



WORKS IN PROGRESS

VOLUME 23, No. 11

SERVING THE OLYMPIA COMMUNITY AND THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE SINCE 1990.

MARCH 2013

What's at stake for Procession of the Species

As an integral part of Olympia's celebration of Earth Day, it has a very "fragile" life.

Desdra Dawning

The Procession of the Species, Olympia's yearly one-of-a-kind celebration of the natural world, held in conjunction with Earth Day and Arts Walk, is in preparation for its 19th year of both joyful revelry and serious creative intent. That

intention is to bring deep love of life into the very heart, and onto the very streets, of our city. Once again, people of all ages are filling the Procession studio, their minds dancing with images of the creatures they love and wish to protect. Following their own inspiration, they are creating costumes from the donated, recycled, and purchased materials they find in the free community art studio.

Olympia school classrooms are bustling with teachers and children learning about the sea and its watery inhabitants, the air that surrounds us with its winged community, or the life that runs, crawls, digs, and slithers on our precious planet, and even the sun, who makes all of this possible. Costumes, deeply representational to the actual chosen creature are emerging from piles of encyclopedias and photographs, and both children and grownups are being given the gift of getting to see how wonderfully creative, joyful and uninhibited adults can really be. As Eli Sterling, loving parent of the Procession, puts it, "This is an adult event where kids are welcome. When kids see all these adults dancing, playing music, and doing art in a public setting, they think, 'Oh! That's what adults do. I don't have to be embarrassed by that!'"

I recently shared a conversation with Eli Sterling and a volunteer/participant who does community outreach for the Procession, Ann Pelo. Looking out over Budd Bay and the marina that hosts those big log-laden ships, I was struck by the sheer enthusiasm and deep love I share with them for this place, its people, and most of all, the sweet world of nature greeting us out of the window.

From our vantage point, Eli was able to point out the exact spot where the Procession was conceived-on the beach just west of Swan Town Marina. It was during his days at The Evergreen State College, he said, working toward a Master's Degree, walking the beach, that he came upon a sign with skull and crossbones, offering a warning not to eat the clams buried there, due to "polluted

water." (That, by the way, was almost 20 years ago and, sans the pirate icon, that sign still exists on the shores of Budd Bay.)

Standing in the midst of diamond sparkling water, seeing the Olympic Mountains in the distance, he realized in that moment that even "our icons of the natural world —gorgeous snow-

As the procession grows, the challenges to its integrity grow stronger. Commercialism, antithetical to the deep purpose of the Procession, gnaws hungrily at its skirts.

capped mountains, sunny blue skies—are not enough to motivate us to a greater level of responsibility." Inspired to take action, he formed Earthbound Productions and began his journey in this community-gently, creatively, joyfully inviting and encouraging us all to come alive to the cornucopia of amazing life that teems around and in us.

The Procession, while it has a life of its own, also has, as Eli puts it, a very "fragile" life. As it grows, the challenges to its integrity grow stronger. Commercialism, antithetical to the deep purpose of the Procession, gnaws hungrily at its skirts. And while it is "appreciated in positive gratefulness by the community for its beauty, originality and creativity," Eli points out that it is also most "under-appreciated in the understanding of what it actually does and what's at stake." And what is at stake?

That can be found in the mission of the Procession: "To invite the community in elevating the ultimate dignity of the human spirit by enhancing connections in the natural world, focusing on imagination, creation and sharing as a cultural exchange as opposed to an entertainment event."

It is this conscious stance, rooted in spiritual awareness, that sets the Procession apart from the consumer world, inviting us all, participants and onlookers alike, to regain our genuine innocence, open to the world around us, and embrace the 'what is' of our lives



Photo: Desdra Dawning

in loving acceptance. And yet, it is this very stance that adds to the fragility of the Procession. Eli's message is clear: there is an innocence and authenticity at stake. He explains, "Something in

► **PROCESSION**, continued on page 11

The future of the apple: A small biotech company could change the debate on GMOs

Marco Rosarie Rossi

In the terms of apple history the Granny Smith is a recent creation. The first known record of Granny Smith propagation dates back to 1886, where Maria Ann "Granny" Smith selectively bred a European red apple (*malus domestica*) with a European crab apple (*M. sylvestris*). Since that time, Granny Smiths have become one of the world's most popular apples. And, it is a reputation well deserved. Granny Smiths managed to be tart without being bitter, are both crisp and juicy, and their light green skin sets them apart from their red cousins. Love for the Granny Smith is global and can take on an even quasi-religious appreciation in countries like Australia—where Maria Ann Smith was from—and the United States. In America, the Granny Smith remains a top selling apple. This is not

only because of individual consumption, but because it is often the apple of choice for the most American of foods: apple pie.

The Granny Smith does come with a defect. Like all apples, after a few minutes of being sliced open the Granny Smith begins to turn brown. This transformation is largely a cosmetic occurrence. Mild browning of an apple slice

OSF is an extremely small company with a total of seven employees. They hardly fit the description of the corporate monolith that is usually associated with genetically modified foods.

has little effect on its taste or nutritional value. Nevertheless, browning is an undesirable trait which apples consumers reject. Americans love apples, but they won't eat bruised or mildly brown ones. And, what Americans won't eat, busi-

nesses won't sell.

This limitation to the Granny Smith may end up being a thing of the past. Recently, a small breeding and biotech company from Canada—Okanagan Specialty Fruits, Inc. (OSF)—has developed a way to keep the Granny Smith, along with the Golden Delicious—and potentially all other apples—from browning. Apples have an enzyme referred to as *polyphenol oxidase*. This enzyme—once exposed to the open air—causes the apple's interior to transform from a bright white into a grainy brown. Through genetic engineering OSF has managed to silence the enzyme. No active enzyme means no browning; it's that simple.

OSF is looking to have these apples—which is has named Artic Apples—approved throughout North America in the next two years, possibly sooner. However, even if approved by the regulatory agencies, it's not guaranteed. ► **APPLE FUTURE**, continued on page 10

WORKS IN PROGRESS

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

Works In Progress is a free, all volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of Works In Progress and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions

Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

Works In Progress is committed to stories misrepresented or ignored by the mainstream media. We value local, well-researched news stories, accounts of personal experience and reflections by local authors. Opinion pieces, also valued, are often best supported by facts, examples, and sources, and we encourage writers to include these elements to submissions. We're also looking for graphics, poetry, cartoons, and articles that push the boundaries of conventional journalism.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite sources.

If your issue isn't being covered in Works In Progress, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or haven't found someone else to cover it!)

Send submissions to olywip@gmail.com or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool

The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

WIP will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by WIP to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but WIP reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.

Mission Statement

Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. Works In Progress is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed.

Anti-Discrimination Clause

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues

WIP is archived on microfilm by the University of Washington Library. Some issues are held in the Timberland Library system. The last five years are online at www.olywip.org

WORKERS IN PROGRESS

Editing: Eliot Nelson, Robert Whitlock, and Sylvia Smith

Layout: Sylvia Smith

Proofreading: Eliot Nelson, Scott Yoos, and Sylvia Smith

Writers' Group: Amicus Curia, Desdra Dawning, Eliot Nelson, Marissa Luck, and Matson Boyd

Mailings: Jeff Sowers

Finances: Pat Tassoni

Website: Eliot Nelson, Marissa Luck, and Robert Whitlock

Distribution: Berd Whitlock, Creighton Rose, Fred Schug, Jerome Johnson, Maggie Reardon, Marylea Coday, Sandia Slaby, Scott Yoos, Stan Butler, Teresa Jennings, and room for more.

Submission Deadline:

Friday, March 15
olywip@gmail.com

Proofreading Meeting

Saturday ♦ March 23 ♦ Noon
Olympia Timberland Library
next to the biographies
(Be there for the first read!)

ADVERTISING RATES

7.25" x 4.75" . . . \$125
4.75" x 4.75" . . . \$83
3" x 4.75" . . . \$52
4" x 2.25" . . . \$34
3.5" x 2.25" . . . \$30
2.25" x 2.25" . . . \$20

*Special microbusiness deal!
4 months for the price of 3
Ask for nonprofit rates*

olywip@gmail.com

*(not available with alternative financing)

On the front cover —
Artesian Rumble Arkestra sans Andy
Photographer: Robert Whitlock

Olympia, where are your commons?

Jo Trees

Community can't exist without the commons. Where will we commune?

The rise of capitalism began with the enclosure movement, the removal of peasants from the land they worked and shared—the destruction of the commons.

In the current situation in which we find ourselves there is no more communal land. It is all owned by someone—especially if you think of corporations as people. Even the land we think of as public is really owned by city, county, state or federal governments. The question of homelessness downtown and what is and is not allowed on public property goes right to the heart of what capitalism is. Is this public property to be freely shared by everyone and used for *acts of living* or is it to be regulated and controlled by local governments that clearly place the interests of one class of people above another and the belief in economy above all?

Why shouldn't people be allowed to sleep in the park? Littering, public urination, drug use and violence—all the things that are brought up when discussing homelessness—are already crimes, so why is it also a crime to sleep on a park bench after dark? Why should parks,

benches and gazebos sit empty when so many people just need a place to rest their heads?

Under the current economic system access to land—a necessity for life—is dictated by the amount of money a person has. Can't we imagine something different?

Governments will never give us permission to retake the commons. The best we can hope from them

is to leave us alone.

Their first priority is their religion—the economy. People who live without paying rent, without a job, are in direct opposition to the goal of commodification of everything in the service of the economy. That is

what we are up against to create a world where everyone's needs are truly met even those who have no position in or allegiance to the religion of economy.

There are 18 million empty homes in America and less than 1 million homeless!? Economy is a religion based upon the myth of scarcity—the belief that there is not enough to go around. As the 99% slogan demonstrates, it's not that there

are too little resources to go around, it is that there are too few in control of those resources. So, on its face, the economy they never stop talking about is a lie because it's based on the presumption that there is not enough when clearly there is plenty.

The occupy movement demonstrates that a large number of people fully support the use of public lands for displaced peoples. Each encampment provided a model—with all it's beauty and flaws—of how societies based on voluntary association

and cooperation could work—a place where food, shelter and time are shared freely. The state showed that it is in direct opposition to such a world. So, there will be conflict, but I can see no other way forward for those of us who want to be a part of a better world.

We must recreate the commune—not an occupation—a community!

Jo Robinhood was a poor boy from the bible belt who came west to be a cowboy. He was disillusioned with "the American way" by images of child casualties from the 2003 US bombing of Baghdad and radicalized by port militarization resistance to that war. Now Jo is a gardener, father, and an anarcho-tribalist.

As the 99% slogan demonstrates, it's not that there are too little resources to go around, it is that there are too few in control of those resources.

Charity vs. civil rights for Olympia's homeless

Amicus Curia

Olympia's new ordinance targeting the homeless became effective on Friday, 2-8-13. It not only effectively criminalizes the homeless for 'camping' (sleeping) on public city property, but prohibits the possession/carrying of camping paraphernalia. e.g. tents, sleeping bags, tarps, canteens, cooking/eating utensils, and sticks. On February 8th, homeless advocates and a few of the homeless themselves, gathered at the Artesian Well on 4th Ave to march on City Hall to protest the new law with a sleepover as an act of civil disobedience, knowing full well the premises are under 24/7 surveillance.

As the march proceeded down 4th Ave, led by the symbol of protest against state oppression, a black flag, traffic was temporarily blocked for several minutes. A number of marchers were masked in an effort to avoid persecution by the city's security apparatus. A number of supporters engaged in discussion about the plight of Olympia's homeless, a discussion that included at least

one or two people who were homeless themselves. (To hear audio recordings of those interviews, along with assorted images of the event, visit the Mason County Blog.) At least one exchange erupted into raised voices and passionate demands between a local resident of 42 years and one of the protesters.

Much of the discussion focused on the services Olympia had made previously made available to the homeless, the fact public bathrooms remained locked after hours, whether crime would be reduced by locking them, and whether there were sufficient resources available to

the homeless. Little to no discussion addressed the civil-rights implications of laws virtually criminalizing an entire class of people.



Photo: Amicus Curia

the homeless. Little to no discussion addressed the civil-rights implications of laws virtually criminalizing an entire class of people for being destitute or whether charity was a substitute for civil/human rights. (However in an interview after the discussion, one long-

time worker of an interfaith homeless shelter named Lorian argued that charity and civil/human rights are actually indistinguishable.)

One Oly PD cruiser happened by during the sleep-in, but did not stop or question the demonstrators. Food was set out for the hungry, portable musak was played. Signs pleading for making 'life legal' were displayed along with others alerting the public to the city's new version of Jim Crow laws targeting poverty. Nobody present believed the homeless were seeking recreation (camping?) on the cold hard dangerous pavement of Olympia's streets. Already stigmatized

by the humiliation and lack of privacy, the homeless now have been virtually labeled as criminals by a city which boasts of its charity while remaining curiously silent on the issue of civil rights. The mayor openly brags of creating 'momentum' through a strategy of management by crisis in passing the ordinance.

Amicus Curia of amicuscuria.com/wordpress, is an investigative photojournalist.

Scott Yoos next court date

Wednesday, 13 March, 9 am

Thurston County Courthouse
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW, Olympia

Pre-hearing support
vigil begins at 8:15 am.

Dear friends!,
I'm looking forward to
seeing a good-sized & joy-
filled clump of you there,
(if'n y'All can make it!)

Till then... -Scott Yoos

www.scottysupport.blogspot.com

Inside Works In Progress

Page 4 Letter from the rebel territory of Oaxaca, Mexico

Page 5 United Natural Food strike won by boycott

Page 6-7 Lessons in activism from France and Spain

Page 8 More educational opportunities needed for parents

Page 9 Assault rifles not coming to Evergreen

Rachel Corrie - ten years

The person and the continuing struggle

On Saturday, March 16, Olympia will mark the 10th anniversary of Rachel's stand in Gaza. It has been an extraordinary and challenging journey for the Rachel Corrie Foundation, for the Corrie family, and for those in our community and beyond who have worked tirelessly for justice and peace in Palestine/Israel, in the world, and here at home.

In this month's launch of a special year-long Peace Works effort, we will feature multiple special events and a remarkable March 16 day of action, reflection, and celebration. (See details below.) We will focus on how Rachel has touched our community and the world; on all that has been accomplished these past ten years through our local, regional, national, and international peace-building; and on inspiring the work to come.

We urge our friends to spread the word! We hope local organizations who have done the work of peace building through this past decade will share their highlights with us in a March 16 display of photos and word pictures in The Olympia Ballroom. We hope organizations that are noting the 10-year anniversary of Rachel in Gaza in any way will send details to the Rachel Corrie Foundation to be shared at our website - to bring attention to the group's efforts and to inspire others! Info@rachelcorriefoundation.org

Help us remember together, to celebrate how we (like Rachel) have all stood this past decade for justice, freedom, equality, and peace in the Middle East and beyond, and to think together about the work that lies ahead.

Please join us at these March events!

Sunday, March 3, 6 pm

Remi Kanazi-Spoken Word Justice
Washington State Labor Council
906 Columbia St. NW

Remi Kanazi, Palestinian-American poet, writer, and human rights activist will bring his spoken word to Olympia. Author of *Poetic Injustice: Writings on Resistance and Palestine* and editor of *Poets For Palestine*, a hip hop, poetry, and art anthology, Kanazi is a recurring writer in residence and advisory board member for the Palestine Writing Workshop. He has taught, lectured, and performed extensively throughout the US, Canada, Europe, and the Middle East. A member of the organizing committee of the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, Kanazi has been a featured political commentator for news outlets throughout the world. Through spoken word, he inspires audiences to discover their power to act for justice and peace in Israel/Palestine. An American-born son of Palestinian refugees who deeply feels his roots, Kanazi states, "This isn't about me being a Palestinian or me being an Arab. It's about a system of oppression and what's being done to a people." Kanazi will be available for book signing.

BDS workshop

Kanazi will also provide a Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) workshop at 2 pm in the same location about the Palestinian call for academic and cultural boycott of Israel, misconceptions about this call, and how to mount BDS campaigns.

Sponsored by the Rachel Corrie Foundation. For information, call 754-3998.

Admissions to both events are free to the public.

Friday, March 15, 6:30 pm

Where Should the Birds Fly
(with Fida Qishta filmmaker from Gaza)
Capitol Theater, 206 5th Ave SE, Oly

We are excited to team up with the Olympia Film Society (OFS) to present this film followed by a discussion with the filmmaker Friday, March 15. Fida Qishta is a Palestinian journalist from Rafah, Gaza, and survivor of the 2008-2009 Operation Cast Lead attack on Gaza by the Israeli military. The film tells Fida's story of life during the past decade in Gaza and during the siege, along with the moving story of Mona, a Palestinian girl, ten-years old at the time of Operation Cast Lead. Fida will be joined by Rachel Corrie Foundation board member Sonja Wentz for discussion with the audience following the movie.

Saturday, March 16, 1-9 pm

Rachel Corrie - 10 Years
Sylvester Park & The Olympia Ballroom
116 Legion Way SW, downtown Olympia

Expect a dynamic day of social action, speakers, music, dance, food, reflection, remembrance, and community!

1 pm - Rally at Sylvester Park

Ten years is enough! Challenge US aid to Israel and the lack of accountability for how those resources are used.

2:30pm at the Olympia Ballroom

Keynote speakers Phyllis Bennis and Ramzy Baroud - 10 Years

Writer, analyst, and activist on US foreign policy related to the Middle East and the UN, **Phyllis Bennis** directs the New Internationalism Project at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington DC



and is also a fellow of the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam. A journalist at the UN for ten years, Bennis remains a special adviser to top-level UN officials on Middle East and UN democratization issues. In the US, she works actively on global peace and with Palestinian rights movements and was a co-founder of the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation. Bennis has authored eight books on the Middle East and the United Nations and is a frequent contributor to US and global media at the *BBC*, *Democracy Now!*, *Al-Jazeera*, *NPR*, *the Nation*, *AlterNet*, *Common Dreams*, *TomPaine.com*. and more.

Ramzy Baroud, originally from Gaza, is a Palestinian-American journalist, author, editor, former producer for *al-Jazeera*, and currently Editor in Chief of *The Palestine Chronicle*. Baroud's work has been published in hundreds of newspapers, including *The Washington Post*, *The International Herald Tribune*, and nearly every English-language publication throughout the Middle East. He has been a guest on *CNN*, *NPR*, and other broadcast media. Baroud's third book, *My Father was a Freedom Fighter, Gaza's Untold Story*, published in 2010, narrates his family's history from 1940 to the present. Richard Falk, UN Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories wrote, "This book more than any I have read tells me why anyone of conscience must stand in solidarity with the continuing struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination and a just peace."

Music and Dance

Batiste Dabke, House of Tarab, David Rovics, and more!

Community Potluck, 5-7 pm

This is an Olympia tradition.

Remembrances

Remembrances from Cindy and Craig Corrie and others.

Interactive Displays

A visual feast reflecting Rachel Corrie—the writer, artist, and activist, and the continuing struggle; ten years for the Rachel Corrie Foundation; ten years for our community's work on Israel/Palestine; and ten-years of local peace-building.

Check the Rachel Corrie Foundation website for schedule and performance updates! rachelcorriefoundation.org or call 360-754-3998 for more information.

Working in WIP

Works In Progress depends on its community and its volunteer members. From articles written and advertisement bought to the final copy printed and delivered, it can't be done without you.

CARTOONIST: WIP is looking for political cartoonists. We love Mr. Fish and Eric Garcia, but they seldomly address local issues.

For those interested, please contact us at olywip@gmail.com.

Special Events

March 1st Episode of Dance Oly
Dance with DJ You Voted For
Friday, March 1, 8-9 pm
Thurston Community Television
440 Yauger Way SW Ste. C, Olympia

Come dance to your favorite DJ's mix on March first.

Laura Carlsen to give two major talks in Olympia

Latin America's Challenge to Neoliberalism

Monday, March 4, 7-9 pm
Olympia Center, Room 101
222 N Columbia St, Downtown Oly

Nation at Risk: Drug Wars, Democracy, and Dependency in Mexico

Tuesday, March 5, 11 am-1 pm
TESC, Seminar II, Room E1105

Laura Carlsen is a political analyst and writer who has lived in Mexico City for 25 years and is the Director of The Americas Program at the Center for International Policy. She has written extensively on NAFTA, the drug war, immigration and gender issues in *Americas Updater*, *Counterpunch*, *La Jornada* and others. She is a columnist for *Huffington Post* and *Foreign Policy in Focus*, and a commentator with *Al Jazeera*, *CCTV*, *NBC*, *Democracy Now!*, *NPR* and Mexican television and radio stations. She is co-editor of "Confronting Globalization: Economic Integration and Popular Resistance in Mexico" and has participated as an analyst and activist in the movement against militarization and the drug war on both sides of the border.

Both events are free and open to the public!

Sponsored by OMJP (Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace) and TESC Political Economy and Social Movements Program. For more info: peterbohmer@yahoo.com.

Invitation to be a Procession volunteer

Saturday, March 9th, 11 AM
Community Art Studio

Come to the Procession's first production planning and organizing meeting for volunteers. Bring a pastry, something hot to drink, and an extra pastry to share. The meeting will scope out possible community studio opportunities in light of this year's funding constraints.

Eyewitness Updates on Honduras: Attacks on LGBTQ Community and Unions
Friday, March 8, 6 pm
Media Island

816 Adams SE, Olympia

Chuck Kaufman speaks about his first hand experiences organizing delegations to Honduras. Three years after the Honduras coup, Indigenous, LGBTQ, teachers, Labor and farmers are subjected to continual violence. The Resistance Front calls for greater international solidarity to stop the violence. This is Chuck Kaufman's final stop on a NW tour speaking on this issue, Evergreen masters student Caitlin Payne Roberts will give a recap of her experience doing solidarity work in Honduras and the delegation trip she took with Chuck. Introducing both will be Bruce Wilkinson, who traveled to Honduras 6 months after the coup and now works for Alliance For Global Justice. Free event. (donations accepted)

Who Bombed Judi Bari?

Sunday, March 10, 7 pm
Labor Council Building
5th Floor, 906 Columbia Olympia

Showing of the award-winning documentary plus Q&A with producer Darryl Cherney, director Mary Liz Thomson and Earth First! co-founder Mike Roselle.

"Before Occupy Wall Street, there was Redwood Summer..." On May 24, 1990, a bomb blew up in the car of two of the most prominent Earth First! redwood activists: Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney - while they were driving through Oakland, CA on an organizing tour. The story spans from the mid 1980's right up to today, uniquely capturing a part of environmental history that is still as relevant as ever.

Sponsored by Olympia F.O.R. and Media Island.

Best wishes to former WIPster Tom Freeman! ✨



✨ Tom married Mauro Padovani Feb 15 in Ghent, Belgium.

Letter from the rebel territory of Oaxaca, Mexico

Joseph Bullington

It has been exactly five weeks since I left Montana in a tiny and loud Toyota Tercel to catch a flight out of San Francisco. That also means I've been in Mexico for exactly four weeks, and the country has, for the most part, ceased to feel strange. I've spent most of that time in Oaxaca, a city that has clawed a vibrant life out of a dry desert valley surrounded by mountains a seven hour bus ride south-west of Mexico City. The city's center is compact and walkable, but its barrios sprawl for miles up and down the hazy hills. El Centro is beautiful with brightly painted buildings and countless massive and ornate stone churches. Next to almost every church is a large park, with benches and trees, interesting stonework, and often a fountain or a statue. It is these outdoor spaces that I find most impressive, not only because of their physical layout and number, but because it is here that Oaxaca's tremendous energy is showcased. This energy fascinates me. Oaxaca is a whole city _____ that doesn't want to go home.

In a letter to my mom and dad, I wrote that if I had one wish for the United States, it would be that something similar existed there. Now, my line of argument here is drifting uncomfortably close to the flimsy liberalish sentiment that things would be okay if people just got together, face to face, and talked. It is an idea that suits

the poseurs and the lazy well because it suggests no action and does not demand the taking of "unacceptable" positions. It is an idea that I have always distrusted—the ride is too smooth to be trustworthy—and have often done my damndest to throw a wrench into the easy-working gears of. Still, what I have seen here in Oaxaca has cast the thing in a different light.

In Oaxaca, life takes place outside the house, on the streets, in the sprawling markets, in the zocoló—the town square—and countless other parks. Some of the wide cobblestone streets allow no cars, and at almost any time of day, these calles are so crowded with slow moving people that it is difficult to get anywhere quickly. Few people hurry down these streets, especially in the afternoon and evening; there is nowhere really to get to but lots of time to go. Even the bars and cantinas are not plagued by the daytime depression that hangs like a sick cloud around bars in the US and which is dispersed only by the coming of night. In the bars that are open in the day, people cheerily pass the hot and empty hours with beer and friends as they might in their living room. And, of course, there is the zocoló, which is crowded all day but which really hums and shines in the four or so hours around sunset. The zocoló is the center, the weird sun around which Oaxaca's energy orbits and radiates. Once, on my way home from a day trip to the village of Mitla, I got off the bus in the dark in a part of the city I did not know. I followed the throngs of people as they grew steadily larger, the increasing noise, and an unnamable sense for energy—and I landed in the zocoló. From there I knew my way.

Maybe this lively character of life in Oaxaca is in part the result of the housing conditions that poverty has forced on the inhabitants of this, the capital of the second poorest state in Mexico. The vast majority of Oaxacans live in housing that ranges from modest to dilapidated and utterly inadequate. Large families squeeze into small, cinder block shacks in Oaxaca's barrios. As of March, 2012, 19% of houses in Oaxaca

state had dirt floors and over 46% suffered from some kind of overcrowding. Having your “own room” is certainly not taken for granted as it is by many in the US. On top of that, jobs are scarce and rent is high compared to wages, which, I am told, average around 100 pesos per eight hours of work—that’s between eight and nine dollars. It is common for children to live with their parents until well into their twenties or longer. Personal space and the separation family members need from each other, scarce at home, are sought in the city.

But there are other reasons for Oaxaca's liveliness; the one I have mentioned casts it as something forced and undesirable. And it is anything but those things.

If one grows used to Oaxaca's wild energy and ceases to notice it, there is a weekly reminder. It comes on Sunday when the streets lie silent and almost empty. Traffic slows and where once were open-air storefronts, there are only sliding metal security doors. Almost everything is closed; the most

Oaxaca has never been the quaint, peaceful, market city that is described by travel blogs and guidebooks. It has long been the hub of a radical intellectual culture, and for many years defiance has been a prominent feature of life here.

notable exceptions are the brightly lit and open multinational corporations—McDonalds, Burger King, Wal-Mart, and others—that colonize the Oaxacan cityscape.

Oaxaca has never been the quaint, peaceful, market city that is described by travel blogs and guidebooks. It has long been the hub of a radical intellectual culture, and for many years defiance has been a prominent feature of life here. Combative faculty unions and student groups at the Universidad Benito Juárez Autónoma de Oaxaca have disrupted years and routines with frequent strikes. A strike by Oaxaca's teachers, for everything from higher wages to better education for indigenous

[illegible]

Oaxaca, Oaxacá
(Centro District)

students, has been enshrined as an annual, springtime event. While here, I witnessed several street marches and rallies by workers from the Universidad Benito Juarez in the lead up to a strike that was settled after just a day or two.

peace-
travel
g been
culture,
been a

In fact, there are so many demonstrations here that I can't keep track. One day, I was walking down the street and ran across city workers painting over spray painted slogans and stenciled street art—"Zapata Lives! The Resistance Continues!"—the aftermath of a march the day before which I hadn't even heard about. When George Orwell travelled to Spain late in the 1930s in the heat of the anarchist revolution in the province of Catalonia, he wrote that the Catalans were a people with an innately defiant spirit and a natural tendency toward anarchism. I am tempted to write something similar about the people of Oaxaca, but after only four weeks here, I have neither the experience nor the words.

In the spring of 2006, the annual teachers' strike exploded into a city-wide revolt that sent the Oaxacan government into "bizarre sort of roaming exile, floating between luxury hotels on the outskirts of the capital" ("Teacher Rebellion in Oaxaca," *In These Times*, 08/21/2006). In the following months, Oaxaca's spirit of resistance came to the surface in a long flash. Since 2006, even the name Oaxaca is surrounded by an

aura of rebellion.

During the revolt, Oaxaca's building fronts and blank walls became a battleground when protesters appropriated them with the poetry, slogans, and art of rebellion. In the five years since the heat of the movement burned off, the street art—or at least the tendency to make it—has not been completely eradicated. Political graffiti and murals are still common in Oaxaca's streets and many buildings, alleys, and street signs are marked with the circle A of the anarchists.

Another key strategy of the Oaxaca movement was control of media sources. On August 1, 2006, over 3,000 women seized CORTV, the state television station, and turned it into a movement station. Protesters also maintained a broadcast from the radio station at the Universidad Benito Juárez Autónoma. These stations served as a “vital means of coordinating resistance to the police” and organizing actions, and they were critical to shaping an alternative narrative of the revolt (“Broken Barri-
cades,” *Collective Reinventions*,).

On October 29, the *Policia Federales* entered the city. Their first move was to seize the *zocoló*, which had been, not coincidentally, at the center of the movement since the beginning. Next, the authorities ordered the painting over of all graffiti. Then, they moved to attack the university to shut down the movement's last radio station.

► **OAXACA**, continued on page 5

► **OAXACA**, continued on page 5

Though we're in the dark days of winter, spring awaits—and with it...

The 19th Annual Procession of the Species Celebration!

The Luminary Procession

Friday, April 26 at 9:00 pm.

Procession of the Species

Saturday, April 27, at 4:30 pm.

Our first production planning and organizing meeting for volunteers is Saturday, March 9, 11 AM at the Community Art Studio. Bring a pastry, something hot to drink, and extra to share. The meeting will scope

out possible community studio opportunities in light of this year's funding constraints.



► **Oaxaca**, cont. from page 4
city's cultural center, its walls, and its airwaves for a reason: it was the only way to build and circulate a narrative and an aesthetic counter to those circulated by the powerful forces threatened by the revolt. The federal authorities attacked in these three areas for the same reason.

Certainly there are lessons to be learned from the strategy of the Oaxacan rebels—but I stumble when I try to take the comparison to the U.S. too far. Compare the zocoló and the culture it represents to the cold isolation in the U.S. In the states, the city and its other inhabitants are obstacles standing between us and our obligations. We go out to work or school and get home again as quick as possible. As a result, our cities are predictably boring. And there is also the way this isolation affects the way we receive information. The French philosopher Jacques Elul recognized that one of the most important features of propaganda broadcast over the radio is the unconscious awareness on the part of the propagandees that they are part of an audience. The same is true of television and to some extent, newspapers and the internet and other “vertical” sources of information. In this audience, the listener has no neighbor to turn to and compare thoughts, and so each listener confronts the propaganda alone but nonetheless measures her reactions against those of the “audience.” And, of course, the expected audience reaction is implied in the propaganda itself.

This is not true in the zocoló or any other place where people are together. The individual, in these situations, is not subconsciously part of an audience; he is a participant in the exchange of information. The truth is something to be debated and considered.

All of this is not to say that the culture of the zocoló is inherently radical. The 2006 revolt in Oaxaca only took the zocoló to its most radical potential. But maybe it does make subversion easier. Or, more accurately, maybe it makes control more difficult.

Joseph Bullington grew up in Montana where he became interested in radical politics, rebellion, and writing, and he fled to Olympia in 2011 to pursue these interests.

Boycott initiators celebrate victory by United Natural Foods strikers

Linda Averill

“Hats off to the 160 victorious strikers at United Natural Foods who withstood nine weeks on the picket line in freezing weather to defend their right to decent wages and union representation,” announced Patrick Burns, a spokesman for Organized Workers for Labor Solidarity (OWLS).

Teamsters Local 117, representing the United Natural Foods Inc. (UNFI) workers, announced that a contract was ratified by union members on February 7 and provides for the reinstatement of all the strikers. “Workers at UNFI stood together courageously to fight for dignity and respect,” said Tracey A. Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 117. “They showed determination, solidarity, and fortitude. In the end, their spirit could not be broken.”

The settlement came almost ten weeks after union warehouse workers and drivers walked off their jobs on Dec. 10, at UNFI's Auburn warehouse, to protest months of bad faith bargaining and the firing of 72 union workers. Rather than negotiate with Teamsters Local 117, UNFI brought in low-wage replacement workers. As the strike wore on into early January, OWLS initiated a consumer boycott against Whole Foods, one of UNFI's biggest customers, to support the workers.

“The OWLS independent boycott definitely helped pressure UNFI back to the table,” said Robert Jurey, a shop steward and strike leader. “We want to thank OWLS and the other community and labor organizations that stood with us. The solidarity and unity this strike built, within the workforce and community, will help us face the challenges ahead. These achievements can be reached when the working class stands together against corporate greed.”



Photo: Courtesy of Organized Workers for Labor Solidarity

Just days before the settlement was reached, OWLS activists also celebrated their own important victory with the announcement that Whole Foods was forced to withdraw charges it had filed with the National Labor Relations Board in an effort to stop the boycott.

Organized Workers for Labor Solidarity (OWLS) launched the boycott against the natural foods grocery chain on January 12 to protest business practices that OWLS charged foster union busting. TV and radio stations picked up the story, unions and community organizations endorsed the boycott, and picketers drew supportive honks from cars as they leafleted shoppers to “take your food dollars to another store.”

The goal, said OWLS, was to get Whole Foods to apply pressure on UNFI to halt anti-labor activities at the warehouse in Auburn, Washington. Specifically, boycotters called on Whole Foods to stop using UNFI until the supplier signed a fair contract and reinstated all its union employees.

The International Labor Rights Forum reports “the facility pays its workforce approximately 24 percent less in wages than the prevailing rate in the warehouse industry in Northwest Washington.” The Forum has also criticized UNFI for a pattern of denying employees their right to form a union in its “Report on Freedom of Association at United

Natural Foods Inc.”

Burns explained that his organization was pressuring Whole Foods, a major UNFI customer, to “live up to their corporate motto, which boasts a commitment to supply chain justice and sustainability from ‘farm to fork.’”

Burns called the NLRB charges filed by Whole Foods a “bully tactic,” aimed at silencing public criticism of its business practices. Corporate lawyers in Los Angeles filed the charge against OWLS and Teamsters 117 on January 18, claiming that OWLS was an “agent” of the union, and “engaged in picketing” in violation of secondary boycott laws under the National Labor Relations Act. Its lawyers withdrew the charges ten days later.

“These claims were clearly frivolous,” said Burns, “OWLS is an independent, grassroots, all-volunteer organization of labor activists who promote the unionization of all workers, especially the lowest paid. Employers and NLRB laws attempt to hamstring unions from broadening the economic impact of strike actions, but community organizations like OWLS are not under the NLRB's jurisdiction, and we have no intention of giving up our free speech rights.”

“We pride ourselves on being a gutsy, multi-racial alliance of workers from numerous different unions, as well as the unorganized. For the last five years we have supported numerous strike actions and organizing efforts and the victory by the UNFI workers makes us realize how important our role is.”

“Despite the intimidation tactics by Whole Foods, we kept expanding the boycott and enlisting endorsers.” Several unions and community organizations signed on to support the boycott, including: Food Justice Project of the Community Alliance for Global Justice; Retired Public; Employees Council, Chapter 3; Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 8; Seattle Solidarity Network; Seattle Radical Women; Vegans and Organic Food Lovers for Justice; Freedom Socialist Party; Washington Federation of State Employees Local 304; and Amalgamated Transit Union Local 587.

Linda Averill, a member of Amalgamated Transit Union 587 and bus driver for public transit in King County.

Organized Workers for Labor Solidarity can be found on Facebook or www.organizedworkers.org.

The solidarity and unity this strike built, within the workforce and community, will help us face the challenges ahead. These achievements can be reached when the working class stands together against corporate greed.

FRESH.
organic
LOCAL

Everybody welcome!

Two locations to serve you!

WEST SIDE

921 Rogers Street NW
Olympia, WA 98502

EAST SIDE

3111 Pacific Avenue SE
Olympia, WA 98501



Mixx
96fm
KXXO
www.mixx96.com

Thanks to MIXX 96 for its generous support in providing much needed space for Works In Progress production meetings.

Learning Spanish

Gente sin casas, y casas sin gente. No se entiende.

Dan Leahy

Madrid, Spain--Thousands of people marched yet again down the main avenues of Madrid on Saturday evening, February 16, 2013. As the protestors turned from the grand Paseo de Recoletos into the more narrow confines of the Gran Vía, their chant of "Si Se Puede!" boomed off the buildings in such a way as to make a believer out of you.

The marchers are on the verge of a major political victory. The previous Tuesday, February 12th, Spain's ruling Popular Party with one of the strongest parliamentary majorities in Europe reversed its position and accepted the marchers' national legislative initiative, the Iniciativa Legislativa Popular (ILP), for consideration by the National Congress.

The ILP is a direct challenge to Spain's one hundred and three year old mortgage law, said to be one of the most restrictive in Europe. The initiative calls for a moratorium on housing evictions (Desahucios), the elimination of the obligation to pay the mortgage debt after the person has been evicted (dación en pago retroactiva) and the use of foreclosed homes for public rental housing.

What changed the minds of the ruling Popular Party so that they accepted this Initiative for consideration?

The Popular Party, headed by Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, came to power in the November 2011 elections crushing the discredited Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) and winning an absolute majority of 186 seats out of 350 in the Congreso de Diputados. Prime Minister Rajoy's orientation is reflected in appointment of Luis de Guindos as Minister of the Economy and Competitiveness. Luis de Guindos was the Director of Lehman Brothers for Spain and Portugal from 2004 until its collapse in 2008 that initiated the global financial crisis. Rajoy also appointed Rodrigo Rato, former Managing Director of the IMF, to head Bankia. Bankia is the largest Spanish financial institution to receive state bailout funds, 8 billion euros, and the largest landowner in Spain with 11 billion euros in property. Bloomberg Business news called Rato the worst CEO of 2012. Rato resigned in May 2012 and is under investigation for accounting irregularities, as is most of his Board of Directors.

Given the Popular Party's orientation and its previous governments, one would think the Party would just focus on its policies of bailing out the banks, privatizing public services like health care, changing labor laws to promote worker "flexibility", ruling by royal de-

cree and waving the Spanish flag rather than accepting for debate a popular initiative from a non-affiliated social movement.

"It was a perfect storm of coincidences that hit the PP after it took power," said Sophie Gonick, when I asked her to explain the PP's acceptance of the Initiative.

Sophie Gonick is an American Ph.D. student writing her dissertation on the movement to stop evictions in Madrid. She is looking particularly at the role of the Ecuadorian and Moroccan immigrant communities in the construction

2007, home prices have fallen 33%. A quarter of all mortgage holders are in a negative position, owing more than their home is worth. About 500,000 people have lost their homes due to repossession by banks and the rate of evictions is estimated at 500/day. This also means that about 20% of Spain's housing stock or 5.6 million dwellings are empty due to bank seizure or failure to sell.

All of this is happening at the same time as Spanish workers suffer from the highest unemployment rate in Europe at 26%. That is 5.9 million workers. Span-

thought the Party's acceptance of this initiative for debate a good idea, the PAH organizing is only one part of Sophie's "perfect storm."

Making money in the Spanish housing bubble meant several things. First, bank lending increases from 100 billion in 2000 to 600 billion euros worth of mortgages by 2012. Second, one of the early targets for sub-prime loans was the immigrant community. Third, you securitize the loan, get it rated triple A and sell it on the avaricious global market while attracting more credit from French and German banks. Finally, all this depends on more land for the expanding housing market.

Just as in the United States, the "land turnover function" is at the local governmental level and, here in Spain, it is also at the regional level. And, while we in the U.S. call the process of real estate interests using government for profit-taking "campaign contributions," or "lobbying" or acting in a "business-like manner," here in Spain they call it corruption.

Since the bubble burst in 2007, over 300 politicians across party affiliations have been indicted or charged with corruption, primarily related to land turnover and housing construction. In late January, 2013, the case of former Popular Party Treasurer Luis Barcenas hit the news again with Swiss authorities certifying that Barcenas has an account with 22 million euros in it. This was followed up by the largest national daily, El País, turning over to authorities "Barcenas secret papers" showing a decade long series of regular and possibly illegal payments to Popular Party officials, including the current Prime Minister. Party officials denied any connection to Barcenas who had resigned his position in 2009. But on Thursday, February 21st, it was revealed that Barcenas had remained on the Party payroll until the end of 2012.

In addition to this, the activities of the indicted business group run by Francisco Correa, known as Gurtel, continue to show large under the table payments to city officials in jurisdictions controlled by the Popular Party. Lavish expenditures and unexplained income is one thing when the economy is booming and people are politically asleep, but when people have neither a job nor a home, they tend to get irritated or, here in Spain, indignant. Within several days of these latest revelations, one million Spaniards signed an on-line petition calling for the government's

resignation.

But, that is not all. There are the suicides. On Sunday, the 17th, the day after the PAH march, I was walking on the Puerta del Sol Plaza when I saw three young men holding a makeshift banner. It read: Art 143.1 Código Penal: "El que induzca al suicidio de otro será castigado con la pena de cuatro a ocho años." The recent suicides by people faced with evictions have led to banners like this one and chants of "asesino!" in the pro-

► CASAS, continued on page 7

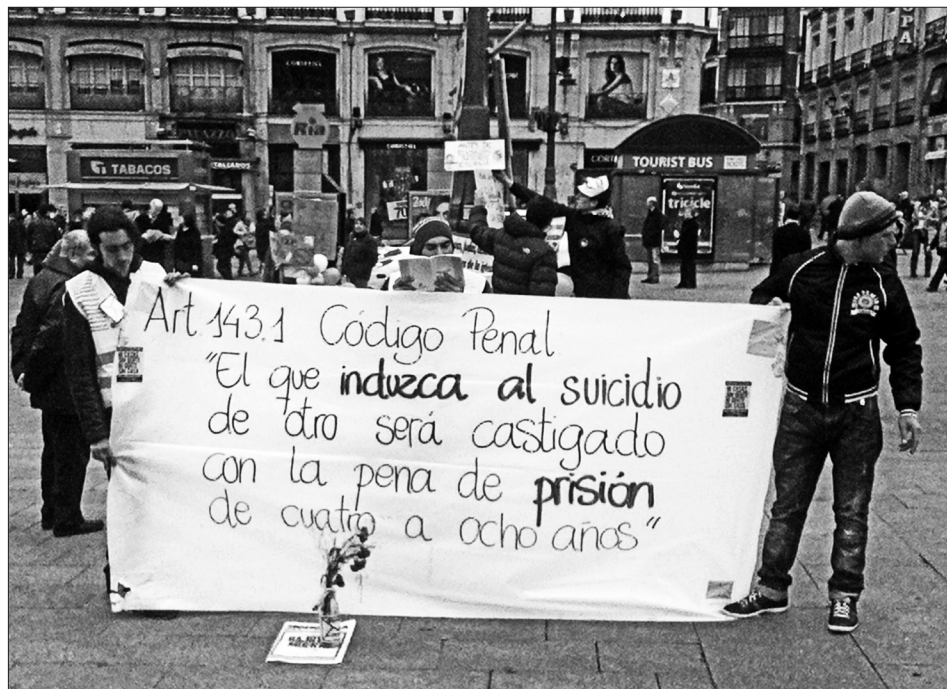


Photo: Dan Leahy

of this movement.

"There's the continuing exposure of possible political corruption in the party's leadership in the midst of a severe economic crisis. Then there's the severity of the foreclosure crisis itself and the on-going suicides by those being evicted. Then, of course, there's the solid organizing of the Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH). Finally, the party was already backing another initiative to overcome any regional bans on bullfighting. All of this made for a perfect storm," she explained.

There's little doubt that social movements detached from the levers of state power have to be in place to take advantage of political crises. The PAH has been organizing and "getting into place" since February of 2009 when it began in the Catalan city of Barcelona. Loosely translated as the movement of mortgage victims, PAH first focused on the problem that all home loans in Spain are recourse loans, this means, unlike in the State of Washington, you owe the full amount whether you have been foreclosed and evicted regardless of whether the bank has sold the foreclosed house or not. Plus, in Spain, the bank can take your wages.

As the economic crisis deepened and foreclosures increased, the PAH expanded its concerns beyond the recourse problem.

Just like in the US, the economic crisis in Spain began with the bursting of the housing bubble in 2007-2008. While consistent figures are hard to come by, the picture is something like this: since

ish youth under 25 years old have an unemployment rate of 57.6%. The Spanish people have the highest private debt ratio to personal disposable income (112.7%) in the OECD countries.

In November 2010, a little less than two years after they began to organize, the PAH expanded their organizing to include putting a moratorium on evictions and turning the foreclosed or empty housing stock into publicly owned rentals. Their organizing got a considerable boost when protesters against bank bailouts and political corruption, known as "Indignados", began a series

While we call real estate interests using government for profit-taking "campaign contributions," or "lobbying," or acting in a "business-like manner," here in Spain they call it corruption.

of plaza occupations on May 15, 2011 that eventually led to the 70 neighborhood "Asambleas" that now meet on a regular basis in the Madrid region.

The PAH then took advantage of Spain's national initiative process that allows a petition with at least 500,000 signatures to be presented to Congress. The PAH collected 1.5 million signatures on its proposal. This was the proposal accepted by the Popular Party on Tuesday, February 12th.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that a national poll said 87% of the Spanish people

INKLIFE
Tattoos Body Piercing Art Gallery

\$10 off
Any piercing above the waist over \$40

15% Student Special

15% off any TATTOO \$115 & up with Valid Student ID Appt or Walk-in!
We display Local art! Inquire at shop.

307 4th Ave East Downtown OLY 360-754-6623

Reading Olympia Since 2002

Publishing, screenprinting, full-service printing, & more!
books-zines-t-shirts-stickers
211 4th Ave E, Olympia, WA
360-786-9673
www.lastwordbooks.org

Last Word Books & Press

Centralia Square Antique Mall

3 floors to explore • Restaurant • Bookstore

Directions from Olympia
South on Interstate 5
Off at Exit 82 (Factory Outlets)
East on Harrison
Right on Pearl
2015 Pearl & Locust

**Open 7 days
10 to 5**



► **Casas**, cont. from page 6
test marches.

The suicides even shocked the Popular Party into action last year. In early November 2011, after a second person had committed suicide, the Party's Deputy Prime Minister announced a two year eviction moratorium for "vulnerable" families, but the characteristics required to fit the definition of "vulnerable" rendered the moratorium almost meaningless. It also did not stop the suicides.

During the week the PAH presented its initiative to Congress, there were four more eviction related suicides. Between February 11th and February 14th,

a couple in Majorca overdosed on drugs, a man hanged himself in Alicante and there was another suicide in Basuri Vizcaya.

Whether the perfect storm of popular mobilization, political corruption scandals and eviction related suicides will be enough of a political crisis to ensure the actual passage of the PAH's Initiative remains to be seen.

The Spanish banks are still in a precarious position and the European Central Bank has promised to buy Spanish government debt. European lenders, however, have a 110 billion euro exposure to Spanish banks and they want their money back. The Prime Minister,

in his national state of the nation address to Congress on Wednesday the 20th, said his focus is on incentives to entrepreneurs and that he does not favor stopping evictions or changing the recourse only mortgage law.

Nevertheless, the perfect storm is still building. There is a massive march scheduled this Saturday, the 23rd, in Madrid to protest the privatization of the public sector. The Spanish judiciary is on strike demanding more resources to investigate political corruption. The flag of the 2nd Spanish Republic is in the streets encouraging Spaniards to learn a history denied them in this constitutional monarchy with a parliamen-

tary addendum.

Still, there is the question of state power. The Popular Party has it and the social movements do not. With the beginning of the World Social Forum in 2001, social movements have organized everything except political parties. Perhaps here in Spain the people can create the right mix between the confederations of unions and popular assemblies and the political vehicle that can implement the visions of social movements like the PAH.

Dan Leahy, defender of Olympia's West-side, is currently wandering Europe as a foreign correspondent for Works In Progress.

Learning French

Tous ensemble

Dan Leahy

On July 1, 2009 Albany International announced in the *Puget Sound Business Journal* that it intended to close its Tumwater manufacturing plant at 5700 Littlerock Rd. Two months later, at the end of August, they closed it.

Thirty years of manufacturing history ended. The average length of work per employee had been eighteen years. There had been more than 95 workers at one point making between \$15,000 and \$40,000. When Albany International closed the plant, 32 workers lost their jobs. The only US plant producing polyurethane coated belts for the paper industry disappeared. Albany International moved the work to Bury, England, calling the closure, "a business necessity, driven by existing and anticipated market conditions."

As part of Albany's press release of July 1st, they also said they were proposing to close a plant in France.

St. Junien is a city in the Limousin region of France and the second largest city in the Haute Vienne department. When you walk up the hill from the railroad station to the center of St. Junien, one of the first buildings you run into is an all white, monumental, art décor-type structure engraved with title, "Bourse du Travail." It's St. Julien's labor temple, cultural center and union office building constructed in the 1920s at the request of the unions. Today it remains a symbol of the importance of workers to this city's history, according to the historical marker just outside the front door.

St. Junien was also, like Limoges, a center of armed resistance to German occupation in the 1940s. And, like Limoges, the resistance fighters liberated their own city from a defeated German army. St. Junien was "rouge" then and still is, according to many of the folks I talked with while there.

On February 9, 2012, a regional newspaper, *Le Populaire*, ran a story saying Albany International was planning to close their St. Junien plant and lay off 134 workers. The source of the story remained anonymous and the workers could not believe it. The plant had been renovated in 2004 with a public investment of 1.5 million euros. The plant's production figures were setting records; it was profitable and the industrial demand for its products was growing. The story made no sense.

Still. What about the story? For the next two weeks, workers, union leaders, city and regional officials tried to get a straight answer from Albany International. They confronted a stranger that had been seen with local management and discovered he had been hired in January 2012 to close the plant and layoff the workers. On February 23rd the other shoe dropped.

Albany International announced it was closing the plant, laying off the 134 workers and moving production to its other French plant in Selestat. It sent an email asking the workers to leave the plant by February 27th and ordered the local management to cut the plant's electrical current.

The workers didn't budge. They decided to stay in the plant 24/7. The local unions, led by the CGT and the FO, held press conferences to condemn the proposed closing, organized large demonstrations, collected petitions, gained the support of local businesses, local and regional government officials and utilized the French presidential elections to gain exposure in a country wracked by plants closures and growing unemployment.

On March 7th, they sent an open letter to the Joseph G. Marone, President and CEO of Albany International based in Rochester, New Hampshire. They told him that closing the plant made

Albany International sent an email asking the workers to leave the plant and ordered the local management to cut the electrical current. The workers didn't budge.

no sense, that they were committed to keeping it open and demanded a direct meeting with Albany International. A copy of the letter was sent to the French Ministry of Labor.

You wouldn't think a guy like Joseph Marone would handle a situation like St. Junien in such a clumsy and inept manner. Appointed President in 2005 and CEO in 2006, he holds a Ph.D. in political science from Yale University and is author of *Winning in High Tech Markets*, a book about how to use technology to gain a competitive business advantage. Nevertheless, he has been busy.

If you fly on an new Airbus or Boeing jetliner, when the plane takes off it will probably be using a LEAP engine with Albany composite materials inside. When it lands, it will probably be using a landing gear made of Albany's composite materials rather than from steel.

Albany has two main divisions: machine clothing for the paper industry and engineered composites for aerospace. It seems clear Dr. Marone is moving his company toward composites and aerospace. In November 2012, Albany stated that over the past several years, due to deteriorating market conditions, they had closed 12 plants, eight in the US and three in Europe. When Albany closed its Tumwater machine clothing plant in 2009, Albany had 6000 employees world wide. They now have 4300. In addition, Albany is building two new



Photo: Dan Leahy

composite plants to service aerospace, both in conjunction with its French partner SAFRAN. One plant will be in Rochester, New Hampshire and the other plant in Commercy, France.

Dr. Marone wasn't too busy, however, to know that he had to send his new President of Albany's machine paper division, Daniel A. Halftermeyer, to France for a March 8, 2012 meeting called by the French Ministry of Labor. Mr. Halftermeyer had been appointed president of the machine paper division in February 2012. St. Junien must have been his first plant closure effort. It hadn't gone

well. In fact, at the March 8th meeting in Limoges attended by all community and worker leadership from St. Junien, Mr. Halftermeyer said Albany hadn't closed the St. Junien plant and wanted to talk to everyone about the plant's future.

It was a great victory for the people of St. Junien. The workers went back to work on March 12th. They even got paid for the two weeks the plant had been shut down. But, talking to Albany about the plant's future has been a different story. In fact, there has been no talking about the 134 workers, just announcements and Albany press releases.

In November 2012, eight months after work had resumed at St. Junien, Albany issued a press release stating that it was going to reduce employment at its two French plants by 200 positions, 74 at its St. Junien plant. Dr. Marone stated that the St. Junien would remain a "center of excellence" but with only 50 workers rather than 134.

The workers had another idea of excellence and mobilized again. Their efforts produced two meetings at the

national finance ministry in Paris, one in December 2012, and one at the end of January 2013. The meetings were chaired by Arnaud Montebourg who had been appointed to head the Ministry of Industrial Renewal by the newly elected socialist President Francois Hollande. You'd think he would have been more helpful to the St. Junien workers. This was the guy who told Indian billionaire Lakshmi Mittal to leave France and threatened to nationalize his plants because Mittal was refusing to fire up two blast furnaces which meant 629 workers would lose their jobs. He did tell the St. Junien leaders that Albany was going to invest 1.5 million euros in the St. Junien plant, but that they would have to talk to Albany about layoffs.

On the evening of February 1st 2013, I attended a standing room only public meeting in St. Junien's Administrative Center, chaired by Christophe Sardin, CGT's local delegate. It's been a year of continuous struggle mixed with wearing uncertainly for many families, some of whom have worked at the plant for over 30 years. The union leadership again asserted their position that there was no need for layoffs. They called for a debate on the public TV channel France 3. They intend to mobilize large demonstrations. They want direct talks with Albany leadership.

I don't know if Dr. Marone will hear them. He's quoted in a January 2013 New Hampshire business journal as saying, "The whole show is talent. It drives innovation and growth." It's not clear whether he means talent to replace workers with machines, or talent to use the creativity of workers.

Whatever he means, I have hope for the workers of St. Junien. They know their history. They are attached to their community. They possess a deep reservoir of talent. And, as they say, they are mobilized. I remember one of the best chants in the streets of Seattle when people closed down the WTO ministerial in November 1999:

"Tous ensemble, tous ensemble, tous, tous, tous!" It was the French workers reminding us of the strength of solidarity.

WIP's foreign correspondent, Dan Leahy, reporting from Limoges, France.

**OTC PRO-NET**

THURSTON COUNTY PROGRESSIVE NETWORK

**Plug-in**

to YOUR progressive community!

Sign-up for the TC Pro-Net Picks events newsletter
www.tcpronet.org

Expansion of WorkFirst education opportunities will decrease intergenerational poverty

Patricia Ridge

Ed. note: The following is testimony given February 7 before the Washington Legislature on HB 1342, which would expand education opportunities in the WorkFirst program from one year to two.

In support of HB 1342

As a single mother who has participated in the WorkFirst program, I can say that having had a two-year associate of sciences degree has been beneficial in reducing poverty, improving resilience in finding employment, and beneficial for my children. Many studies cited during session speak volumes to the relationship between parents with college experience improving the educational success rate of their children. Education is mutually beneficial for society and for impoverished families.

My story

After graduating from high school, I completed a year of college before dropping out after the death of my mother. I continue to work as a waitress for 10 years at an Olympia diner.

After traumatic events in my family's life, including abusive men and dependence on illicit substances, I lost long-term employment and my home. While

putting the pieces back together from my life, I knew if the changes were to stick, then I would need to go back to college in an effort to improve opportunities and positive influences in my family's life.

I chose Associate of Applied Sciences: Paralegal Studies as my vocational program. Typically, the program takes nine quarters to complete. While at South Puget Sound Community College, I also participated in two internships;

Rather than watch others experience it, I can walk the path with my children, setting an example. Children whose parents go to college are more likely to go on to college as well.

one at an Olympia Family Law Office and the other at Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights as an advocate where I am currently employed. I also made contacts volunteering for Thurston County Legal Services where I have volunteered for nearly two years now. I also obtained office and scribing experience working on campus for a year in Disability Support Services at the college. Upon graduating, I also received temporary employment for six months making \$14 dollars per hour as an interpreter.

If I had not already had a year of college before starting as a WorkFirst participant, I would have had to drop out after a year with only a legal secretary certificate, for which the entry level wage is only \$10 per hour. Also, most law firms, offices and the State of Washington do not use legal secretaries at all anymore. With an economy trying to rebound and adapt with less money, legal assistants and paralegals are the norm. The entry level wage working at a

boutique law firm is \$12-16 per hour. As a paralegal working in Complex Civil Litigation, at the Department of Labor and Industries or working at the Attorney General's office, the entry level is wage is much higher. Paralegals or legal assistants in Olympia, according to (www.salary.com) make an annual salary of \$49,123 dollars annually. The numbers speak for themselves. Also, I would like to mention that I have paid for my education so far with grants, scholarships, and loans and not with WorkFirst. They have paid a monthly grant for my son and childcare so I can go to school and work.

While I was a scribe at SPSCC in a Writing 102 class, students were reading a Humanities Essay (David Spade) about the richness of education on the soul as well as the obvious financial advantages of advanced degrees and the opportunities that exist for those who have them. For some reason, it hit me hard...truthfully, not the financial aspect as much as the richness of education knowledge and culture. I decided that I needed to continue my education with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Social Justice, Law, and Policy at the Evergreen State College (Fall '12.) The window from which I view my life is a little clearer, larger, and brighter now. Rather than just watching others travel, live and experience it, I can walk the path myself along with my

Friend us on Facebook!
WORKS N. PROGRESS



children, setting an example for them. Children whose parents go to college are much more likely to go on to college as well.

As far as social progress, education is not something we can go without. I imagined working in an office, making change and being a part of the system that makes things happen. I met people for whom I served coffee and breakfast, people who had the careers, and traveled to and lived in places where I could only imagine...at the time, I believed it was only for "them" and not me. I was inside a mirror looking out to the world I could see, but could not touch. The state, partially due to the McCleary decision, is working to figure out how to put money back in to children's education. Can the state also work to provide education for the parents who raise the children?

Patricia Ridge is active in P.O.W.E.R. and lives in Lacey, WA.

Israeli Apartheid Week at Evergreen

You're invited to Evergreen's Second Annual Israeli Apartheid Week! Hosted by the Mideast Solidarity Project (MSP) and the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace.

Please join us in conversations about the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict, the nature of Israel as an apartheid system, and building the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns as part of a growing global BDS movement. If you don't know what BDS is, come to these events! If you aren't sure why "apartheid" is an accurate term, or disagree, come to these events! We will have current Evergreen students reporting on their recent travels in Palestine, in addition to various films, and an introductory workshop. We welcome everybody—students, friends, community members, faculty, and staff.

Israeli Apartheid Week Events

Sunday, March 3 Author and Activist Remi Kanazi Time: 2-4 pm workshop, 6 pm poetry reading Location: the Washington State Labor Council, 906 Columbia St. SW. Hosted by MSP and The Rachel Corrie Foundation	Intro to Israel/ Palestine Time: 5:30- 7:30 PM Location: Lecture hall 3
Monday, March 4 Student Report back from Palestine Time: 4-5 pm Location: Lecture hall 3	Wednesday, March 6 Film screening: Five Broken Cameras Time: TBA Location: TBA
Thursday, March 7 Film Screening: Slingshot Hip-Hop Time: 7 pm Location: lecture hall 3	

All events will have facilitated discussions after the main event. For more info: apartheidweek.org/Sponsored by Mid-East Solidarity Project.

Cartridge Care Inc.

THE PRINTER EXPERTS since 1990

TONER - FILM - INK JETS

Remanufactured and new - Hundreds in stock

REPAIR - SERVICE - SALES for

Printers - Fax - Copiers - Plotters

Free Pick Up & Delivery

1314 Lebanon St. SE - Lacey

360-459-8845

We remember.

Three-year memorial,
Sunday, 12 May 2013,
6pm, *Miracles Club*.
4200 NE Martin Luther King, Jr Blvd
Portland, Oregon

Vigil at the site of
his police killing on the
12th of every month.
6 pm, corner of NE 6th and Halsey
Portland, Oregon

Support the
friends and family
of

Keaton Dupree Otis

4 Jan 1985 - 12 May 2010

JUSTICE FOR KEATON OTIS

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK.

[HTTP://JUSTICEFORKEATONOTIS.WORDPRESS.COM](http://JUSTICEFORKEATONOTIS.WORDPRESS.COM)



Campus cops with assault rifles

Not happening at TESC

Eliot Nelson

While there have been a wide range of responses to the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut that took place last December, few have looked to have an impact on our community. At The Evergreen State College, the student group Police Awareness and Student Safety (PASS) asked the school to provide Police Services with heavier firearms. The request was specifically for: three assault rifles as well as ammunition, upgraded body armor and helmets, and rifle proficiency training. This would amount to a cost of \$10,000 this year for the purchase and an additional \$2,000 each year for the next five years.

While it was not the Police Services that made the request, the chief of Police Services, Ed Sorger, said that he is in favor of the request and hopes that his officers can get the proper training and equipment that he says they need in order to deal with an on campus shooter. Brendan Hale, an Evergreen student who was on the Police Services Review Board Committee (a committee made up of students and faculty to vote on issues such as this) was also one of the original co-coordinators of PASS, which formed last year. Hale left PASS after they began to lobby for heavier firearms, which he says did not “not align with my views, or the policy of trying to make students and police interact with each other. I think that it was instead tearing them apart, because I think that the vast majority of Evergreen students

do not want more guns on campus.” In response to the proposal made by PASS, the Geoduck Student Union (GSU), the group in charge of representing the student body, issued a statement rejecting the proposal while offering up some alternatives. GSU proposed a “Disappearing Task Force” made up of students, faculty, and administration to determine the campus preparedness in case of a shooter. GSU also suggests putting in place a “prevention plan” that would allow members of Evergreen to have a place to report persons that shows signs of violent behavior that could be acted upon others.

The statement from the GSU also details surveys done by GSU itself and one done by the Police Services Services Committee Review Board (PSCRB). These surveys show that most students are concerned with the threat of sexual assault and natural disasters and that worries over an on campus shooting rank lower than both of the other concerns. GSU also notes that the likelihood of a shooter is much less than sexual assault and natural disasters.

Police Services haven’t had guns for very long. Up until the 90s they didn’t carry guns on campus. This said, other state schools have had armed campus security for longer and most of them have the sort of firearms that PASS is asking for. Right now Police Services have what Chief Sorger calls “mutual aid agreements” with the Thurston County sheriff, Washington State Patrol, and the Olympia police department to respond if there is a shooter on campus.



Photo: Eliot Nelson

Sorger notes that most shootings that take place at a school happen in a very short amount of time; generally less than five minutes.

Right now Police Services has ballistic shields, helmets, and vests to protect themselves from a shooter. They are also armed with handguns but Sorger says he would prefer rifles, as they would give his staff the ability to stop a shooter from a safer range and would also be more accurate. Sorger also brought up the case of 9/11 flight United 93, where passengers rushed the cockpit, keeping the plane from reaching its destination and crashing in a field in Pennsylvania. He says that “the fight needs to happen when [the shooting] happens. When this

person shows up with a gun right there and then, whether it’s a student, staff, or faculty...”

The PSCRB voted not to grant the request for more equipment. When asked if they would continue to seek more equipment, a co-coordinator for PASS said that they are continuing to get information on the matter and that they are also talking to the Evergreen board of trustees as well as the state legislature.

Eliot Nelson is a student at The Evergreen State College, studying political science and creative writing. He is an intern with Works in Progress and is pursuing a career in journalism.

KAOS

89.3 FM

CELEBRATING

40 YEARS OF

LISTENER-SUPPORTED

VOLUNTEER-POWERED

SERVICE TO YOU!!

1973-2013

www.kaosradio.org

Employment-Population Ratio, 16 years and over (2/2013)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Year	Ratio (%)
1/03	62.5
1/04	62.5
1/05	62.5
1/06	63.0
1/07	63.5
1/08	63.0
1/09	60.0
1/10	58.5
1/11	58.5
1/12	58.5
1/13	58.5

Become a citizen journalist.

FIRST THURSDAY

5:30 PM

TRADITIONS CAFE

Camaraderie

Collaboration

Editing support

Works In Progress Writers' Group

Write left.

For more information, contact WIP at olywip@gmail.com.

► **Apple future**, cont. from page 1

latory bodies OSF could face hurdles in taping into new apple markets; the main one possibly being consumers. Genetically modified foods are still a hard sell for many Americans. GMOs have been consumed in the United States since the 1990s, but most of these exist in processed foods, are not easily identifiable, and for some, highly controversial. Arctic Apples would be the first genetically modified food on the market whose modification is directed specifically at the desires of consumers. In this way Okanagan Specialty Fruits is trying to not only introduce new apples to the public, but trying to change people’s perception of biotechnology.

Whatever one thinks about Okanagan Specialty Fruits it is quite clear that they are no Monsanto. OSF is an extremely small company with a total of seven employees. They hardly fit the description of the corporate monolith that is usually associated with genetically modified foods. The company was started by a married couple—Neal and Louisa Carter—who worked for years as orchardists. Neal Carter, who acts as the company’s president, has experience as a bioresource engineer—including working with crops and farms in the developing world. Even though the company was not required to do so, it willingly handed over its research on the safety of Arctic Apples to the FDA for review. The company has is also voluntarily labeling its GMO apples as Arctic Apples, and has on its website tools to help consumers identify genetically modified produce. In no way does the company hide the fact that they are involved in biotech—if anything, they proudly display it like a genetically engineered badge of honor. In terms of business practices, these moves appear unconventional, and in some cases even bold. However, OSF is confident that the research and safety testing around the Arctic Apple will vindicate it in the marketplace, and eventually biotechnology in general.

There are others who disagree. Both the U.S. Apple Association and the Northwest Horticultural Council—which represents the tree-fruit industry in and around Washington State—oppose the introduction of Arctic Apples. The reason isn’t because they view the fruit as dangerous or that even growing Arctic Apples could potentially be ecologically harmful. It’s because they fear that if the negative public perception around GMOs gets associated with apples the industry as a whole could suffer. A large number of Americans are extremely hesitant toward biotechnology—with a very active and vocal minority opposed to it in all its forms. Apples have a reputation of being healthy. The saying “an apple a day keeps the doctor away” is the type of folksy prescription that the apple industry adores. With apple consumption declining in the United States, producers are reluctant to take a gamble on a product that could potentially cause a backlash for the entire industry. Again, what Americans won’t eat, businesses won’t sell.

In a certain sense, the public’s reluctance to embrace GMOs is understandable. Numerous consumer groups, natural food advocates, and environmentalists that have sounded the alarm bells against them. Arctic Apples themselves has experience their share of dire predictions. For example, in an article published in *The New York Times*, Lucy Sharatt—coordinator for the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network—described why her group was opposed the Arctic Apples: if Arctic Apples fail to turn brown then it will be impossible to tell fresh ones from rotten ones; the whole project was a biotech gimmick

to move apples into plastic bags so that they could be turned into an “industrialized product” rather than a whole food.

There is problem with Sharatt’s comment. She gets the science of apple browning completely wrong. As mentioned above, apple browning is caused by the existence of an enzyme that when exposed to the open air through slicing or superficial bruising causes the apple to brown. Apple rotting is something different entirely. Apples rot because of the existence of fungi and bacteria. Arctic Apples will still rot—as nothing in their genetic make-up will make them impervious to fungi and bacteria—and it will be easy detect the because it will be nearly impossible to mistake it for superficial browning.

Karl Haro von Mogel, editor for the science blog *Biofortified.org*—a website dedicated to giving people accurate information on genetic engineering—has a more balanced and informed perspective on Arctic Apples. For him the crop is “ecologically neutral.” The modified trait does not target pest or other potential species, and the risk of the crop contaminating neighboring farms is low. Genetically modified Arctic Apples could be grown next to an organic farm without any real risk accidentally violating organic standards. If anything, the crop could end up helping the environment. Each year a significant proportion of the apple crop is culled due to browning. If those apples were brought to market instead

of thrown out it would not only prevent food from being wasted, but could also drive down the costs of apples for consumers. As for the health risks, Haro von Mogel thinks the introduction of Arctic Apples could be beneficial. The browning effect of apples limits their availability to consumers. Rarely—if ever—are apples offered in salad bars, sold in slices, or used in displays. The onset of browning just a few minutes after the apples have been sliced open makes it near impossible to utilize the crop for these purposes. “I once interviewed an apple breeder at the University of Minnesota, and he said that he is in competition with candy bars. That they have to convince people that (they) should eat apples rather than candy bars,” Haro von Mogel said.

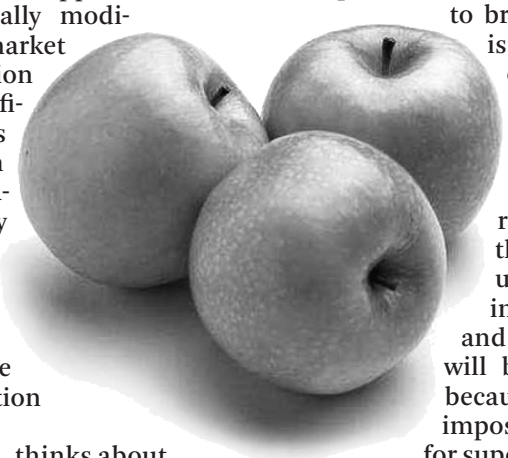
In any case, Washington State will have to deal with the coming political and economic changes that Arctic Apples could bring. When it comes to apples, Washington State is North America’s powerhouse. According to the USDA in 2007 Washington dedicated 165,215 acres of farmland to apples. The only other state that came close was New York with a distant second at 49,996 acres of farmland. Washington use more apple acres than the next five states combined, and it is Washington—and famers along the states that border it—that provide 60 percent of the apples for the entire country. If Arctic Apples do eventually make it to mar-

ket, their success or failure will largely depend on how growers in Washington react to them.

In addition, Washington State is next in line to face another intense battle over the labeling of genetically modified foods. After the failure of proposition 37 in California, anti-GMO activists moved their battle to Washington. Washington’s initiative 522, which has similar wording as California’s proposition 37, would require the labeling of all genetically modified foods. Activists in favor of initiative 522 have been successful in collecting enough signatures to put the matter before legislatures. If the elected representatives fail to act, the law will go before the public as a referendum in November. The role that Arctic Apples will play on the effort to I-522 debate—if any—has yet to be determined, but if the law is passed it is bound to have an influence on the future of the apples.

What is clear is that consumers, farmers, environmentalists, scientists, basically anyone concerned with food issues today, will all have to deal to the rapidity of advances in the biotechnology, the growth of smaller biotech companies, and what these changes could mean for the future of food.

Marco Rosaire Rossi is a graduate of the University for Peace in Costa Rica and a resident of Olympia.



War on the homeless update

C.I.V.I.L. -- According to Jesus, the only way to get to Heaven is to treat ‘the least of those amongst us’ the same way that you would treat Jesus Himself — with the understanding that Jesus Himself was also the Son of God. [Matthew 25:40]

According to this standard, the Olympia City Council will not be going to Heaven.

There have been scores of academic peer-reviewed studies done upon the subject of homelessness. Their almost universal conclusion is that putting homeless people into homes is the cheapest and most effective method of dealing with the problem.

(Though the studies usually don’t mention it directly, this is also the most humane method of dealing with the problem.)

These studies also conclude that the most expensive, least effective (and though they don’t usually mention it directly the least humane method) is to criminalize homeless people and start running them through the jails, giving them a bunch of fines that they will never be able to pay, and otherwise leaving them to crap in the bank’s flower bed if they don’t freeze to death between their repeated and costly stays in jail.

All of this information is immediately in the face of anyone who starts researching this issue. It is not a secret.

This being the case, can anyone explain to me why nearly every city in the United States chooses the most expensive, least effective, and least humane way to deal with homelessness rather than the cheapest, most effective, and most humane way?

I think that this would be a very good question to put to the Olympia City Council.

A lot of people are currently mobilizing to do just that, in fact, and in a manner that the council will not be

able to easily ignore.

The situation is especially reprehensible when you consider that for every homeless person in the United States there are five empty foreclosed homes dragging down property values, rotting away abandoned and unloved, and making the neighbors uncomfortable. In many cases the banks that claim to own these homes can’t prove that they do in fact own them and even if they do ‘legally’ own them then more likely than not this means that their masters on Wall Street conducted criminal fraud in order to obtain these homes in the first place...
...so screw them.

Eminent Dominion?

Washington CAN is thinking of taking on a campaign targeting the banks that refuse to work with homeowners to stay in their homes; they want the State of Washington to use the rule of ‘eminent domain’ to force these banks to sell these foreclosed homes to the state at current market rate so that the state can then refinance the loans and keep the people in their homes.

The controversial practice of ‘eminent domain’ is used by governments to take control of private property when there is a ‘compelling public interest’ in doing so.

I think that than keeping people in their homes qualifies as a ‘compelling public interest’.

This is likely to become a serious campaign and the other side will poodliate in their droodliays and fight us tooth and nail thus transforming it into a

‘controversy’ which means a lot of people will be talking about this concept so I think this will be a very good campaign. Stay tuned.

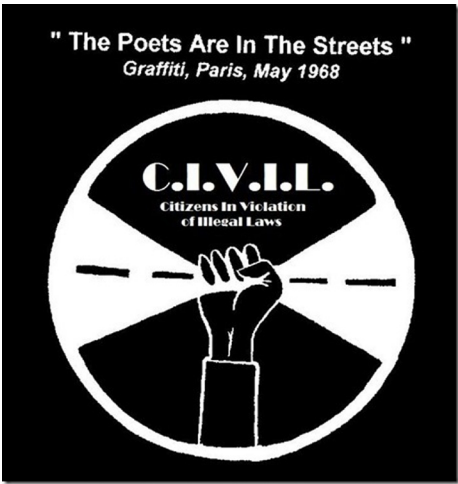
CIVIL Uprising

As far as defending the homeless: Homeless people are tough to defend because hardly anyone really likes them. Other than social workers and the occasional activist they have no constituency and no political clout. They piss off conservatives and embarrass liberals. None of them ever have any cigarettes. Most people wish they would just go away. Many of them are almost completely helpless and many of them are truly offensive human beings. A highly disproportionate number of them are seriously mentally ill. A highly disproportionate number of them have drug and alcohol problems. A highly disproportionate number of them are veterans who fried their brains in service to their country and were then thrown onto the trash-heap once that country was done with them. More and more of them are families with children. All of them are humans.

-- Dana Walker

C.I.V.I.L. [Citizens in Violation of Illegal Laws] has been on hiatus lately, but whenever the downtrodden are being trodden down, CIVIL stands ever ready to mount their horses and draw their swords!

There are some major actions being planned in early March that will be aimed at the city around their criminalization of homelessness. Join C.I.V.I.L. [Citizens in Violation of Illegal Laws] on Facebook to plug in and/or to stay apprised or send an email to dana98501@gmail.com



► **Procession**, cont. from page 1
the Procession still sparks that space. Understanding how we arrived at that genuineness and innocence, how to protect it and what will compromise it is what is evolving.”

In order to provide continuity, avoid compromise, and insure the integrity of the Procession, Eli is adamant about preserving three simple dynamics: no written words, no live pets, and no motorized vehicles. Over the years, these have been challenged by folks wanting to make a statement or get their petition signed, by pet-lovers who want their dogs, snakes, or ferrets to join them, and no doubt by people wanting the traditional “floats.” This, however, is no ordinary “parade”—a label that speaks, to Eli, of commercial entertainment and a “look at me” approach to the moment. “When people conquer,” he observes, “they parade; when people are liberated,” and sharing themselves with their community, “they process.”

The Procession, then, is “really about the beauty of the human dynamic. It isn’t about us, but about how we are a part of miraculous nature. It invites participants to come not in their costumes but in their awe and appreciation of the natural world, and to participate from a desire to share born out of the creative relationship that springs from collaborative art.” It invites us to liberate ourselves.

So by standing firm in complying with these three rules, the Procession has been able to, so far, survive the tests of time relatively uncorrupted by what he calls the “comparative reality” so alive and well in the consumer-orient-

ed world. This reality springs from the everyday world of our rational minds: labeling, evaluating, judging, assigning worth, creating products that can be sold and consumed. It is from this place that “parades” are formed. What we have in the Procession is a safe place to free ourselves from that world of comparison.

Ann clarifies this as she points out that participants are able to feel that safety as they share themselves in creative ways because of “the intention of the ‘no words rule’ which is meant to take people out of the sense of being told what to think” (and the need to tell others what to think), “and away from comparing, assessing, and evaluating—which creates an atmosphere of not feeling safe.”

It is this comparative reality mindset, locking participants and onlookers alike into the world of value judgments that if left unchecked, could ultimately turn the Procession into a commodity. By staying consistent, Eli points out, a certain depth is brought to this genuine experience which allows, with repetition and time, the cultivation of public awareness from a taken-for-granted yearly event into a solid community “yes!” for what it is—an experience “filled with joy, generosity, creativity, and ultimately acceptance.”

The no words dynamic has also added implications for the financial funding of this wonderful event, and speaks once again to its fragility. “There are no written words in nature,” Eli points out. “By taking out the words you even the playing field for the corporate dynamic.” As a result of this he adds that “having no corporate sponsorship has had huge

It is this comparative reality mindset, locking participants and onlookers alike into the world of value judgments that if left unchecked, could ultimately turn the Procession into a commodity.



Photo: Malcom Kent

repercussions, economically, for us as an organization.” Remaining integral to this stance is no easy task, but it is a huge part of protecting the Procession from commercial compromise. At the same time, it costs to put it on.

A recent audit estimated the full budgetary costs of the Procession to be \$150,000. That cost, which includes \$45,000 dependent on significant in-kind donations, also involves holding a central office space (rent, light, heat etc.), administrative expenses, printing costs, insurance for the Procession, studio costs (insurance, rental, light, heat, water), and supplies (glitter adds up!). The Procession depends on volunteers, although there are small administrative stipends which don’t come close to appropriate recompense for the full-time work done to keep the Procession vibrantly moving forward each year.

But moving vibrantly along it does. I have been blessed with two Processions now, the first coming a mere two weeks after I arrived in Olympia. Standing on the street corner, watching it pass by me, photographing every entry, I was filled with a sense of gratitude to be living in such a wonderful place. It was as if I was standing on a threshold, being invited, with glittery rainbow colors, rhythm and music, dancing, and sheer joyful revelry, to join them. “This is my new community!” I was thinking. And with that thought, I stepped across the threshold and moved from onlooker at a parade, to joyful participant in a Procession!

Desdra Dawning writes for the Olympia Food Co-op Newsletter and Works In Progress. She has an MA in Creative Writing from Northern Arizona University.

Now delivering lunches downtown for
Alforno Ferruzza
(360) 292-1095



contact us:

olystarcourier@gmail.com
starcourier.wordpress.com
360-556-0535

What’s going on?

The chained CPI proposal by President Obama [as part of a plan to reduce the deficit] *would change the formula for calculating the Social Security cost of living adjustment (COLA). This COLA cut would reduce benefits by over \$100 billion dollars over the next 10 years and would result in thousands of dollars of lost benefits for current (and future) retirees.* (AARP)

Next consider the following statement by the late President Ronald Reagan.

Social Security has nothing to do with the deficit. Social Security is totally funded by the payroll tax levied on employer and employee. If you reduce the out go of Social Security, that money would not go into the General Fund to reduce the deficit. It would go into the Social Security Trust Fund. So Social Security has nothing to do with balancing a budget, or erasing or lowering the deficit.

So why is Obama mentioning Social Security in connection with the sequester? What do you suppose is going on?

JOIN OUR THRONG OF SUPPORTERS. SUBSCRIBE!

☐ INDIVIDUAL -- \$35 ☐ LOW-INCOME -- \$15 ☐ DONATION -- _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____

Serving the cause
of social justice.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

PO Box 295
Olympia WA 98507

6,000-mile cross country walk for TBLG equality ends at White House

Into the Light Walk – A walk for gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation equality

February 3, WA, DC-- Since May 31, 2011, Alan Bounville has walked from Seattle, Washington, pushing a cart of his belongings. On the cart are two rainbow-colored signs that read, “Full Equality NOW!” He’s walked every step of the way, zigzagging from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean, often over harsh terrain and in even harsher weather.

“Walking across the country in a straight line essentially twice is one thing. Walking as an out queer person

pushing a cart emblazoned with rainbow signs while sharing the demand for full equality based on gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation is quite another,” says Bounville when talking about the walk as a whole. “People stop me all the time to ask what I’m doing and why I’m walking. Many people are supportive. Some are down-



forms a solo interview theatre-based play inspiring people to walk into their own light and true potential.

“For nearly two years I’ve been invited as an equal into hundreds of homes across this great land. The walk ends at the People’s House, where transgender, bisexual, queer, lesbian, two spirit, intersex, and gay Americans are still not welcome as equals. The time for full equality is now.”

– Into the Light

STYLING · CUTS · COLOR · PERMS

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



JAMIE LEE & COMPANY

309 E. 4TH AVE.
OLYMPIA, WA 98501

360-786-6027
JAMIELEEANDCOMPANY.COM

KAOS patron business.

DEEP CONDITIONING · MANICURES · PEDICURES · MASSAGE · ASTROLOGY · TAROT

FREE CONSULTATIONS · FREE BANG TRIMS

BOTANICAL HAIR CARE PRODUCTS



DISTRIBUTED BY STAR COURIER,
AN ECO-FRIENDLY DELIVERY SERVICE

MARCH 2012
FREE, take one!

WORKS IN PROGRESS

SERVING THE OLYMPIA COMMUNITY AND THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE SINCE 1990.

**PRESERVING THE INTENT OF THE
PROCESSION OF THE SPECIES**

**A SMALL BIOTECH COMPANY COULD
CHANGE THE DEBATE ON GMOs**



MAR **WORKS IN PROGRESS** FREE