



Each voice should be heard at City Hall

By Clark Gilman

We can't eliminate discomfort

Democracy depends on real and meaningful ways for the governed to have a say in how they are governed. Part of the promise of local government is that it will make it possible for people to participate in decisions that directly affect their everyday life. When those who hold the direct reins of government propose to limit participation by people whose actions may cause discomfort (because we're not talking about violence), democracy recedes into the distance.

On July 18, the Olympia City Council removed from its agenda an item that would have criminalized disrupting a Council meeting. While I am disheartened that this proposal even made it to the Council agenda, I am grateful that it brought to light the serious discussion we—the Council and the community—need to have about the value of open, accessible and transparent government. That day, prior to the item being pulled from the agenda, Council members heard from many who were appalled and downright angry about the proposal. It's clear that people care deeply about their right to know what their city government is doing and their right to have a safe public space to speak up. Many callers suggested that rather than shutting down meetings, we manage meetings well enough that business gets done and citizens feel welcomed.

I've served on the Council since January 2016. I watch week after week as people come to express passionate frustration over issues. Tension in the room can build and situations escalate when we demand that overwhelmed speakers be civil, patient, and deferential to our positions. The current situation benefits no one and does not serve democracy.

Disruption: It takes two to tango

It is difficult to continue to listen empathetically after receiving personal insults. Disrupted Council meetings have at times adjourned to a small conference room that limits public access. In truth, it is very challenging to manage a meeting where protestors intend to prevent us from conducting business. Then the question appears as: When a few people decide to take over the agenda do we stop reviewing the summer children's lunch feeding program? Do we not recognize long-time community volunteers?

I see that community members sometimes feel their specific issues are not being addressed. But even as we take on these issues we have to be sure water is clean, city parks are open, and

For me, creating opportunities for authentic dialogue that informs policy and action is the job of City Council. Our municipal code specifies that the Council is the legislative branch of lo-

pia values and priorities. The current process offers few opportunities for questions or input on the draft budget. The Council has hearings on the budget, receives comments from the few people who have had time to read it, and passes it. Like many organizations, Olympia City Council focuses on the very small portion of the budget that is considered discretionary, spending hours debating where to put a \$5,000 grant while giving scant consideration of the allocation of tens of millions of dollars.

We should open up our process in order to be clear about how its budget will affect real people. The impacts should be stated in writing in the budget document itself. Last year, I hosted an experimental People's Budget Forum that asked a group of 60 or so people to state their priorities for spending

by the city. I think it is time for the entire City Council to engage and host a forum to broadly consider city spending and income, before we make the final decision about what to include in the budget. We spend a great deal of time and energy maintaining a long-range plan for growth. Perhaps it is time to similarly consider a long-range look at spending and income. We need to hear from a broad spectrum of people as to their priorities for

► **CITY HALL**, continued on page 4



Photo by Amy Shull

we have fire trucks available to respond to emergencies.

There are other, and I believe better, ways to manage contentious meetings. Councilmembers along with members of advisory boards and commissions recently participated in "Jurassic Parliament" about how to do so. Our trainer, Ann MacFarlane, made the point that the First Amendment applies to government meetings. Our job as elected leaders is to listen to each speaker as if they are the only person in the room and try to hear their concerns.

The Big "C"

By Trent Kelly

Be wary of those who say they're on your side when it comes to the war on cancer.

Cancer seems to be on everyone's radar these days. The struggle against the disease is discussed openly in everyday conversation and constantly referenced in the media. But that's a good thing, right? I'm old enough to remember when "the big C" was a dark secret, discussed in hushed tones by folks who shuddered and shook their heads sadly upon hearing the news about a relative or friend. Cancer used to be a hopeless topic and the subject of short conversations for good reason: the proverbial death sentence diagnosis and the ultimate negative lottery.

Today the topic of cancer no longer lives in the shadows. Now, nearly all of us know somebody battling the dis-

ease and many who are 'winning,' surviving what was once a death sentence, or at least living with it for years longer than before. We are told that cancer rates are improving and that we as a society may just whip cancer all together if we raise enough research dollars. We have the best minds and the most money America can offer to fight this scourge; it's the "moon shot" for our generation.

The City budget: A great place to start democratizing

Our current budget process is an example of where we could do better. Where we spend our money is the clearest expression of our real Olym-

The noble fight against cancer has become a part of business in America. It's more than just out in the open now; cancer care advertising is in your face every day, hawked at a fever pitch, right up there with beer, cars and cell phones.

The noble fight against cancer has become a part of business in America. Everywhere you look some hospital is touting their team as the most adept at

fighting a cancer diagnosis. It's more than just out in the open now; cancer care advertising is in your face every day, hawked at a fever pitch, right up there with beer, cars and cell phones.

But should we all be cheering along with the health care industry? Yes, cancer survival rates are perhaps improving but what about cancer diagnosis rates?

It is a matter of fact that the incidence of cancer has increased dramatically over the last century. According to the World Cancer Research Fund, data for 2012 show that the rates have not slowed in the last half century, with the highest rates being in the most industrialized nations. There's convincing evidence that over the course of that time our diet, habits and environment have all changed in ways that make us more likely to develop cancer. (CDC 2016, WHO 2017, and others.) An emphasis on treatments, survival

► **Big C**, continued on page 8

Works in Progress

Works In Progress is a free, all volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Established by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition, the paper published its first issue in May 1990.

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 practices that seek to silence the oppressed.

Submissions: Our goal is to publish stories that are ignored or misrepresented by the mainstream media. We seek local, well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities, and accounts of personal experience or reflections by local authors. Informed opinion pieces are also welcome, especially when accompanied by facts, examples and sources. We are also looking for graphics, poetry, cartoons, and articles that push the boundaries of conventional journalism. WIP reserves the right to publish any material submitted in whole or in part.

Submit writing in the following format: In a separate word document attached to an email that goes to: *olywip@gmail.com*. Please use Times New Roman 12 pt. type, no paragraph indents. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically. Include your name and phone number and a brief bio. WIP's volunteer editors will contact authors if there is any significant editing proposed. If you wish to submit an article to be reprinted, include the permission and original location.

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

Governing Tool: The following statements are part of our Editorial Policy:

WIP will make an 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 refrain from printing any material submitted.

Anti-Discrimination Clause: We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if or 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 by the University of Washington Library. The last 5 years are online at *www.olywip.org*

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Submission Deadline Next Issue
Sunday, August 20
olywip@gmail.com

Proofreading Meeting
Sunday, August 27, 1 pm
Buck's 5th Avenue Loft



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Works in Progress is still adding WIPsters!

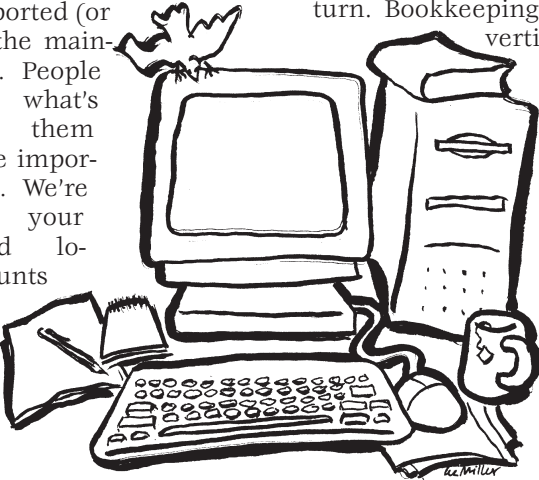
Works in Progress is a free newspaper that's been produced and consumed in Thurston County every month for almost 30 years. Periodically, some WIP folks look up from their tasks and discover that it's time to bring in some new and different people to keep the publication going strong. Check out the ways people relate to WIP and contact us about taking a part. Send an email to *olywip@gmail.com* with the the area you're interested in in the subject line. Or just get in touch with a question. See you on the web.

Delivering WIP.
A paper ain't nuttin if nobody gets hold of it

to read! Every month a small cadre of devoted volunteers puts 2500+ copies of WIP in racks and boxes in Olympia, Lacey, Shelton and elsewhere. You can be part of that network—or you can step in as the coordinator, finding new locations and expending WIPs reach.

Editing and more. WIP publishes articles, opinions and analyses submitted by all sorts of writers. Needless to say, some of them need expert editing – so WIP depends on expert editors. As articles come in, they're forwarded for editing, formatting, suggesting a headline and re-checking with the author. Editing is one of the great, under appreciated skills—and if you possess it, we're waiting to hear from you! If you're just a detail-oriented person who likes correcting others—you'd be right for our proofreading sessions once a month.

Writers. Ah, writers. Some people are natural writers—but everyone who has something to say is a writer if they have a good editor (see above under Editing). WIP looks for news and reflections unreported (or distorted) by the mainstream media. People writing about what's important to them turns out to be important to others. We're looking for your well-researched local news, accounts of personal experiences, reflections on life and politics... Or



Following up From a couple of last month's stories...

Then. In May, Evergreen faculty member Bret Weinstein went on Fox News' *Tucker Carlson Tonight* where he stood by while Carlson mischaracterized the events of a day when students disrupted Weinstein's class. Carlson's programs are often culled for presentation on "alt-right" media. After Weinstein's appearance, the college was the subject of repeated threats of violence, and students found themselves the subject of threats via their personal online information.

Now. Bret Weinstein, along with his wife who also teaches at the school, is preparing to sue Evergreen for \$3.85 million. (Perhaps he will follow in the footsteps of others who have sued the state of Washington, who don't go intend to go to court but rather to receive substantial sums in settlements

if your organization just wants to send us a press release, that's good too. You could be a regular contributor, or just send in an article once in a while.

Creative Techies. Boy do we need some help here! Our website, Facebook page and editing/layout expertise are very much "works in progress." We'd like to migrate from our clunky email-based submission practices to something more streamlined, ditto our listserve, and we could use some pointers to enhance our knowledge of InDesign. As for our website and FB

page—that whole ball of wax needs major remodeling. (Never mind our misuse of metaphors.)

Graphics. We're off to a promising start to building a deeper team of artists, doodlers, illustrators, photographers and other image-oriented folks, so if you're looking for a place to showcase your talents however idiosyncratic, we want to hear from you. Back in June we sent out a call for help with graphics and as a result, we have two new creative volunteers. Photographer **Amy** has been a photography hobbyist since about 2011. She views the craft as a way to show each other what we see in the world, and hopes thus to evoke an emotional resonance. She dedicates the images she submits to her late uncle, an established photographer who saw the potential in her photos and encouraged her to continue. Graphic Artist **Don** is a 'life-long Olympioid" and artist with political chops and a sense of humor who would be earning a living as an artist if the world rewarded talent the same way it rewards project management.

Operations. This is everything else that's needed to make WIP's wheels turn. Bookkeeping, nurturing our advertisers, coordinating the distribution network, filing reports, outreach to organizations who could be using WIP, seeking out stories, running the whole show, running a part of the show. Taking on one discrete task, or jumping in with both feet. Now's the time.

the state often makes to avoid costly litigation.)

Then. In mid-June, the Board of Thurston County Commissioners announced their belief that Thurston County needs a new convention center to be paid by property tax increases via a Convention Taxing District. They quickly set a hearing date with a requirement that local jurisdictions would be included on the board for creating the district—unless they opted out before July 25.

Now. The four big jurisdictions in Thurston County—Olympia, Tumwater, Yelm and Lacey—passed resolutions opting out. At the July 25 hearing, the speakers were opposed. The Commissioners aren't giving up though—they will keep talking and hoping.

Special events

Presentation by the Freedom Foundation
Thursday August 3, at 2 PM
Panorama City, Quinault Auditorium
Know the enemy.

Pollinator Extravaganza
Friday, August 4, 4:30-6:30 pm
Avanti HS, 1113 Legion Way SE
RSVP to pollinatorextravaganza.eventbrite.com
USFWS and Carrie Ziegler – Earth Art

Arbutus School at the Thurston County Fair
Sunday, August 6, 10 AM – 5 PM
Learn about their classes in folk arts, music, crafts,
info@ArbutusFolkSchool.org

Peace and Democracy Conference in Minneapolis
Wednesday-Sunday August 2-6
Website *www.DemocracyConvention.org*.
Sponsored by World Beyond War.

Movie "Cowspiracy"
Sunday August 6, 7 PM
At the Obsidian on 4th Street
Sponsored by the Green Party of South Puget Sound. Admission \$2.

Free movies starting at dusk
Mondays at West Central Park, Black Lake and Harrison in West Olympia.
August dates: 7th - *Hook*; 14th - *Babe*; 21st - *Alice In Wonderland*; 28th - *Galaxy Quest*

Olympia FOR annual potluck picnic + jazz concert
Wednesday August 9, 5:30 PM
The Rose Garden in Priest Point Park
Joe Mailhot Quartet plays John Coltrane's peace-related music.

Women of Color in Leadership Movement
Media Island, 816 Adams St. SE
Potluck brunch for women of color
Saturday, August 12, 11-2 PM
Contact *shawna@mediaisland.org*
Benefit potluck for CIELO
Sunday, August 20, 2-4 PM
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
1601 North St., SE
CIELO serves those facing deportation and others. Sponsored by Interfaith-Works

Total eclipse of the sun!
Monday, August 21, 10:15 - 11:27 AM (approx)
The path of the eclipse runs through Oregon, from Newport (about 10:15 AM) through Corvallis, Salem, and Madras, leaving the state at Ontario. Ontario has a total eclipse at about 11:25. *See related article on page 11.*

Sierra Club Annual Picnic
Wednesday, August 23, 2017, 5 PM
Priest Point Park, Kitchen 1
Like minded groups, candidates and brief speakers.. Bring a side dish.

Green Party Annual Meeting (picnic)
Friday, August 25, 5 PM
Bigelow Park
All welcome

Love Your Local! Northeast Neighborhood Assn
At the intersection of Bethel and San Francisco Street NE
Sunday August 27, 1 - 9 PM
Street festival featuring local farmers, inventors and artisans



Any time in August is a good time to write to Governor Inslee to protest the permit granted to Northwest Innovation Works for a plant in Kalama. The plant will convert natural gas to methanol and ship it to China. Natural gas is extracted from the earth by fracking, a process that releases methanol to the atmosphere. Go to **Sightline** for more details.

Restoring creeks and competition

Enhancing economic and ecological function

by Harry Branch

The words “economics” and “ecology” stem from the ancient Greek root *oikos* meaning the family and the family's property. The two disciplines are founded on many of the same principles. Citizens working toward a better world face challenges that overlap and fall under both. We hope for a more equitable society. We hope to guarantee that everyone has a chance at health and sustenance. To have sustenance, people need sources of food and the means of purchase. Locally, the most productive source of both is the marine environment, which we have degraded and refuse to fix.

Manufacturing salmon and sea life

We think we can manufacture a more productive system than nature, that for example by growing salmon in net pens we can increase production. Wild salmon go to sea where they feed and grow and then return. Aquaculture will never come up to the same level of productivity as millions of salmon returning from the sea.

Geoducks naturally grow in the sub-tidal zone, below the beach. Growing three geoducks on every square foot of intertidal beach is going to displace other species and imperil outmigrating forage fish. The impacts on salmon, herring, rockfish and shellfish varieties grown where they naturally proliferate are a certainty.

Government efforts fall short

The State with the help of a few non-profits is attempting to identify beaches where forage fish are observed spawning and provide them with special protection. Given that forage fish populations are already in decline a better approach would be to determine which beaches meet physical parameters for spawning and protect those. An even better approach would be to determine where physical parameters could be restored or enhanced and restore and enhance them.

Washington State operates under a paradigm called “No Net Loss”. If we cause a loss in ecological function in one place, we “mitigate” the loss someplace else. In our arrogance we tell ourselves that we can build a wetland where one didn't exist that will be equal to one that nature built over millions of years. We imagine that by maintaining some sameness we won't see continuing loss through interactions between diminished populations and degraded habitats.

Big money wants to grow bigger

The challenge in all cases is the influence of big money. The captains of big business represent big money and they want that money to grow. They demand to develop for profit. They want species harvested by their big businesses that employ people at or

near minimum wage. Wild species on the other hand, are typically harvested by individuals operating their own vessels as independent businesses, not by big businesses. Meager incomes for workers and dwindling supplies of marine food stem from the same source – the demand by a small number of very wealthy people to make even more money.

Foretelling the non-existence of Moxlie Creek

Work will soon begin on parcels two and three across State Ave from Cherry Street in what was the Moxlie Creek Estuary prior to its being filled in the 1980s. Real estate developer Walker John plans to build 85 market rate housing units with retail and office space on the ground floor. There is little that will stand in the way at this point. There's been no sampling for dense non-aqueous liquids like creosote, the actual chemicals of concern, no assessment of oceanographic parameters like primary and secondary production and basic water quality. There's been no real science. In all the thousand some odd pages pertaining to parcels two and three, Moxlie Creek literally does not exist!

Elsewhere, officials begin to restore estuaries

Last week officials in Blaine stopped development in the estuary of California Creek. Officials in other cities have taken similar steps: Kingston restored the Carpenter Creek estuary. Silverdale restored the Clear Creek estuary. Seattle daylighted a long section of Thornton Creek. California restorations include the Lake Merritt estuary and Alviso Marsh in San Francisco Bay, Elkhorn Slough in Moss Landing and the Bolsa Chica reserve in Los Angeles. Restoration of the Los Angeles River is in the planning stages. There are many other examples of urban stream and estuary restorations up and down the West Coast. Olympia has fallen far behind, its heads in a proverbial hole.

Overlapping jurisdictions and diminishing opportunity

One problem here is that we have so many overlapping jurisdictions none of which wants to step on the others' toes. We have Thurston County, the Cities of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater, LOTT sewage treatment and the Port of Olympia, six separate local governing bodies. By contrast, the City and County of San Francisco is one governing body that oversees its port and sewage treatment. The system is more efficient, it plans and works more toward the general good and it's less susceptible to special interests.

Big money generates undue influence. We might remember though that the first instances of writing were ledgers and IOUs. Money marked the beginning of civilization. Competitive free enterprise for all its defects is self correcting and efficient. Perhaps the problem is that our current corporate-dominated system is not free enterprise—competition diminishes as competitors gobble each other up. Perhaps what we've lost in today's economy is opportunity.

Minimum wage and maximum rent

A few decades ago, driving down West Bay Drive past all the lumber and plywood mills, one would see car after car with bumper stickers that read “Don't Export Logs and Jobs.” That's exactly what the Port does today. All the mills are gone and young people are expected to work in minimum wage service-industry jobs. Working full time a person might make \$2000 per month. After taxes and other subtractions a person is supposed to pay \$700 per month rent. The City's response is to encourage construction of new low income housing projects, where rents will in reality still be unaffordable for a significant portion of our community. The true intent once again is to funnel money

through tax breaks and other incentives into the pockets of developers. The State meanwhile is increasing property taxes to pay for education – and in many cases landlords will pass on that increase to renters.

What happened to Adam Smith's hand?

What if we were to require governments to make money the old fashioned way. All the means of resource extraction might be government-owned and operated. Any business that grows beyond the point of competition might be purchased and operated by governing bodies. Independent businesses, for example, might benefit from on-line marketing and the on-line marketing system be government operated at a profit. The independent makers of knives or cabinets as well as farmers, restaurateurs and others would pay no taxes. Though there may be rules and limits, the intent would be to let Adam Smith's invisible hand run the show day to day. Whatever the solution, we'd all benefit if we could somehow take some control back from the influence wielded by the masters of big money.

Harry Branch is a devoted Westsider who has worked on a variety of ecological projects here and abroad. His hobby is thinking.



Photo by Amy Shull

The people vs. Donald Trump –

Out of the frying pan into the fire?

On July 11, local members of the Puget Sound Communities 4 Impeachment asked the Olympia City Council to adopt a resolution calling on Congress to investigate impeachment of US President Donald Trump. Twenty or more people gathered in front of City Hall, unfurled a banner and waved flags to the enthusiastic honking of commuters on 4th Ave, before moving to the Council Chambers to present their resolution.

Instead of passing the resolution, Council members voted to send a letter via Congressman Denny Heck asking that the House Judiciary Committee to investigate Trump's “business ties, Russian connections, and actions to impede Federal investigations...” The letter referred to the fact that “the President's actions have led many to conclude that he has violated “ the Foreign and Domestic Emoluments Clause and the contract lease provisions of the General Services Administration, and stated that the Council “firmly believes in the Constitution and laws of the United States and insists that no person is above the law.”

Resolutions similar to the one proffered by the Olympia group have

been passed in 13 cities. The Olympia group partners with the Impeach Donald Trump Now campaign which is a non-partisan national effort led by Free Speech for People and RootsAction.org. The campaign recently delivered a petition to Congress calling for Donald Trump's impeachment. As of mid-May, more than a million people had signed this petition.

If Donald Trump were to be impeached, the next in line to serve as President would be Vice-president Mike Pence. Pence, the former governor of Indiana, describes himself as “a Christian, a conservative and a Republican—in that order.” During his tenure as governor of Indiana, he signed into law a bill allowing profit-making corporations (among others) to disobey laws that burdened “their” religious beliefs. He was an early supporter of the Tea Party movement and led the Republican's crusade in Congress to defund Planned Parenthood. After Pence in succession would be House Speaker Paul Ryan, then Senator Orrin Hatch (R., Utah, age 83), president pro-tem of the Senate. *Be careful what you wish for.*

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KOWA 106.5 low power radio makes for high quality listening

Staff reporter

What do Harry Shearer, Sojourner Truth, Molly Ivins, Richard Wolff, Davey D and Sonali Kohatkar have in common? You can hear them all on Olympia's low power radio station, KOWA 106.5. They're on along with a spectrum of voices and views that can enlighten, entertain, and enrage you throughout the day—and that is the true definition of diversity; something you don't get from radio that pretends to be diverse but in reality confines itself within a narrow range of orthodoxy (NPR anyone?).

The 13-year old Olympia-based station has upped its game in the past few months, with 24-hour public affairs programming that reaches across the country and even into the past to bring listeners a variety of perspectives on dozens of different topics.

The station is a project of Media Island International, operating out of quarters on Adams Street, with new energy coming from station manager Shawna Hawk and a team of dedicated programmers and technicians.

The programmers are revamping the schedule, looking to the community, to the internet and to Pacifica archives for inspiration. You can see their Arts Walk action in a video on the KOWA website, but they've also hung out at Rainy Day Records, TESC and elsewhere in search of ideas and volunteers to become part of the station. Events at Media Island also provide an opportunity for people in the

community to find KOWA, and for KOWA to find new listeners.

Shawna Hawk and Jamie Madison point to several programs that illustrate the new efforts –

- current and breaking news with Flashpoints, Between the Lines, Sea Change news with an environmental edge; Sojourner Truth, and many others
- political analysis like Tim Wise on “Trumpism “ (“he really breaks it down”); “Hard Knock Radio” where host Davey D gets guests like Mos Def, Saul Williams, Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney to tell more of their stories than usual; Rising Up with Sonali (a favorite)
- women's rights on Feminist Hour and Women's Magazine, plus a new segment on “progressive mascu-

linity,” that includes “Tough Guise” featuring conversations about rape culture and the media, because “we’re all in this together.”

- science programs including Bioneers, Quirks and Quarks, Planet Watch, Mayo Clinic radio and more you've never heard of!
- plus music (a local show “Vibralizing” with DJ Hawk plays every other Saturday); spoken word (another local segment, “The Word” after 10 when the FCC's asleep), culture (First Voices), history (even Thomas Jefferson?!) – and this list doesn't tell you the half of it.

You must go to the KOWA website programming page to get the full richness. Or, better yet, turn your dial to 106.5 and just let a new piece of the world in. If you can't tune in KOWA on your car radio or at home (its range is downtown and the immediately adjacent neighborhoods—on the westside it's audible til about the intersection of Cooper Point and Black Lake), you can go to the website and click “listen online” for the streaming source.

Washington Legislature fails at basic governing task after three overtime sessions

[Ed note: When the legislature left Olympia on July 20 this year (after three extra sessions) they had agreed on the amount and detail of the budget that funds all state-supported capital projects. It's just that the Senate Republicans

refused to vote on it. This reflected the increasingly frequent breakdown of governance: the party most closely tied to business holds hostage basic legislation unless and until their handlers get their way. In this case, the budget that affects the whole of Washington state was left hanging because of the demands of powerful developers determined to overturn a Court decision requiring that water to serve new housing projects not draw down existing prior uses. As noted below, there are real costs to this failure.]

Capital Budget

Projects now stalled by the lack of a capital budget include more than \$360 million for green stormwater infrastructure retrofits, toxic cleanups, Puget Sound restoration, flood risk reduction, community forest projects, wildfire risk reduction work, weatherizing low-income homes, clean energy development, and modernizing the energy grid. The House passed a capital budget with these investments by a 92-1 vote. Historically, the capital budget has had strong bipartisan support due to the many benefits and job creation opportunities it provides for urban and rural areas.

“Tying our state's capital budget to other pieces of legislation is a troubling and dangerous precedent to set. This is a bad outcome for the people of Washington,” said Becky Kelley, President of Washington Environmental Council. “The Capital budget is critical for our state and invests in win-win projects that create good jobs and protect the environment. It is too important to be weighed down by divisive politics.”

Water for People, Farms, and Fish (Hirst Decision)

The legislature is not expected to reach agreement on an equitable solution to the state's ongoing water management crisis. Existing water users, tribal treaty rights, and the health of our rivers and streams are at risk of water shortages, and uncertainty increases in the face of climate change.

“This is a huge missed opportunity for our state,” said Chris Wierzbicki, Executive Director of Futurewise. “Tribal nations, property owners, and fishing communities all deserve certainty that they'll have access to reliable water supplies. The legislature left options on the table for a balanced solution.”

Protecting All Communities From Toxic Pollution

In the wake of an unprecedented drop in revenue and a more than \$70 million shortfall, the legislature failed to stabilize funding for toxic cleanups and pollution prevention. Projects from the Spokane River Restoration to Bellingham Bay Cleanup continue to slow and stall as funding for the Model Toxics Control Act drops due to his-

torically low contributions from major polluters.

Oil Transportation Safety

Washington's oil spill program faces a \$3.2 million shortfall, and the oil transportation safety system must address protection gaps for Puget Sound and oil pipelines. Legislation to fund state oversight programs and extend oil transportation safety measures to pipelines and to tankers traveling through Puget Sound did not pass and awaits action next legislative session.

This analysis is reprinted with permission. It was prepared by the Washington Environmental Council, Washington Conservation Voters, and the Washington State Labor Council.

City Hall

From page 1

how we spend money, rather than the city simply telling people what will happen with their tax dollars.

Staying present

City Council should be listening respectfully to many, many voices: small retailers, service industry workers, state workers, the homeless, builders, developers, educators and others as we plan for the next 20 years and beyond. It's my responsibility and that of our people to hold city government accountable. It is tempting to retreat from difficult conversations and demand a demeanor denoting respect based on our position and authority. Staying present and listening hard to the brilliance in our community—the many facts, ideas, and opinions around each issue—is the right thing to do.

Resources

For more information about Ann MacFarlane's advice for democratic and effective local government take a look at her Jurassic Parliament website (<https://www.jurassicparliament.com/>)



For more ideas about greater citizen involvement in City budget priorities check out the People's Budget Review in St. Petersburg, Florida (PBR2017.org). Clark Gilman is an Olympia City Councilmember and president of the board of The Bridge Music Project. He is also a long-time union organizer and resident of Olympia's Westside. He is a candidate for re-election to the Council this fall. He can be reached at www.clark4olympia.com

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Early morning in the garden of poetry and hope

Sandra Yannone

Last issue I had intended to publish an essay about the power of protest poetry, particularly highlighting the work in the 2016 anthology *Of Poetry and Protest: from Emmett Till to Trayvon Martin*, edited by Philip Cushway and Michael Warr, against the backdrop of more unjust verdicts, more tragic shootings, and more international terrorism targeting Muslims. But honestly, as I contemplated my intended task, my exhaustion from the lived experience of all the spring strife at Evergreen, of the anniversary of the Pulse nightclub massacre, of the death of a dear friend, and of world events got the best of me. As the WIP deadline loomed, the writing just wouldn't come. I missed the deadline.

The inertia I continue to feel reminds me of how I struggled to create last summer, too. I found that writing two essays, including one with an accompanying poem about Orlando, zapped my capacity to generate anything that registered on the same emotional plane as those pieces. I wrote something lighter, something that my brain and heart could handle: an essay about writing sonnets collaboratively, an essay that demonstrated how writing can come from places that are not always conceived initially from the need to produce narratives consciously from a social justice lens.

These summer months feel the same and different. While I could justify all too easily skipping this month, too, the difference is that I know that I have a responsibility to write. Something. It is not a responsibility

to the dedicated readers of WIP. It is not a ploy to keep me in good standing with the indefatigable WIP editor. It is a commitment to myself. It is a knowing that anything I write breaks through the wall that I easily can construct around myself that encourages me to believe that I have nothing of value to say.

So, the deadline is here. I need to write. I need to trust that the very nature of writing is its own political act that fulfills my obligations to this important publication. I need to accept that I cannot produce my best work every time I write. My job is to write. Period.

I reach back to my recent April trip to Ireland where I celebrated a friend's book launch and gave a few poetry readings. One early morning I found myself in the garden of one of Ireland's most prominent poetry editors, Salmon Poetry's Jessie Lendennie. In 1981, cognizant of the trends in Irish poetry that kept women's voices at the margins, Lendennie began Salmon Poetry. Her vision continues today in a modest bookstore in Ennistymon, tucked between the Cliffs of Moher and the City of Limerick (or at least that is my orientation).

Through curating *Even the Daybreak: 35 Years of Salmon Poetry* (Salmon Poetry, 2016), Lendennie accomplishes the creation of a poetic history where most anthologies fail. Her collection's assemblage of Irish and American poets speaks to one woman's vision, resilience, and belief in poetry to move the world.

As moved by her garden as I was by her storied place in international arts and letters, not to mention her hospitality, I wrote the following poem on my only morning in Ennistymon:

The Garden

for Jessie Lendennie

Before the day takes off, before
I watch the crow lift into the morning sky
as if from out of the painting above
the fireplace mantle, I step into her garden
waiting and breathe dear life
into my restless, wanderlusted lungs.
One wall of the garden a wild tangle
of hair, the other an ocean of ivy.

A single pink tulip towers
toward the day from the ground
below, reminding me
that the year is still

early, to say nothing of this morning,
to say plenty that I'll leave unsaid
about last night's reading by the fire
crackling inside. At one end of the garden,
an arched passageway to the house
listing with books meticulously
chosen. At the other end an unfinished
room, a sanctuary city all by itself.

Between both, a door that opens
to a shed of stacked doors
stored beside the garden's edge
as if an unnecessary caution
to the tempered wind. And no doors
hoarded here are needed

when the garden, so lovely
this singular morning, dares
in its absence of the obvious,
in its rich, eager soil, to behold
every stem anticipated
of her wild, waking dreams.

Rereading the poem today, I'm reminded of the adage that hope springs eternal. From summer's vantage point, I've needed some hope to restore myself after a spring where I witnessed chaos, experienced the most unnerving workplace threats, and endured the exhaustion that kind of trauma produces. I think everyone I know has needed some hope, something to attempt to lift one out of the shock, grief, and other disorienting emotions that continue to accompany these spaces.

The poem I wrote for Jessie seems the appropriate place to land this month, for I find myself in need of what her garden offered with such little effort other than my waking up and stepping into a source of potential growth. In today's uncertain, agitated local, national, and global climates, this recollected memory feels like hope. And this planting myself in hope's sights is one of the reasons I continue to write and read poetry.

Sandra Yannone's poetry has appeared nationally in *Ploughshares*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Gay and Lesbian Review*, *Calyx: A Journal*, *Lambda Book Report*, and *Weave*. She is currently a member of the faculty and directs the Writing Center at The Evergreen State College.

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In Lacey as elsewhere: An old, unworkable and always at hand approach to homelessness

By Janine Gates

Reprinted with permission from Janine's Little Hollywood, 7/28/17

The City of Lacey just turned 50, and the city council held an appreciation ceremony at its meeting Thursday night for those who made the year long celebration a success.

The accolades, though well deserved, along with the announcement of the city's new song, "You're Never a Stranger in Lacey," could not have been more poorly timed.

Ironically, the city also had on their agenda consideration of an ordinance related to the prohibition of camping on public property.

Tens of community members, social workers, and advocates for street people filled the room in opposition to the ordinance. Hasty conversations between council members just prior to the start of the meeting was observed.

When it came time to approve the agenda, Mayor Andy Ryder made a motion to table the controversial agenda item, saying he wanted people to have a chance to comment on it.

City councils typically do not allow public comment on items already on the agenda and there had been no previous public discussion about the proposed ordinance.

City attorney Dave Schneider gave a brief report, then the council unanimously put the item on the agenda for discussion at their next work session, scheduled for August 3 at 7:00 p.m., Lacey City Council chambers.

The staff report, which lists no disadvantages to the ordinance, reads, "Increasingly, people are camping in public areas in cities and towns across the country. Such camping is taking place in areas that are not designated as, nor intended or designed for camping. The allowance of camping in such areas presents health and safety concerns for the public. Other Washington cities have begun to regulate camping activities via their city codes.

"Currently there is limited regulation on this type of camping in the City of Lacey. Recent case law suggests that regulations which prohibit camping in public areas are permissible provided adequate shelter options are available for those camping due to lack of shelter. In the Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater area there are several such shelters available, some partly funded by public means. Accordingly, the City of Lacey may legally regulate camping."

The proposed ordinance would prohibit camping in any park, on any street, or publicly owned parking lot or publicly owned area. Violators would be subject to a \$1,000 fine or by imprisonment not to exceed ninety days, or both.

A "compassionate enforcement" section states that the investigating officer shall inquire as to whether the camping is due to homelessness. If the officer learns that is the case, the officer shall determine whether any known homeless shelters within the cities of Lacey, Olympia, or Tumwater have adequate space and facilities available to accommodate the subject of the investigation.

If the officer determines that all such shelter space is full, the officer shall not issue a citation. If the officer determines that there is shelter space available, the officer may, within his or her discretion, issue a citation, provide directions to the shelter and/or offer

one-time transportation to the shelter.

A wide range of representatives and volunteers from area homeless support and advocacy organizations, such as Sidewalk, Interfaith Works Emergency Overnight Shelter, and Just Housing argued that there are not enough shelters in the region to house the homeless. The City of Lacey does not have a homeless shelter.

Community activists with veteran support groups, the Libertarian Party, the Thurston County Democratic Party, and various Tumwater and Lacey city council candidates all spoke in opposition to the ordinance.

Others literally came out of the woods to speak for themselves, telling first-hand stories of their experiences with homelessness.

In all, thirty articulate, passionate speakers spoke to council members.

Just Housing arranged carpools for several people to attend the meeting. Many speakers handed out flowers to council members.

The flowers, some with names attached, signified those who have passed away on the streets or those who are surviving on the streets without shelter.

Tye Gundel, an organizer with Just Housing, said she wanted the flowers to remind the Lacey City Council that the ordinance represents so much more than a simple rule on paper.

"It is an ordinance that has the potential to affect the lives and survival of hundreds. We need to remind them that each one of them has the power in their vote to prevent so many more beautiful flowers from suffering and even possibly, from dying," she said before the meeting.

Patrick and Danelle Helsper came to the meeting on their own, after hearing about the proposed ordinance on Seattle based radio stations KIRO and KOMO.

"I can't give you an address," Patrick Helsper started, trying to fulfill the typical requirement requested by public bodies when speakers approach the podium to speak.

He said he and his wife have been married for 34 years. Their home was foreclosed, and both have medical issues, making them unable to work. They receive Social Security, and park their motorhome in the parking lot of a Lacey business.

The couple says there aren't enough recreational vehicle parks in the area and Capitol Forest changed its rules, allowing camping ten days in a calendar year.

"We don't litter or leave trash. ...We're not criminals, we don't do drugs, we're just down on our luck! What are we

supposed to do? We want to know!"

Eric Miller said that this proposed ordinance hit home for him because he and his brother grew up homeless in Lacey.

When he was about 13 years old, his single mother developed agoraphobia, a fear of leaving the house, which they eventually did not have. He did as many odd jobs as he could. Friends would let them sleep in their garage or on couches. They also lived on the streets.



Through all that, he was vice president of his student body, graduated from South Sound High School, and received a community service award.

"My childhood was not easy, but one benefit that I feel like we had was that my mom didn't have to run from the police or worry about our RV getting towed or impounded. We did have a lot of other things to worry about, but to me, at a time that income inequality is growing further, we need to look for a way to reach out to the most vulnerable and make things easier for them instead of figuring out new ways to attack them," he said in an interview before the meeting.

James Blair, of Yelm, is chair of the Libertarian Party of Thurston County.

"When this meeting started, each and every one of you stood up and said The Pledge of Allegiance. The last sentence is, 'with liberty and justice for all.' This ordinance does not promote liberty and assuredly does not promote justice," he said.

"I don't tell people this very much, but for nine months, I slept in my truck... Multiple times, wherever I parked, I was told to move....Everyone in this room could end up in the same situation...this doesn't target homeless people? That's the only people it's targeting....You say other cities have this similar ordinances....If someone jumps off a cliff, would you? It's wrong, and Lacey needs to step forward and find a different solution."

TJ LaRocque spoke as a private citizen in opposition to the ordinance.

LaRocque works for Providence St. Peter Hospital and will serve as the manager for the Providence Community Care Center currently under construction in downtown Olympia. The center will provide wrap-around health and wellness services along with showers and restrooms.

He said that if the ordinance was enacted, it would be difficult to reverse, and that the City of Olympia's ordinance, which is similar to the one proposed by Lacey, has caused damage to the community.

"Even if this is with the best of intentions not meant to be coordinated around the homeless, there is no way to separate an ordinance like this from homelessness," he said, saying that the majority of those who are car camping are families who could best be helped with rent assistance and rapid rehousing.

Since Lacey does not have a downtown, he said he does not want to see the ordinance push people out of Lacey and into a concentrated area like downtown Olympia.

"...And when people are looking at whether or not there are enough shelter beds, we fail as a community," referring to the 200 people per night who showed up per at Interfaith Works' temporary warming center in downtown Olympia this past winter.

Eric Franks, a man who is disabled and uses a wheelchair, said he became homeless one and a half months ago because the property owner recently sold the home he was living in. He says this is his third stint with homelessness.

He said that Tuesday was the 27th anniversary of the American Disability Act, and learned that in the late 1800's, there were American cities that made it illegal for persons with "ugly," or "unsightly" disabilities to appear in public.

"This ordinance criminalizes humanity. I don't want to go backwards," he said.

Phoenix Wendt, who lives in the woods, is active in finding solutions. She participated in the drafting of a resolution that will be introduced to the Olympia City Council at its meeting next Tuesday. If passed, it could result in a standing committee on homelessness.

Before the meeting, Wendt was circumspect about her situation.

"I love everyone and I appreciate everyone to the point that, yeah, I may have a difficult past but this is the best I can give you right now. Why is it that evil is still in this world? Why does it still exist? It is to make us humble to have the pain and suffering to move us closer to understanding love, joy, and beautiful mercy and compassion for others. It brings us closer together," she said



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Puyallup tribe and friends battle unsafe fracked gas plant

by Megan Cornish

The Puyallup tribe and other environmental activists are waging a heroic and determined fight against a disastrous liquid natural gas (LNG) plant at the Port of Tacoma, Wash. Planned and approved virtually in secret, it would feature a 140-foot-tall, 8 million gallon tank of liquid natural gas stored at -260°F. The facility would be located in a populated area within the city. The site is also adjacent to tribal land, mere feet from its salmon restoration project. Close by is the NW Detention Center, a for-profit immigration prison, whose 1,500 detainees would be trapped in an emergency.



Photo by Zoltán Grossman

Dangerous, toxic, treaty-violating and climate changing
Parallels to the Dakota Access Pipeline fought by the Standing Rock Sioux last year are striking. The Port Commissioners ignored the Puyallup's treaty right to be consulted along with its fishing rights, which depend on clean water. Preliminary construction has already started, even though the all-important fire permit and others have not been obtained, and the tribe is still fighting the project. The Port notified only those residents within 400 feet of the site, for an end run around the public's right to know. The environmental review was a cruel joke that admitted only the possibility of a pipe leak, not a tank leak. The owners made major changes to the plan after the Environmental Impact Statement was finalized, yet the city refuses to require a supplemental review.

tralian financial conglomerate the Macquarie Group) has since canceled, announcing it doesn't know whether or when it may retrofit its ships to use natural gas fuel.

A majority of the gas will come from hydraulic fracturing, which pollutes enormous amounts of fresh water, contaminates ground water, and typically leaks significant amounts of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. Contrary to the claims of the industry, that makes fracked gas environmentally devastating.

The liquid natural gas will be cooled to -260°F by using toxic chemicals that will also be stored in huge tanks on site. The plant would essentially be a giant bomb. Besides being extremely flammable, liquid natural gas expands 600 times when it leaks to the atmosphere. Steve Storms, a retired chemi-

cal engineer in environment and energy, and an activist with RedLine Tacoma, says, "that makes it explosive two ways."

Furthermore, the facility is being built on the Tacoma Tideflats, a landfill, between two superfund sites. Toxic chemicals already in the soil can melt steel! Compounding existing pollution — especially next door to Puyallup tribal land — is outrageous.

People's warriors fight on
"As tribal members, we never shy away from the fight when our treaties are being violated. It's just a little unsettling, how often the fight is homed right on our doorstep," says Sarah Reiser, a member of the Puyallup tribe.

The tribe has sued over the violation of its treaty rights. It sponsored a November 2016 march in support of Standing Rock and against

the liquid natural gas plant. With increasing public support, young tribal members led a 24-hour vigil next to the construction site for five days in June. In early July, they held a three day 100-mile Save the Salish Sea walk from Seattle to Tacoma.

Holding on-going protests, the "No LNG" activists have attended many Tacoma City Council meetings, and local health department and Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission hearings. Two objectors sued successfully to force the plant's emergency response plan to be made public, and exposed its serious inadequacy. During a May 2017 demonstration, six protesters with Tacoma Direct Action chained themselves to drill equipment and halted construction. Originally charged with felonies, they still face misdemeanor allegations.

Continuing public pressure is vital. To get involved, visit RedLineTacoma.org/action, or check out Tacoma Direct Action or RedLine Tacoma Community Forum on Facebook.

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Universal single-payer health care is the real solution



Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation's August 2017 TV program is very timely and informative. Although Obama's Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") helped in some ways, it has failed to cover many millions of Americans and failed to control costs. Republicans are trying to repeal the ACA for right-wing reasons. The real solution is universal single-payer health care, which other modern countries use to produce far better results at far lower cost. Olympia FOR's August 2017 TV program—watchable through our website—proposes universal single-payer as the real remedy for Americans' lack of access to affordable, high quality health care. We aired the program in December 2015, and it is timely again now.

Our guest is Dr. Sarah K. Weinberg. She knows a lot about the problems, and she has been working for universal single-payer health care as the best solution. She has worked very hard with two non-profit organizations, Health Care for All – Washington and Physicians for a National Health Program. We list websites for these two organizations and other resources at the end of our TV program and the description posted at our website.

Please watch the program and/or read the very informative summary of what we said, plus much additional information. Visit the "TV Programs" part of www.olympiafor.org.

- Topics include:**
- ▶ Compare health outcomes in the U.S. with those of other nations
 - ▶ Compare access to health care in the U.S. with access in other nations

- ▶ Cost and affordability of health care in the U.S. vs. other nations
- ▶ How do some other countries' health care systems work?
- ▶ How a system can work
- ▶ What has the Affordable Care

- Act ("Obamacare") accomplished?
 - ▶ How does Obamacare (the Affordable Care Act) fall short of meeting our needs?
 - ▶ Summary and encouragement
 - ▶ Two excellent books, one short video, several non-profit organizations
 - ▶ Watch powerfully insightful and important TV programs through your computer or on TCTV
- For 30 years the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation has been producing powerfully informative TV programs on important issues. You can watch our current program and more than 160 of our previous ones through the Olympia FOR's website at your convenience, even if you don't watch our current program on TCTV cable channel 22 in Thurston County (Mondays 1:30 pm, Wednesdays 5:00 pm, Thursdays 9:00 pm).

Simply visit www.olympiafor.org, click the "TV Programs" link, and scroll down past the brief description of the current month's program. Previous programs are listed chronologically. Click the link for the program you want to watch. Also, next to each program's link is a link to a thorough summary of the program. Read that by clicking the "Word" and/or "pdf" link. You can watch more than 160 programs through www.olympiafor.org.

Questions? Contact Glen Anderson, the Olympia FOR TV series' producer/host at (360) 491-9093 or glen@olympiafor.org

repeal and replace

repeal and replace
transparency with turbidity
kindness with cruelty
government with business
bridges with walls
understanding
with mayhem
repeal and replace
equality with power
earth with fragmented cinders
the constitution with whim
hope with fear
repeal and replace
democracy with oligarchy
freedom of the press with molten muzzles
delicacy with vulgarity
repeal and replace
hand shakes
with a wink and a nod

*"..but he hasn't got anything on!"
the whole town cried out at last.
the emperor shivered,
for he suspected they were right.
but he thought,
"this procession has got to go on."
so he walked more proudly than ever,
as his noblemen held high the train
that wasn't there at all...*

lovitt 7/15/17

robert lovitt studied poetics at naropa university where he apprenticed with poet allen ginsberg. his books are available in local book stores and electronically through amazon. he is involved with the local peace group – south sound buddhist peace fellowship (www.ssbpf.net)

Letters to WIP

When they come for you...

Dear WIP,

Here is a recap of the July 17 hearing in Seattle, where the issue is removing Zahid Chaudhry from the country. Judge Paul deFonzo spent some time to mark exhibits and make sure each party had the same documents; then government side wanted Zahid's witnesses "sequestered". Ann Chaudhry and two other witnesses were told to leave the courtroom.

Government's long cross questioning of Zahid caused court to run out of time at 4:30 pm! On the next and final hearing Judge Paul deFonzo wants to hear from Ann. So this hearing has been "continued" to a later date. Judge Paul deFonzo first suggested September 11th; and a groan went out from supporters in the courtroom !

Ann and Zahid want to express their gratitude to the following -

To all the folks from Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, Chehalis & south, and Seattle area and up north; To all the drivers for the car and van pools; To Elissa Goss for her tireless energy, time and care for detail, activity & Press release; To all the writers of letters of support; To all the feverish texting, creators for facebook event, calling, & emailing; To all the slogan and sign makers, sign holders, & chanters;To all the im-

promptu speakers; To all those waiting in and out of the courtroom, those waiting in hallways, & those remaining with signs in front of building;

To all those handing out snacks; To all those providing shoulders, hugs, & hand-squeezing; To all those holding us in the light, praying for us, sending blessings, prayers for the judge, and for the attorneys.

Just one question... why don't they let this awesome, wonderful, fabulous, loving, caring, marvelously, supportive community run the United States???? Hum

Learn about USCIS' illegal, immoral, unethical, and previously secret Controlled Application Review & Resolution Program (CARRP) - also known by the ACLU and others as "Muslims Need Not Apply." Ann Chaudhry's presentation on CARRP is at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1kRqQuA8tI> To see more on the over 15 years-long endeavor for EARNED citizenship through Qualified Military service (in United States Armed Forces), check out our websites: www.keepzahidhome.org <https://keepzahidhome.org/> and <http://justice4chaudhry.info/>

When they come for ***you***, who will speak up for you?

Ann and Zahid

No discrimination based on religion

Dear WIP,

On June 26, the Supreme Court gave a ruling on Trump's Muslim travel ban. The decision has been touted as a partial win for Trump and as a partial win for Muslims. In reality, this decision is a great loss for America. The Supreme Court has ruled that in some situations it is legal for the government to discriminate on the basis of religion.

One of the main reasons this country was founded was so that people could practice their religion without any interference from the government. The Trump administration has not produced any detailed or specific evidence on the national security threats posed by visitors from the six countries and refugees targeted in the order, despite requests made during continued litigation against the order. This makes it very clear that these people are being targeted solely because of their religion.

If this travel ban was actually about terrorist threats from Muslim countries, Saudi Arabia would be first on the list. The six countries listed have no natural resources US corporations covet nor do they have the wealth to make large weapons purchases from American arms merchants.

At a time when the US President openly flouts the law, racial and religious

prejudice is seen as a winning political strategy, and spurious national security issues are used as a potent justification for eroding basic constitutional protections.

According to a recent poll released by the Arab American Institute, since 2010, American attitudes toward Arabs and Muslims, have had a continued erosion of the favorable ratings given to both communities, posing a threat to the rights of Arab Americans and American Muslims. Favorable attitudes have continued to decline - from 43% in 2010 to 32% in 2014 for Arabs; and from 35% in 2010 to 27% in 2014 for Muslims.

The current climate of Islamophobia in America is reminiscent of the anti-Semitism that was rife in early twentieth century in both America and Europe. Hitler and the Nazis promoted racial and religious hatred as a means of manipulating the willfully ignorant population who could tell themselves that it had nothing to do with them.

This looks an awful lot like the subtle and not so subtle message we hear and see daily from those who control the propaganda machine in this country. According to George Orwell, "Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing." Think about it.

Larry Kerschner
peacepoet@gmail.com

The big C

From page 1

rates and cures does not shed light on why individuals are getting sick in the first place. Is it because a focus on survival and cures is just a more upbeat and positive message?

Or is it because focusing on prevention offers little in terms of a business model? Healthcare has become big business in America. Our nation spends nearly one fifth of our gross domestic product on healthcare. That's more than \$3 trillion annually - about the same as the entire economy of France. Once we were cared for by local independent practitioners and hospitals with firm roots in the community. Now our care is meted out by "health systems" that are drawing those community-based entities under their large corporate umbrellas. Hospitals were once organized around a charitable mission and run by medicine-centered physicians. But starting in the 1960-70s, with the advent and growth of Medicare for the elderly, Medicaid for the poor and employer insurance for much of the rest of us, health care became a more lucrative enterprise.

As anticipated in the early 1980s, with the increase in revenue opportunities, hospitals evolved into finance focused enterprises, 'nonprofit' in name only. (*An American Sickness*)

In parallel with the overall health industry, cancer too has become big business. Cancer treatment alone has grown globally to a \$100+ billion-dollar market and is forecast to increase 50% in the next four years (TMS Institute and Forbes).

It makes sense then that today's medical industrial complex would design ad campaigns that target rich growth opportunities. But there's more at play here than just aggressive cancer care promotion. Let's consider some of the recent slogans for cancer advertising:

"Make Cancer the Victim" (Oregon Health Sciences University)

"It's Cancer's Turn to Be Afraid" (Cancer Research UK)

"We Won't Give Up 'til Cancer Does"

(Irish Cancer Society)

"Where Cancer Meets Its Match" - (University of Kansas Cancer Center)

"Cancer Destroyers" - (MD Anderson Cancer Centers)

"Cancer Picked a Fight with the Wrong Team" - (St. Francis Health SCL Health Colorado)

"You Wanna Fight?" - (University of Colorado Hospital)

Sense a theme here? At first glance, these may seem simple words of empowerment for a boomer generation. But we should consider their sponsor and ask why they seem designed to appeal to one's fighting spirit. To be sure it is a theme that resonates with those no longer wishing to be hapless victims living in fear of cancer. But just as we should be wary when our government vilifies a convenient demon in support of military engagement, so should we be circumspect when the medical industry issues such a hyperbolic call to arms against a disease.

These slogans cheer the victims of cancer and paint their sponsors as vanquishers in a holy war waged against the terrorist disease. Might these ads be crafted instead to distract the consumer away from the larger issue? How we perceive and approach cancer as a society is important in and of itself. To what degree is cancer a telling symptom of the modern condition wrapping around us with the help and blessings of those very same corporate interests who tout its cure?

Part of any game of deception is to direct the subject's attention away from where their focus should be. Note that the above campaigns bear down on the cancer battle post-disease, where the biggest potential for treatment profits exists as opposed to prevention. True, there's no profit motive for the medical industry to emphasize prevention - and I'm talking true prevention as opposed to early detection which still involves expensive tests and procedures - but that only goes so far in explaining the themes at play. Perhaps the bigger message from all four corners of the corporate world is that what is being laid before us to live with and consume is fine and grand and should not be questioned.

Part and parcel of this propaganda is the subtler underlying message that cancer is inevitable: just part of the cost of living in this modern world and enjoying the benefits of greater life expectancy. This rests on the assumption that adults are actually living longer than their ancestors - but even this is not necessarily the case (Psychology Today). Worse yet, the excuse that cancer is just a natural response to modern medicine having increased our lifespan only makes us more complacent with a situation we should be outraged about.

It seems as though the more health care becomes a high stakes game of corporate profiteering, the more the emphasis is on the message that implies you can't really do anything about cancer until you get it. And when you do, then have no fear: we're winning the war so send your cancer business our way. The more compelling narrative is drowned out: that the choices offered to us by our economic arrangements put us in harm's way; and how we can lessen our chances of getting cancer in the first place. One message supports the medical industrial complex, and industry as a whole, while the other does not serve to make anyone rich. Don't expect Wall Street or Madison Avenue to tell you to eat fewer processed foods and cut down on your use of toxic household products. Those items alone represent half the shelves of the modern grocery store; there's no profit in that message.

The passion displayed in the above advertising by the cancer industry is misplaced. We should be afraid, angry and ready to fight—but this energy shouldn't be marshalled only after we get cancer. We should be afraid of what's happening to our world right now—and that's where we should be directing our anger and fighting spirit.

I say all this with no interest in adding stress for those who are already dealing with their own or a loved one's struggle with this affliction. I know their world. I lost my first wife when she was struck down in her early '30's and left two small kids alone with a dazed father. But we cannot let this increasingly more common and everyday struggle distract our society from facing the true realities of the situa-

tion. There is something wrong with this situation and it is folly to turn our attention away from this reality in pursuit of a miracle cure. Those who profit from the increased emphasis on treatment and research, instead of a broader more fundamental approach to prevention, will continue to distract us from our core responsibility to make this world safer for successive generations.

Trent Kelly is a freelance writer who lives in Olympia, Washington. He writes to bring new insights and perspectives to the reader through a thoughtful and open-minded approach. He can be reached at his website: hiddenharborlounge.com

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Opinion

A national carbon fee and dividend program deserves progressives’ support

By Rich Harris

Progressives don't need to be reminded about the importance of acting on climate change. Few other issues we face will affect so many so dramatically while still managing to remain near the bottom of the priority list for many elected officials. And it's certainly true that the election of November 2016 provided no grounds for optimism—it truly is a dreadful scene in Washington, D.C. In light of that, local action to reduce our carbon emissions and live more sustainably is critical, and Thurston County has a number of excellent organizations pushing for just that. Here in Washington State, while not yet where we'd like to be, we remain leaders in policies to reduce our collective carbon footprint.

US is the world’s second largest carbon emitter

That said, climate change is a global problem, and even the best policies and behaviors we can adopt on a local level will have limited effect on the global atmosphere. Thus, we still need action on a national and worldwide scale that can hasten our off-ramp from the fossil fuel-based economy. The US is responsible for far more carbon now in the atmosphere than any other country and is currently the second largest carbon emitter (China passed us a few years ago). For for better or worse, we are the single country most able to influence policies of others. Is there any hope, given the current political situation, that the federal government would be willing to move forward soon enough to mitigate the worst of the effects that will increasingly burden us, our children, and our grandchildren?

Enacting a Carbon Fee & Dividend is realistic

I'm going to argue that a Carbon Fee and Dividend (CFD) approach, which is the policy prescription of the Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) provides us just such a hope. I believe that getting a CFD enacted is not unrealistic even for the current congress and thus we need to push our representatives to support it. Further, I'm going to argue that the CFD proposal manages, simultaneously, to be both progressive and one that can actually garner some Republican support (I'm also going to argue that progressives ought to be OK with that last thought).

How a carbon fee & dividend would work

In brief, CFD would have the Treasury Department impose a fee of \$15 per ton of CO2 equivalent emissions on all fuels containing carbon at the point where they first enter the economy. <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/carbon-fee-and-dividend/> This fee would then increase by \$10/ton yearly until we achieved a 90% reduction of carbon emissions relative to 1990 levels.

The effect of pricing carbon this way would be to gently but inexorably wrench the levers of our economy away from fossil fuels toward clean renewables. We know that, in isolation, such a pricing scheme would be regressive: energy costs are a disproportionately large share of day-to-day expense for people of modest means. For this reason, CFD returns 100% of

the net proceeds from the fee (that is, all funds minus only administration costs), back to the public on a per capita basis (typically via direct deposit, although other options would be available). A couple would count as 2 people, kids under 18 would count for half each (thus a family of 4 with youngsters would get “per capita dividend X 3), and it would be capped at 2 kids/family (to avoid overly large payments to very large families). Predictions are dicey, but to give you a sense of scale, we are talking about \$1,000 to \$3,000 returned annually to a family of four.

Benefits of a revenue-neutral approach

Now, revenue neutrality might not seem as progressive as a policy that directs specific benefits to needy segments of the population, but consider a bit more. Per capita dividends are, by nature, progressive because they constitute a larger share of family budgets to low-income than wealthy folks. Studies CCL has commissioned by independent economic consultants (summary and pdf available at <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/remi-report/>) have indicated that under such a dividend program, 53% of households (58% of the population) would get a net economic benefit despite paying more for energy. Importantly, the proportion of households in the lowest fifth percentile of income coming out ahead would be 86% (with only 2% coming out worse and 12% about the same), and among the next lowest fifth, 72% would come out ahead (with 9% coming out worse).

Wealthy folks with multiple homes and overseas vacations would pay modestly more in energy costs than they'd get back in their dividend, but they could afford to. So CFD manages to incentivize all of us to move toward renewables (it is, after all, a problem we all share) without burdening those with the least means. CFD on average also provides a similar benefit vs. cost to people of color relative to white folks (<https://citizensclimatelobby.org/household-impact-study/>).

Why CF&D is the best answer

Is making carbon emissions more expensive the best way to address climate change? It's clear to me the answer is yes. In the short-term, regulatory devices including the requirement that auto manufacturers produce more efficient vehicles may be useful and necessary (here there could be difficulty convincing Republicans). In the long-term though, pricing is what drives our collective decisions. Recall how Trump's absurd promises to 'bring back coal' are undercut by the competitive advantage currently possessed by natural gas. Similarly, when the economic dials are all pointing toward solar, wind, and efficiency, there will be no turning back. Carbon cap-and-trade has an allure, but is susceptible to the gaming of powerful corporations, and has typically underperformed. In contrast, CFD has support not only from

economists, but from climate scientists such as James Hansen.

A word more about revenue neutrality, a core principle of the CFD approach. There is a legitimate argument from progressives that an even better approach would be to deliberately apply funds obtained by a carbon tax to improving the lives of those disproportionately affected by climate change. This could involve investing more directly in renewables or providing training funds for those whose employment is disrupted by the transition to clean fuels.

Washington’s failed carbon tax initiative

I consider myself a progressive, but would argue that a revenue neutral approach is still preferable for the following reasons: 1) first, as I've argued above, returning carbon revenues directly to households on a per capita basis via a dividend (as in the CCL proposal) is redistributive, providing more benefit to those most in need; 2) if instead all carbon revenues were allocated programmatically, lower income folks would be vulnerable to the regressive nature of taxing gasoline and heating oil, and it's very likely that even the best tailored of programs would overlook some needy folks; 3) promising to fund specific new programs—desirable as they are—from carbon fee money is risky (as California has recently discovered) because it's impossible to predict exactly how much revenue will be generated.

Washington's failed 2016 carbon tax initiative 1732 was premised on revenue neutrality, and was vulnerable to the concern that it could end up revenue negative. Good as the prognostications of Yoram Bauman and others no doubt were, one could always fear that the sales tax reduction, B&O tax reduction, and funding of the state earned income tax credit would sop up more than the carbon tax would produce. I suspect this, more than anything else, reduced the support initiative 1732 would otherwise have gotten from public officials and editorial boards.

But the CFD proposal evades these difficulties. Excepting only the (relatively minor) administration costs, the amount of the dividend exactly equals the amount of the revenue divided by the number of families in the country. It is calculated only after the carbon fee is collected. Thus, CFD is insulated against the fear that it will exacerbate government debt.

The need for a “border adjustment tax”

One more component of Citizen Climate Lobby proposed policy deserves mention: the “border tax adjustment.” Tariffs are assessed on goods entering the US from countries that lack carbon pricing; conversely, a rebate is paid on companies' exports to such countries.

The idea is that, once we have good carbon-reduction policies in place here, we want (now cleaner) companies and industries to stay home, and to face penalties if they choose to relocate to countries that allow them to externalize the costs of their pollution. The “border tax” says, in essence, “Yes, we want to continue trading with other countries, but not to the detriment of the global environment.” The US, embarrassingly, lags well behind many other countries in carbon pricing, so this part is mostly just joining the rest of the world.

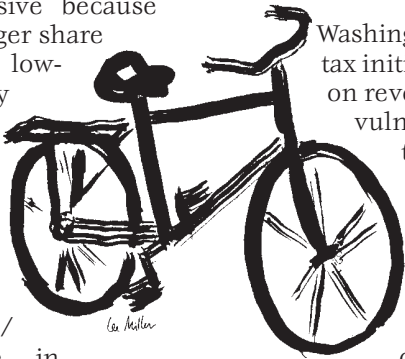
It's ironic that a similar though not identical CFD proposal has been floated by a group of conservatives known as the Climate Leadership Council. If you are leery of supporting a proposal pushed by old-guard conservatives James Baker and George Schultz, consider this: very similar proposals have also been floated by none other than Bernie Sanders and Washington's own (recently-retired) Jim McDermott. Bernie's proposed “Climate Protection and Justice Act” is centered on a CFD mechanism broadly similar to that advanced by CCL McDermott's “Managed Carbon Price Act of 2014” similarly would have returned 100% of revenues in equal dividends and included a border adjustment mechanism (details on both available at <https://www.carbontax.org/bills/>).

The power of partnering across political lines

So sure, maintain skepticism and look at the details, but now is no time to dismiss the potential power of partnering where we can with folks we often disagree with. Instead, let's take this as a modest indication that messages about climate change are finally getting through (at least to some!). Suggested alternatives to CFD are likely to be revenue positive, and that means increasing taxes. While many of us might not mind that if funds are spent for the public good, Republicans are simply not going to support that, regardless of the argument.

We can hope for the day when those of that mind-set are no longer in power, but the climate isn't waiting around. By all means, let's continue working with more thoughtful and progressive legislators at all levels, but the best possible climate mitigation program will do us little good if not enacted until many years in the future. We really don't have the luxury of time on this issue, and that means we must find support across the political spectrum. For our future, for our planet, for justice and equity, Carbon Fee and Dividend needs to play a central role in US economic and environmental policy.

Rich Harris oversees moose, mountain goats and bighorn sheep for the state of Washington, and lived in Montana and other countries. He thinks about his daughter when he thinks about looming climate change.



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Seattle City Council votes a tax on high incomes

Stepping up to pay for critical public needs

By Adam Ziemkowski

Seattle further cemented its reputation as one of the most progressive cities in the U.S. last week, when its City Council passed a law to tax the rich, sponsored by socialist City Councilmember Kshama Sawant along with Councilmember Lisa Herbold. The law places a 2.25% tax on individual incomes over \$250,000 and \$500,000 for married couples. It's expected to raise as much as \$175 million to fund affordable housing, education, transit, human services, and other critical needs.

"Tax us and we'll leave..."

Recognizing the significance of Seattle's new tax on the rich, the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "a number of cities have adopted local income taxes, but no other city has solely targeted high earners and few have adopted so high a tax rate. The measure has opened the door to political warfare in the state." Shortly before the vote, former Microsoft CEO and Seattle billionaire, Steve Ballmer, warned city officials, most of whose campaigns are financed by big business and wealthy individuals, that a tax on the rich would "drive up wages here and cause [company executives] to think about moving jobs elsewhere. That will certainly happen."

Despite this, the City Council unanimously passed the tax on the rich and a chorus of Democratic establishment politicians sung its praises. Seattle Mayor Ed Murray declared, "Our goal is to replace our regressive tax system with a new formula for fairness, while ensuring Seattle stands up to President Trump's austere budget that cuts transportation, affordable housing, healthcare, and social services."

Changing the incentives for those who govern

This is a welcome change of tune for activists in an organization, Socialist Alternative, that have been fighting to tax the rich since the Occupy movement, and which ran campaigns for Kshama Sawant in 2012, 2013, and 2015, and Jess Spear in 2014, with "tax the rich" as a central demand. These are many of the same establishment politicians who voted against Sawant's City Council proposal to fund transit through a progressive tax on business. They also rejected another Sawant initiative to reduce energy rates for working people by making big businesses like Boeing and NuCor Steel at least pay the same rate as individuals.

Those of us in the movement should be crystal clear on how this came about. We didn't win this because Seattle's Democratic establishment suddenly began to care about the crushing impact that decades of budget cuts and regressive taxes have had on working people and people of color in our city.

Building relationships with ordinary people

It was the growing might of our social movements that led to this major victory. The establishment may have ultimately voted 'yes,' but not because they genuinely support taxing the rich. Mayor Murray and establishment Councilmembers like Tim Burgess and Lorena Gonzalez voted for it because we built a powerful movement over a number of years which made their continued opposition politically unviable. During our election campaigns, Socialist Alternative members spoke with hundreds of

thousands of voters at the door and on the phone, held dozens of rallies, and raised a record-breaking half a million dollars from ordinary people with the bold and unambiguous demand to "tax the rich." It was a pillar of our 2015 campaign and we made it clear to everyone we talked to that we wanted to make big business and the wealthy elite pay to fund public needs.

Building coalitions with extraordinary groups

Once elected to Seattle City Council, Sawant worked with activists from the Transit Riders Union on the proposal

Our movement brought together transit and neighborhood advocates, climate justice and affordable housing activists, socialists, retirees, teachers, and unions into a coalition. It met regularly to discuss and decide on the legislation and build a campaign to win it.

to remove a regressive sales tax and instead fund Seattle's Metro bus system with a tax on business and a commercial parking fee increase. We lost that vote, but over the past months the Transit Riders Union, led by Katie Wilson, spearheaded the Trump Proof Seattle coalition along with the Economic Opportunity Institute, led by John Burbank. The Trump Proof Seattle coalition, of which Socialist Alternative and Kshama Sawant were a part, played the leading role in this year's fight to win Seattle's tax on the rich.

Our movement brought together transit and neighborhood advocates, climate justice and affordable housing activists, socialists, retirees, teachers, and unions into a coalition. It met regularly to discuss and decide on the legislation and build a campaign to win it. The coalition organized Town Halls in each district, dragging along Councilmembers and forcing them to take a position with the community watching. In Sawant's district, she and Trump Proof Seattle held a standing-room-only rally with people clamoring to tax the rich and ready to make the sacrifices necessary to win it.

Rejecting the liberal "compromises"

Critically, even as our movement picked up steam and corporate politicians started hopping on the tax-the-rich bandwagon, we resisted the siren song of an "easier path" to victory through collaboration with the establishment, rather than class struggle. Our movement maintained an unrelenting political independence and our activist base stubbornly refused to take establishment politicians at their word. Coalition members flooded City Council offices with emails and phone calls and packed City Hall for every discussion and vote, to demand

Councilmembers' support and to warn them not to oppose or water down the legislation.

Relying on our own strength

This approach effectively beat back the conservative wing of the Council, which scandalously put out a push poll to test the viability of replacing the tax-the-rich ordinance with a highly regressive "flat tax" proposal. This model of staking out a bold demand, building a movement independent of the city establishment, and relying on our own strength to win came pretty naturally this time around. That's not surprising. It's the same model our movement in Seattle has used to win the Fight for 15, defeat 400% increases on low-income tenants, replace Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day, defeat a \$160 million police precinct proposal, win \$29 million of public money for affordable housing, and divest \$3 billion dollars from Wells Fargo in solidarity with no NoDAPL, all in just the last few years.

Failures of capitalism are the context

Yet, Seattle's tax-the-rich and other trailblazing victories aren't being won in a vacuum. Ever since the economy collapsed and the banks got bailed out, ordinary people have been searching for a way to beat back attacks on their living standards and win gains to improve their lives. The Occupy movement revealed how broad and deep the anger was. Bernie Sanders showed that tens of millions were ready to rally behind a "democratic socialist" campaign taking no money from big business and calling for a national \$15 minimum wage, free college education, and a political revolution against the billionaire class.

An independent movement or support for Democrats?

Donald Trump's election upped the ante, and in the months after his election, millions took to the streets to defend the basic rights of immigrants, women, LGBTQ people, Muslims, unions, and workers. Ordinary people are flooding into activist organizations like Trump Proof Seattle and the Neighborhood Action Councils. Socialist organizations like Democratic Socialists of America and Socialist Alternative are also seeing a rapid increase in membership.

Many of these new activists are grappling with the question of how we can defeat Donald Trump and win victories in the face of constant attacks. Do we fight Trump and make change by accommodating ourselves to what's

acceptable to the Democratic establishment and big business? Or do we build movements that fight for bold demands and are prepared to use radical tactics, including civil disobedience?

No trust in corporate politicians

The victories in Seattle – from the Fight for 15 to tax the rich – provide activists with clear answers to these questions. Building determined movements alongside having a voice in City Hall, Socialist Alternative's Kshama Sawant, is a powerful combination. While we will work in unity with broader forces, including Democrats like those who ultimately voted unanimously for the tax the rich proposal, we do not put our trust in corporate politicians or limit our demands to what they or their big business backers are prepared to accept. As thousands swell the ranks of activist and socialist organizations, the Seattle model has a potential to expand and win gains around the country, if the right strategies and tactics are applied.

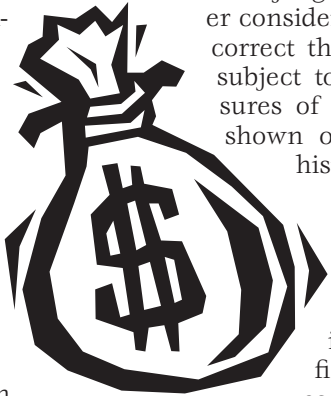
The fight for a fairer tax system is on-going

In Seattle, the tax-the-rich fight is far from over. The right wing Freedom Foundation has already filed a lawsuit saying the tax violates a Washington state law barring cities from taxing net income. State Republican Party Chairperson, Susan Hutchison, in a press conference where she was surrounded by red "tax the rich" placards, called for "civil disobedience" and to "forcefully resist the tax." Tax Foundation executive Joseph Henchman complained, "If it was just about the law, it couldn't survive, but my worry is the judges will think about other considerations." Henchman is correct that the courts are also subject to the power and pressures of social movements, as shown over and over in U.S. history, and recently with the victory on marriage equality in the Supreme Court. Without a doubt, our movement in Seattle is ready to take our fight into the courthouses as well as back onto the streets.

We have momentum

In the meantime, we are not resting on our laurels. We are channeling the energy that won a tax on the rich into a bold campaign for affordable housing and rent control, and knocking on thousands of doors in neighborhoods around the city. Given our track record, the Seattle real estate lobby and political establishment are already on high alert.

This article is reprinted from The Socialist Alternative Newspaper, July 21, 2017



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A black and white photograph of the Centralia Square Antique Mall building, a multi-story structure with a prominent sign that reads "CENTRALIA SQUARE ANTIQUE MALL".

A black and white portrait of Kim Dobson, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing headphones, likely a radio host.

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An end to the war in Syria?

By Eric Margolies

Many Americans voted for Donald Trump because he vowed to end the foreign conflicts in which the US had become entangled. So far, they have been disappointed. But this week a light flashed at the end of the tunnel.

President Trump, according to numerous reliable Washington sources, has decided to end US arms supplies and logistics support to Syria's jihadist rebels that have fuelled the bloody six-year conflict. Washington, and its allies Britain and France, have persistently denied arming Syria's jihadist rebels fighting to bring down the Russian and Iranian-backed government of President Bashar Assad.

Former President George W. Bush actively considered invading Syria around 2008 in collusion with Israel. But the Israelis then pointed out that there were no Western-friendly groups to replace Assad, only extreme militant Sunni Muslim groups. Even the usually reckless Bush called off the invasion of Syria.

By contrast, Barack Obama gave a green light to the CIA to arm, train and logistically support anti-Assad jihadist rebels in Syria. Arms poured in from Lebanon and, later, Turkey, paid for by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf emirates. Small numbers of US, British and French advisors went to Syria to teach the jihadists how to use mortars, explosives, and anti-tank weapons. The media's claim that the fighting in Syria was due to a spontaneous popular uprising was false. The repressive Assad government was widely unpopular but the uprising was another CIA 'color-style' operation.

The object of this operation was to

overthrow President Assad and his Shiite-leaning regime, which was supported by Iran, a bogeyman to all the US-backed feudal Arab oil monarchies. Syria was also to be punished because it refused Washington's demands to sever ties with Iran and accept US tutelage.

Then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton championed the covert war against Syria, arranging massive shipments of arms and munitions to the rebels from Kadaffi-era arms stores in Libya, and from Egypt, Croatia. likely



Serbia, Bulgaria and Azerbaijan. Once again, the Gulf Arabs paid the bill.

The offensive against Syria was accompanied by a powerful barrage of anti-Assad propaganda from the US and British media. From the background, Israel and its partisans beat the war drum against the Assad government.

The result of the western-engendered carnage in Syria was horrendous: at least 475,000 dead, 5 million Syrian refugees driven into exile in neighboring states (Turkey alone hosts three million), and another 6 million internally displaced. That is, some 11 million Syrians, or 61% of the population, driven from their homes into wretched living conditions and near famine.

Two of Syria's greatest and oldest cit-

ies, Damascus and Aleppo, have been pounded into ruins. Jihadist massacres and Russian and American air strikes have ravaged once beautiful, relatively prosperous Syria. Its ancient Christian peoples are fleeing for their lives before US and Saudi takfiri religious fanatics.

Just when it appeared the jihadists

The result of the western-engendered carnage in Syria was horrendous: at least 475,000 dead, 5 million Syrian refugees driven into exile in neighboring states (Turkey alone hosts three million), and another 6 million internally displaced.

were closing in on Damascus, limited but effective Russian military intervention abruptly changed the course of the war. The Syrian Army was able to regain the military initiative and push back the jihadists. Intermixed with so-called 'takfiri' rebels are some 3,000 ISIS jihadists who were originally armed and equipped by US advisors but have now run amok. They are under fierce western air attack in Syria and Iraq and are splintering.

Russia and the US have been inching toward a major war over Syria. In fact, US intervention has been far more extensive than generally believed, as this writer has been reporting for the past five years. Turkish media linked to the government in Ankara has just revealed that the US has at least ten small military bases in northern Syria being used to support rebel jihadist forces.

Meanwhile, the US is now relying almost entirely on Kurdish militias, know in Syria as YPG, to attack ISIS

and act in US interests. This has outraged Turkey, which regards YPG as part of the hated Kurdish independence movement, PKK, against which Turkey has fought for two decades. During the 1980's, I covered the Turkish-PKK conflict in eastern Anatolia.

If YPG/PKK emerges victorious from the Syrian conflict, Kurdish demands for an independent state in south eastern Turkey will intensify, threatening the breakup of the Turkish state. Kurds make up some 20% of Turkey's population of 80 million.

For this very important reason, Turkey has been pulling away from US-run NATO, and warming relations with Moscow. Turkey has NATO's second largest armed forces and key airbases that cover the Mideast.

Trump's announced retreat from Syria – if it

turns out to be real – will mark a major turning point in US-Russian relations. It could well avoid a clash between Russia and the US, both nuclear powers. The US has no real business in Syria and no strategic interests

America's powerful neocons, who have been pressing for war against Russia, will be furious. Expect the media war against Trump to intensify. So too claims that Trump colluded with Moscow to get elected.

Eric Margolies is a columnist and author of the book, *War at the Top of the World*. This article is reprinted from his blog.

The Great American Eclipse

By Russ Frizzell

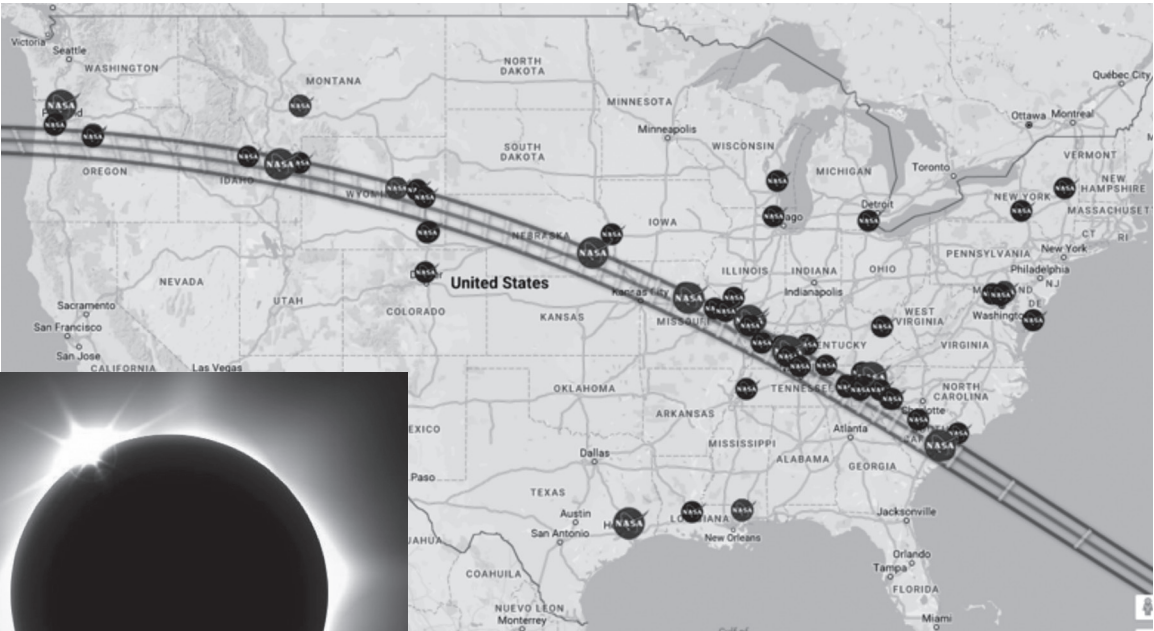
It's right around the corner now. On August, 21st 2017, the new moon will pass right in front of the mourning sun and completely block out the entire disk. I have yet to see a total eclipse myself but I've heard it is an experience so sublime it can restore that sense of joy and wonder which you may recall from childhood. Even the wild animals and whales stop and watch when an eclipse happens.

The path of totality will pass just south of Salem, Oregon and continue right across the nation through South Carolina and into the Atlantic. From Olympia, only a partial eclipse will be seen, and you will need the correct eye protection or a pinhole projection. To see totality we will need to travel, and with an event like this - travel may or may not be possible.

There is little time left folks. If you would like to learn more there is an absolutely wonderful free online class available at coursera.org. This class is presented by the University of Colorado free to

everyone with the internet and titled "The Sun and the Total Eclipse of August 2017." The course has fairly easy difficulty level and the teacher is Dr. Doug Duncan, a fabulous teacher and astronomer.

No doubt you will hear more about it on the news. There is one project which to me seems most noteworthy. *The Eclipse Megamovie*, being produced by thousands of citizen scientist



volunteers, shows great promise. The goal is to record the eclipse continuously as it crosses the nation and digitally stitch together all the pieces. This is a first ever opportunity to record the

sun's corona over the entire event. I can't wait to see how this comes out.

So here's a special invitation to all our "flat earth" friends. Come outside and look for yourselves. The awe inspiring majesty of nature is far more wondrous than those silly fairy tales and myths we scare children with. The science of astronomy is bringing the universe, from which we came, back to us. Space, the planets, moons, stars,

and galaxies all seem to be waiting for us. We should like to know more about them, I think.

The author is an activist living in Olympia and a graduate of Evergreen.

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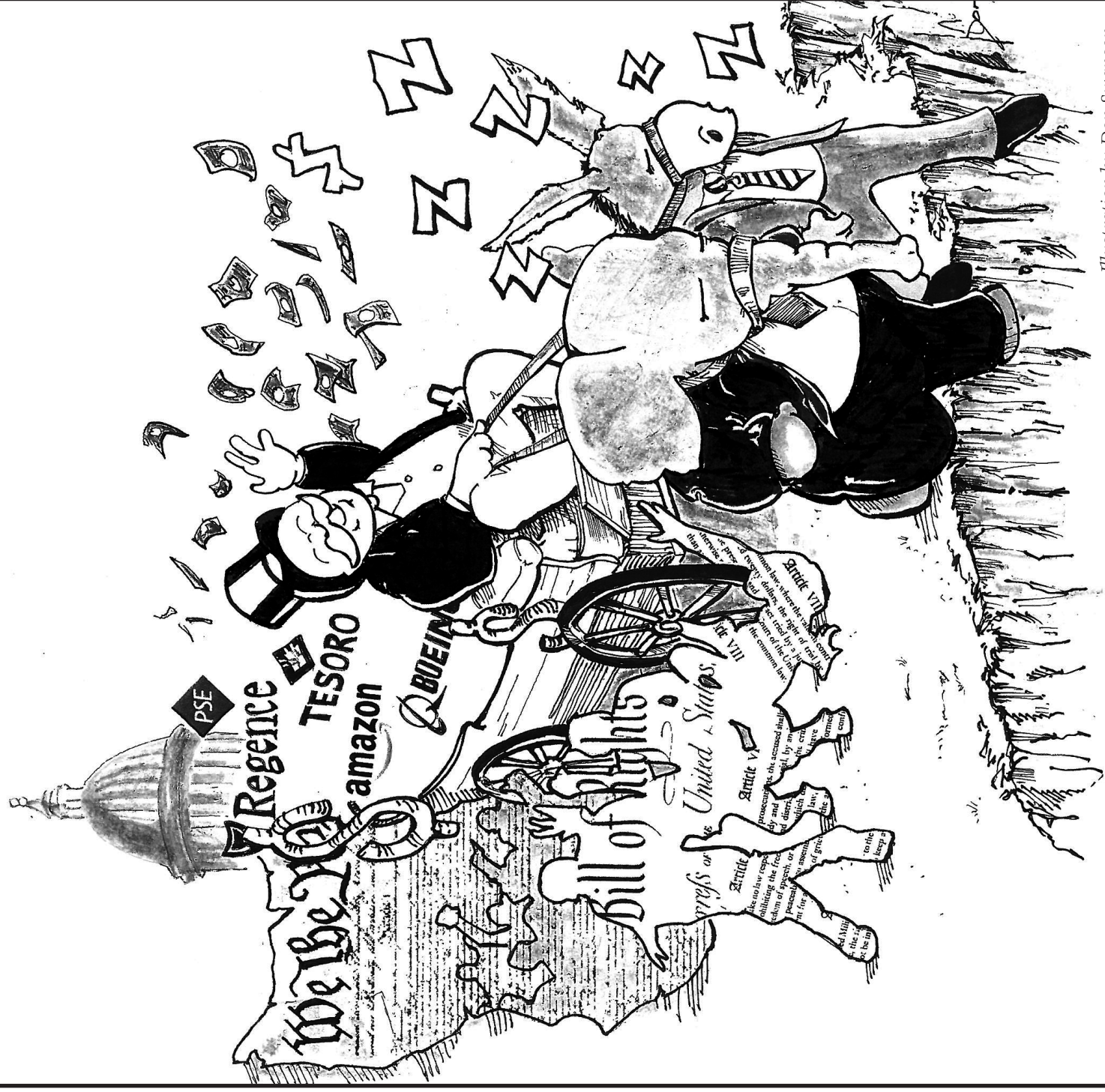


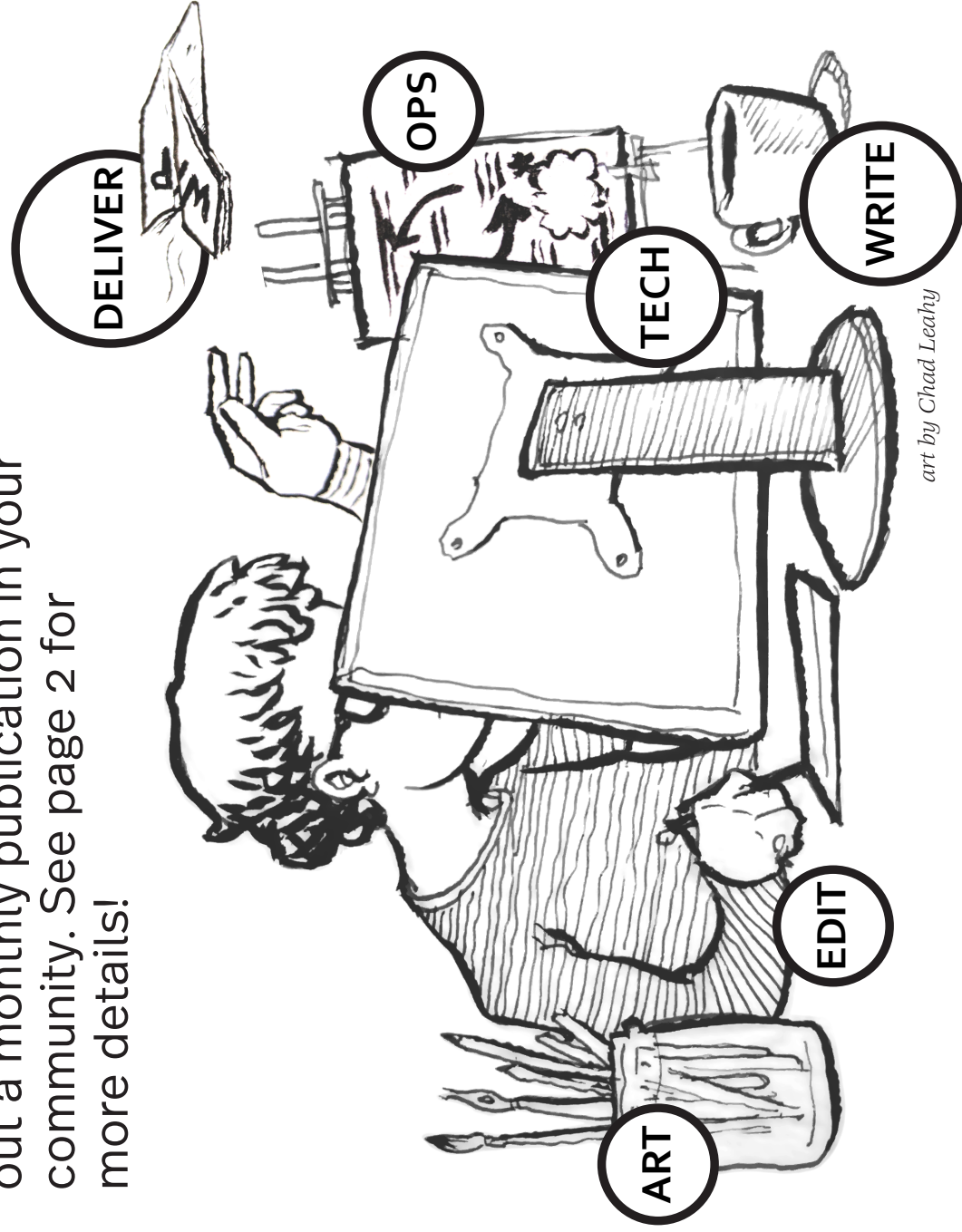
Illustration by Don Swanson

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