that in Olympia, higher population densities are not associated with the success of Neighborhood Centers, the consultants’ first recommendation was to modify the City’s zoning so new types of commercial and residential buildings could be located anywhere within a 6.5 acre center defined by a 300-foot radius.

This upzoning would allow taller buildings, less parking area, higher intensity of use, checkerboard pattern development and increased lot coverage—in sum, more concrete, less green space, diminished light and concentrated development.

Making room for more commercial development

The City’s strategy appears to be a classic case of “manufacturing consent”—an effort to manipulate neighborhoods into accepting a corporate-sponsored agenda as a necessary or even “natural” consequence of today’s economy. One of the most pernicious aspects of that agenda is to replace home ownership—the foundation for building wealth and economic security for the middle class—with “rentership”—a stream of ever-in-

creasing rents draining a family’s housing payments into corporate and hedge fund bank accounts.

The Profile report goes on to suggest that modest homes could be replaced by commercial development. It actually acknowledges that this could lead to gentrification and displacement, i.e., destruction of some of the most affordable housing in Olympia.

When the reports reference “infill,” they are not talking about building on empty lots, but rather iden-

How the City of Olympia orchestrated support for a \$2.3 million “cultural access” sales tax

Bethany Weidner

Late in July 2021, the head of Olympia’s Office of Community Vitality requested \$200,000 as a new “enhancement” to the City’s operating budget. It would pay for the City to hold a special election in the spring, to put a .1% sales tax increase before voters.

The election was needed to enable Olympia to create a “Cultural Access Program” as allowed under Washington state law. With a majority of votes in favor of the tax, the City would be able to collect \$2.3 million a year for 7 years.

Proponents wanted to begin collecting the money on July 1, 2022, which meant they had to pay for their own special election before then.

How did a Cultural Access Program become a priority for funding so urgent that Olympia couldn’t wait to put the question to voters on the regularly scheduled August ballot?

Rise of the “culture economy”

One clue may lie with the belief in the “culture economy” that has in recent years emerged among promoters as the new economic development engine. According to this view, the proliferation of arts organizations and the frequency of art and cultural events improves the image of a community. Art and culture attracts business and makes a city more vital, more appealing to prosperous consumers, including those the City is hoping to attract to settle in the proliferation of new high-end apartments downtown.

Inspire Olympia, the political action committee set up to secure a favorable vote on the levy, said “arts are a proven economic driver, and community investments in the arts around the state have proven results.”

The state’s cultural access law does require cities to prioritize programs and services for public school children, but the entities providing the programs and services are the ones who will be funded—and will benefit. Funds can be used by nonprofits like the Children’s Museum and others

for capital expenditures, construction of improvements, technology, equipment, and supplies related to program delivery.



The text of the voter’s pamphlet contained a blank where the “against” statement should have been.

“Free and discounted access to the arts for Olympia’s children”

The arts as a driver for economic development may explain the urgency to begin collecting the money, but the tax was marketed to the community primarily as a program to give children robust access to the arts and culture—especially children often excluded from such activities for lack of resources.

With official go-ahead by the City Council, staff and supporters of the initiative set about to orchestrate approval of the tax. They established a Political Action Committee, Inspire Olympia, with Olympia Mayor Cheryl Selby (identified as a private citizen) serving as a cochair with two other individuals.

Manufacturing consent

During August and September, staff members worked in partnership with a 9-member “steering committee” made up of business owners, nonprofit officials and educators—all prospective beneficiaries of the tax. The steering committee recruited another 16 participants to craft a campaign that would lead to a successful vote on the tax levy.

tifying the destruction of “modest” homes that constitute some of the most affordable housing in Olympia and their replacement by rental apartments. The consultants met with business and real estate reps to get input before issuing their report, but—again—not with neighborhood residents.

Collecting evidence to show community support

In line with an attempt to manufacture consent, the City created an online survey with questions designed to elicit answers that can be used to indicate public support for the corporate agenda.

Take the question that asks respondents if they support allowing a “...greater variety of home types within a ¼–½ mile of the neighborhood center for greater con-

► **Investors**, continued on page 17

In October, they called together a stakeholder group composed of 80 representatives from 40 arts, heritage, science and education organizations. Meeting 2 (or maybe it was 4) times, and using “targeted questions and discussion” they gathered “input” on “priorities and hopes” to be realized with the new funds; and passed these on to Councilmembers to show support for the levy. There was evidently no discussion about the tax itself.

How the community at large feels

Staff next hired a firm called Change Research to help craft a community survey to be used to demonstrate support. Respondents ranked 9 propositions, all related to expanding arts and cultural programs (Very important? Not important?). Another set of 11 asked respondents to “agree or disagree” with similar statements—again a majority agreed that expanding arts is a good idea. But there was one important distinction: a majority also agreed with the 4 statements that said raising taxes to pay for this expansion was wrong.)

Marygrace Goddu, the City’s Historic Preservation Officer staffed the tax proposal and also served on the Inspire Olympia! steering committee. On Nov 16, she briefed Councilmembers on “how the community at large feels.” From the stakeholders came “a clear call for expanded cultural access.” The community survey results were “all strong in support.” No mention was made of the majority who agreed that a tax increase for the arts was not a good idea. (According to the briefing paper, 417 people “from a representative demographic” responded to the survey. However, in counting the survey responses as reported, the actual number appears to have been much lower—maybe as few as 120.)

A voters’ pamphlet in support of the tax

State law requires a City Council offering a ballot initiative to find people to prepare “for” and “against” statements for the voters’

► **Cultural access**, continued on page 17

Inequality heats up

More risk falls on people working outside

Lin Nelson

Heat, smoke and climate assault have become “new normal” conditions that daily threaten workers, especially in agriculture.

There is no heat rule at the federal level to protect workers. In Washington, Oregon and California there are emergency rules, but they are temporary.

And there are meetings... and more meetings. There are the organizing efforts of regional health care providers, unions, and advocacy groups. And there are the meetings of agencies whose personnel struggle to create rules that are supposed to protect workers—even though they mostly don't have time for those meetings in their increasingly stressed workdays.

A lot can be said about the meetings, rule creations and behind-the-scenes contortions that agency folks go through to navigate tensions between workers and employers. There are dedicated public workers at the federal level (EPA, OSHA, and the NIHHS—National Integrated Heat Health Info System) and in state agencies.

They struggle to protect the rights of workers facing the brunt of climate change—especially outdoor workers, from firefighters to truck drivers to construction crews. This includes farmworkers, who face multiple risks at work, and their families who often live in overheated situations. Among farmworkers, the undocumented risk retaliation in addition to the hazards they face.

On the West Coast, a campaign by the Western State Pact has had an impact, pressuring governors in three states to create more unified and effective protections across the region. Washington's temporary rules on heat/smoke call for rest-breaks, shade, water, attention to workers' pre-existing health conditions and emergency work stoppage when air quality indexes hit high marks. The other two states have similar measures, with Oregon's reportedly the most protective, and California's emerging due to energized community advocacy.

Against what often feels like the glacial, “too late” process of government deliberation on the impacts of climate change, there are those who are vocal witnesses to worsening conditions. These are advocates who stand alongside the agricultural workers struggling hard just to get by. Here are some of their voices

Breaking through the seasonal cycle

Farmworker advocates have every reason to be furious and frustrated that the economic, social, and health conditions of the agriculture worker community have improved so little over the decades. Their voices have been overpowered and hushed with the seasonal cycles that result in ebbing and receding of the public visibility of their struggles.

Among those who never recede are the *promotores de salud*...the community health workers. These community advocates, as well as other worker justice activists, are swelling their ranks with renewed power. Many of “their own” are back in the communities with solid

credentials in environmental justice, medical professionals, expanded state and regional networking.

Elevating the need for access, expecting community needs to be responded to in more sustainable ways, assuring that respect and cultural lens inhabits all organizational strategies. There is power

improve the enforcement of these new protective rules and laws.

Unfortunately, some farmworkers have worked even fewer hours this harvest season because of the extreme heat which has resulted in lower wages and added stress to pay for expenses. The climate crisis continues to negatively impact

working on a Farmworker Justice Campaign to organize around heat, smoke and pesticide use. This involves advocacy work, health-care, research, and policy work to address how these factors impact farmworkers and to find a solution to support them through this time of drastic climate change.

—Irene Ruiz, *Bilingual Chapter Organizer, Idaho Organization of Resource Councils, Boise*

At the national level, there are major efforts to offer information and strategic support to workers at risk. The National Council on Occupational Safety & Health works with unions, worker centers, immigrant rights groups and health rights organizations to support workers. COSH organizes workshops as part of a national alliance pushing for meaningful heat/climate protections. Public Citizen, a key organizer for that group, has taken up the challenge with Congress and OSHA to ensure worker safety and protection from retaliation. Public Citizen's Juley Fulcher recently announced that Congress is showing signs of support for the labor-promoted Asuncion Valdivia Heat Illness & Prevention Act.

There is also growing pressure on OSHA to activate an emergency rule on heat, certainly not too much to ask of OSHA, launched a half-century ago. Time moves on, especially for those out in the fields, shouldering the heat of these difficult times.

What can we do?

Kathy Baros-Friedt reminds us to continue to pay attention: Educate ourselves about the links between climate crisis and the health and work of the agricultural workers who are vital to our economy. Make connections where they might otherwise slip through the cracks. Where we can, humbly make introductions and then step out of the way so that those eloquent voices are heard.

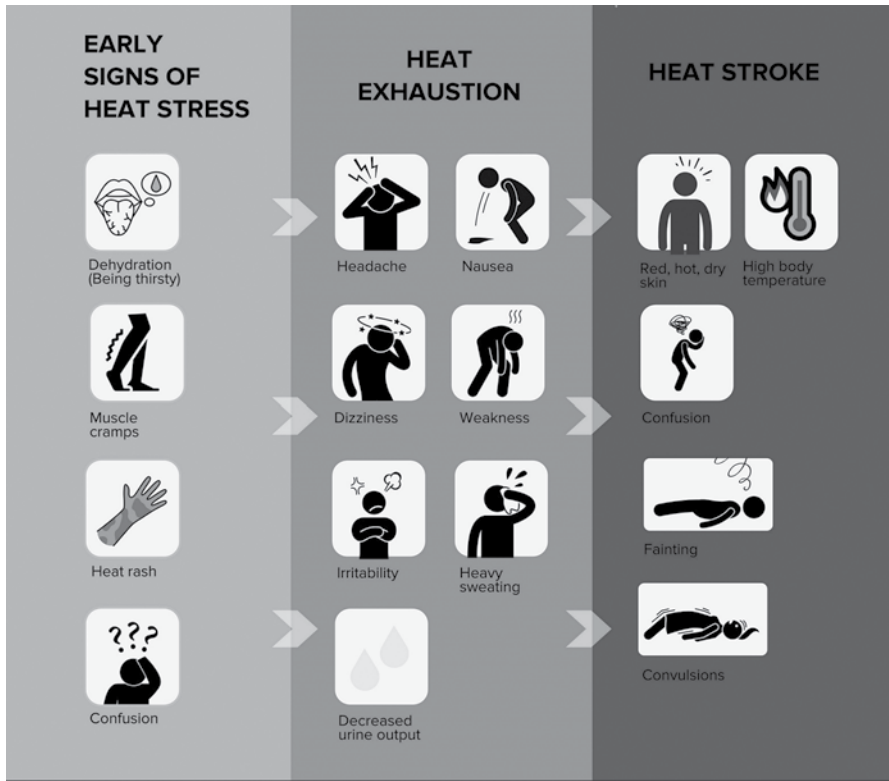
Lin Nelson is a member of Olympia-based Strengthening Sanctuary Alliance and part of the COSH Advisors network.

Check out these resources plus more online:

WA Labor & Industries June 2022—Increased protection from heat & smoke

<https://lni.wa.gov/news-events/article/22-016>

Council on Occupational Safety & Health. www.nationalCOSH.org/climate-justice



Heat hurts and kills worker, indoors and outdoors. —National Council for Occupational Safety and Health

in these credentials as they never forget their agricultural roots.

—Kathy Baros-Friedt, *community social justice advocate, member of Strengthening Sanctuary Alliance and prior director of WA State Human Rights Commission*

Only a first step

WA State's emergency rules must be seen as a first step. The State did make some attempts to align rules with our West Coast neighbors, importantly at the insistence of CBO's and farmworker advocates. The alignment of heat and wildfire smoke rules is to prevent workers from dying, plain and simple.

Our dream is that the Western State Pact for Heat and Wildfire smoke would be the catalyst for the rest of the country. There is a precedent where governors from West Coast states joined together for the health and safety of their residents during COVID. What we hear from workers is in spite of the new rules it is business as usual. “Let's skip the breaks so we can go home early” or go in early in the morning, only to be called to come back in the evening when it is cooler.

—Mary Jo Ybarra-Vega MS, *LHMC, Outreach Health Coordinator, Quincy Community Health Center, Quincy WA*

Enforcing the protections

PCUN is pleased to see Oregon OSHA adopt one of the strongest heat standards in the country. Many farmworkers have shared the benefits of having access to water, shaded break areas, and additional breaks on high heat days.

However, there are still workers who lack access to shade or feel pressured to work through their breaks in order to earn more income. As unions and advocacy groups we must continue working with our state labor agencies to

our communities and we must work to adapt to our new realities.

—Ira Cuello Martinez, *Policy Advocacy Director, PCUN—Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, Woodburn OR*

Advocating for farmworker justice

IORC along with the Idaho Immigrant Resource Alliance (IIRA) is providing heat and smoke supplies such as water, Gatorade, hats, bandanas, etc. to farmworkers all over Idaho as a way to protect them from the intense heat. With Idaho's temperatures reaching over 100 F for almost two straight weeks with only slight relief for a day or two, we know that this will be the norm for our summers in the state and this will adversely affect farmworkers in the area.

With the lack of permanent rules and regulations, farmworkers are more likely to suffer heat-related illnesses and lack of protection. IORC has a Latinx chapter called Vision 2C Resource Council that is

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What happened after employees at Cooper Point Village Starbucks voted to form a union

[As Starbucks reports quarterly profits of \$40 billion, they try to quash organizing efforts of baristas and other staff who are voting to unionize for better working conditions. Recently Matt Crichton talked with one of the baristas at the Cooper Point Village Starbucks about the employees' experience trying to form a union. The interview has been condensed and edited for clarity. We are not using the interviewees' name because of concerns about retaliation by the company.]

MC: How did you come to work at Starbucks in Olympia?

Barista: I was working in the medical field and it was very high stress during the pandemic and I moved here to be with my best friend. Because I can't drive, I had to find work close to where I live. There was a Starbucks down the road (Cooper Point Village) and after a long wait, I started working there in January this year. I am a barista, and I typically open.

MC: What was it like when you started work there?

Barista: I was getting about nine hours per week. I had to hound my store manager at the time, saying I needed 30 hours a week, before that changed. Hours have been really finicky for every barista. It felt like a rotating door—someone new every week so hours were never consistent.

MC: Talk about the campaign to organize the Cooper Point Village Starbucks.

Barista: After I was at Starbucks about two weeks, a co-worker asked if I would be interested in forming a union, and I said “heck, yeah.” During the early stages, I wasn't super involved. It's hard to help the union effort when you've known people less than a month, and you're trying to make friends. Once I got comfortable, I got more involved. I remember sitting in one of my co-workers' bedrooms with six other people, we had set up a Discord channel (an internet chat group) to share our interests and skills and to stay in touch with Seattle Starbucks baristas trying to unionize.

It was an exciting time, of feeling very small, and then learning there are folks in Buffalo doing this, and in Seattle, and all over the Pacific Northwest.

Even though we were the first SB in the Pacific Northwest to pursue this, it's not just us.

When all the pressures are concentrated on us, we got close to our breaking point. Finding out that other stores are voting to unionize takes away some of the pressure. It's like this, when you stand on one egg, it shatters. If you stand on a dozen eggs, the weight is distributed. That's what a union is—it's solidarity with each other. It's workers uniting together, saying, hey, please treat us the way we deserve to be treated.



MC: The Cooper Point Village store employees voted in May in favor of a union. What happened then?

Barista: We won our vote 19–2. It was a little surprising that we all wanted this because we felt like our effort was going on in the background. We were in the newspapers and being talked about. There was a huge wave of support for what was being referred to as the Starbucks/Amazon effort. This was way bigger than I thought.

When we won, we were ready to bargain for a contract. One of the things we are asking for is livable wages, and that anyone who needs full-time hours can get them.

MC: How did the company react once you won the vote?

Barista: First, shortly after the vote, the store manager said she was leaving to go back to school. And Starbucks didn't replace her. So we don't have a store manager. We need a store manager for all kinds of thing—for example, consistent hours. I'm not getting enough hours; most baristas have picked up additional jobs just to survive. It feels like we won our union, and Starbucks said “let's take the wind out of their sails.” They refused to talk to us. They're still refusing.

MC: How can they do that?

Barista: They just say, “no, we're not going to listen to your demands,” and they give a lot of reasons that are technically legal. Every store who has unionized is ready to bargain and they're in the same boat. We have a list of demands that are consistent across the board. We have the tools to bargain. But we have only one union lawyer. based in Philadelphia. Starbucks has many more staff on their anti-union legal team to delay and intimidate.

MC: What's happening at the store in the meantime? What's it like going to work now?

Barista: The company is punishing us for unionizing by not giving us what we need to run our store effectively. We're short-staffed; equipment is breaking down. One day we were gathering to open and we thought the store was on fire. Something in the drip coffee maker had overheated and was leaking water, creating a huge amount of steam. The coffee maker got so hot I had to use a towel to yank the power cord out to stop it.

Our dishwasher broke; the refrigerator started having problems. We couldn't make coffee or sanitizer. The only thing we could make for customers were shaken refreshers or frappuccinos. We should have shut down the store to get repair people in, but we weren't allowed to close. We know how to use the equipment, but we're not plumbers or electricians.

After a while, I hopped on the drive-through and told people it wouldn't be safe to serve them because we couldn't clean things. The community picks up on the dysfunction. It's

frustrating when service is slow, or the ticket printer is printing orders on the wrong side. It was so frustrating to feel like, yeah, I want to stay a part of this union because a lot of good can come from it, but what SB is doing is very scary.

A lot of the unionized stores are feeling the pressure of Howard Shultz's union busting tactics: “We're going to remove the store manager, and let them sink or swim.” Then, when they don't perform well, SB fires the entire store. A lot of folks are scared. We wanted change to come much sooner than it is. There isn't really a precedent for what happens when a company refuses to talk with a union.

MC: Do you still feel like the effort is worth it?

Barista: I don't ever want to feel discouraged by the union movement. Even though things are tough, it will be worth it in the end. If we don't keep trying to push this, nothing will ever get better. Employers are not motivated to treat their workers well. The only reason they will treat workers well is from legal pressures, pressures from workers themselves, or societal pressures. There has to be some type of pressure on Starbucks to cause them to treat workers better.

MC: Do you think the community understands the actual situation of workers and why they might need a union?

Barista: Back in the beginning of the campaign, I did a ton of research into unionizing. Pretty much every positive thing that has to do with labor, like the 40-hour work week and days off—all these came from labor unions. The general public has a hard time recognizing that, and may not know about where certain benefits come from. When someone asks, “Where do you think this benefit came from?” They don't have an answer, they say “it's always been that way.” And then they say, “If things are that bad, then just leave.”

MC: What would it mean to have a stable work schedule and fair pay for the staff at your Starbucks?

Barista: When I worked in the medical field, the paycheck and the hours were steady. I worked in caregiving, and there were several months where I worked 60+ hours a week, six days a week. I was exhausted, but I loved the work.

It was a huge deal for me to walk away from that. The pandemic really stressed the medical field and put a magnifying glass on issues that were already present. A lot of people felt abandoned by the system.

I have never felt that same sense of economic security at a coffee shop since I made the switch. “Don't bother me until I've had my morning coffee,” is something you hear often. Providing coffee is clearly a service industry—people rely on it to do their jobs. I have the sense of being needed by the people who come to the drive-through every day who are mostly grateful.

But I'm not making enough money to afford groceries. I can't afford rent as it is—and my rent is going up at the end of the year. Having secure hours and a secure wage would mean I could breathe a little bit. I could survive—and not just on the seven free food items Starbucks allows you! I know I'm not alone in that experience. People know this is not sustainable. But here we are.

MC: What most inspired the workers at the CP Village Starbucks during this fight?

Barista: Each other. Being able to share our frustrations has been essential, but it's also sharing our triumphs. Caring for each other. Maybe someone gains access to a new education program that they're ecstatic about or brings home a new pet. We love to throw little random celebrations for each other when stuff like that happens because it reminds us that we really have built something pretty amazing here. Having people we can trust is really important during this challenging and exciting time.

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Time for a new policy

Public awareness of the value of Legacy Forests grows

Our forest correspondent

For years, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources has treated its responsibility to manage state forests as requiring them to maximize timber harvest and revenue generation for public services including, especially, school construction.

This is beginning to change. Community groups, local governments, environmental scientists and others have organized and begun working to demonstrate the unique and irreplaceable value of Legacy Forests.

The public at large is beginning to understand the role played by legacy forests not only in drawing down carbon but in providing irreplaceable habitat for wildlife. This awareness has come thanks to a variety of strategies and tactics ranging from tree-sitting, to community forest walks into planned timber sales, to energetic rallies in front of the Natural Resources Building, to consciousness-raising teach-ins in cafes, and online. Extensive news coverage of these activities has made it possible for the general public to recognize the

value these forests represent both in themselves and as frontline resources in the climate catastrophe.

Political leaders such as Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal and the Thurston County Board of Commissioners have taken unprecedented stances in recent months. In July 2022, Reykdal, who sits on the Board of Natural Resources and whose agency receives more than 50% of DNR timber revenue, held a news conference in which he called for delinking K-12 school construction budgets from timber revenue.

Thurston County Commissioners sent a unanimous letter in June

2022 requesting that DNR cease all planned logging of legacy forests in Thurston County: “[The] majority of our remaining Legacy Forests are scheduled for cutting by 2026,” they wrote. “This is unacceptable to our residents from a variety of perspectives, especially as we struggle to meet local climate targets in our Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan in the face of accelerating climate change.”

On July 21, 2022, the Washington State Supreme Court issued a ruling in *Conservation Northwest v. Commissioner of Public Lands*, the “All the People” case. While the Court confirmed the trust mandate under which DNR operates, it found the State has great latitude in how to carry out its mandate—other than maximizing timber revenues. Page 23 of the Court’s ruling doubles down on this point: “There appear to be myriad ways DNR could choose to generate revenue from the state and forest board lands or otherwise put them to use for the benefit of the enumerated beneficiaries.”

More recently, the Environment and Climate Caucus of the Washington State Democratic Party approved a resolution calling on the Board of Natural Resources to develop a new management plan for State Trust Lands. The resolution seeks a policy that protects forest health, biodiversity and structural complexity.

Finally, the Washington State Working Lands Group (WSLG) of the Pacific Northwest and Forest Climate Alliance, recognizing the significance of the Court’s ruling in July, released a “Call to Action” for DNR to adopt policies that support rural communities and emphasize forest health, biodiversity and climate protection. *See “Call to Action” text and endorsers on opposite page.*



The biggest logs, some over 4 feet in diameter, are stacked along the road after the Oyster timber sale in Whatcom County. Photo by Sarah Gardam

PERSPECTIVE

Elegy for a clearcut forest

Sarah Gardam

Ever wonder what a Department of Natural Resources (DNR)–approved clearcut of public forestland looks like after the fact? Our Whatcom County field team got a close look at the wreckage when we walked the recently cut Oyster timber sale near Lake Whatcom.

We found the skeleton of a forest with every bone broken. Trees razed, land savaged, the entrails of a dead beauty left withering in the sun.

Like the neighboring forest visible along the boundaries of the clearcut, Oyster was once an ecologically complex, lush and shady haven, watered by cool, clear streams. Now the sun burns down on a denuded and forsaken wasteland. Light glares off skinned logs lying in disordered heaps, tangled with piles of severed branches.

Logging roads and tire tracks snake across the now unrecognizable forest floor: a torn and muddy landscape clogged with sawdust, wood fragments and withered vegetation. Meager groups of spindly “leave trees” stand together awkwardly against an empty sky. Little rivulets of water run haphazardly across the road, evidence of dis-

rupted streams that once carried clean, cool forest water into the watershed. Today, water pools stagnantly in random spots, likely to evaporate rather than be absorbed by the scarred earth.

Stacked along the logging road lie the largest logs, soon to be hauled away. Some measure over four feet in diameter, the remnants of trees that once soared high overhead, supporting a canopy that helped our biome regulate climate, store carbon and provide a home for birds and wildlife.

Now an angry orange where they’ve been cut, the freshly severed logs and stumps bleed sap from their slashed veins. Shards of snapped-off wood stick up in a line across the center of the stumps as if mirroring, in miniature, the sparse and jagged skyline they face today. The massive stumps’ exposed rings will remain as the sole record, silent testimony to quiet mysteries and miracles performed by these trees, decade after decade—the work that only a healthy forest can do for the world.

This is “land management” in the year 2022? What a misnomer. Nothing has been “managed” here, nothing achieved, no thoughtful plans or decisions made. Just another

run-of-the-mill slaughter. Just another day of insanity, of trading life for cash. The only difference is that this clearcut has been done in our name, in the name of the people.

We were too late to save the Oyster forest. There are too many forests on the chopping block each month to save them all—unless we the people demand what most of us actually want: for our older forests to be left in peace.

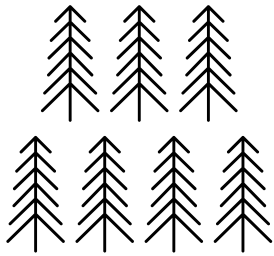
This is far from a radical request, given that nearly all the public forestlands in the Puget Sound lowlands are already being “managed”—sold for timber and clearcut.

It’s too late for Oyster, but there’s still time to save Box of Rain, Brokedown Palace, Delica, Sprinter, Aldwell Sorts, Bedford Sorts, VTwin, Fir Reals Sorts, Penny Wise, Midge Sorts and dozens of other beautiful forests scheduled for destruction across Washington State.

The DNR has slated these and thousands of acres of other Legacy Forests for clear cutting over the next few years. We have so much to lose right now. This won’t stop until we make it stop. New organizations and new leaders have emerged to help concerned citizens across the state add their

voices to this struggle. This is the only way to preserve Washington’s rapidly vanishing natural legacies, forests that deserve our protection as they struggle to hold together our increasingly fragile landbase for as long as they can, for everyone’s sake.

Sarah Gardam works in nonprofit communications. She lives in Whatcom County.



Mud Flat Shorts

(mostly Fiction)

with original work by nine Olympia writers

Dawud H. Al-Malik
Jenni Prange Boran
Jack Butler
Christian Carvajal
Alec Clayton
CK Combs
Keith Eisner
Ned Hayes
John Knold as Tracy Gunn
Megan Kruse
Meenu Madiavan
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Washington forests for “all the people”

A Call to Action

[The Pacific Northwest Forest Climate Alliance's Washington State Lands Working Group (WSLWG) and 18 other groups have released a “Call to Action,” demanding that state leaders pivot towards more ecologically sound forest management, emphasizing such myriad benefits as biodiversity, habitat conservation, water quality and climate protection. See related story on page 8]

On July 21, 2022, the Washington State Supreme Court issued a unanimous ruling in Conservation Northwest v. Commissioner of Public Lands, the “All the People” case. While the Court confirmed the trust mandate under which the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) operates, the Court found that the State has great latitude in how it is carried out. The DNR is under no obligation to maximize revenue from logging, and has multiple ways it can create benefits for beneficiaries and the broader public.

Now that the Court's ruling has clarified that DNR has great flexibility in how State forests are managed, the Washington State Lands Working Group and the endorsers listed below call for actions to be taken that support rural communities and emphasize forest health, biodiversity and climate protection.

Outlined below are seven specific actions we urge be taken by those who have the discretionary authority to act: the Governor, the Washington State Legislature, the Commissioner of Public Lands (CPL), the Board of Natural Resources (BNR), the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Public University Presidents and Boards of Regents.

Conserve all remaining legacy forests. An immediate moratorium must be imposed on any further commercial harvest of the remaining 80,000 acres (5.3%) of unprotected State-managed legacy forests in Western Washington. These are naturally regenerated, mature (generally pre-1945, and older) forests, which, if left to grow, will become the next generation of old growth. These forests store and sequester carbon at very high rates, function as lifeboats for biodiversity and provide numerous other ecological benefits. These forests, if left intact, will help Washington achieve its 2050 climate goals. The BNR can take this action. The CPL should recommend this be done.

Modernize the Board of Natural Resources for All the People. The Board of Natural Resources must be reconstituted to effectively ensure representation of a broader set of beneficiary and public interests (including tribal interests). The current Board is composed of trust beneficiaries that benefit financially from logging. It will take an act of the Legislature to change the governance model of the BNR.

The Governor, the Commissioner of Public Lands, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction should request this legislation be adopted early in the 2023 session with an emergency clause which would make it effective upon signing. This would allow much needed planning to begin in 2023.

Create an “All the People” Forest Plan—with climate as top priority. The reconstituted BNR must

oversee the development of a new Forest Conservation and Management Plan for State Trust Lands that restores forest health, protects biodiversity, and maximizes carbon storage and sequestration. It is critical to focus on this immediately, given the urgency of the climate crisis and the State's goal to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, a goal WA cannot meet unless older forests—the most effective tool for drawing down atmospheric carbon—are safeguarded.

Fortunately, there is abundant skilled work in forest restoration and sustainable harvesting. The Legislature should develop and fund a Rural Community Development Investment Plan. The Governor should work with the rural counties, the Legislature and the Congressional delegation to begin this transition in the 2023 session.

De-link logging and education budgets. In recent decades, logging revenues have constituted a decreasing share of the overall budget for K-12 school construction. Today it is less

ing the underlying trust.

Since the TLT program was created in 1989, it has been used to conserve over 120,000 acres of forests. DNR let the program lapse in 2020 when they chose not to request further appropriations. Fortunately, the program is now being revitalized with extensive stakeholder engagement. The CPL should work with the Governor to make a robust funding request to the 2023 Legislature.

These are some of the important steps that need to be taken to reform Washington State forest policy and practice so that it works for trust beneficiaries and for “All the People.” We stand ready to work together for the enactment of these changes and to offer strong support to the elected and appointed leaders who will do the same.

Washington State Lands Working Group,

Pacific Northwest Forest Climate Alliance

Signatories:

350 Bellingham

350 Everett

350 Seattle

350 Tacoma

350 Wenatchee

Alpine Lakes Protection Society

Black Hills Audubon Society

Cascadia Climate Action Now

Center for Responsible Forestry

Center for Sustainable Economy

Earth Law Center

Emergency Conservation Committee—Pacific Northwest

Friends of Miller Peninsula State Park

Friends of Trees Action Group of Restoring Earth Connection

Green Faith Olympia

Kitsap Environmental Coalition

Legacy Forest Project

Lorax Coalition

Mason County Climate Justice

Middle Fork Outdoor Recreation Coalition

Northwest Watershed Institute

Olympic Climate Action

Olympic Forest Coalition

Protect the Peninsula's Future


Whatcom Million Trees Project

Rally to stop the clearcutting of Washington's last remaining mature legacy forests!

Forest Defense is Climate Defense

Rally on Sept. 5, 8 AM
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1111 Washington St. SE
Olympia, WA

Tell the DNR we want our forests managed for climate change and biodiversity, not timber profits. Washington forests are for all the people!



tinyurl.com/forestdefense

The new Plan should conserve the remaining legacy forests of Western Washington, establish a new Washington State Carbon Reserve System, and accelerate the development of structurally complex forests in areas that lack complexity, or are vulnerable to catastrophic wildfire, disease, or pest infestation. The Plan should be developed in close consultation with independent scientists who are not beholden to the timber industry.

The next decade's logging plan, known as the “Sustainable Harvest Calculation”, must be based on the principles and priorities of the new Forest Conservation and Management Plan. In the 2023 session, the Legislature should appropriate funding for the Plan including the costs associated with the independent science panel. Implementation must begin in 2024.

Invest in our rural counties. Rural counties that have relied on logging revenues from trust lands for essential public services must no longer be ignored. The State must develop new revenue sources and funding approaches to help fund the important services provided by rural counties and their junior taxing districts (e.g., hospitals and fire). The climate benefits from intact forests accrue to the public broadly, so it is appropriate that the public pay to keep the forests intact. It is also in the broad public interest to address the need for new forms of economic development in many rural communities.

than 2%. We applaud the Superintendent of Public Instruction for calling on the Legislature to break the remaining tie between logging revenue and school construction budgets.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction should work with the Governor and the Legislature to enact this recommendation in a way that also conserves the legacy forests that are essential to our children's climate future. Similarly, it is time to end the link between logging and higher education funding. Public universities with trust interests in DNR-managed forest lands should prioritize climate protection and research—not clearcutting. The university presidents and the Boards of Regents, the governing bodies of the public universities, should work with the Governor, the CPL and the Legislature to implement these changes.

Implement practices that improve forest health. For the long-term viability of our state's forest ecosystems, it is essential that DNR transition away from standard practice industrial logging and move toward an ecologically-based management model that requires harvest rotations of at least 80 years and improves forest health. The BNR can take this action. The CPL should recommend this be done.

Strengthen the Trust Land Transfer tool. As the state transitions to the new forest conservation and management approach, DNR's Trust Land Transfer (TLT) program can ease the transition for the traditional trust beneficiaries. Trust Land Transfer involves preserving a forest with high conservation value that would otherwise be logged while also compensat-

City of renters

From page 1

an “affordability requirement” in exchange for public subsidies to developers. They rejected the idea, worried that if such requirement were “not sufficiently offset, developers may opt not to build any residential housing...”

In Olympia, several downtown developers enjoy an 8-year exemption from property taxes they would otherwise owe. The express goal of the exemption is to raise the return on investment by as much as an additional 5%. Successive waves of elected Council Members have waved through the subsidies, never asking for anything in return. They are now considering extending the area for tax exemptions into other parts of Olympia. [See WIP, December 2020 “When a 13% return is not enough.”]

What this means to people in Olympia who rent

They are also are building wealth for the investor. Homeownership is still the number one way for families and individuals in the US to build wealth. Olympia's planners and politicians attribute historical

inequities in access to homeownership to the evils of single-family zoning. But instead of making homeownership affordable and available to groups previously excluded, their policies guarantee that no one other than the wealthy will have access to ownership.

Even in this overheated market, buying the house you live in means part of your monthly ‘note’ builds equity for you. If you’re a renter, your payment builds equity for the investor. And in the case of Thurston County, where over 30% of renter households pay more than 30% of their income for housing given wages at the low end, that leaves them with no savings and little to cover day-to-day expenses.

Your ability to pay expenses actually diminishes over time. Median rents in Olympia increased by 9.9% since 2019, according to a recent presentation by Planner Amy Buckler. When the Land Use and Environment Committee addressed the status of renters, however, their prescription was

nowhere as generous and understanding as the City’s approach to developers.

They forwarded an amendment to the Municipal Code requiring landlords to give more notice when raising rents: an increase of 5% or more will require 120 days’ notice and 10% or more will require 180 days’ notice. The reasons given for this change was “to give people time to prepare for a rent increase that could put you out ...”

There was no discussion of limiting rent increases; nor of the fact that if rents are unaffordable to working people at today’s wages what would longer notice mean?

Thurston Regional Planning calculates 2020 annual gross wages for people working in the food and accommodations sector at \$22,677/year. For those in the retail sector, it’s slightly better at \$36,733.

Add to this the fact that employers offer “flexible” jobs at the low end of the wage scale meaning that pay can vary from month to month.

For a one-bedroom apartment with monthly rent (probably understated) of \$1076, a 5% increase would add \$50 per month and a 10% increase would be \$107/month.

Finding out months in advance that your unaffordable rent is going up \$50 or \$100 a month won’t help you find a way to pay it.

What this means to Olympia as a community

In short, less stability, less social cohesion, less civic engagement. More polarization. Endemic homelessness and need for the “supportive housing” that claims millions of Olympia and surrounding community budgets.

The Federal Reserve reports that the average homeowner had a household wealth of \$231,000 vs. the average renter’s household wealth of \$5,200. The median length of residence for homeowners in their current home is 11 years. For tenants it’s fewer than 3 years.

Olympia has apparently recently created an Office of Community Vitality. If the title means anything other than promoting downtown, then that Office has its work cut out for it.

Mary Jo Dolis is the penname of an interested observer of the local scene and a sometime contributor to Works in Progress.

Use our public power directly!

Making affordable housing a reality—somewhere else

Ricardo Gomez

In June, Rhode Island passed a \$10 million pilot program that will use COVID-19 stimulus money to build mixed-income public housing. By acting as a public developer itself, Rhode Island would be the only state to acquire its own land and build housing directly, cutting out profit-gouging developers—a model approach for the rest of the country amid a housing crisis that has only grown more dire since the start of the pandemic.

The state’s pilot housing program is already shaking things up at the local level. On Monday, Providence mayoral candidate Gonzalo Cuervo added a municipal public developer plan to his housing policy platform as Reclaim RI—the progressive organizing group that backed the state’s pilot program—endorsed his campaign. Cuervo also adopted a rent stabilization plan that would institute a four percent cap on year-over-year rent increases.

Programs dominated by private interests

In a housing landscape dominated by private equity, federal divestment, and the failure of “public-private” programs, the fight for public housing at the state level is increasingly urgent.

In Rhode Island alone, one in three renters cannot keep up with rent. A recent report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition estimated that more than 60 percent of renter households in the U.S. are struggling to afford basic living expenses after paying rent and utilities. Rather than letting markets drive housing development outcomes, the public developer model creates a foundation for a housing system not driven by profits.

The pilot program is just one part of the state’s Create Homes Act, which would use \$300 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to create a new state housing department, realigning public spending with public good. Designed to confront the housing crisis head-on, the new department would have two central capacities: building housing and acquiring land for public ownership.

State Sen. Meghan Kallman (D), who introduced the Create Homes Act, told The Lever that the bill “is designed to equip the state to do everything that it could possibly need to do in support of a robust, just, multi-income, well-planned, well-connected housing vision.”

Public development for public housing

Public housing is popular, and some states—Colorado, California, Hawaii, and Maryland—recently passed legislation to build more of it.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program has been the nation’s main program for creating “affordable housing.” However, LIHTC produces fewer units than it did 20 years ago, while costing the public 66 percent more. Plus, 81 percent of LIHTC units are owned by for-profit entities, and with scant federal oversight, recent investigations have shown how the program is rife with corruption, siphoning away millions to private industry players, while banks and investors take tax deductions.

What would set Rhode Island’s new public developer model apart is that it puts land planning, acquisition, and the actual building of housing units into the public’s hands at the state level. This removes the need for outside financing, as required by LIHTC, and also circumvents the restrictions of the 1998 Faircloth Amendment,

which capped the expansion of federal public housing. By creating a direct relationship between the public’s needs and the allocation of land for housing, the effort would circumvent the typical public housing approach of draining public resources for private profits as with LIHTC.

As the left-wing think tank People’s Policy Project argued in a 2018 report, “a local administration which can build its own housing can never be held hostage by developers expecting an unreasonable profit margin again.” The report also noted that a public development model affords the state more “autonomy and bargaining power” in future housing decisions.

Prioritizing housing supply for profit, not need

Kallman sees the pilot program as just the start of a holistic approach outlined by the Create Homes Act. Kallman told The Lever, “We have been historically hamstrung by a number of things including disinvestment and zoning laws, which are handled primarily at the municipal level.”

Importantly, using ARPA money takes a federal windfall to create housing infrastructure without relying too heavily on municipal bond markets. Historian of economic and racial inequality Destin Jenkins found that public projects have been stymied by debt arrangements that are shaped by the interests of bondholders.

In his book *The Bonds of Inequality*, Jenkins writes, “The deterioration of public housing projects was taken as proof of the failures of socially oriented public policies rather than as a consequence of a structural arrangement that, from the beginning, privileged the claims of bondholders.”

In order to get the public developer program off the ground, Rhode Island would create a land bank, a versatile tool for coordinating the conversion of real estate and public land into the urgent goal of housing. All public and quasi-public bodies in Rhode Island would have to conduct a review of the real estate they own by the end of 2022. If those entities own land that does not have a planned use within the next 10 years, then they could be obligated “to enter into a negotiation with the department for the transfer of the parcel to the land bank.”

The housing department could then use its own staff or hire its own contractors to carry out the construction of new housing units. These two capacities—land development and contracting capacity—are central pillars of a housing plan that could efficiently and quickly create public housing.

Housing created by private developers has largely focused on building luxury and high-end apartments, prioritizing housing supply for profits rather than social need.

In April, the owner of Rhode Island’s tallest building—locally called the “Superman Building”—reached an agreement with state and city officials to redevelop the building to create more housing. Using \$41 million in state and local financing, High Rock Development plans to build 80 percent of the housing into luxury, market-rate units.

Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE), a local organizing group, is leading a campaign to protest High Rock Development’s profiteering. DARE organizes tenants and is working on a campaign for rent stabilization and housing for all.

Landlords are organized—so should tenants be

A spokesperson for Tenant Network RI, a grassroots organizing group that has helped form tenant unions, told The Lever that as more tenants have come together

► **Affordable**, continued on next page

Cooper Crest

From page 1

and that there were three wetlands on site, not the one claimed on the Application. City records also documented five landslide hazard areas that were not considered in the FPA. The city also noted that DNR should have coordinated with its own geological division to access internal data showing the site was geologically, hydrologically and seismically unstable.

The 1998 Green Cove Plan recommended an increase in the tree canopy and a decrease in the amount of stormwater runoff that contributed to downstream flooding that had always been a problem. The high-pressure aquifer recharge area on the site supports several critical wetlands and tributaries that support in-stream flow for threatened salmon in Green Cove Creek and help supply the City's Allison Springs Well, hundreds of private wells and the Strategic Groundwater Reserve for the State Capitol.

How did two streams on a map become only one?

The original Forest Practices Application showed two streams. Then, on a revision dated May 26 the stream segment that cuts through the northern part of the property was crossed out with X's and labeled "DNE" — meaning "does not exist." There was no written documentation to support elimination of the stream segment, despite the fact that DNR has a process to update water typing maps. Claims

by Silvimantle that no stream channels had been found in this area don't reflect the fact that the evaluation was not done during the rainy season or that the area



"We're in the business to invest." Silvimantle official Marty Wicklund, talking to The JOLT waxed on about how beautiful the Cooper Crest forest was: "A legacy type of forest...an incredibly beautiful piece of property." He went on to claim that the company's goal had been to sell the property to a land trust or to the City for a park: "but every single one of them said 'that's not a high priority for us.' We just don't want to buy it." Well, it wasn't so much that the conservation group didn't want to buy it. They just couldn't come up with the \$750,000 that Silvimantle was asking. And not just asking, but setting a turn-around time so tight that no one managed to come up with that kind of money that fast. Silvimantle wasn't interested in selling the property for preservation—they were interested in getting their money back—which they did. Sold the clear cut property to OlyEcosystems for \$225,000 after logging it for timber they can likely sell for over \$750,000. Photo by Oly Ecosystems.

was overgrown with brush that could conceal evidence of the stream bed.

A gift that keeps on giving

Land surrounding streams and wetlands qualify as riparian areas. These enjoy greater protection from logging since they are essen-

tial to the integrity of watersheds. These aquatic resources ultimately belong to the State; a practice that allows logging from these areas amounts to a "gifting" of public lands to private interests.

With a stroke of the pen, Silvimantle obtained this gift and so was able to bulldoze a logging road through the area of the map where the stream was located—concealing the fact that the tributary ever existed.

Silvimantle claims that altering an official map in this way is a "common practice" in the natural resources world. If that's so, it appears that DNR's failure to stop the practice may compromise watersheds statewide.

Will an appeal stop this "common practice?"

In an effort to shine a light on DNR policies that allowed this to happen, more than 100 individuals and five organizations signed on to a June 27 appeal of the Forest Practice Application, filed by the authors of this article. It was amended on July 7 to request a statewide stay on the practice of altering official maps.

The amended appeal and stay states that crossing out the mapped stream at Cooper Crest "...appears to be based upon an unwritten, unlawful custom, policy or procedure to allow a "gifting" by state government to private forest landowners of state aquatic land and riparian zone areas, as well as the gifting of federal resources of the United States, in this case, a half mile of Green Cove Creek, its headwaters, and its endangered and threatened fish and wildlife. This custom—to allow private landowners to steal federal and state resources with the aid of Department of Natural Resources and Department of Fish and Wildlife agents and the Attorney General by altering, and thereby tampering with an official document... appears to occur statewide."

And pay for the damage done

Forest Practice Applications are appealed to the Pollution Control Hearings Board (PCHB). The amended appeal and stay asks for injunctive and compensatory relief. Injunctive relief would be to stop the practice of crossing out streams without process or documentation; as well as mandating state agencies to review all evidence held by state and local officials before approving permits.

Compensation is requested for damage to the property and to downstream infrastructure in the Green Cove Creek Basin and Butler Cove watersheds due to stormwater runoff, flooding and landslides; as well as to fish and wildlife habitat. Displaced bears, cougars and coyotes have recently been sighted in the Goldcrest neighborhood next door.

The PCHB has issued an Order to show cause why the appeal should not be considered moot since Silvimantle has already clearcut the forest. Appellants responded that the practice of altering official maps is likely to recur, that adjudication is of statewide public interest and that the PCHB could award damages. PCHB will likely rule by September on whether the appeal will go forward.

Esther Kronenberg and Jerry Dierker have studied and researched the Green Cove Watershed and taken responsibility for its protection.

Affordable

From previous page

with local organizers to advocate for public policy measures like rent control, so too have landlord lobbying groups like the Rhode Island Coalition of Housing Providers and Narragansett 2100 arguing against government action to address housing issues.

"The way we see it is... everyday people who don't have property, who don't own a business, or own their home, need to be organized to defend our interests," the spokesperson said, "There's been a [housing] crisis this entire time, [however] crisis in itself is not enough to force the powers that be in the establishment to back down and give people things."

For policies backed by progressive groups to be successful, ongoing support must come from everyday people organized together, said the Tenant Network spokesperson.

"While there's been some grassroots level organization, good political organization, and good electoral work, there has not been enough pressure and organization from everyday residents and renters from

below, to create these conditions," the spokesperson told The Lever. Looking at the recent developments with the pilot program, they said that "new public housing will create communities where working class people can live and work and play and it'll actually strengthen those communities to continue to build new connections."

Housing "To live, work, and play"

Kallman said that the newly passed pilot program ought to be thought about within the context of the bill as a whole, with the housing plan moving "the needle on a bunch of interconnected issues." Pointing to the bill's inclusion of labor standards and attention to transit, she noted that the state housing department would consider housing as part of a broader set of social conditions to improve the strength of Rhode Island's public systems.

The \$10 million for a pilot program is just a fraction of the \$300 million initially proposed for the Create Homes Act. However, the bill was introduced with just a month of session left and the pilot program passed with quick support from more moderate Democratic leadership, so there may be support for expanding the program next year.

According to Jordan Goyette, political director for Reclaim RI, the pilot program is expected to generate 150 to 200 units of low-income public housing for people in the state.

Goyette also stressed that the bill will be central to making the economy work for people at a time when the pandemic and inflation are making things difficult. "Especially when we've seen recessions hit us, and you know the [Federal Reserve] just raised interest rates, basically asking for a recession, we've seen meaningful construction die off," Goyette told The Lever.

"This legislation will temper or even effectively make the construction industry recession-proof by kicking off prevailing wage requirements, having strong labor standards for the prevention of wage theft, and having strong apprenticeship standards," added Goyette. "This will really be a boon to the working local economy."

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REFLECTION

A conversation with Thad Curtz

What can you and I do to lower our carbon footprint?

Thad Curtz

[Ed note: As Thad Curtz writes, it's morally good to reduce your carbon footprint. But don't let that deflect attention from the international corporations that brought us to this pass. As Thad notes in closing, climate change is a problem governments will solve, not individuals. Only governments can compel international corporations; only they have the power to decree the systemic changes we must have to avoid a climate catastrophe.]

In *The Armies of the Night*, Norman Mailer writes about going to a big demonstration against the Vietnam War. He isn't planning to go at all, but a friend calls him up about it. He feels as if he ought to go, though he doesn't want to. Finally he goes. After that, he faces one choice after another—will he join the protestors on the Pentagon steps; will he stay there and get arrested; will he post bail or spend the night in jail... There's always another rung on the moral ladder.

However much he decides to do, there's always something else. Climate action is like that. Many things you could do might help slow it. Nothing any single person can do will slow it down a lot. There will always be something else you might do. (Though it does seem that doing what I can means I worry less about it.)

Food accounts for roughly 34% of Olympia's carbon footprint

Changing how you eat is complicated. It arouses your memories and feelings in ways that your water heater doesn't. When I was a kid, we had pie instead of cake, my mother didn't make casseroles, and I never saw jello salad with stuff in it except at Cub Scout potlucks,

when people in line ahead of us had already taken the chicken my mother brought. I'd feel differently now if I'd eaten differently then. Biological differences in how people smell and taste affect preferences too. The more people you're cooking for, the harder it is



to shift to something you're sure all of them will like.

Changing foods can be hard because you make thousands of decisions about what to eat. You don't have the time and energy to think about each one; it's easier to buy and eat what you always do. However, this can also make shifting your diet easier, because you can do it a little at a time. You don't have to become a vegan. Eating chicken or minestrone for dinner more often can reduce the footprint of your diet a lot.

The benefit of reducing your consumption varies depending on what kind of food. Fish comes below poultry, unless it's fish flown in fresh from a distance, but most food-related emissions depend on how food was produced, not where. Washington apples stored for months in Controlled Atmosphere warehouses may have higher emissions than ones just picked and shipped from Chile. In terms of the emissions related to food, production accounts for about 80%, transportation accounts for about 4% and warehousing, wholesale and retail operations account for the remainder.

Beef is the worst food for the climate. Cattle create a lot of methane by digesting plants, and that traps about twenty-eight times as much heat in the atmosphere as the same amount of CO2. Cows are big animals; so a lot of their food energy goes to moving around and keeping warm rather than producing meat. Emissions from fertilizer, machinery and clearing land for their feed are part of beef's carbon footprint. Fast food burgers account for about half the emissions, the rest from dairy cows. On the other hand, creating an "Impossible Burger" uses 96% less land than a typical beef burger, generates 89% lower emissions, and tastes an awful lot like hamburger.

Transportation accounts for about 34% of Olympia's carbon footprints

Obviously, if you can walk or bicycle to get somewhere rather than driving, it reduces your carbon footprint. So does telecommuting, or using Zoom, instead of a dozen volunteers driving to a meeting. So does taking the bus. Adding transit routes in not very dense areas like ours is expensive. A new Intercity Transit bus route would need to average more than five passengers per trip to emit less than the individual drivers. It would only cost less per trip if the trips in their cars were over 41 miles.

Choosing a more efficient vehicle for your next purchase is one of the few things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint substantially and save money over time. (Selling your car and buying a more efficient used one will reduce your carbon footprint, but it won't change the county's, since both cars will still be on the road.)

Let's go car shopping

Compare four similar subcompact SUVs using local values for costs and emissions and including available incentives. Over 12 years, a regular 2019 Kia Niro hybrid would cost \$644 less than a conventional Hyundai Kona and reduce CO2 emissions by 18.97 metric tons. A Niro plug-in hybrid, which goes 26 miles on the battery, would save \$2,481 and reduce emissions by 28.51 metric tons. An all-electric Niro, with a range of 239 miles, would cost \$1,663 more over twelve years and reduce emissions by 37.06 metric tons. An all-electric Nissan LEAF would reduce emissions a hair less than the Niro

all-electric but cost significantly less, saving \$7,615 compared to the conventional car.

Lower estimated maintenance and repair costs would reduce the cost of the regular hybrid by \$1,989 compared to a conventional car; and reduce the cost of the all-electrics by another \$1,575 compared to the hybrid and make it another \$3,564 cheaper than a conventional car. Since savings from a more efficient car come from its lower operating cost, people who drive a lot save more. Coltura, a non-profit focused on ending the use of gasoline, wants incentives for electric cars to go to the 10% of drivers who use 30% of the gas: we'd get much larger emissions reductions if they drove EVs.

Or just stay on the ground

Flying is a much smaller piece of most people's carbon footprint than driving. Cars and pickups create 92% of personal transportation emissions; flying and other transportation create 8%. The 12% of Americans who take more than six round trips annually are responsible for two-thirds of all air travel.

If you do fly, though, you increase your carbon footprint very quickly. One round trip from the West to the East Coast produces the emissions of driving approximately 2,200 miles. Flying coach reduces your emissions, and flying non-stop may. The only practical way to avoid emissions from air trips is not taking them. My wife and I have given up flying except for weddings and funerals. Maybe that's why I'm particularly bothered by friends who fly often for vacations, or the people at Sierra Club meetings chatting about the great trips they took to enjoy unspoiled nature in Costa Rica or the Galapagos.

Home energy use accounts for roughly 26% of Olympia's carbon footprint

"Appliances/other" is a roomy category that includes the washer and dryer (roughly 6%); the refrigerator (4%); electronics (4%); and all sorts of other stuff, from stoves to electric toothbrushes.

Let's talk about electricity

We can use electricity instead of fossil fuels for transportation and in our homes. Doing some things with electricity uses far less energy. Electric vehicles go a given distance on less than a third of the energy gasoline and diesel cars use. 60% of their fuel energy is wasted as heat through the radiator and the tailpipe; it never gets to the wheels.

Electric heat pumps use a third of the energy to perform the same function as a gas furnace or water heater. A heat pump runs like a refrigerator in reverse, using energy to move heat from outside air into the house or a water heater. (They also condition air in the summer by moving heat from inside the house to outside.)

Electric induction stoves use about half the energy of gas, heating up only the metal of the pan, while lots of heat from gas burners goes up the side of the pan—creating air pollution at the same time. (If you want to try it, you can buy a countertop induction burner for \$60.)

If we electrified everything, relying on coal generation, our emissions would still be high. Fortunately, a recent law requires Washington

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Solar energy: decades of sabotage

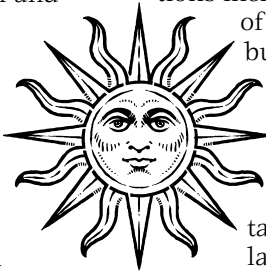
Daniel Berman and John T. O'Connor

In *Who Owns the Sun*, Environmental activists Berman and O'Connor offer a scathing explanation of why solar technology has played such an insignificant role in meeting America's energy needs. Politicians, utility companies and even many mainstream environmental groups come under attack for either their lack of leadership on this issue or for their downright hostility to solar possibilities. The authors argue convincingly that the impediment to widespread adoption of environmentally friendly energy sources is no longer technological but rather the fear that private utility companies' profit margins will suffer.

Numerous examples of the ways in which renewable energy

advances have been sabotaged by politicians and utilities are presented, as are a wide array of solutions. The most interesting solutions include public ownership of utilities, enlightened building codes favorable or at least neutral to solar technology, utility company buy-backs of excess electricity generated by homeowners, tax breaks for the installation of non-polluting sources of power, removal of massive governmental subsidies of fossil fuels and equalization of governmental research dollars for renewable and non-renewable sources of energy. Where such reforms are already in place, in the Netherlands and Israel, for example, solar energy is playing a very significant social role. This is a book likely to stir people to action.

—Summary from Publisher's Weekly



1000 miles by electric vehicle

Ryan Stephens

I've always been intrigued by electric cars. I love driving but hate the problems that cars bring—like maintenance and the looming possibility of another expensive thing breaking that I don't know how to fix. A car is “the gift that keeps on taking.” So, when the State motor pool offered me the option of reserving an Electric Vehicle (EV) for an upcoming work trip, I jumped at the chance.

An intimidating itinerary

Day 1: Travel to Port Townsend, then on to Spokane (450 miles).

Day 2: Visit Spokane Indian Housing, then Colville, and end up in Spokane (175 miles).

Day 3: Visit Palouse and Pullman, and then back to Olympia (401 miles).

Each day of this trip was filled with appointments and site inspections. The schedule had been planned weeks in advance, and it didn't allow for time to deal with charging problems that might arise. In order to map out my EV trip including scheduling charging stops, I used two different apps.

A Better Route Planner (ABRP). Now available on mobile devices as an app in addition to their website, this will tell you 95% of the information you need to know about charging within 30 seconds. It even calculates how long to spend at each charging station in order to have the fastest trip possible. My favorite thing about this app is the ability to tweak and customize the details.

PlugShare. I used this popular app to double-check that the charging stations were active and reliable (thanks to the in-app reviews). A Better Route Planner told me exactly what to do, but I wanted to

make sure I wasn't putting all my eggs in one basket.

Know your car

Aside from knowing my route and where to charge, I needed to know my car. The Chevy Bolt EV is rated by the EPA at around 250 miles, but this number is only useful when you're car shopping. It's just a dumb number you can use to make comparisons with other EVs that have been tested in the same way.

Personally, I liked guessing the efficiency I might expect—like 3.5 miles/kWh—and then multiplying that by the 66 kWh capacity of the battery. This way I could predict how the car was likely to behave. If it showed only 2.8 miles/kWh on the dash display, I knew I needed to modify my plan. (If you don't like fooling around with a calculator as much as I do, you might prefer to rely on the ongoing display estimating how many more miles you can go without charging.

Trust your car

Early on in my trip, I was checking the car range constantly. By the end of the second day, I had learned to trust the range the car was predicting, and it seemed to have “learned” what driving style and conditions to expect on my trip. I was able to reach for my calculator less, and drove faster if I knew I had extra electrons to burn (though I guess you don't actually “burn” electrons...).

Enjoy the route

At a charging station in Ellensburg, I discovered their Saturday market, spent an hour there after forgetting that I was “waiting” on a charger, and wound up purchasing some pottery. Guess how many times in my life I've stopped on a road trip to purchase pottery? That's right, never! It was fantastic. I never would have known the market was there or stopped to visit it if I

hadn't taken a break to charge the car. I was able to come home with a thoughtful gift.

On the third day, I drove on the Palouse Scenic Byway. The name is misleading. Driving Highway 26 from Pullman to Vantage is the best way to cross the state. It's 180 miles from charger to charger and the wheat fields were still green in spring. It was like floating through paradise. I pulled over onto a gravel road and captured a photo, amazed at my state and amazed that I could explore such new places in an electric car.

Tips for a successful EV trip

All in all, I drove 1,091 miles in three days and had no regrets about my choice to go electric. Here are some tips, as well as my thoughts on how to successfully plan electric road-tripping:

Better driving. EVs are better vehicles than internal combustion ones, as far as driveability and comfort are concerned. They're quieter, with smoother acceleration, no downshifting up hills, and tons of torque for passing on two lane highways. You never have to wonder if that funny burning smell is coming from your engine; it's always somebody else's.

Winter would have changed everything—from battery efficiency to driving comfort, to overall predictability and planning.

Hotel charging. Having a charger at your hotel is great. I charged for free in my sleep!

Timing. Arriving at a charger in time for lunch or dinner is good planning.

Traffic. Beware epic detours and winter traffic jams. These are the two things that I can imagine screwing with trip planning or range expectations. Regular traffic

jams (with the heat off), on the other hand, are great for your range. I got the best efficiency of my whole trip on I-5 at 5 PM.

Calculate your trip. Make peace with math, and math will give you peace. The distance you need to go can be divided by the battery capacity, and you'll know the miles/kWh number to look for while you're driving. The car can't know what sort of road you will be driving on, so it may give you an overly optimistic estimate of your remaining range if you're about to do some energy-intensive driving. Paying attention to how much electricity per mile I was actually using and how far I needed to go made me feel better on the way up Snoqualmie Pass.

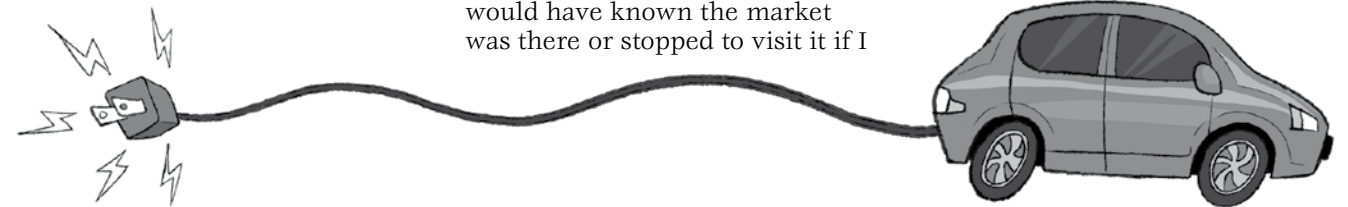
Charging problems. DC Fast Chargers are a technology I hate to love. I look forward to more user-friendly charging infrastructure. My chief complaints on this trip were heavy unwieldy cables and broken credit card readers, though those only meant I had to move to the next charger in the row.

A win-win choice

Gas-fueled cars are helping to kill the planet. If this trip report has a thesis, it is that driving electric is a win-win. It ain't no sacrifice. Driving electric is an asset on a road trip. I think it helps to create a better experience than the unthinking zombie marathon of a gas-powered endless journey.

I'm surprised and annoyed when EVs are criticized because a 1,000-mile road trip like mine includes four hours of additional time for charging. I think it's a good thing to take more breaks. Take a walk, throw a Frisbee and let the dog pee, read a book, or explore a town that you've only ever visited via their gas station.

Do we Americans really need more opportunities to be objects in motion? Has perpetual maximization of the most easily measurable outcomes ever delivered the greatest good? If you've never been in one, you might think that driving an EV up, down, and across the state in three days would be a hassle. But after doing it, I was grateful for the opportunity. It's a better tool for the job.



Carbon footprint

From page 14

utilities to eliminate coal power by 2025. By 2030, the power they deliver has to be “greenhouse gas neutral.” 20% of it can come from gas plants, but the emissions from that are supposed to be offset by equivalent reductions. Switching from gas to electricity will reduce your emissions now, but it will reduce them more as we clean up the grid.

A word to the wise

We need to plan ahead to electrify. Many people end up replacing a failing water heater or furnace on an emergency basis, with whatever they can get. A water heater might last twelve to fifteen years; a furnace might last twenty. By making sure you have a 200-amp electrical panel or a smart panel for power, you can anticipate when a water heater or furnace is likely to fail and be ready to replace them with electric versions. (If an electrician's running a circuit for a car charger, it might save money to add one for a future water heater too.) You can also pay for switching to electricity over time. PSE offers

rebates for some investments in upgrades and efficiency, and there will be Federal incentives.

Advice from people with no vested interest

Unsurprisingly, gas utilities don't want customers to switch to electricity. They've begun touting “renewable gas” made from biological sources like dairy manure. Unfortunately, there won't be enough of that to replace the fossil gas we use. We'll have other, more pressing uses for any biogas we produce, like making fuel for long distance aviation. (A recent State study compared reducing our 2050 emissions by 80% by electrification vs using renewable gas and hydrogen; it concluded electrification would cost about \$6 billion less annually in current dollars.)

In theory, if our electricity after 2030 were “greenhouse gas neutral,” we could use as much as we like without affecting the climate. We wouldn't need to think about efficiency. However, if we electrify everything we'd be using a

lot more electricity. Increasing efficiency and using the freed up capacity will be the cheapest way to meet additional demand—even though prices for solar, wind power and batteries keep dropping. Some efficiency measures are simple, like switching to LEDs. Others (like electrifying everything) are more complicated.

I'd like to have an energy concierge service—people with no vested interest in selling me anything—who'd give me sophisticated advice about what to do and when to lower the carbon footprint of our house.

Goods and services account for about 26% of Olympia's carbon footprint

“Goods and services” includes emissions by everything from clothing and furniture to all elements of health care, to movies and beyond. Individuals can't do much to affect these.

With so many different things there's not much general advice to offer. Buy less stuff; buy second-hand stuff; buy more expensive stuff that will last longer. Use

less water—it takes a lot of energy to pump it around and to treat wastewater. Recycle—especially aluminum and paper. (Making recycled paper produces almost as many emissions as new paper, but leaves more trees standing.) It can be complicated to figure out what's best for the climate—organic cotton or regular cotton; paper bags or plastic...or cotton?

But what you do about any of these won't affect your emissions much. Do what you think is right. Don't worry about small choices—with the exception of food. Put time and energy into changing things in your life that will have a greater impact on emissions.

Now for the rest of the story

Much of what can be done doesn't involve your personal emissions, and isn't local. Project Drawdown brought together seventy scientists from 22 countries to prioritize the hundred best ways to reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. They created a book and evolving website with photos and a couple of pages about each action.

► **Footprint**, continued on page 18

The Supreme Court cited “ordered liberty” to overturn “Roe”

What’s next?

Stephanie Guilloud

[Ed note. This is an excerpt from an article published in www.truthout.org

What the hell is “ordered liberty”? Most people in the United States are not familiar with this archaic legal term, but it reveals the direction that the current attacks on our freedoms and civil rights are headed.

Right-wing members of the Supreme Court used the term “ordered liberty”—defined as “freedom limited by the need for order in society”—16 times throughout their recent *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

The same legal term was also at the core of efforts to defend the state repression legalized through the creation of the USA PATRIOT Act. For example, former President George W. Bush’s attorney general, John Ashcroft, discussed “ordered liberty” in depth at the 8th Circuit Judges Conference in Duluth, Minnesota, in 2002 to justify the overreaching powers of the PATRIOT Act. The act exploited Islamophobia to develop new law enforcement agencies, new legal departments and increased surveillance. Those laws and policies were then leveraged to increase police pow-

ers against Black people protesting violence and immigrants going about their daily lives.

Both Bush administrations relied heavily on legal playbooks, reports and staffing recommendations generated by the Federalist Society, a right-wing organization established in 1982. Made up of tens of thousands of conservative law stu-

dents, faculty and scholars, including Ashcroft, the Federalist Society has strategically advanced the legal concept of “ordered liberty.” Leonard Leo, a former president and current board chair of the Federalist Society, has been identified as a major force behind this Supreme Court’s nominees.

The idea that freedoms could be “limited by the need for order in society” is dangerous because it enables right-wing forces that are in power to determine what “order” means and what freedoms should be limited.

In the authoritarian world of ordered liberty, a pregnant person can have a miscarriage and be charged with murder. In their world, religious freedom applies only to Christians and allows Muslims to be registered and surveilled. In their world, the police act on behalf of the powerful and carry impunity when they kill and harm Black people and others. In their world, supporting transgender kids is considered child abuse. In their world, educating people about sexual health and U.S. history is dangerous. They are building a world where our lives and decisions can be cut short and predetermined by extremism and fundamentalism. Their world is theocratic and authoritarian, and they are seeking to use the law and those emboldened by these legal decisions to control and contain movement opposition.

In their ruling on *Dobbs*, the right-wing Supreme Court majority wrote: “Ordered liberty sets limits and defines the boundary between competing interests.” They contrasted the right to bear arms as a more legitimate and fundamental right than access to abortion or health care within their version of “ordered liberty.”

Truthout.org is a nonprofit online news organization. Find the copyrighted article at <https://truthout.org/articles/the-supreme-court-cited-ordered-liberty-to-overturn-roe-whats-next/>



BOOK REVIEW

Free Speech: A History from Socrates to Social Media

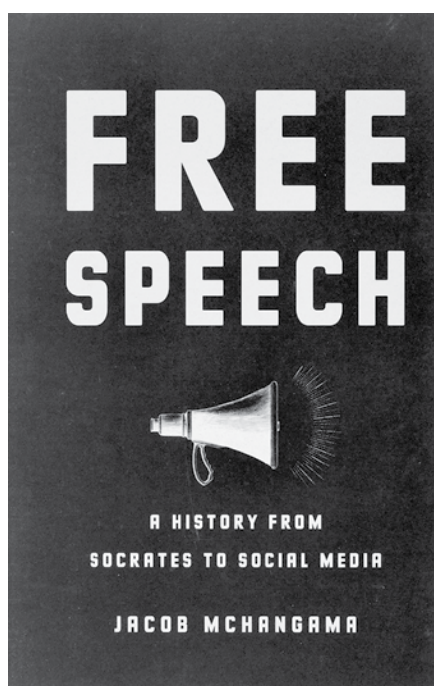
by Jacob Mchangama (2020)

Margaret Thomas

I suppose it will surprise no one to learn that the age-old fight for free speech goes on, and likely will continue as long as there are unpopular ideas. Lawyer, podcaster and founder of a Copenhagen-based human-rights think tank, author Jacob Mchangama is in the thick-skinned camp that still believes “more speech is the best weapon against bad speech.”

The author’s background as a biracial Danish citizen and the son of a Sunni Muslim lends legitimacy when he opposes speech restrictions ostensibly aimed at protecting minorities. Again and again, such seemingly reasonable “hate-speech” restrictions provide loopholes that allow dictators to curtail dissent. Again and again, it is the powerless who pay the price.

Mchangama’s history of free speech is detailed, starting in Ancient Greece. Intellectual curiosity, or “poking around” as he calls it, has ever since been the bane of kings and churches. Every manner of execution and maiming, including “ear cropping,” failed to stop the back and forth between liberty and tyranny that zigzagged through the



ages. The free-speech skirmishes get more interesting as Mchangama makes his way to modern times.

The late Congressman and civil rights leader John Lewis understood that restrictions on speech were more likely to serve the status quo than to bring about social change. “Without freedom of

speech and the right to dissent, the Civil Rights movement would have been a bird without wings,” he said.

But some social-justice proponents see free-speech as a bludgeon too often used to intimidate and smash today’s equity efforts. After World War II, writes Mchangama, it was a popular conception that “democracies cannot tolerate intolerance.”

The author disagrees. Mchangama argues that the freedom to speak serves as a relief valve to prevent the oppressed or disgruntled from resorting to violence: “Free speech may well be the most powerful engine of equality ever devised by human kind.”

The same tensions between authority and intellectual freedom that played out in ancient times are reflected in today’s news. Will pandemonium prevail if self-described free-speech absolutist Elon Musk buys Twitter?

Former President Donald Trump’s efforts to overthrow the 2020 election, followed by the Jan. 6 hearings, highlight the subtle difference between free speech and sedition, a charge typically leveled at those who challenge the established order in America. An important guidepost might prove to be what’s known as the Brandenburg Standard, a Supreme Court ruling that narrowly defines criminal speech as “... incitement to imminent lawless action.” In any case, Mchangama believes free speech was a decisive factor in why Trump was a one-term president, while Vladimir Putin has maintained his iron grip on Russia for more than 20 years.

Throughout history elites have assumed ordinary citizens are ill-

equipped to know what’s good for them. Backed by research findings, Mchangama is confident that the majority of us (with the exception of hyper-partisans) can be trusted to judge the value and veracity of information.

Authorities once considered the printing press to be dangerously disruptive, producing a torrent of political and religious propaganda, hate speech and obscenity. So Mchangama is hopeful that social media, too, will be harnessed for ultimate good, if we can tolerate the inevitable bad. Rather than a handful of billionaire capitalists serving as censors, tech visionaries call for restructuring and decentralizing social-media platforms to someday allow individual users to control the kinds of information they receive or reject.

Mchangama ends on a cautionary note. After hailing the late 20th Century as the Golden Age of free speech and the United States as “the most speech-protective of any nation on earth,” he warns about what he calls a “global free-speech recession” in the 21st Century. He singles out Muslim-majority countries where blasphemy is a capital crime, Chinese censorship and surveillance, and Westerners who view the free flow of information as “a trojan horse threatening democracy.”

The word fun appears just once in this thoroughly researched, often bloody 400-page history. It is the last word. A world with less free speech, says the author, will be less fun.

Margaret Thomas is a former journalist and recently retired college librarian.

A message from the Thunderbolt

A tale of two refugee camps in Tijuana

Dana Walker

It turns out that if you're a refugee trying to escape horror and death by coming to the United States via the Mexican border—make sure that you are Ukrainian!

A small army of American volunteers showed up in Tijuana to help incoming Ukranians. The Mexican government provided them with a soccer stadium. The Ukrainian welcome center complex is a large, welcoming space with tons of resources—everything from cooked food, to information flyers, to help for refugees to line up for the next bus.

The day that reporter James Spring visited this camp, he estimated that between 500 and 800 refugees moved through this shelter and into the United States with an average wait time of 8 hours.

<http://www.jamesrspring.com/>

Then Mr. Spring went to another refugee center called Agape, this one populated by refugees with—let's say—‘darker’ skin tones. This camp had about the same number of people, but they were migrants mainly from Central America and Mexico, and a few from Haiti.

I will quote Mr. Spring here: “Agape is up a dirt road. It's right between a junkyard and a cemetery. It's not very big, maybe the size of two Olive Garden restaurants. And I'll just come out and say it. The place has a very different vibe than the Ukrainian compound.”

Hundreds of Ukrainians moved through daily with an 8-hour wait. In the month previous to Mr. Spring's visit, only one person from Agape had been legally processed into the US—and he had been waiting at Agape for almost a year.

The [T]Rump used COVID as an excuse to close the border to nearly all immigration for over two years, and now—breaking another solemn promise—Sleepy Joe continued that policy.

But, miraculously, they found a way around that it came to Ukrainians! Ukrainians are accepted into the US through a process called ‘humanitarian parole’ which allows them to stay

Cultural access

From page 5

pamphlet. The three Inspire Olympia! co-chairs, including Mayor Shelby (identified as Cheryl Selby, arts advocate) were immediately available for the “pro” statement.

City staff was unable to find anyone to write the “against” statement—despite the fact that 50 or 60 of the community survey respondents had agreed that a tax for arts expansion was wrong. (The eventual 5223 “no” vote also suggests that there were others who would have written an “against” statement.) Nonetheless, no one could be found.

The text of the voter's pamphlet went to the auditor with a blank where the “against” statement should have been. In that situation, it's the Auditor's turn to look for people. They did so by putting this notice on their Facebook page: “Auditor seeks citizens to serve on against committee for a ballot measure in the April 26 Special Election.” Not surprisingly, no citizen appeared. The only statement in the voters’ pamphlet was the mayor and her colleagues celebrating the benefits of cultural access.

How a minority of voters decides for everyone

In the days leading up to the vote on April 26, Olympia's registered voters received a glossy 8-panel mailer from the City outlining how many benefits would flow from the Cultural Access Program. (A statement on the mailer said that it wasn't an endorsement by Council members.) The Inspire Olympia! PAC collected \$42,000 much from prospective beneficiaries of the tax. They spent \$36,000 on innumerable mailers, posters and presentations. A huge lighted sign spelled out Inspire Olympia! in downtown Olympia on the eve of the vote.

for up to 12 months.

Mr. Spring decided to take one of the refugees from the Agape center to visit the Ukrainian center. A young woman named Mayra from Michoacán, Mexico volunteered. Mayra had been acting as a nurse at Agape. She was seeking asylum in the United States because the drug gangs in Michoacán had been killing and/or recruiting her family members.

...unlike Agape, the Ukrainian center had a kids’ area with toys and Legos and a coloring station for older kids. There was prepared food everywhere. There were kennels for the Ukrainian dogs! ... whereas at Agape, refugees mostly slept on floors and paid their own way...

Mayra noted that unlike Agape, the Ukrainian center had a kids’ area with toys and Legos and a coloring station for older kids. There was prepared food everywhere. There were kennels for the Ukrainian dogs! It was explained that Ukrainians had these resources even though most of them weren't spending the night—whereas at Agape, refugees mostly slept on floors and paid their own way as the center didn't have enough resources to take care of them or provide them with luxuries—such as food or a bed, for instance.

The fact that the Ukrainians were getting processed so quickly—especially under the guise of ‘humanitarian parole’—was a tough pill for Mayra to swallow. She had attempted to get her father into the US under the ‘humanitarian parole’ exception: his leg had been amputated, he had severe diabetes, and his condition had been steadily getting worse.


His ‘humanitarian parole’ claim was denied and Mayra's father died soon after at the Agape shelter from medical complications.

The 0.1% additional sales tax was agreed to by vote of 7242 (yes) and 5223 (no) with one-third of Olympia's 35,416 registered voters (out of about 42,000 adults) weighing in. After a well-orchestrated campaign, the “consent of the governed” we profess to believe necessary, came from only 17% of the people. This approach to democracy is known as “manufactured consent.”

Status of the \$200,000 budget enhancement

This May, City Manager Jay Burney brought Councilmembers a request to use \$180,000 of a \$10 million year-end balance to cover “Cultural Access Tax Special Election Costs The actual cost of the election according to the Thurston County Auditor, was \$87,495. In response to a public records request, the City provided documentation for another \$11,189 used to cover printing and mailing of the City's promotional brochure. The total cost was \$80,000 less than what Burney asked for. Why the discrepancy? Are Council members not curious? “It's only money.” Is anyone paying attention?

1. It turned out that the City could not legally begin collecting the new tax until January 2023. They could have waited until the August primary for their vote, which would have cost much less than \$87,000. But “it's only money.”



last word books
new location
501 4th ave east –
corner of 4th ave and jefferson.
lastwordbooks.org

As Mayra and Mr. Spring left the Ukrainian facility, they walked past dishes of hot food, cases of bottled water, walls full of clothing and blankets sealed in clear plastic bags, and past the smiling American guards at the front gate. Outside, Mr. Spring pointed out the Mexican cops posted at the corner keeping watch over the Ukrainians and protecting them from gangs.

“What? Really?” Mayra asked. “They get that, too? People shoot at us from outside the shelter, actual gunfire, and the police are almost never around!”

Mayra continued, “I've seen so few people, so, so few bringing even a single donation to our shelter. ...these kids have so many supplies—crayons, notebooks, Play-Doh, learning materials. Our kids, who are here for months, don't have these. People who are only here for eight hours [in the Ukrainian camp], they have everything here, everything, all the comforts. They even have Internet. And the truth is, they don't need it.”

“Honestly here, they don't even open the things they bring them. They don't need it. These are people who simply pass through, and they give them everything. Why?”

That is a very good question, Mayra. I have yet to hear an acceptable answer.

Dana Walker lives in Olympia and is the creator of The Thunderbolt, a free-thinker's sometimes email newsletter

Neighborhood centers

From page 5

sumer base, vibrancy, and housing options and affordability. (Most are currently zoned low-density residential even though the Comprehensive Plan vision calls for greater variety.)”

The question seems to ask whether you support a change in zoning that will bring “a greater variety of home types” which in turn bring “... vibrancy, housing options and affordability.” This misleads by falsely implying that a “great variety of homes” isn't possible under current zoning.

The question also describes up to a half-mile radius from the neighborhood center for the new zone. To put this in perspective, the total area encompassed within a circle with a radius of a half-mile of 17 neighborhood centers would be 13.4 square miles. Since the City of Olympia is only 20.1 square miles, this is a vision of new commercial zoning covering two-thirds of the city.

To achieve a community-driven plan

The survey questions do not represent a genuine attempt to gain insight into resident desires for housing density and local neighborhood businesses within walking range. The take-away when City planning staff summarizes the “yes” answers will be that there is support for these zoning changes, i.e., more commercial development, taller buildings, higher intensity of use etc. This will enable the next steps toward something that will qualify as a “commercial center,” not a “neighborhood center” as advertised. One question even alludes to scattering commercial businesses throughout neighborhoods, not just at centers.

Working with the residents of existing neighborhoods should have been the starting point for this effort, not an afterthought. Integrating Neighborhood Centers into Olympia could be a win-win-win for the city, residents, and businesses. That is unlikely unless the City's approach to their development changes.

Judy Bardin is a resident of West Olympia, and was formerly an Environmental Epidemiologist.

More info at Neighborhood Centers: <https://engage.olympiawa.gov/neighborhood-centers>



Violence against black people A white American cultural habit

Enrique Quintero

Zip Code 14208

In May 14, a young white supremacist armed with a semi-automatic assault rifle traveled over 200 miles to the zip code 14208, which seemed an ideal place for implementing his plan to kill black people. Within driving distance from his hometown, the neighborhood has the highest percentage black population of any ZIP code in upstate New York—78%.

Tragically, his plan “worked” and by the end of the day, he had killed ten people and wounded three more. The murderous assault in zip code 14208 has created the most recent place in the US to be stained in blood by deliberate and premediated violence by white people against black people. The events in Buffalo attracted national attention, galvanizing the media and the two traditional political parties, each offers a different explanation for these killings.

The Republican posture

On one hand, Republicans and rightwing news fabricators such as Fox broadcaster Tucker Carlson quickly tried to distance themselves from the fact that the shooter framed his actions in a written manifesto evoking the so-called Great Replacement Theory. (This is a set of concepts that sees the existence of all non-white people as a threat to white people's wellbeing).

In the last decade, replacement theory has openly nourished the soul and intellect of Republican conservatives like Carlson who—on TV screens and political soap boxes, and behind religious pulpits—have disseminated the theory's concepts. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer pointed out repeated references to the theory, noting that replacement rhetoric has been used in Carlson's show over 400 times.

A key element of Trump's 2016 campaign was to promote the politics of fear and resentment among white audiences against immigrants and “bad hombres”.

In the face of the murders in Buffalo, these same individuals, crippled by hypocrisy, seek to remove themselves from ideological concurrence with the shooter. Carlson piously rushed to wash his hands in the baptismal font of Fox News, conveniently characterizing the events in Buffalo as the solitary expression of a mentally ill person.

As if the mental health condition of an individual can be understood in isolation from the mode in which a society is organized and operates. Carlson and other conservatives portray the motive for the murders in Buffalo as purely psychological, outside the cultural conditions of social reality.

Many Republicans appear to hope that by replacing the label attached to the motives for violence against black people, we will forget how these actions came to be and who needs to be held responsible.

Tragically, in another violent episode, nineteen elementary school

children and two teachers were killed in Texas. In an attempt to deflect attention from research on how to prevent school shootings, Republican politicians pointed to the psychological instability of the individual shooter—even as they took the floor at the NRA conference.

Democrats' Stance

Despite their claims, Democrats and the liberal press also don't seem to understand how to address the systemic problem of violence against black people. Yes, some members of Congress and President Biden have condemned the killings. They've linked the ideology of white supremacy and the Great Replacement to the murders in Buffalo. But in terms of addressing the violence, Democrats have limited their response to characterizing replacement theory as “a lie.” In Biden's words:

“The internet has radicalized angry, alienated, lost and isolated individuals into falsely believing that they will be replaced. I and all of you reject the lie. I call on all Americans to reject the lie. And I condemn those who spread the lie for power, political gain and profit.”

Exhortations condemning replacement theory are not enough. By itself, oral disapproval carries the same weight as the countless thoughts, flowers and prayers offered by politicians in reaction to violence and its victims. American history shows that the thoughts prove inconsistent, the flowers lose their color and the prayers never seem to reach the ears of an imperturbable and tone-deaf god.

The problem with “replacement theory”

The problem is not the fact that replacement theory is a big lie fabricated and sustained by the feverish brains of conservatives and racists. The problem is that it offers an incomplete, a-historical, and obfuscatory explanation of the causal driver of violence against black people.

The theory has its origins in early 1900s French nationalism and anti-Jewish positions. It wasn't until 2011 with the publication of Renaud Camus' *Le Grand Remplacement* that the theory acquired its current status among rightwing movements around the world. At that point it began to play a role in racial hate crimes of which the Buffalo massacre is an example.

The roots of systemic violence by whites against blacks lie in the brutalizing atrocities of slavery. In 1619, twenty black people were the first human beings forced into slavery in the colony of Jamestown, Virginia. By 1865, around 10 million black people had lived as slaves in the US. Four million black people were living as slaves at the outbreak of the Civil War.

The National Museum of African American History in Washington DC helps make visible the overwhelming violence and brutality that assumed multiple forms in the system of slavery in which this country originated. Besides be-

ing an instrument of forced labor that underlies the development of American capitalism and American capitalists, centuries of slavery created an indelible culturally-induced disorder in the mind and behavior of white Americans.

Most white people have not deliberately sought out opportunities to murder black people. We nonetheless must recognize that violent behaviors directed against black people in the US have managed to morph and survive for four hundred years.

After the formal end of slavery in 1865, violence against black people did not come to a halt. Violence was pursued and implemented by other means. Jim Crow segregation laws established a system of ‘debt peonage’—the involuntary servitude of black laborers. That system was violently reinforced by the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist organizations who regularly engaged in lynching, beatings, and burnings.

It wasn't until 1964 that the US Senate passed the Civil Rights Act, in spite of violent acts meant to repress the Civil Rights Movement. White Republican Senators who opposed the bill were forced to witness their colleagues formally acknowledging ending discrimination in the work place, public accommodations and facilities, federal funding and in schools. Along with making discrimination in voter registration illegal, in the words of Senator Dirksen, it was “an idea whose time has come.” Soon after, the leadership of the black movement was beheaded: Malcom X in 1965, and M. L. King in 1968.

The time is yet to come when the US eliminates race-thinking and violence against black people. The election of Barak Obama in 2009 and 2013 provided an important change in the racial symbol operating from the White House (a term borrowed from Cornel West).

And yet systemic violence against black people continues, as evi-

denced by the US criminal justice system and incidents of police brutality. Today, 38% of the people in prison are black, yet black people account for only 12.4 % of the US population. According to a study quoted by Black intellectual Keenga-Yamatha Taylor, between 2010 and 2012, young black men ages fifteen to nineteen were twenty-one times more likely than their white peers to be killed by police.

In the civil arena, there are more than thirty white nationalist organizations currently operating in the US. Two years ago, massive protests over the murder of George Floyd by a white police officer formed a “splinter in the eye” that magnified the continuity of violence against black people.

A white American cultural habit?

If we define a habit as “a settled or regular practice that is hard to give up,” then from the historical glimpse provided above, we can conclude that there is an established, traceable, practice of white people using violence against black people.

In many instances this violence has been reinforced, ignored or denied by state institutions. Just as we cannot attribute this behavior to individual white people, we cannot deny the evidence that such practices exist and are closely related to the ideology of white supremacy.

Thoughts, flowers, and prayers are insufficient. Serious political change is required; change that sustains political engagement even when it seems hopeless. We must give “replacement” theory a new meaning, one that replaces systemic exploitation, racism and inequality with one based on social equity, justice, and human solidarity. Those should be our national habits.

Enrique Quintero

Carbon footprint

From page 16

[Find WIP's Dec. 2017 review of Drawdown online at www.olywip.org]

Number one item on the Project Drawdown list is emissions from refrigerants, with thousands of times the warming effect of CO2. Item six is girls' education. 130 million girls around the world don't get much education. If they stay in school, they have more options, including the knowledge to use birth control.

Item seven is family planning. 214 million women in lower-income countries want to choose whether and when to become pregnant but lack access to contraception. Drawdown estimates that funding high school education for girls, along with access to family planning for women around the world would reduce emissions by 30% more than

dealing with refrigerants. (They're also two of the cheapest options in Drawdown's analysis.)

The site has a long list of other critical actions State and Federal governments need to take to address global warming. You could write letters, sign petitions, lobby local, State and Federal officials. Here in Washington, elected officials mostly vote right on climate bills, so maybe the best effort would be to try to elect more Democrats in other places. Plus, there are many organizations working on issues like these—you could find some you admire and contribute

Thad Curtz has been volunteering for local climate groups since retiring from the Evergreen faculty; his website about resources for acting on our climate mitigation plan is at <http://www.climatetoolbox.info>.

Community Spotlight

Railroad Strike and Worker Solidarity

Reduced crew size, drastic changes to work schedules, slashed compensation and heightened safety hazards while corporate-owned railroads continue to post profits are contributing to the upcoming rail worker's strike (date estimated to be mid-September). Learn more at solutionaryrail.org.



Forest Defense is Climate Defense Rally

September 6, 8 AM
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
1111 Washington St SE, in Olympia.

Everyone is invited to a rally to stop the clearcutting of Washington's last remaining mature legacy forests. Tell the DNR Washington forests are for ALL the people.

Public Meeting on 3900 Boulevard Road Project

September 14, 6 - 8 PM
Olympia Regional Learning Academy's (ORLA) Learning Center
2400 15th Ave SE in Olympia

South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity's Project & Artisans Group Architecture and Planning will host a meeting for the public about their vision and next steps for the development at 3900 Boulevard Road.



The Olympia Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

September 15, 5 PM Zoom video

Call 360.491.9093 or email glenanderson@integra.net for Zoom link and agenda details.

Democratic Socialists of America – Olympia

September 16, 4 PM Zoom meeting

Oly DSA general membership meetings are held the third Saturday of every month and are open to the public. Interested folks should reach out to us ahead of time at info@olydsa.org.



World Rivers Day action

Backbone Campaign
September 25, 12 PM

An overpass, intersection or bridge in your community



In recognition of World Rivers Day, we are mobilizing folks to protect the rivers and streams in their communities. Backbone's focus will be advocating for a free-flowing Snake River. By breaching the 4 dams on the Lower Snake, we open up thousands of miles of pristine, cool salmon habitat—urgently needed by salmon and the over 100 species that depend on them. RSVP to info@BackboneCampaign.org to join this or another action. We'll follow up with you.

International Day of Peace (9/21) to International Day of Nonviolence (10/1)

Organized by Campaign Nonviolence
Sept 21 to Oct 2

Help build a culture rooted in nonviolence. From renewable energy to housing for all, we're connecting the dots between the issues and proposing a bold vision for nonviolent solutions to our pressing crises. Local groups are encouraged to pick 1-3 actions and contact us to join monthly calls and trainings and/or to endorse specific actions.

Direct questions to rivera@paceebene.org.

Parallax Perspectives—“Some People in the Military Refuse Orders”

Watch any time at www.parallaxperspectives.org or on cable Channel 22 in Thurston County Mondays at 1:30 PM, Wednesdays at 5:00 PM, and Thursdays at 9:00 PM

This month, Glen interviews Jeff Paterson and Stephanie Atkinson, who share first-hand experiences, insights, and information about people in the military who refuse to fight wars. Both now work with Courage to Resist (www.couragetoresist.org), helping people refuse military orders.

Questions? Contact Glen Anderson at 360.491.9093 or email glenanderson@integra.net.

South Sound Artisan Guild's Artisan Market

September 17, 10 AM – 8 PM
Capital Mall , 625 Black Lake Blvd SW
Olympia, WA 98502
Free parking & admission

Handcrafted, upcycled, artisan-created and unique items for sale. In addition to traditional retail products, artisan created merchandise will include photography, digital art, and authors.

Questions? SouthSoundArtisanGuild@gmail.com



October 15, 10 AM – 5 PM
Thurston County Fairgrounds
3054 Carpenter Rd SE Lacey, WA 98503
This is an indoor and outdoor event

Free entertainment by local performers

Free parking & admission

Handcrafted, upcycled, artisan-created and unique items for sale. In addition to traditional retail products, artisan created merchandise will include photography, digital art, and authors.

Questions about vending requirements: SouthSoundArtisanGuild@gmail.com

Stories of Food, Food as Story

Window Seat Media in collaboration with local teaching artists

Four workshop sessions:
September 24 – November 6
GRuB farmhouse
2016 Elliott Ave NW, Olympia

\$5-\$500 (select what works best for you!)

Participants will explore their history and cultural heritage through food traditions. Workshop sessions will be led by local teaching artists who will guide participants through the process of identifying a food tradition through which they can learn about their history or culture, conducting oral history interviews to document

the tradition, using interview transcripts and memorabilia as source material to create a short piece of creative nonfiction, an audio story, or a visual journal and reflecting and sharing stories through play-back theatre.

Learn more and register at <https://www.windowseatmedia.org/post/stories-of-food-food-as-story>



Saturday Market at West Central Park

Saturdays, May through October,
9 AM – 2 PM
1919 Harrison Ave.
NW in Olympia



Saturdaymarketwcpnc.org

Ongoing resources

Rosie's Place

Drop-in: 520 Pear St. SE in Olympia
12 PM – 3 PM, Ages 12-24

Get lunch, hang out, watch a movie.

One of over 20 Community Youth Services programs, Rosie's Place provides a warm, safe place for homeless and at-risk youths, to help them identify their strengths, and to empower and support them as they work toward self-identified goals.

Young Overnight Shelter

Ages 18-24
9 PM – 8:30 AM



For more information, contact Tasha Church, program director, at 360.943.0780, ext. 135 or go to www.communityyouthservices.org

Home Share

Home Share Program helps match people who can't afford to buy or rent a home to find



affordable, semi-permanent housing. Before matches are made, reference and background checks are conducted and lengthy interviews are held. Managed by South Sound Seniors. Contact Rebecca Hutchinson, Home Share Program Manager, at 360.586.6181 ext. 111 or rhutchinson@southsoundseniors.org.

Missing, Murdered Indigenous Women & Families

MMIWF is a grassroots family, survivor-led organization. Our work is not chosen, it is the result of our loved one's going missing, being murdered, being exploited, being trafficked, domestically abused, sexually assaulted, and systematically sexualized and oppressed. The reality for us was that we had no resources or services to aid us in the pursuit of visibility and justice for our sisters, ourselves and loved ones. To learn more visit mmwipfamilies.org.



The Rape of Orithyia

The Rape of Orithyia, mountain gale nymph, by Boreas, god of the north wind, a mytho-poetic interpretation of the wrath of the Goddess and her hand in the devastating Marshall Fire, Colorado 2021.

Orithyia, mountain gale nymph,
No longer whispers her secret sorrows.
She runs down mountain slopes howling.
Rushes through valleys at 100 mph,
Breaking branches and uprooting whole trees.
Her heavy steps fall like thunder on the land,
A million hooves stampede over rooftops.
She is running from the cold North Wind,
Running from her abductor.

Boreas found the maiden by the river,
Praying with rocks and salamanders.
He took her swiftly and by force,
Wrapped her in a cloud to conceal the shameful rape.
Then he mounted her,
Like he mounts mares and sires lightning-fast colts.
His sharp icicle prick punctured her womb
And she bore Khione, “Snow.”

Now the North Wind chases Orithyia down the foothills,
Like winter stalks late autumn.
She grabs a fistful of dry wild grasses.
She holds up a burning torch,
So the violation of her body will be seen,
Will be felt.

Witnesses turn away and become numb to her abduction.
In her fury she “rain[s] flaming fire over the land.” (ENHEDUANNA)
She blazes through hills and towns.
Then Khione, “Snow,” comes to put out the flames of her mother’s body.
Leaving gray and white,
Ash and ice,
Smoldering ground.

Catherine Brooks, 2022

Works in Progress

Advocating for social justice since 1990

