

Seen as trying to starve the District and its programs State Commission recommends possible removal of TCD Board members

Esther Kronenberg

The Thurston Conservation District (TCD, District) has been the locus of an ideological fight in Thurston County that lumbers on. Last year, the District lost a third of its funding when three board members (including the Chair) failed to vote at a critical meeting. Chairman Johnson was quoted in the Olympian saying the revenue loss could be viewed as “taxpayers saving nearly \$600,000 that would have gone to overcompensated bureaucrats sucking the public teat.”

A pattern of conduct by the Chair and another Board member eventually provoked complaints of disruptive behavior serious enough to merit investigation by the state. The loss of funding has led to the departure of staff, as well as the sacrifice of important functions of the District. At this time, only 7 of 15 employees remain, and many programs have been eliminated. “Staff is drowning in workload,” says Executive Director Sarah Moorehead.

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) that oversees the TCD recently completed its investigation of the District and recommended possible removal of two board members—Eric Johnson and Richard Mankamy.

The investigation found that the two board members engaged in acts that constitute neglect of duty and malfeasance. A hearing to consider the report and the two board members' response will be scheduled at a special meeting of the SCC on August 29. That meeting is open to the public.

Functions of the Thurston Conservation District are being compromised

TCD has had to curtail agriculture workshops and classes. Its farm equipment rental program and soil testing for the public are in jeopardy. Recently, the two Board members who were subjects of the investigation refused to vote on a contract that would have continued the TCD in its role as fiscal agent for \$820,000 to help with salmon recovery. Their inaction could lead to the County losing those irreplaceable funds.

In November, 2017, Thurston County's Environmental Health Director wrote “reducing or eliminating TCD services

in 2018 will have a significant impact on Thurston County residents and jeopardize many successful programs.” Programs affected include the Shellfish Protection District, the Deschutes Non-point Source Pollution Project, and the Voluntary Stewardship Program. These programs work because they enlist the voluntary support of the landowner to fix problems on their land.

An Environmental Health staffer also addressed the consequences of losing the District:

“...the even bigger impact to our program is the lack of someone to send

years, thousands of kids have gone on field trips with marine biologists.

► The Envirothon is a hands-on, outdoor environmental science competition for high school students from surrounding counties where students demonstrate knowledge of soils, forestry, aquatics, and wildlife among other topics..

Restoring habitat The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Project (CREP) is a partnership between the State and Federal governments that plants native trees and shrubs along streams to restore and protect critical habitat and protect water quality.

CREP works with landowners to develop a site specific buffer, pays the full installation costs of plantings, fencing, and a watering facility if necessary, and pays the first 5 years of maintenance. Landowners receive

a yearly rental payment for the length of the contract, either 10 or 15 years. At Riverbend Ranch on the Skookumchuk river, CREP recently installed 7000' of fencing and planted a riparian buffer to restore 0.3 miles of the stream.

► TCD runs the Voluntary Stewardship program (VSP) to protect critical areas on agricultural land. Often referred by the County's Environmental Health Department, farmers work

A pattern of conduct by the Chair and another Board member eventually provoked complaints of disruptive behavior.

closely with TCD's resource technician to develop voluntary, site-specific conservation plans.

► TCD provides free technical assistance for residents of Thurston County to assist landowners with all types of questions on land management such as crop and livestock advice or riparian habitat enhancement.

Leveraging resources

TCD has been the lead entity for the South Puget Salmon Enhancement group, helping restore salmon habitat at Mission Creek near Priest Point Park

by ripping out a road and concrete to restore the area to a natural estuary.

TCD partnered with the Capitol Land Trust to acquire and enhance Harmony Farms in Henderson Inlet.

TCD supported a landowner for a fish passage project on the East Fork of McLane Creek. When complete, a bridge will replace a culvert that now acts as a fish barrier.

A new era of public awareness

TCD is a form of local government that originated in the Dustbowl of the 1930s. Erosion and dust storms created a national disaster that was solved only with the cooperation of local citizens. Today conservation districts help people preserve the health of farms, forests, urban yards, rivers, lakes, and coastlines. TCD has operated with volunteer leadership since 1947, winning awards and recognition for its work.

Over the past two years, under the leadership of Chair Eric Johnson and Richard Mankamy, the TCD descended into a period of turmoil that has prompted renewed attention from the public. In the most recent Board election, Paul Pickett, who ran on a promise to stop the dismantling and restore the District's viability, swamped his opponent, a high school friend of Johnson.

“We are beginning a new era where the Conservation District is adopted by Thurston County residents who care about the environment, sustainable agriculture and social justice. We are just beginning that effort —first stop the bleeding, then begin the rebuilding,” says Paul Pickett. Thurston Conservation District's future health depends on the County Board of Commissioners' voting to approve the District's request for funding through 2019 via a “Rates and Charges” assessment.

Esther Kronenberg is a member of the observer corps for Thurston League of Women Voters.

Supporters can help by writing letters and emails urging Commissioners to approve TCD's Rates and Charges this fall. <https://www.thurstoncountywa.gov/bocc/> The WSCC report including the response by Johnson and Mankamy can be found at <http://scc.wa.gov/tcd-072018/>



farm operators and land owners high quality technical assistance... The Conservation District works with many property owners to develop stream-side restoration plans, and can help cost-share the cost of the plants, site preparation, and plant installation. They can manage a class or two of students on a restoration site and get plants properly in the ground,,. Currently when health department water quality staff identify a property that is polluting water, our first approach is to talk with the property owner or farm operator and refer them to the Conservation District for assistance. Most property owners take advantage of the services, and most of our problems can be remedied this way. ... If the Conservation District closes, that will leave a huge gap in assistance for residents and I worry about the impact to our water.”

Staff continues to operate other key programs

Educating. Clear Choices for Clean Water educates landowners in the Henderson and Nisqually Shellfish Protection Areas to help restore and protect water quality and shellfish tidelands.

-South Sound GREEN educates students in watershed studies. Over the

Works In Progress

Works in Progress (WIP) is a community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington and published monthly. The paper was established by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition which published the first issue in May 1990.

Our mission. The aim of WIP is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on justice in the economic, political, environmental and social realms and across classes, races and genders.

How WIP is produced. WIP depends on a volunteer managing editor, supported by the Publishing Committee, to see to the accomplishment of nearly all organizational, administrative and editorial tasks.

How WIP is supported. First and foremost, WIP depends for survival on the contributions and participation of writers, activists, students, organizers, and other members of the community, broadly defined. We also receive support from the Workers' Defense Fund whose purpose is to strengthen organizations that engage in struggle against the powerful for the empowerment of the powerless.

Guidelines for writing for WIP. Our priority is to focus on stories that are ignored or misrepresented in the mainstream media, especially those that relate directly to our mission.

To this end, we seek well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities and accounts of personal experiences or reflections by local writers. We also consider poetry, graphics, cartoons and articles that challenge the boundaries of conventional journalism.

Submitting your writing: Send an email to olywip@gmail.com with the word SUBMISSION on the subject line. Attach your submission as a word document. Include your name, a brief bio and contact information. WIP volunteer editors will contact you if there is significant editing needed. Send pictures etc as attachments. Pictures should be high resolution with dimensions in relation to the content. Generally 300 pixels is one inch.

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Contact WIP. Online at olywip@gmail.com or via snail mail to: *Works in Progress*, P.O. Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507.

Submission deadline next issue
Sunday, September 16
olywip@gmail.com

Proofreading Meeting
Sunday, Sept 23, 1pm
West Central Park,
Harrison & Division

About the cover:
Collage by Kelly Miller



Your writing in Works in Progress

Works in Progress is a community resource, so please take advantage by submitting your writing, using the guidelines below. This month, we're also looking for a book reviewer. WIP will buy the book and you will write a review of 500-800 words or so. You can keep the book or donate it to the library. It's that simple. Contact us if you're interested..

Guidelines for writing for WIP. Our priority is to focus on stories that are ignored or misrepresented in the mainstream media, especially those that relate directly to our mission. To this end, we seek well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities and accounts of personal experiences or reflections by local writers. Informed opinion pieces are welcome, especially when accompanied by facts, examples and sources.

Theme for this issue–Democracy and Elections.

Our readers will find a conversation – conducted from different angles – on the upcoming midterm elections and their impact on the political life of our immediate community and the nation. On November 6, 2018 all seats in the United State House of Representatives and 35 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate will be contested. Given the oppressive political context created by the Trump administration, and the complicit silence of the Republicans, both in the House and the Senate, the upcoming elections offer the possibility to alter the right-wing scenario dominant in the American Congress.

We think that most Americans are alert to the desire for social changes that will steer public policies, through the actions of government agencies and elected officials, away from being in the exclusive service of big corporations and the super-wealthy, to the clear detriment of working people's life conditions and the wellbeing of the planet. We believe that the midterm election offers the opportunity to replace some nefarious figures with progressive and radical candidates willing to protect, maintain and expand important social policies and programs that are products of hard-fought struggles by the people.

And then this happened: Congress votes \$77 billion increase in Defense Dept Budget

Staff Writer

In April 2017, *Works in Progress* reported on Trump's proposal to increase the annual Defense Budget from \$582.7 to \$639 billion. The bill passed in December of 2017, increasing the budget by \$53.9 billion.

This past June, the Senate voted to raise the annual Defense Budget again – to \$716 billion, a \$77 billion increase. Democrats readily joined the Republicans in voting aye : 139 in the House and all but 10 in the Senate. Both Washington Senators, Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray, voted yes. (The two Oregon Senators were among the no votes.) Of our 10-member House delegation, only Pramila Jayapal voted no. Democrats who accuse Trump of being an authoritarian who believes himself above the law keep voting to give him more money and power for

Being aware of the potential that elections have to shape our public and private lives, we are at the same time aware of their limitations. Elections in this country work in one of two ways: through them, advanced forms of capitalism are protected and strengthened at the expense of the public good or, and this is a big or, elections promote more egalitarian forms of social organization. Ultimately, we, the people, must go from being allowed every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressor class are going to ‘represent’ and oppress us, to supporting genuine left-wing candidates and corresponding political actions, promoting independence from the corporate-dominated traditional party system and endorse an ideological message for the nation, one that strives for equity and social justice.

Theme for October–Immigration
The October issue of WIP offers an experiment in this volunteer-based project. At a WIP public meeting in May many people expressed a desire that WIP cover the critical issue of immigration. Anne Fischel, long-time WIP reader, proposed to organize a group of writers to assemble a set of articles from varied perspectives that would give WIP readers an informed sense of current immigration policies and issues. Much of the October issue will be dedicated to those topics, but submissions on other issues are sought as well. We welcome reader feedback about this approach to organizing an issue, including ideas for the future.

Theme for November–The Public Good. Heading into the month of elections, we hope to stimulate lively debate about our collective social well-being by inviting writers to address this theme: “public goods or the public good?” At this historical moment, with public goods like clean water and clean air under attack and up for sale by the very agencies created to protect them, we can think of few other topics that need wide discussion. The shape of our efforts to organize our political actions will be limited or expanded in direct measure to our political imagining about the meaning of the public good. Making a distinction between public goods and the public good is an essential concept for all of us. —EQ

war, surveillance, nuclear weapons, new military technology, and bloat generally.

As noted by one analyst, if the budget had simply stayed the same as 2017, Congress could have funded public college for every student in the US and had \$12 billion left over.

Historic cuts to non-defense departments are on the table. The administration is proposing to decrease funding for the Environmental Protection Agency by one-fourth; by nearly a third for the State Department, 14% for Housing and Urban Development, and 5% for education. Other programs likely to lose significant funding are programs like HeadStart, FBI law enforcement, and research programs for the National Health Institute and National Science Foundation.

Special events

Fundraiser for Capital Homecare Cooperative
September 3, 5 to 8 PM at Pizzeria La Gitana

For caregivers, care receivers, and interested people. Buy some pizza (20% donated to the cause) and connect with other caregivers.

What’s Blooming in Budd
Citizen monitoring of Budd Inlet, to identify plankton and algae affecting water quality. Meets the first, second and third Thursday of each month (September 6, 13 and 20), from 1 to 2 at the Port Plaza gathering specimens, and from 2 to 3 at Lott Science Center identifying species.

Rise Up for the Climate!
September 8, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm at Tollefson Plaza, 1548 Commerce Street, Tacoma

Bring your banners, signs, instruments, voices, rattles, drums and hearts to shine a light on the LNG facility and the ICE detention center, both located on the Tacoma tideflats. Family friendly rally followed by 2-mile unity walk. Sponsored by 350 Tacoma.

Orcas Need Chinook: Petition Delivery
Saturday, September 15 at 1:45, WA State Capitol Building Lawn
Meeting to deliver petition signatures to Governor Jay Inslee's staff, to request the immediate breaching of the Lower Snake River dams. Go to <https://tinyurl.com/yd5cbwll> for details.

Out of Darkness Walk (suicide awareness)
September 15, 10 AM to 12 noon, at Heritage Park
A march for funding for programs that prevent suicide. Wear your red or orange Moms Demand t-shirt.

A conversation on how to bring about a nuclear weapons-free world
Saturday, September 15, 9 AM to 3:30 PM at St Patrick Catholic Church, 2702 Broadway E., Seattle.
Morning presentation, to develop a coherent local strategy; afternoon peace walk to St James Cathedral. More information at gzcenter.org/events.

Wobbly Beach Day: IWW picnic
September 19, 5 to 9 PM at Priest Point Park

Reinventing Power - film
Thursday September 20, 6:30-8:30 pm. Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 2200 East End Street (parking access). Free and open to the public

Community Peace Walk
September 22, 3 to 5 PM at Heritage Park
We will sing familiar songs of peace and social justice as we stroll around Capitol Lake! Hosted by the Olympia Peace Choir.

Thurston Conservation District Monthly Meeting
September 25, 2 to 5 PM, 2918 Ferguson ST SW, STE A
Commissioners attempt to get the minutes done, secure funding before deadlines pass, be civil to employees and other difficult chores.

Lets Talk About It: Asian Women, Stereotypes, and Feminism
Tuesday, September 25, 6 to 8 PM at 402 Legion Way
Hosted by Planned Parenthood Votes NW and Hawaii

Thurston County Prosecutor Candidates Forum
Tuesday, September 25, 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm at the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 2315 Division Street NW.

Find how Victor Minjares and Jon Tunheim differ in their views of the most powerful position in law enforcement.
NW Permaculture Convergence
September 28-30, Camp Singing Wind, Toledo, WA
Dozens of workshops, plenary sessions, key note addresses, educational displays and lots of networking. Attendees must volunteer 2 hours of time to the Convergence. Adults \$130, teens \$75. Go to <https://www.northwestpermaculture.org/> for more details.

For a comprehensive listing of events and activities of interest to the South Sound’s politically active community and friends, go to the Community Calendar at LocalMotive.org. For WIP listings visit our FB page.

Midterm elections: To the Left! To the Left

The contrast between Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Elizabeth Warren

Enrique Quintero

First things first: Should the Left participate in bourgeois democratic elections? Yes—for the following reasons.

1) Parliamentaryism is a living, politically alive form in the functioning of American democracy. Although I agree with Borges that in the next life we should commit more errors, given the present conditions of the nation, it would be a mistake to vacate this political space and leave it to the exclusive control of the dominant classes. Granted, elections in a liberal democracy like ours tend to legitimize the power and interests of big corporations and capital to the detriment of the needs and interests of most working or unemployed people. On the other hand, we must go where the masses are (130 million Americans went to the polls in the 2016 elections, which represents 58% of eligible voters).

We must occupy the spaces in which working people fight their battles, even if many battles have proved to be futile, misguided, frustrating, and conducted in conditions of social adversity. It is up to us — to paraphrase Lenin — to “tell them the bitter truth” and to unveil the parliamentary prejudices of the electoral system. At the same time we “must soberly follow the actual state of class-consciousness and preparedness ... of all the working people” in a given historical time. In other words, given that in this current moment, more working people are focused on using elections to fight battles rather than picking up arms, we can’t afford to ignore electoral politics (See *Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*).

2) Voter suppression. Although both Republicans and Democrats are guilty of gerrymandering and imposing electoral restrictions, in the last decade these dubious practices have become almost exclusively the solitary pleasure of the Republican Party. According to Michael D. Reagan, writing for PBS, over 14 states in the union “installed new restrictive voting laws hurting the turnout of high-poverty districts.”

This type of legislation implemented by Republicans aims consciously to force the masses into political somnolence and disenfranchisement. In this context, forsaking voter registration campaigns and avoiding promoting cognizant electoral participation creates a disturbing bed-fellowship between the Left and the most conservative forces of the country. There will be no ‘morning-after pill’ available in the political medicine cabinet after such a questionable affair.

3) Parliamentary participation. When combined with higher forms of struggle this becomes a useful and indispensable tool used by the masses to press for higher and more egalitarian forms of socio-economic organization. The most notorious example in current American history of ‘playing the piano with both hands’ are the large variety of oppositional actions leading to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the anti-war movement. Using parliamentary elections does not exclude the struggle for socialism; rather, it gives the left an opportunity to unveil the contradictions of the capital system.

On to measurements and perspectives

The political measurement of any po-

litical party, single candidate, group, organization, PAC, lobbyist, newspaper, media network, etc. is taken by asking two simple, related yet distinct questions: First, which class interests does the party, candidate, or group in question represent? And second, who are or will be the main beneficiaries of the policies proposed by that entity?

It would be a mistake to vacate [the electoral] space and leave it to the exclusive control of the dominant classes.

If improvements in the material living conditions of working people are not addressed, and the main beneficiaries are not, or have not been, the majority of the people, it becomes imperative that we not support that candidate, organization, or policy.

The mass line. Progressive political leadership primarily uses what is known as the mass line, and the mass perspective. “Mass line” aims for the continuous advancement of the living conditions of the masses by taking three steps: first, gathering the needs and ideas of the people; second, processing those ideas and needs into a political form; and finally, returning those collected ideas and popular needs to the masses in the form of a doable political platform meant to advance and improve the conditions of the masses.

Mass perspective. This, in contrast, is more of a political-philosophical standpoint but it can also be summarized in three points. First, it acknowledges that the masses are the makers of history and that social change cannot take place unless it is made by the masses themselves. In other words, the course of history is not determined by isolated individuals or politicians regardless of their assumed importance but rather it is determined by the people. Second, mass perspective assumes that the masses must come to realize through their own experience and political struggle that change is not only necessary but possible. Finally, mass perspective assumes that the role of progressive and revolutionary people is to actively join the struggle of the people in order to help shift the struggle to higher political levels.

The specter of socialism and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

In spite of what Fox News may broadcast, socialism is not just around the

corner holding hands with the revolution. Nonetheless, it is a growing living reality in the political unconscious of many Americans. This is illustrated by the 28-year-old Democratic Socialist Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s shocking victory against longstanding Democrat Representative Joe Crowley, causing what the ‘Business Insider’ calls “the biggest political upset of the year.” Alexandria’s victory, followed by other similar political nominations strengthened by her support in other states, shows that her success did not start and end in New York. Add to this the growing number of Democrats and anti-Trump activists willing to identify with social reforms advocated by the Democratic Socialists of America. It is not surprising then that the Democratic Party finds itself in internal disarray, trying to exorcise the specter of socialism within its ranks, while trying to keep some level of credibility among voters.



According to Anne McElvoy in *The Guardian*, “Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of the Democratic Socialist of America has galvanized disillusioned voters.” The DSA, in McElvoy’s opinion “is the afterlife of the 2016 Bernie Sanders campaign, but with roots in a movement reaching back a century that peaked in a post-Depression quest for a New Deal.” In a Gallup poll published early this month, 57% of Democrats have a positive view of socialism, while only 47% of them perceive capitalism as positive, down from 56% in 2016. The same poll indicates that fewer than half (45%) of young Americans view capitalism positively.

Alexandria’s victory cannot be explained within the traditional logic

and modus operandi of the Democratic Party establishment. This was evident in Obama’s ‘first wave’ of 2018 midterm endorsements that did not include Ocasio-Cortez. Her victory belongs to her efforts, ingenuity and dedication and not to the political or monetary generosity of a fossilized party apparatus. She is a Bronx native, and this was her first time running for office. While running her campaign (and to help to finance it), she was working as a bartender. Writing for “Business Insider,” John Haltiwanger noted that she started her unconventional campaign literally “out of a Trader Joe’s bag,” What “Business Insider” didn’t report was that to a great extent, Ocasio-Cortez’s political success constitutes a creative example of applying the mass line concepts to her political leadership.

Speaking on MSNBC’s “Morning Joe,” Alexandria said, “it was speaking with constituents about issues instead of focusing on President Donald Trump that helped me win.” She also mentioned that her platform and political message aimed at the working class, independently of race, ethnicity, or political affiliation (her constituency is located in the Bronx and part of Queens). Consequently, she indicated, it wasn’t important to introduce her political identity-label (Democratic-Socialist) first when interacting with voters, but rather she led with real issues felt by the people and that was what made a difference. In her own words:

We have to stick to the message: What are we proposing to the American people? Not, ‘what are we fighting against’ ... We understand that we are under an antagonistic administration, but what is the vision that is going to earn and deserve the support of working-class Americans? And we need to be explicit in that vision and legislation, not just ‘better,’ but what exactly is our plan.

What are the elements of Ocasio-Cortez’s plan?

Medicare for All: a single payer health care system that would cover medicine, vision, dental, and mental health care.

Fully funded public schools and universities: Ocasio-Cortez is still paying off student loans, and she advocates tuition-free college and trade school, and cancelling all student debt.

Universal jobs guarantee: a Federal Jobs Guaranty, establishing a “baseline quality” for employment that guarantees a minimum \$15 wage (pegged to inflation), full health care, and paid child and sick leave for all.

Housing as a human right: “Congress must tip the balance away from housing as a gambling chip for Wall Street banks and fight for accessible housing that’s actually within working families reach,”

Justice-system reform: end the war on drugs, demilitarize police departments and abolish for-profit prisons. Legalize marijuana at the federal level and release individuals sentenced for non-violent drug offences.

Immigration Reform: abolish Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Clear a path to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants and create more protections for “Dreamers.”

Climate Change: this is the “single biggest national security threat for the United States and the single biggest threat to worldwide industrialized civilization.” Implement a carbon-free

► Midterm, next page.

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The view from the Green Party

A new system for electing leaders

Janet Jordan

It's no secret we need a better voting system. The US uses the plurality system, where the party with the most votes wins, even if it's not a majority but only a plurality (where the winner gets less than half the votes).

In the plurality system, you'd better vote for one of the two major parties, or you're a "spoiler." Call the major parties A and B. People will say, "Candidate C shouldn't be running! The trouble is, she's better than Candidate B - more intelligent, better values, more in tune with what I believe in - but a vote for her will spoil Candidate B's chances!" Then we're stuck with A or B, much as we dislike both of them.

The election system is the problem

Today, we can't vote for a Bernie Sanders, or a Jill Stein, or a Dennis Kucinich, for fear of spoiling some Democrat's chances, and we are the poorer for it. But the problem isn't Candidate C —it's the system that pits two candidates representing the same value system (although different points within that system) against each other.

There is a movement for electoral reform that's gaining strength. FairVote, NextGen America and others propose a change to Instant Runoff Voting (IRV). There's also a bill for IRV in Congress. A Washington State initiative may come in the fall. I ask that Thurston County voters pay attention to what these voices have to say, and carefully consider the alternatives: IRV? Scored voting? Or some other system?

Instant Runoff Voting

Once a voter realizes plurality voting is a problem, that voter might look at IRV. Under IRV, voter ranks the candidates as first, second and third choices. The candidate with the fewest (first choice) votes is eliminated, and those votes are distributed to the voters' second choice. There's no spoiler effect because the voter, in effect, votes for both an outsider candidate and a mainstream candidate, sequentially. It's "instant" because voters designate their choices on the same ballot rather than returning to vote again in a run-

off. IRV can become the preferred voting system for an enlightened voter. I've worked for it in the past.

William Poundstone (*Gaming the Vote, 2009*) looked at alternative voting systems and concluded that IRV is not the best one. To start off, it's clunky. Even with the "instant" part, the program has to run through many iterations to arrive at the winner. New programs would be needed and even with the proper machinery the process would take days.

Scored Voting

IRV gives less information than a "scored voting" system. In that system the voter scores each candidate along a range, i.e., from 0 (no approval) to 4 (high approval). In IRV the second choice selection is counted only when the first choice is eliminated. Scored Voting actually gives credit to the second and third choices - just in differing amounts.

You might rank Candidate A as worst (0), and Candidate B as best (4). That's expected; it's the same job plurality voting does. But your score of Candidate C as "good" (1, 2 or ,3)—in the middle—will be more revealing.

If Candidate C gets a 3 from both left and right, it means that candidate has appeal to most people and is able to negotiate the differences between the major parties - in other words, he-or-she probably deserves to win. Such a candidate has been defeated in the past because people recognize that C is not rabidly in favor of a particular ideology and they want the most convinced person on their side to win; so C doesn't get many first-ranked votes. In this scenario under Scored Voting, C probably will win. C will get a consistent 3 while candidates at one or the other end of the spectrum will get either a 4 or a 0, averaging a 2.

Score Voting ranks the candidates just as IRV does, but it gives more information, and conforms to current voting machines, with some software adjustments. We are all familiar with scoring things (your last BaconBurger for example) from 1 to 5 or whatever.

view of the far right, is her most recent attempt to ameliorate capitalism via the Accountable Capitalism Act. Among other things, this would require big companies to recognize obligations to society. The problem with Senator Warren's position is not that all her intentions are bad, but that her thinking ignores the fact that the social problems of American society are not due to a simple malfunction of the market but rather to the very essence of the market functions.

Candidly, or perhaps, defensively, in a video interview with John Harwood, Warren promptly reassured viewers that "Of course I am a capitalist, come on!"

You shouldn't worry much Senator Warren, we always knew you were a capitalist. The constant of her 13 years in congress is that Elizabeth Warren has always seen the failures of capitalism as simple distortions in need of timely reform. Ironically, she seems to see the Democratic Party as an entity that does not need to be reformed, but rather as a well-functioning apparatus that for unknown reasons is not part of capitalism nor of its ideological political machinery. In contrast

Approval Voting

Approval Voting is a simplified version of Score Voting where you can accept several candidates for any given race. You give each candidate either a Yes (4) or a No (0) - they are acceptable, or they are not.

Remember the 2004 slogan, "Anybody but Bush?" With Approval Voting, you could have voted for everybody except Bush. Candidates you liked would not have been running against each other. Only the disliked would be left out. It's like having a veto.

Approval Voting is not very intuitive; we're used to figuring out who we want to win and trying to make it happen. Under Approval Voting we would vote for that person and others. So how does the best one come out ahead of when you have candidates with similar values - say, between Bernie Sanders (who could have gone on to the general election under Approval Voting) and Hillary Clinton? One of the two would have had to get votes from other than Democrats - maybe a few Republicans or some Greens.

The winner might not beat the others by large numbers, in fact other candidates might also have majority approval. But you could be sure the winner was wanted by the ones who voted for him-or-her and was not a second choice, selected by a voter who glumly realizes they can't vote for their first choice.

Looking again at Instant Runoff

These are two good methods of selecting leaders and neither one is IRV, our favorite for many years. Why not IRV after all? According to Poundstone, there is another flaw with IRV: IRV works as long as there are two major parties and a protest party. The protest party can be considered the little brother of one of the major parties. Under IRV Little Brother gets just a few votes. Their candidate is disqualified and the votes go to Big Brother, who then has a better chance of winning. Everyone who supports Big Brother is happy.

The trouble, says Poundstone, is that Little Brother can grow bigger. Indeed, with IRV it is almost sure to grow bigger. People can make it their first choice without spoiling and with every vote it gains credibility. It might get about a third of the vote - say D's 34, R's 34, and Greens 32. Creeping up! But the dynamic is still the same. First choice Green votes will be distributed to the major parties.

When the Greens get to 34, though, everything changes - let's say it's R 34,

to Ocasio-Cortez's practice that can be described as "from the masses, to the masses,"Warren's political practice seems to reflect a deep-seated belief that a group of enlightened elites should change the course of history.

Unleashing a demon?

In a recent article in Fox News, Newt Gingrich catastrophically announced that "Democrats have no idea what demons they are unleashing." His article is mostly aimed against Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the most recent public 'demon' of American socialism. In contrast to Gingrich's assertion, Ocasio-Cortez appears to be well-aware of the nature and direction of her political practice. She shows that parliamentarianism is a politically alive form in the functioning of American democracy. She also demonstrates that parliamentary participation - particularly when combined with more advanced forms of struggle - can become a useful and indispensable tool used by the masses to press for higher and more egalitarian forms of socio-economic organization.

Enrique Quintero is a member of the WIP Publishing Committee.

Green 34, and D 32. Now Green votes are no longer re-distributed. They just stay in place, waiting to see if the D's have given their second-choice votes to them or the R's. And the D's can't be counted on to vote Green.

Poundstone says that as a centrist party, D's might look askance at Greens for being marginal and flaky. Consequently, they will vote R the R's will win because of IRV.

The argument seems spurious. First, D's don't vote R. Then, if the Greens have, after many years of work, won a larger percentage of the votes than the D's, they are no longer considered flaky and marginal. Most people had no such impression in the first place; if people don't vote Green, it's mostly because they fear the spoiler effect. In short, both Greens and Democrats are diverse groups of people who don't vote in blocs and whose second-choice votes cannot be predicted (except that a D will never vote R).

Poundstone is correct that with Greens at 34%, a whole new group of people will decide the race, and it will not be predictable. This may seem like a far-off problem, but Greens actually hope and expect to reach 34% —that's the whole point of the exercise. They are not happy to endorse D plans. So, with regret, I have to concede that this might be a problem, and that we should perhaps work towards either Approval or Score Voting.

The importance of a new system

Voting systems matter. If our system allowed for third parties, we wouldn't have the two major parties colluding to ignore things like climate change, the plight of the poor, or high unemployment. The third party, being a sort of protest party, is likely to bring these issues up and make it harder to ignore them.

If we had a different voting system, we wouldn't be opening our ballots and finding only Trump and Clinton for President, plus a few names we dare not vote for, for fear of electing Trump. We are a significant country and it is wrong to be running it like this. It affects the whole world - would our President be tormenting those would-be immigrants if we had a better electoral system? We need to change how we elect our Presidents, and we need to choose the new system carefully. We may get the chance to change our system soon, and we need to do the job right.

Janet Jordan is a long-time resident of Thurston County and a Green Party member.

Ed note. For details about how IRV and RCV worked in practice, go to www.sightline.org where the Pierce County experience with these two methods is analyzed.

Midterm

From previous page

100% renewable energy system and a fully modernized electrical grid in the US by 2035.

Campaign-finance reform: Ocasio-Cortez set an example by running a low budget campaign, raising about \$200,000 and refusing to accept donations from lobbyists. She calls for overturning the Supreme Court ruling on Citizens United.

"Of course, I am a capitalist!"

The political specter of socialism disturbs not only the Democratic Party. Republicans and the right-wing media have embarked upon a holy crusade to exorcise socialism. Few figures or parties opposing the current status quo have not been branded as socialists. Among these oppositional figures we find Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), a liberal Democrat who all of a sudden finds herself categorized as socialist. It's an ideological label for which she is far from prepared, a label that fits her like an oversize hat.

Warren's capital sin, in the cross-eyed

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Water is life, everywhere in the world

James O'Barr

The house across the street from me has a big sign in the window that says *Water is Life*. I see it every day coming and going, and despite being awash in news reports of record droughts and mega-fires, rising sea levels and shrinking aquifers, empty reservoirs in Capetown and poisoned water pipes in Flint, I haven't usually given it a second thought. Not until I sat down to talk with Curt Andino, who recently gave a presentation at Olympia Friends Meeting.

Andino is the newly hired, first-ever Executive Director of Friendly Water for the World, a non-profit organization based in Olympia. For the past twelve years he headed South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity, and prior to that was the director of the Jail Ministry program of Catholic Charities in Onondaga County, New York.

Friendly Water's mission is "to expand global access to low-cost clean water technologies and information about health and sanitation through knowledge-sharing, training, community-building, applied research, peacemaking, and sustainability." The name comes out of the fact that local members of The Society of Friends—otherwise known as Quakers—developed the idea of bringing a simple technology for purifying water to poor and war-ravaged communities where there is little or no potable water.

Friendly Water has projects in 15 countries and counting. In these places people, usually women and girls, have to walk great distances to find water that may not be clean, and then carry it back to their towns and villages, at times risking assault and rape. According to Andino, the UN estimates that more than 2 billion people do not have access to safe water sufficient for drinking, cooking and hygiene; and 4.5 billion lack safely managed sanitation systems. Those most vulnerable and most affected are children. About half-a-million under age 5 die each year from water-borne illnesses, including typhoid, dysentery, cholera, hepatitis A, parasitic infections and diarrhea.

The "simple technology" is the BioSand Water Filter, which Suzanne and Del Livingston, of the Tacoma Quaker Meeting, saw being built in a village in Mexico by a group of Canadian volunteers. Del, who had volunteered with Suzanne in poor communities in Kenya, was captivated by the BioSand filter. He and his wife saw the filter as the ideal technology to meet the dire need for clean water in the communities they served.

After being trained and certified by the Canadians to build the filter, Del and Suzanne spoke about their work at Olympia Friends Meeting. This ignited an enthusiastic response that culminated in the creation of Friendly Water for the World in 2010. With a governing board and a group of volunteers, they set out to make the filters available wherever they found a need.

For those of us in the "first" world who think of the garden faucet or a flush toilet as simple technology, the The BioSand filter sounds like something of a wonder.

Curt Andino: It's a 'point-of-use' or household water purification system, using sand and gravel. An environmental engineering professor at the University of Calgary, Dr. David Manz, adapted an old sand filter technology dating back to the 1800s. He developed and field-tested it, and patented it as the BioSand filter in 1993. the filter is made from a 3' x 1' metal mold, using

concrete for the form with gradations of sand and gravel inside. Dirty water is poured in the top and flows through a biologically-active "biomass" layer. By the time it gets to the bottom and rises up a plastic tube to an outlet, 95 to 99% of bacteria and viruses have been removed along with 100% of worms,



parasites, amoeba, protozoa, and other noxious or poisonous substances.

Friendly Water does the training and provides the molds. The filters can be made locally by the people themselves. We estimate the materials cost for the filter at \$50, more or less—the molds cost about \$500 but are loaned for free as long as they're in use. In many places the filters and the clean

grand, multicultural, scale? "If I had only a one-word answer," says Curt Andino, "it would be...empowerment. In fact, that's what it says on our brochure: How do we do it? We empower people and communities! And how we do that? Well, each project would have a somewhat different story,

one reflecting its unique circumstances. The only thing they'd have in common is that the people themselves, in their determination, resourcefulness, inventiveness, intelligence, in their love and generosity, would be front and center.

In June of this year, Friendly Water for the World was given the Energy Globe National Award for the Congo—sometimes called 'Nature's Nobel Prize'—for our work with the women of Minova, Congo. In 2012 the women were the victims of a mass rape by members of their own national army. Some became pregnant, some contracted HIV, many were abandoned by their husbands. They had to withdraw their children from school because they could no longer afford the cost. Everything was made worse by the endemic water-borne illnesses: diarrhea, dysentery, typhoid, cholera—for which there was no money to treat.

In October of 2016, with a \$3200 grant, we trained the women of Minova in fabrication of BioSand Filters, and in community hygiene and sanitation. By January of 2017, they had built and sold 172 BioSand Filters, enough to provide clean water for almost 2000 people, generating \$9000 in income. Since then, they have built and installed more than a thousand filters, stopped cholera epidemics—with just potable water!—in two refugee camps. They've started two more BioSand programs in collaboration with women in similar circumstances.

There are many, many other ripples from those first drops of clean water in Minova. Maybe the most important thing about it, from Friendly Water's perspective—which takes us back to that one-word answer above —was the title of the official Energy Globe National Award: Empowering the Women of Minova through Clean Water Technologies.

I told Curt Andino about the poster in my neighbor's window. "Yeah, I've seen those around Olympia—didn't they come out of the Standing Rock movement? It's what we're about—the Friendly Water movement: Water is Life!"

How could people find out more? "There are many more amazing stories we can tell, and we're always looking for volunteers, collaborators and donors. Periodically we do trainings in construction of the BioSand Filters, and are most happy to do presentations on our work."

James O'Barr is a recent transplant from New York's Hudson Valley, where he worked in health care for migrant and seasonal farmworkers, theatre in the community and in prison, and writing as way opened.

Friendly Water for the World can be reached at info@friendlywater.net, or by phone at (360) 918-3642. Their website is www.friendlywater.net.



water itself have become a source of income. The filters can produce 23 - 24 gallons of water a day, and can last as long as 30 years with minimal maintenance. Countries where Friendly Water has projects range across the entire globe. And while each project serves poor and oppressed communities lacking enough clean water to ensure people's health and well-being, each community has its unique set of variables, needs, and conditions.

How does a small, modestly funded organization, run for the most part by volunteers, operate on such a

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How some states work to take away the right to vote

Chipping away at the foundations of democracy

Kevin Morris

Purges: A Growing Threat to the Right to Vote is a newly-released report by the Brennan Center for Justice. The report comes during a wave of efforts to keep people from being able to register to vote; and to throw them off even if they are registered.

Voter purges are an often-flawed process of cleaning up voter rolls by deleting names from registration lists. Done badly, they prevent eligible people from casting a ballot that counts. Among the report's key findings are:

More people are being purged now than at any time in the past decade. Between the federal elections of 2006 and 2008, boards of election collectively removed 12 million voters from their rolls. In the two years ending with the presidential election of 2016, that number grew to 16 million — an increase of 33 percent.

Much of this increase coincided with a landmark decision handed down by the Supreme Court in 2013. *Shelby County v. Holder* struck at the heart of

the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the civil rights legislation writing pivotal protections for access to the franchise into the books of law. Prior to 2013, counties with a history of discrimination in

In reality, as the Brennan Center has shown, the number of noncitizens who vote is minuscule.

their election practices couldn't make any changes in their voting rules without first proving that the change wouldn't have negative impacts on minority voters. We estimate that as many as two million more voters were removed in these previously covered jurisdictions thanks to their higher purge rates. This number stands even after we control for all sorts of other socio-demographic factors.

In the past five years, four states (Florida, New York, North Carolina, and Virginia) have engaged in illegal purges, and four others (Alabama, Arizona, Indiana, and Maine) have followed purge policies that violate fed-

eral voting law. Many did so by using Crosscheck, a flawed system for catching voters registered in more than one state. Crosscheck has been promoted by Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, who headed the work of the White House's controversial and short-lived voting commission.

Flawed purges are especially damaging because the voter often won't know that she's been removed from the rolls until she shows up at the polls on Election Day, meaning, at best, she'll likely have to cast a provisional ballot that won't be counted unless she later proves her eligibility.

Not all purges are bad. We need our election administrators to take steps to ensure the voter rolls are accurate and up-to-date. But there's a big difference between proper list maintenance and the error-prone mass-removal of eligible voters from the rolls. And the news that purges are on the rise comes as those acting to limit the franchise have increased the focus on voter registration policies.

After all, President Trump has successfully convinced many of his supporters that voter rolls are full of noncitizens or others who cannot legally vote. In reality, as the Brennan Center has shown, the number of non-citizens who vote is minuscule. Another former member of the White House voting commission, however, confirmed this shift toward focusing on voter list maintenance last December, telling activists: "Voter ID is an important thing, but it's yesterday's fight." The main threat now, he argued, is non-citizens getting on the rolls.

When states cut early voting days or implement extreme voter ID laws, the public pays attention, and the press makes noise. In contrast, voter purges, which all too often are done without any public announcement, can have the same effect while stirring up far less backlash. Our report attempts to shine a light on these practices, showing just how serious this threat is, and offering tools for combating it.

Kevin Morris is a researcher at the Brennan Center for Justice at the NYU School of Law. The Brennan Center "works to reform, revitalize and when necessary, defend, our country's systems of democracy and justice." You can download the report at www.brennancenter.org. This article is edited from a press release.

Supporting the foundations of democracy—Washington State

Officials in some states are determined to make voting a complicated task—purging voter rolls, reducing the number and open hours of polling places, prescribing specific IDs etc. Not the Pacific Northwest. With all mail ballots, voting is easy though it might have lost an important contribution to civic life represented by meeting your neighbors at the polls. In a major study of voting during the 2016 General Election, the investigators turned up 74 potential cases of individuals who were ineligible to vote, or otherwise committed electoral fraud in Washington state, out of 3.36 million votes cast.

What can happen before you even get to election day

If an election-related piece of mail is returned by the post office as undeliverable to the voter at that address, the county puts that registration on "inactive" status. A voter who is on inactive status may return to active status at any time by updating his or her address, requesting a ballot, or submitting a new voter registration application.

Uh oh. If you don't fix the inactive status and you let two federal general elections go by without voting...

If the registration stays on inactive status through two consecutive federal general elections, the registration is cancelled.

However—you must be notified if they're going to cancel your registration

Both state and federal law require that a notice be sent to the voter any time a change in the status of a registration occurs. (But they already had a returned mailing, so....?)

Can your registration be cancelled if you just don't vote?

If the voter remains at the same address and chooses not to vote, the registration cannot be cancelled. If the voter moves, however, and election-related mail is returned to the county elections office as undeliverable, the registration will be placed on inactive status. An inactive registration can be

cancelled if the voter does not vote in two federal general elections. (Go back to Item #1)

What else does the WA Secretary of State do to maintain valid voter rolls?

Three times a year, the Secretary of State uses information provided by the Department of Corrections and the state court system to screen the list of registered voters for ineligible felons. If you are registered to vote, but are ineligible because of a felony conviction, they will send you a letter explaining that your registration will be cancelled in 30 days. The letter provides information on how to dispute the cancellation. Assuming you got the letter...You can vote if you've had a felony conviction but are no longer under the supervision of the DOC (but you have to register or re-register).

And... the Secretary of State's office routinely compares its voter registration database to lists of deaths and felony convictions. They look for duplicates every night!

How do they know the ballot you mailed in was yours to vote? If you really want to know, these two provisions of state law are the answer:

RCW 29A.60.050 requires that when the people who count the ballots have a question about validity, they make a record of the issue and send it with the ballot to the "canvassing board." The ballot is rejected only if it's been rejected individually by the board and then it has to be preserved just in case. RCW 29A.60.300 Statewide survey of voted ballot rejection rates and reasons for rejections

Every odd-numbered year, the secretary of state must conduct and publish a statewide survey of voted ballot rejection rates and the reasons for those rejections by county auditors and canvassing boards.

RCW 29A.60.300 requires the Secretary of State to make a study every 2 years of rejection rates (and reasons) for ballots having been rejected across all counties. They're supposed to analyze auditors' practices and recommend improvements to minimize rejections — among other things. The report has to be available to the public.

Who's interfering with our “free and fair” elections?

(Ed. note: this is an excerpt from Noam Chomsky speaking on Democracy Now!)

Take the issue of interference in our pristine elections. Did the Russians interfere in our elections? An issue of overwhelming concern in the media. But it's really a joke. First of all, if you're interested in foreign interference in our elections, whatever the Russians may have done barely weighs in the balance compared with what another state does, openly, brazenly and with enormous support. Israeli intervention in U.S. elections vastly overwhelms anything the Russians may have done. Even to the point where the prime minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, goes directly

to Congress, without even informing the President. He speaks to Congress, with overwhelming applause, to try to undermine the President's policies... This is what happened with Obama and Netanyahu in 2015.

Did Putin come to give an address to the joint sessions of Congress calling on them to reverse US policy, without even informing the President? And that's just a tiny bit of this overwhelming influence. So if you're interested in foreign influence on our elections, there are places to look. But even that is a joke.

[Trump's] perfectly right when he says we should have better relations with



Russia. Being dragged through the mud for that is outlandish. Right at the Russian border, there are tensions that could blow up anytime and lead to what would be a terminal nuclear war, terminal for the species and life on Earth.

First, we should be doing things to ameliorate these tensions. Secondly, we should ask why. Well, it's because NATO expanded after the collapse of the Soviet Union, in violation of verbal promises to Mikhail Gorbachev under Clinton and first Bush. Then Clinton expanded NATO right to the Russian border and further under Obama. The US offered to bring Ukraine into NATO. That's the heartland of Russian geo-strategic concerns. So, yes, there's tensions at the Russian border—and not, notice, at the Mexican border. Well, those are all issues that should be of primary concern. How much attention is given to these things as compared with whether Trump lied about something? This seems to me a fundamental criticism of the media.

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On strike: The men and women in prison call for reform

Bethany Weidner

On August 21, men and women in prisons across the US declared a nationwide strike to take place from that date through September 9. Their demands are for humane living conditions, access to rehabilitation, sentencing reform and the end of modern day slavery. Prisoners in at least 17 states agreed to withhold their work; to engage in peaceful sit-ins, to boycott prison stores, or to engage in hunger strikes. One trigger for the strike was a riot in a maximum security prison in South Carolina where 7 inmates were killed during four hours when guards did not intervene..

“The main leverage that an inmate has is their own body. If they choose not to go to work and just sit in in the main area or the eating area, and all the prisoners choose to sit there and not go to the kitchen for lunchtime or dinner time, if they choose not to clean or do the yardwork, this is the

leverage that they have. Prisons cannot run without prisoners’ work,” stated Amani Sawari, a spokesperson for the protests.

In the US we lock up people at the highest rate in the world. Out of every 100,000 people, we imprison 724. This is double the rate of a decade earlier. Over half the people in prison were sentenced for non-violent crimes. People confined in jails, prisons, immigration detention centers and juvenile detention centers across the country meet with physical mistreatment, overcrowded and barely tolerable living conditions, extreme disciplinary treatment, routine use of solitary confinement, exposure to violence from guards and other inmates, lack of medical and mental health care.

Prisoners also have to pay for things they need in prison: soap, phone cards, tampons, food, books, shoes... even the cost of their imprisonment. In a 2005 National Institute of Justice sur-

vey, thirty-eight percent of responding jails imposed “pay-to-stay” fees for housing, meals, or both. As of 2010, at least twenty-four states had statutes authorizing jail fees.

In 1979, Congress passed the “Prison Industry Enhancement Certification Program” to create “employment opportunities that approximate private sector work...” Instead the program became a profitable scheme for companies to get cheap labor—the daily wage for inmate workers in 2017 ranged from an averaged minimum of 86 cents to an averaged maximum of \$3.45. The average pay in state prisons is 20 cents an hour, according to the Marshall Project. In some states, inmates work for free. Some companies using prison labor have been Victoria’s Secret, Starbucks, Microsoft, Walmart, Boeing, Whole Foods, American Airlines...

A note on incarceration in Thurston County: Thurston County has

the highest average daily bed rate (\$111) of any county in the state of Washington and the jail is on average close to full every day (98%). According to the 2017-18 Thurston County budget, costs for criminal and civil justice including the courts, prosecution and defense, policing and the jail consume 76% of the general fund and are constantly increasing. Despite a drop in crime, the jail population is increasing, in particular the population with special needs (elsewhere it states that 44% of the Thurston County Jail population has a diagnosable mental illness).

Bethany Weidner has never seen the inside of a jail, but considers this a failing.

Information in this article came from The Brennan Center for Justice, the Prison Policy Initiative and the Marshall Project, among other sources. To learn more: <http://sawarimi.org/national-prison-strike>

Report from the NWDC Resistance rally for immigrants detained in Tacoma

Wendy Tanowitz

The Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) is located on a Superfund site in the tideflats of Tacoma. It is privately owned by the GEO Group — the second largest private prison contractor in the US—and can hold up to 1,575 people. All are imprisoned here to await a court hearing that will decide whether they will be deported or granted asylum or possibly some other legal status.

In August, fifty of us gathered outside this immigration facility for one of the monthly rallies held by NWDC Resistance, which is led by undocumented people. We were blessed with the presence of Maru Mora-Villalpando, who has devoted her life in this country to advocating for the undocumented. Maru is fierce and fearless—intensely so, as she faces deportation proceedings initiated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in January 2018.

At the rally we spoke with ShaCorrie, whose family member is inside, and heard from others inside who called Maru on her speakerphone. (We have changed their names.)

ShaCorrie Stunkara: My husband has been locked up for seven months. He has issues in his arm—he wasn’t taken to physical therapy, and he now has permanent disability. He’s going blind in both eyes. ICE has been told and paperwork has been provided. He has seen an eye doctor but there’s been no follow-up. He was born a human and should be treated like one. Lots of people inside are fighting for their lives with untreated illnesses. ICE and GEO Group need to be held accountable for the harm they are doing to families, to people’s health.

Arnoldo (calling from inside): Walls of showers are moldy, I’m sick and had to wait two hours to get to the hospital. There’s a person on the pod who’s been in a wheelchair for 23 years. We bring him food because the wheelchair won’t fit under table. He doesn’t receive medical attention.

Roberto (from inside): Don’t believe GEO and ICE. I have a hernia, which was supposed to be taken care of surgically in April 2016 but I was told,

“Here we don’t give surgeries.” I have to press it to keep the hernia in. My right hand was injured due to a work injury—I have an open case with Labor and Industries.

William (from inside): I’ve been in detention for three months. The food is horrible. I’ve been sick with an infection in my back but have not gotten any treatment. There are lots of people with medical issues here. We face discrimination because people don’t speak English. I came with a head injury and the guards refuse to help me. I forget things and have problems learning but they expect me to represent myself before a judge. I have asked to see a specialist for glaucoma and was told I’m on a waiting list but I receive no medication or help. We get very small portions of food. People are hungry all the time. We are paid \$1.00/day, there’s inadequate training and equipment. When we approached the warden, he said he has nothing to do about it. We are grateful for the attention of folks like you.

Maru Mora-Villalpando described some of the work of NWDC Resistance:

Working for better medical care
The lack of medical attention inside is drawing the attention of Senator Cantwell and Rep. Adam Smith, who asked us what they can do. We are working with them to address the medical needs of detainees. We are also working with Conor McCarthy, who’s on the Tacoma City Council.

Lifting the spirits of those inside

It’s very important for them to know we are outside thinking of them. One man, Mr. Garcia, won his case, yet he is still detained. He went on a hunger

strike for five days. On the first day of the hunger strike, Thursday, he was placed in solitary confinement, but on Saturday he was placed in medical isolation—completely alone. He said, “Not eating and not drinking water is not that difficult. What is difficult is being alone.” These people know how to break someone’s spirit. He called us and we were able to get him legal representation.



Our work was to answer the phone and make sure we would talk to him and send people to see him, to make sure his spirit wouldn’t be broken. Since he ended the hunger strike, he called us to say Hello. He’s continuing his fight and his mom texted me this morning: “I just wanted to say thank you for what you did for my son. My son is so grateful for everything—we sent him a photo of a vigil and he cried, ‘There are people who don’t even know us, yet they support us.’”

Bringing the voices of those inside the NWDC to the public

Detained people lead us; we are committed to bringing their voices to the public. There is a class action lawsuit moving in the court against GEO. Thousands of workers, if this succeeds, will get back money that GEO has stolen from them. This is one of three lawsuits filed against the \$1/day program at NWDC. The most important

part is that you only have lawsuits if you have plaintiffs. These plaintiffs are detained, which requires a lot of bravery. We should not forget that every lawsuit exists because people have chosen to fight back regardless of being detained.

NWDC Resistance is becoming a model for resistance in other places. We are working with groups from The Dalles, Oregon—Norcor County Jail is there. We also work with a California group—Inland Coalition for Immigration Justice in Victorville, CA—fighting the contract ICE has with federal prisons.

Small contributions make a difference

I’m not a fan of depositing money to accounts of detained people but I see the difference it can make. We have a fund to help people. A \$20 donation will give a detainee \$15 (there’s a \$4.95 processing fee). A dad who was separated from his son at the border received \$15 and was able to make calls to relatives who picked up his son—a major miracle!

Messages from families and those detained are how we sustain the work. Sometimes you think you are not making an impact, but actually it’s huge.

Wendy Tanowitz cares about justice. She focuses on issues related to mass incarceration and immigration.

Resources

NWDC Resistance is a movement led by undocumented people working to end detention of immigrants and stop deportations. They support and follow the leadership of those detained at the NWDC in Tacoma, demanding better treatment and conditions. www.nwdcresistance.org
AIDNW (Aid to Immigrants in Detention NW) trains volunteers to visit detainees; operates a Welcome Center outside the NWDC; and offers hospitality and post-detention accompaniment.
aidnw.org dcruz@aidnw.org
(253) 572-9659

Israel razes a cultural landmark in Gaza

“Get back. We are going to hit the center.”

“All our work was there, we lived there, our memories were there,” said Idrees Talib, Palestinian theater director. “I gave my colleagues some hope that a change would happen, but I don’t know what I can say to them after the destruction of our place.”

On Thursday, August 9th, 2018, the Israeli military carried out a missile attack that completely destroyed the Said Al-Mishal Center for Culture & Science, one of few large venues in Gaza for cultural events such as theater and musical performances. The center, located in the densely populated Gaza City, was a hub for activity, community building, and inspiring creative expression for Gazans living under occupation.

In the early evening, residents in the area received alerts from the Israeli military that the building would be hit. The army will phone locals telling them to get back. In this case, Israeli forces also fired shots at the building, not to destroy or kill, but to warn. Palestinians in Gaza call these shots “knocks.” Two hours later, larger munitions transformed Al-Mishal into dust, crumbled concrete and twisted

steel. At least 18 people were wounded, Gaza’s ministry of health said.

“The razing of the landmark which held a library and offices for artistic associations including dance troupes and musicians has shaken the strip’s creative community. The building housed a recreation center for children affected by the three wars waged between Israel and Hamas during the last decade. Its cafe had buzzed with dancers, actors and artists.” (*The Guardian*, US Edition, August 22, 2018)

Gazans have collectively expressed deep mourning for the center across social media channels, reflecting on childhood memories created there and the sense of community the center inspired.

“This center was like the cultural spirit of us in Gaza, all dreams were destroyed after its destruction, with the remains of ashes and some memories,” Almaza Omer Odeh, a law student from Gaza, shared with Olympia’s Rachel Corrie Foundation (RCF) on Instagram.

The center is also where the Palestinian Cultural Palace, an RCF-sponsored

project, practiced and performed their shows directed by Mohammed Baroud. RCF has been in contact with project organizers in Gaza, and while they are all physically safe, they have lost all of their decorations, costumes, and supplies, a material loss worth thousands of dollars. Despite this terrifying destruction, performers gathered Friday morning to sing on top of the ashes and rubble, performing for children and community members, signifying to us all that despite this violence and devastating destruction, the show will go on.

Information in this article came from The Guardian, a press statement from the Rachel Corrie Foundation and other sources.

A message from the Rachel Corrie Foundation (RCF): RCF is committed to ensuring the Palestinian Cultural Palace project continues because we firmly believe that Palestinian youth should have the opportunity to explore their cultural identity, express themselves through creative outlets, and develop their social and emotional skills in a healthy and encouraging environment. At this point in time, we are anticipating an increased need for funding to replace what was lost and to fund future programs, but we need your help to make that happen. Contributions to RCF’s Gaza Projects can be made at **www.rachelcorriefoundation.org**

Middle Eastern Film Festival to feature movies, activities and photo exhibit

Jonah Barrett

The 2018 Middle Eastern Film Festival offers an opportunity to experience works of cinema that diverge from the mainstream. This year’s festival presents three engaging feature films, two of which are animated. All three films will be shown October 6 at Capitol Theater in downtown Olympia. An exhibit of Yemen-focused photographs will occupy the mezzanine along with a number of children’s activities.

The festival’s goal is to expose the South Sound community to Middle Eastern films and multimedia artworks, as well as raise funds for the Shuruq IV: Olympia Arab Festival—coming to the Olympia Center on October 6.

Presented by the Rachel Corrie Foundation and the Olympia Film Society, the Middle Eastern Film Festival is the 13th iteration of the Foundation’s Peace Works project.

“Peace Works, a cornerstone project for RCF provides an opportunity to engage creatively with community members on issues of injustice and struggle, and this year is no different” said RCF Executive Director Whitney Faulkner.

ing her adventurous daughter Almitra (Quvenzhané Wallis) out of trouble. Together the trio embarks on a journey to return Mustafa to his home country, but they must evade authorities who fear that the truth in his poetry will incite rebellion.

5:00 p.m. Persepolis The fan-favorite feature Persepolis is based on Marjane Satrapi’s autobiographical graphic novel of the same name. The story revolves around a young girl as she comes of age against the backdrop of the Iranian Revolution. The film was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Animated Feature.

8:00 p.m., Naila & the Uprising *Naila & the Uprising* is about Naila Ayesh, a woman involved in a nonviolent mobilization known as the First Intifada in the late 1980s.

Activities for the whole family The event will also include a number of children’s activities, Q&A sessions, and a photography exhibit upstairs in the mezzanine. The photographs belong to the late photographer Luke Somers, who was a British-born American photojournalist and resident of Yemen. He was held hostage and killed by al-Qaeda in 2014. “We are all aware of the polarization and oppression occurring in communities around the country, including our own,” said Faulkner. “We hope that through film and allied arts, we can amplify voices that are too often silenced.”

Jonah Barrett works at the Olympia Film Society as a marketing director. He is also a filmmaker and writer.

2:00 p.m. The Prophet Based upon a 1923 book of the same name by Lebanese-American author Kahil Gibran, this new animated adaptation concerns a housekeeper named Kamila, voiced by Salma Hayek, who also produced the film.

Set in Lebanon during the Ottoman Empire, Kamila works for a poet and artist named Mustafa, voiced by Liam Neeson. Kamila has difficulty keep-

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No action is not an option

Olympia City Council works to refine emergency housing proposals

Tye Gundel

The Olympia City Council is considering a proposal for two city-sanctioned emergency housing facilities, which, if approved, would temporarily shelter at least 80 of Olympia's unhoused residents.

One proposed location, referred to as The Nursery Village, would host 40 individuals in tiny home structures. This facility would be located near the intersection of Union Avenue and Plum Street.

The other proposed facility, referred to as The Martin Way Village, would be sited at 2828 Martin Way. The long-term goal is for permanent supportive housing to be constructed at this site.

In the interim, Council is considering relocating The Interfaith Works Emergency Overnight Shelter to The Martin Way Village, to allow for 24/7 operation. Residents would be housed in portable structures. This site might also provide spaces for car camping and host a respite center.

The emergency housing facilities would serve single adults and couples without children and would prioritize the most vulnerable for placement.

The updated proposal for the Martin Way Village represents a shift from an earlier version, which was to temporarily shelter 40 individuals in tiny homes, prior to constructing permanent supportive housing. The original proposal also included possibility using an on-site building in part as an Urban Rest Stop.

The proposal was altered because of feedback from local social service providers.

Exploring financing options

One-time costs include the purchase of the Martin Way property for \$1.35

million, covered by an Interfund Loan which the city will repay over the next few years.

The annual cost of operation, originally estimated just shy of \$1 million will

the 2828 Martin Way property, the purchase will not be finalized until September 18.

Growth in homelessness demands a new approach

Homelessness has become increasingly visible in the Olympia area, with the numbers of those experiencing homelessness continuing to rise, along with the number of people who have no option other than sheltering at illegal encampments.

The City of Olympia initially responded to the growing crisis of homelessness the way many other cities first did, by criminalizing it. In 2013 the City Council implemented a camping ban on public property as well as a "No-Sit-Lie" ordinance. Council and staff were originally slow to support

Development, stated at a May 17 city meeting related to homelessness, "We have tried doing nothing and it isn't working."

Acting on lessons learned from trial and error

The City of Olympia has learned from experience the ineffectiveness of displacing people from encampments without providing legal alternatives. For instance, as the city has displaced encampments from public lands, unsheltered communities have increasingly sought shelter in downtown storefronts and private green belts.

The City has also moved towards recognizing the crisis of homelessness as resulting from systemic failures, as opposed to the faults of houseless individuals.

There is new interest in responses that are centered in anti-oppression and equity, attempting to move away from criminalization and stereotyping that generalize and separate community members who are houseless from the rest of the community.

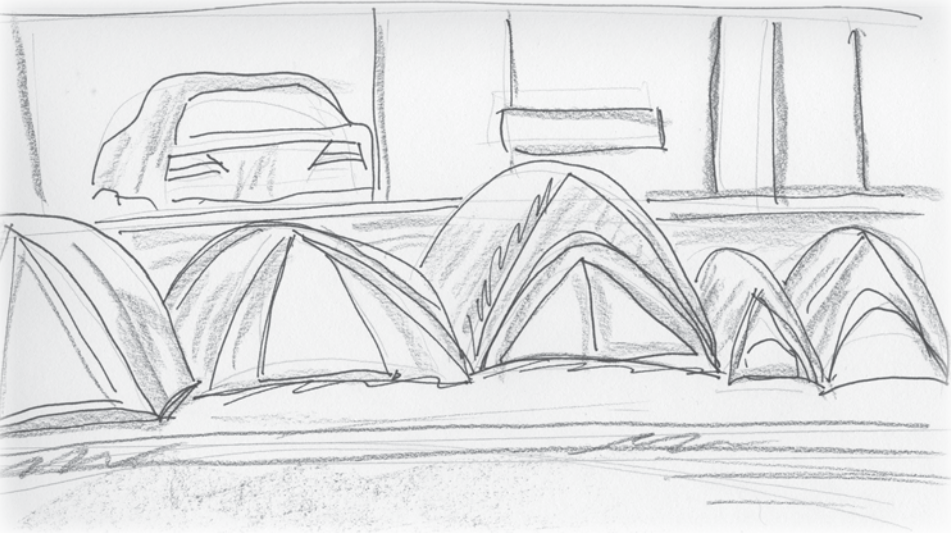
The Council has largely accepted the necessity of pursuing short-term responses to meet emergency needs, in conjunction with long-term solutions, as would be the case in any other crisis. The goal of the recently approved Home Fund envisions only 350 units of affordable housing over the next 10 years. To achieve an adequate stock of affordable housing will take much longer. In the meantime creating safe and legal options today can help alleviate the dangers of illegal camping both for the homeless and nearby neighborhoods.

These lessons learned have resulted in a series of recent actions by the City of Olympia, including, but not limited to, a Declaration of a Public Health State of Emergency Related to Homelessness, amendments to Olympia's Temporary Emergency Housing Facilities Ordinance, and now consideration of a proposal for two city-sanctioned emergency housing facilities.

Tye Gundel is a co-founder of Just Housing and has been working as organizer with the group since 2016.

creating safe and legal options today can help alleviate the dangers of illegal camping both for the homeless and nearby neighborhoods.

likely increase as a result of changes to the proposal. Currently, city staff is proposing that operating costs be covered using a combination of funds accumulated through sources like the Home Fund, utility taxes, and Community Development Block Grants.



The Olympia City Council still needs a vote before it can proceed with a budget for the two city-owned facilities. The Finance Committee will discuss estimated costs and funding options before anything is finalized. And although the Council did direct staff to move forward with the acquisition of

additional homeless services.

A few years ago, a group of community activists brought the City Council a proposal for a 24-7 low-barrier shelter known as "The Peoples' House." The CouncilD voted against each proposed location, largely due to opposition from potential neighbors, and the project was never realized.

As the crisis worsened, community advocates pointed out that the City's approach was failing; a change of direction was needed. As Keith Stahley, Director of Community Planning and

Olympia City Council asks state Investment Board to assess risk of fossil fuel holdings

Pension Board losses tied to oil industry

On August 21, The Olympia City Council voted again to urge the Washington State Investment Board to address risk tied to fossil fuel investments. In May of 2013, Olympia and Thurston County had asked the Board to begin divesting from fossil fuels. Since then, these funds have sustained substantial losses and future returns are not expected to improve.

Concerned pensioners estimate past losses of \$650 million over 18 months for funds managed by the Investment Board. In one case, the Board held onto coal investments until the company went bankrupt.

Divestment from carbon-based investments may be necessary

New York City has already made the move to divest pension funds from risky carbon-based investments. California pension funds divested from coal, but only after losses in the billions.

The American Medical Association has also jettisoned fossil fuel stocks. Analysis of the S&P 500 showed that, over the last year, holdings with no fossil stocks provided 18% larger yields. And in July, the country of Ireland announced it

will withdraw all public funds from coal, oil and gas.

Giant oil companies are the target of major lawsuits by New York City, San Francisco, Oakland, and the State of Rhode Island, adding further financial uncertainty for these investments.

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Applehill neighbors question Olympia’s proposals for emergency housing

Candace Mercer

Residents of the Applehill neighborhood in NE Olympia were shocked when we learned through social media that the City was proposing to establish a legal encampment for the unhoused in our neighborhood, along with an “Urban Rest Stop” that would serve a larger number of homeless. We quickly organized to oppose the camp, based on two years of bad experience with multiple unsanctioned camps on our street.

Residents appeared in large numbers at a July 31 City Council Finance Committee meeting to protest the proposal. On August 10, four Applehill representatives, including this writer, met with Colin DeForrest, the city’s newly hired Homeless Response Coordinator and Councilmember Renata Rollins. We told our story. They listened.

The result was an amended proposal focusing on the most vulnerable unhoused demographic, revealed at a Council meeting August 21, with over a dozen Applehill residents in attendance. We were pleased that several Councilmembers spoke to our concerns when questioning DeForrest on details of the new plan.

Reactions of residents, however, are mixed and wary. Some neighbors are cautiously optimistic about the involvement of Interfaith Works given their long-term experience with the overnight shelter on Franklin St. but we also have concern over population numbers.

Residents are upset that services could be still be offered to non-residents of the site, which would incentivize unsanctioned camps on Pattison St. Also, DeForrest has not presented a specific plan for dealing with the presence of unsanctioned camps. Residents take the position that there should be no unsanctioned camps allowed on Pattison Street if there is an 80 bed site constructed.

History of unsanctioned camps on Pattison Street

I moved to Pattison St. five years ago, surprised there even was a neighbor-

hood here. This section of Pattison is less than ½ mile long, the Applehill subdivision branching off midway. There are 40 houses and a large apartment complex that mainly serves working class people. The location is accessible and quiet.

At the time, there was a long-standing homeless camp behind the VFW. The campers, a small population of older men, seemed to want to be left alone. For three years there were no problems.

Things changed two summers ago, reaching a crisis point last September. Population, mostly younger males, in the VFW camp grew, and there was a dramatic increase in antisocial behavior.

Incidents piled up and residents grew scared and angry. We started organizing and tried to get help from the city with little response. Code enforcement was the only tool that worked, but only for on-street camping and abandoned cars.

By fall 2017, the camp had grown to at least 50 people. They were evicted when the property owner did annual fall forest management. This moved the camp up the street to the woods near 8th St., adjacent to the Applehill subdivision.

This camp also grew to unsustainable population levels and was evicted this June, after which the neighborhood went back to being peaceful.

Effects of unsanctioned camps on the neighborhood

We in Applehill know that homeless people are not bad people – the majority of the unhoused have the same goal we do—a safe place to live. Residents of Applehill recognize social forces have led to this crisis, and we have compassion for the situation the unhoused face. Many of us, including myself, provide support.

There is, however, among the unhoused, a subset that engage in anti-social behavior that causes harm. This is an inconvenient truth some activists do not want to talk about for fear it will lead to more discrimination

against the unhoused. But not talking about it does not mean it does not exist, and that it does not cause harm.

Unfortunately, Applehill has dealt with this harm for two years. Almost every resident has stories, but there is no police record documenting the pattern or level of incidents. This does not mean these incidents were trivial, but that calling the police was pointless.

Acts of aggression have been numerous. Women especially have been targeted, reporting the most in-your-face type of aggression. Some neighbors have remarked on the boldness of the younger demographic, the sense of entitlement and then anger when boundaries are set.

We have been victims of petty theft, attempted break ins, and trespass. Of course, these crimes happen in neighborhoods without camps, but it was rare before the population of the camps exploded, and it goes back to being rare during the periods when the camps are cleared.

We have found used/uncapped needles on the street and in wooded areas. The quantity also seems correlated with the volume of campers. There was an RV that was blatantly dealing. I procured Narcan because I did not want to see someone die.

In June, a burn caused toxic fumes that filled the neighborhood, sickening residents. A recent brushfire required a call to the fire department. The extremely dry weather, frequent

open fires and the close proximity of the camps to our homes makes us nervous.

Next steps for neighborhood and city

Applehill residents look forward to continuing a productive and non-adversarial relationship with the city and will be attending and speaking at various City Council sessions, meeting privately with city representatives, as well as with Meg Martin, Program Director of Interfaith Works. We will be continuing a positive relationship with Tye Gundal of Just Housing, who is informed and helpful. It is our hope the city will include at least one representative of the Applehill community on an advisory committee advocated for by Councilmember Lisa Parshley.

We feel the most humane solution is for permanent supportive housing be built on the site as soon as possible.

Interested community members can attend the City Council Finance Meeting September 6 at 5:30 at City Hall. This meeting will address financing and ongoing operational costs for the site including more detail on the proposal. Citizens may comment.

Candace Mercer is an artist/writer/activist who has lived in Olympia for 22 years, currently a resident of the Applehill neighborhood. She wrote about the Chaplin/Thompson shooting in WIP. She has worked with the Thurston Mason Crisis Clinic, the Northwest Justice Project, and the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice.

Local governments must protect the environment

This month’s interview on “Glen’s Parallax Perspectives” will inform, inspire and motivate us to urge local our governments to do a better job of protecting the environment.

People everywhere really do care about the environment, but environmental problems persist all the way from the global level down to the local level. This interview will help community members understand why local governments often fail to protect the environment – and how citizens can be more effective in urging them to protect it. It is possible to think globally and act locally.

Three knowledgeable, insightful guests – Cindy Beckett, Tye Menser, and Helen Wheatley – will help us explore this topic, drawing upon their vast knowledge and experience to explain things clearly. Our expert guests will help us understand the difficult problems and inspire us to solve them.

The environmental movement was strong in the late 1960s and the 1970s, so we got governments to pass strong laws that are still useful. But some realities have moved beyond the realities of half a century ago, so we need strong new laws to further protect the environment from the more deeply understood problems and the new dangers.

Our guests will explain several reasons why governments are failing to adequately enforce laws and regulations. For instance, many specific sites are complicated by overlapping jurisdictions and fragmented responsibilities, so it’s hard to get various parts of government

to accept responsibility. Also, most elected officials and planning department staffs and hearings examiners do not understand the relevant science deeply enough to make informed decisions. Furthermore, real estate developers carry too much weight.

As with other problems, grassroots people-power is a great remedy. We need to learn the laws, the science, and the procedures, and we need to mobilize people to solve the problems. Yes, ordinary people can indeed study the laws and regulations and learn how to push back to protect their local streams, wetlands, and other sensitive areas. Our guests shared several inspiring examples.

Watch through your computer or on TCTV

Everyone everywhere can watch this interview – and/or read a thorough summary of what we said – through the “TV Programs” part of my blog, www.parallaxperspectives.org. Each program is also posted to one or more categories listed on the blog.

Cable TV subscribers in Thurston County can watch on Thurston Community Television (TCTV) every Monday at 1:30 pm, every Wednesday at 5:00 pm, and every Thursday at 9:00 pm.

**Questions? Contact
Glen Anderson, the
TV series’ producer/
host at (360) 491-9093
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Glen’s Parallax Perspectives

Little Hollywood

A blog about the local news and events of and around Olympia, Washington.

Tumwater Educator Union Members Rally • Justice Sought for Yvonne McDonald • Unhealthy Air Quality in South Puget Sound • Just Housing, Homeless Camp Residents Organize • Nickerson Camp Residents Speak to Little Hollywood

Tip or story idea? Email Janine Gates at Ja9gates@aol.com

The Month of Labor–September

Labor Day – 3 September 2018

Mark Bean

The first Labor Day was celebrated 136 years ago on a Tuesday, September 5, 1882 at a time when working people took their grievances to the street, and their organizations embodied that spirit.

Rank and file workers have begun to remind us that through organizing, victory is possible. 39,000 Verizon workers ended a 45-day strike that forced their predatory company to back off out-sourcing call center jobs. 40,000 Chrysler workers forced their leaders in the UAW back to the table to negotiate a path to standard wages for members subject to Tier 2 wages. Labor is not dead.

This year there are echoes of that spirit in the teachers’ fight for livable wages and better schools in Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, and North Carolina. These are predominately Republican Party-controlled, conservative states. The strikes have been referred to as the “Red State Revolt.” Teachers are taking to the streets and protesting not only for salary boosts, but also for additional school funding, racial justice, gender equality and gun control.

Missouri workers defeated a right-to-work ballot proposition in August. The coordinated effort by labor leaders and shoe leather on the street from the rank and file produced a lopsided result in favor of workers: 67% no and 33% yes out of 1,389,316 votes cast. Since only 8.7% of employed Missouri workers are union, it’s clear that the wave that swept through Missouri in this fight included far more than union members.

Down I-5 in Portland, Burgerville fast food workers got organized by the IWW. In the past two years other fast food workers have walked out of their restaurants to demand a pay raise to \$15 per hour and the right to unionize.



Above: Jillian Emerson, 17, and Jessica Bowerman, 17, will be seniors at Black Hills High School in September. They rallied in support of their teachers and others represented by the Tumwater Education Association outside Tumwater School District offices on Saturday afternoon. Below: Tumwater Education Association members rally on Saturday. Photos by Janine Gates, Little Hollywood



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Also in Portland, temp workers for the Metro regional government partnered with 15 Now Portland to win major increases in a first contract through AF-SCME Local 3580.

The Thurston Lewis Mason Labor Council will hail Labor Day this year with a picnic at Pioneer Park in Tumwater. We will celebrate our holiday

with shouts for organizing many who turn the wheels of the economic system. We will be proud to demand our equal share, and justice for those who do not have justice.

These examples show a worker groundswell from below, inclusive and running counter to the status quo thinking and advice of institutionalized Labor, and Environmental organizations. It will take a Movement from Below to overturn the dominant One-Percenters wielding their financial grip, state-sponsored surveillance, and law enforcement in order to control our country and its workers.

Labor could support such a movement, turning its organizations toward the fight for a new racial equality, the new “illegal” immigrants, and yes, even the so-called Patriot Army of Trump, who are really fellow workers who have no sense of their radical working-class heritage. Alexander Cockburn took note of these Patriots in *The Nation*, back in June 1995; “these young workers should be getting decent radical analysis and some respectful attention”. Perhaps the new Labor groundswell will learn and employ the models presented by the Occupy Movement, or the swift tactical methods of those who in 5 days shook the world when the WTO met in Seattle in 1999. New times require new thinking, organization and action.

Mark Bean was born and raised on Olympia's Westside



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Declining population and growing clout: Demographic shifts that undermine democracy

Gary Murrell

Sometime between the years 2040 and 2050, the demographics of the US will have shifted to such an extent that seventy percent of the people will live in just fifteen states. Put another way, thirty percent of the population will live in thirty-five states.

Those thirty-five states will hold the most rural, politically conservative, religious, and least formally educated people in the country, and their overwhelming control of the US Senate will bring on a crisis of democracy unlike any the United States has seen since its founding.

We've all read our Madison or been exposed, of late incessantly by reactionaries, to his reasoning for creating the United States as a republic, with some necessary democratic components, rather than as pure democracy.

In a pure democracy, Madison claimed, a common passion or interest would almost always be felt by a majority that would sacrifice the minority to achieve its goal. Madison's primary concern was that in a pure democracy property rights would always be insecure.

For Madison and his fellow drafters of the Constitution, the purpose of government was to protect those who have, from those who don't. "Those who hold and those who are without property," Madison wrote in Federalist 10, "have ever formed distinct interests [classes] in society."

To put it more bluntly, Madison worried that his class -- consisting of white men with property including both land and slaves -- was in the minority position subject to the majority of property-less white men, women, Indians and African Americans, both male and female, slave and free. The founder's bete noire, the mob.

The founders' solution to the dangers of democracy is familiar to us—a government with three co-equal branches: legislative, executive, and judicial.

Within that system the founders also grappled with other problems. How was power to be apportioned between slave states and free states? How were states' rights to be honored? After all, in the Articles of Confederation, the first attempt to create a government after the revolution, every state had been "sovereign, free and indepen-

dent," and every state had an equal vote in the Congress.

To solve these latter problems the founders created a bi-cameral legislature—House and Senate—and devised a system we now call the Electoral College, to choose a president. Members of the House of Representatives, the lesser of the two chambers of Congress, had two year terms, and were to

When 30 percent of the population controls 70 percent of the seats in the US Senate, the United States will have government by minority

be popularly elected. Each state would have members apportioned according to their population—one for every 30,000 originally, now about 730,000. But each state would have at least one member.

The Senate, the upper chamber with six-year terms, would represent the states and the propertied and slaveholding classes, and every state would have two senators. Originally chosen by the state legislatures, the Senate has been a popularly elected body since the ratification of the 17th Amendment in 1913.

In essence, the executive and Congress mirrored the British system of representation: the one, king/president; the few, House of Lords/Senate; the many, House of Commons/House of Representatives.

The Electoral College, that eighteenth century anachronism devised to keep the control of choosing a president in the hands of the ruling class, drew its members from appointments made in each state legislature.

The number of electors in each state matched the number of House members plus the two Senators. So, for example, Washington State now fields eleven electors in Presidential elections, equal to our nine members of the House and two Senators. The Electoral College currently has 538 members.

Congress, from its original 105 members in 1790, increased the number of seats in the House after every census. The United States having grown significantly throughout the nineteenth century, both geographically and in population, in 1911 Congress raised the number of representative from 391 to 435. In 1929 Congress passed the Permanent Apportionment Act, which sealed the number of House seats at 435.

From that point until now, after every census, seats in the House are reapportioned according to population. States that lose population lose House seats; states that gain population gain House seats. So even though the population of the United States increases, the number of House members does not.

As population goes up, each member of the House represents more and more people, now a national average of about 730,000. But every state, no matter the population, still gets at least one House member. Currently there are six states with one House member and fifteen states with between two and five members each. And regardless of population and number of Representatives in the House, each of those twenty-one states has two members of the Senate.

By 2050, the reshuffling of population in the United States will have dramatic effects on the House, Senate, and Electoral College. As people move from

rural states, seventy percent of the population will be living in the urban megalopolises of fifteen states, House membership will reflect that change. The fifteen states with the greatest population will pick up House seats from states losing population.

That shift in House members will be reflected in the number of electoral votes allocated to each state. If House membership follows population trends, then the fifteen most populous states could conceivably control seventy percent of (or 305) House seats.

Looking to the Electoral College, the total electoral vote controlled by those fifteen states would be 335, considerably more than the 267 majority required to elect a President.

Since the Democratic Party currently enjoys a significant lead in urban voters, the population shift could benefit that party enormously. The population shift might also, perhaps, end the anomaly the country has experienced twice in this century, when the Electoral College vote has been out of sync with the popular vote.

However, the easiest solution to he problems with the Electoral College would be simply to get rid of it and elect the President by popular vote, which would certainly produce a more democratic outcome.

The most difficult and intractable problem with the population shift will come with the makeup of the Senate. The founders' configuration of the Senate in the Constitution was a sop to the smaller, less populated states, a way to provide some equality.

Currently the Senate dramatically under-represents the most populous states by a ratio of about 70 to 1. 51 percent of the population lives in 10 states but claim only 20 percent of US Senators.

With the shift in population, less than

a third of the members of the Senate will come from the 15 states with 70 percent of the population, whereas the 35 least populous states will send over two-thirds of the Senators.

Many states, including Oregon and Washington, already have a gaping east/west or urban/rural divide. Imagine what will happen in the United States Senate when 30 percent of the population, the least formally educated, the most conservative/reactionary, the most religious, controls 70 of 100 Senators.

Already, the 20 Senators from the most populous states—California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Georgia, North Carolina, and Michigan—have no more voting power in the Senate than those from the ten least-populous states— Wyoming, Vermont, Alaska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Delaware, Montana, Rhode Island, Maine, and New Hampshire.

When 30 percent of the population controls 70 percent of the seats in the US Senate, the United States will have government by minority. To call it democratic would be a travesty. Clearly, something must be done if what now only passes for democracy is to be rescued.

Like the Electoral College, the Senate has outlived its usefulness and should be abolished. Neither institution is going to go quietly, but go they must. The small states will not give up their advantage willingly, but if the country is to have a semblance of democracy after 2050, we may need a unicameral legislature, with refinements. Certainly we cannot have the power relationships between the states that characterized our first government under the Articles of Confederation.

Gary Murrell is Professor Emeritus of History at Grays Harbor College and is a resident of Grays Harbor County where he writes and tends his garden.

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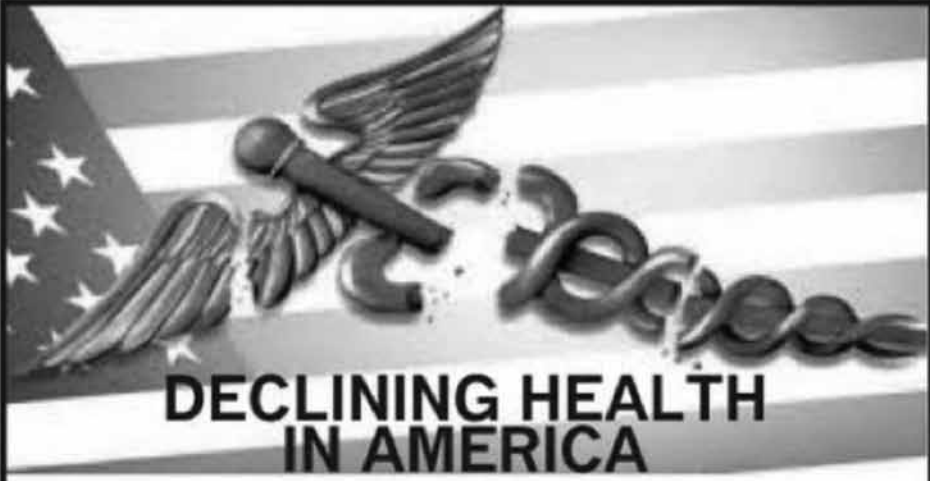
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Washington state’s Freedom Foundation: Every worker’s enemy

Guerry Hodderson

In the debates over the causes of wage stagnation, the decline in union power has not received nearly as much attention as globalization, technological change, and the slowdown in Americans’ educational attainment.

Unions, especially in industries and regions where they are strong, help boost the wages of all workers by establishing pay and benefit standards that many non-union firms adopt. But this union boost to nonunion pay has weakened as the share of private-sector workers in a union has fallen from 1 in 3 in the 1950s to about 1 in 20 today.

Today labor unions and other organizations fighting for working-class people in the US are in an ideological war with economic libertarians and social reactionaries mobilized by the Koch brothers (the second wealthiest family in the country) and their billionaire pals.

In Washington State, the so-called Freedom Foundation is a key player in this right-wing, anti-union movement. The foundation’s CEO is Tom McCabe, who led the Building Industry Association of Washington State for 21 years and was called the “counterbalance to labor unions” in the Northwest by the *Wall Street Journal*. His goal is to make Washington, Oregon and California “right-to-work” states and thereby decimate union membership.

Right-to-work laws divide and conquer

Right-to-work laws were popularized in the 1930’s to counter militant, interracial union organizing drives during the depression. Texan Vance Muse, who coined the term, was a lobbyist, political strategist and white supremacist who used racial stereotypes and slurs against Black workers to win White support. Of the 28 states with these laws on their books today, 19 states adopted them during the Jim Crow era. Advocates of these laws pretend that a single worker can win fair wages and better working conditions negotiating alone with multinational corporations than by joining forces with other workers.

A wide-ranging reactionary agenda

While union-busting is the main focus of the Freedom Foundation, it also advocates extreme property rights to the point of opposing any and all environmental protections and laws that regulate pollution and land use planning.

According to their web site they are “working to reverse the stranglehold public sector unions have on our government” while vilifying teachers’ right to strike and supporting privatization of education. The foundation opposes raising the minimum wage and expanding sick leave laws. It advocates overturning sanctuary city ordinances and Seattle’s new tax on high income earners. It is also trying to block unionization drives by Uber and Lyft drivers.

Contempt for women and workers

If all that was not enough, the foundation is also anti-abortion and invited Andy Puzder, former CEO of CKE Restaurants, the parent company of the Carl’s Jr. and Hardee’s burger chains, to address their 2017 annual meeting.

Puzder was President Trump’s nominee for Labor Secretary until it was revealed his former wife had charged him with violent domestic abuse — on Oprah’s TV show no less! About the

same time, a news organization study brought to light the fact that Carl’s Jr. and Hardee’s ranked first among major burger chains in the rate of federal employment discrimination lawsuits per billions of dollars in sales. That didn’t stop Trump from claiming that “his extensive record fighting for workers makes him the ideal candidate to lead the Department of Labor.” Congress thought better of it and rejected him, but not the Freedom Foundation.

[The backers of dark money networks] are working day and night to turn corporate self-interest into a movement of people on the streets.

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“Dark Money” fills their coffers

Unfortunately, today economic libertarians like the billionaire Koch brothers are making a comeback. Now they are allied with social reactionaries who want to turn the clock back on every advance made in the last 90-plus years: women’s right to abortion, LGBTQ rights, the Voting Rights Act, Obamacare, immigration reform, Social Security, Medicare, public education, etc., etc.

The Freedom Foundation does not get money directly from the super-rich Koch brothers, because they mask their gifts through a maze of secret, non-profit charities and “social welfare” groups which manage to evade public accounting through the use of various tax loopholes. In politics, this is called Dark Money.

Larry Kerschner

The Lewis County Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons wrote a Resolution asking the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners to support the abolition of nuclear weapons. We asked them to place it on the agenda of a regular meeting in order to have a public discussion on this important issue. The Commissioners have refused to even discuss the Resolution.

Knowing the conservative bent of the Commissioners, we didn’t have high expectation of the BOCC passing the Resolution. We did have an expectation that since the United States Constitution and the Washington State Constitution guarantee a right of redress to the government they would place it on the agenda of public meeting for citizen discussion.

There are approximately 1000 nuclear weapons nearby at the Bangor Submarine Base on the Kitsap Peninsula, approximately 65 miles North of Lewis County and 20 miles West of Seattle. The United States has plans to spend between one and two trillion dollars over the next 30 years to completely rebuild all of its nuclear weapons and weapons systems (missile, submarine and airplane delivery systems).

The willingness to inflict massive indiscriminate destruction on civilian

Normally, private foundations are required to publicly disclose their finances in order to prove that they are actually performing the public service for which they get tax exemptions.

But the billionaire elite has created rightwing entities such as Donors Trust and Donors Capital to shield the rich from publicity about their political giving. What is known is that Donors Trust gave away \$740 million between 1999 and 2015 without ever revealing where the money came from. Donors Trust backed the Freedom Foundation with \$1,900,000.

The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, another rabidly anti-union group, gave \$600,000 to the Freedom Foundation between 2011 and 2015. Harry Bradley was an early supporter of the rabidly racist and reactionary John Birch Society which smeared the Black civil rights movement as a Moscow front. The Bradley family foundation has raised more than \$750 million since 1999 to push their far right, corporate agenda including backing a little-known county executive named Scott Walker. Walker went on to bust public worker unions as the governor of Wisconsin.

A tentacle in the Kochtopus

The Freedom Foundation is a tentacle of what has become known as the “Kochtopus.” The Kochtopus is the network of foundations, think tanks, media outlets, so-called scholars, hand-picked politicians, and phony public interest groups that work to legitimize

populations undermines our deepest human and ethical values. Massive nuclear retaliation is a form of genocide that should be completely unacceptable from any legal or sane point of view. It violates not only the principles of international law, common decency and common sense, but also



the ethical principles of every major religion. The United States and all of its communities, instead of continuing the manufacturing of and the threat of the the use of nuclear weapons, should instead take the lead in the global rejection of nuclear weapons.

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty was signed April 8, 2010 in Prague by Russia and the United States and entered into force on Feb. 5, 2011.

a corporate agenda. They are working day and night to turn corporate self-interest into a movement of people on the streets. And as can be seen with the formation of the Tea Party and the rightward march of the Republican Party, they are extremely effective, especially since the Democrats themselves support a corporate agenda and find it impossible to mount a good defense of the social gains of the 20th century.

These economic libertarians believe in completely unregulated capitalism. They want to turn the clock back to the early 20th century when government in the US played no role in assisting the poor or regulating conditions of work. When charities and churches were the only social safety net. When there were no labor laws any employer had to respect. When massacres of workers and their families were the price paid for striking.

Today this is called neo-liberalism but it is just a new name for the libertarians’ old idea that capitalism, free of any and all government regulation is the engine of economic growth and human happiness. That may be true for billionaires, but the rest of us need unions, public services, healthcare we can afford, and public education. And a large majority of Americans agree. A 2017 Gallup poll found that approval of unions had risen five points in a single year, to 61 percent, the highest since 2003.

This article appeared in the Freedom Socialist Newspaper of July 26, 2018, and is reprinted by permission (fspviews@igc.org. It is identified as a statement from the campaign of Steve Hoffman for US Senate. Hoffman received about 7000 votes running against Maria Cantwell.

New START replaced the 1991 START Treaty, which expired December 2009, and superseded the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, which terminated when New START entered into force. New START continues the bipartisan process of verifiably reducing U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals begun by former Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. New START is the first verifiable U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control treaty to take effect since START I in 1994.

Despite some recent belligerent talk, the governments of the two largest nuclear powers recognize the need to vastly reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world. Previous treaties have called for the eventual abolition of such weapons. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was negotiated at the United Nations headquarters in New York in March, June and July 2017, with the participation of more than 135 nations.

Similar resolutions have been discussed in a number of cities and counties around the country. I would be willing to predict that the majority of people in Lewis County if asked would agree that nuclear weapons should be eliminated. This should not be a difficult decision for the BOCC to make. Ask your Commissioner to make it.

Thoughts on the Second Amendment and “a well regulated militia”

Larry Mosqueda

In November 2018 there will be a ballot initiative to have more gun regulations in Washington State.

Initiative 1639, if passed, would raise the age to buy a semi-automatic weapon to 21 and require enhanced background checks as well as training and waiting periods. It would also require gun owners to safely secure any firearms in their homes.

Opponents of gun regulation usually cite the Second Amendment to the US Constitution as a reason to put no restrictions on gun ownership. These arguments are almost always wrong.

In her book *Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment* (City Lights, 2018), Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz examines the creation of “gun culture” in America before the writing of the Constitution. She also explores the history of the time when the Second Amendment was written (1791) and its application in the modern era. (Much of the information in this article comes from this book.)

The Second Amendment itself is very precise and short and can easily be memorized by all who argue for or against its application to the present. It reads in full: “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”

Gun culture never was about hunting

As reviewer Nick Estes, notes, Dunbar-Ortiz shows that “... gun culture has never been about hunting. From crushing slave rebellions to Indigenous resistance, arming individual white settler men has always been the strategy for maintaining racial and class rules and for taking indigenous land from the founding of the settler nation to the present.”

In the 17th and 18th centuries a main purpose of gun regulation was to require European men to own guns. This was to conquer, settle and defend territory occupied by British settlers over the Indigenous population, and to make sure that enslaved people could not run away or could be recaptured if they tried to escape.

Groups formed into settler militias that helped conquer the west – at that time covering the territory occupied today by Ohio and Kentucky.

By the time of the Revolutionary War (1775-1783), the writing and ratifica-

tion of the Constitution (1787-1789) and the Second Amendment (1791), gun culture was becoming more formalized.

As Howard Zinn has noted, the country being formed as the US with its new Constitution established a society that was half free for whites (without total freedom for white workers) and half slave (Africans). Native people in this scenario were basically being eliminated.

“The US gun culture is like no other in the world, especially for a country that is not in a civil war nor experiencing organized armed conflict within its borders.”

From slave patrols to police culture and mass incarceration

The Second Amendment is one of the few places in the Constitution that has the exact reason for its existence written into it, i.e. “being necessary to the security of a free state.”

In his article, “The Second Amendment was ratified to Preserve Slavery”, Thom Hartmann argues that the “well regulated militia” referred to in the amendment was actually the slave patrols. Well-armed white men were

needed as slave patrollers in the case of runaway slaves. The free state referred to in the amendment was actually a slave state that needed to protect its freely held property (i.e. African human beings).

Dunbar-Ortiz notes that by the late 1600s settler militias helped to set the “basis for US police culture after slaving people was illegalized,” i.e. after the Civil War.

This was readily apparent in the post-war period of 1865-1954 and the more modern era as explored in Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor's *From #Black Lives Matter to Black Liberation*.

No other gun culture like our own

The US gun culture is like no other in the world, especially for a country that is not in a civil war nor experiencing organized armed conflict within its borders.

According to Dunbar-Ortiz, using a 2013 study by the Pew Research Center, “Seventy-four percent of gun owners in the United States are male, and 82 percent of gun owners are white, which means that 61 percent of all adults who own guns are white men and this group accounts for 31 percent of the total US population.”

A 2018 report from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva found that Americans account for 40 percent of all guns owned in the world, yet the US has less than 5 percent of the world's population. The Geneva study states that there are 393,000,000 civil-

ian guns in the US or about 121 per 100 civilians. This includes all men, women, and children.

Yet, and this is important, while gun culture does exist, it does not directly involve the majority of Americans. World gun ownership is heavily concentrated in the US and it is heavily concentrated among a few Americans. A *Washington Post* report from September 2016 on a Harvard-Northwestern study notes that 78% of American adults do not own any guns and just 22% do. Of the owners, 19% of American adults own half of all the guns while a mere 3% owns the other half. The top 3% of gun owners own an average of 17 guns apiece.

The impact of guns in the US is well known. Mass shootings, usually defined as 4 or more persons shot, killed or injured at one time, happen on almost a daily basis—literally. *The Guardian* reported in February 2018 that in the previous three years there were 1,624 mass shootings in 1,870 days. Mass killings, especially those at schools, make the headlines on a regular basis, but the vast majority of those who die by guns are suicides and regular homicides.

The original purpose of the Second Amendment may appear to be no longer valid, but as Dunbar-Ortiz demonstrates, it helped to create the gun culture and the police culture that permeate our society, both well-described in the Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor book cited above.

Role of the NRA

One of the primary groups that has twisted the current interpretation of the Second Amendment is the National Rifle Association (NRA). In her book, Dunbar-Ortiz covers the history of the group and its evolution. Originally the NRA was a post-Civil War organization that provided education on how to shoot and handle a gun. It was not always against regulation of guns, but over the years and especially since the Reagan era, the NRA became an extreme right-wing organization that has worked against almost any restrictions on any aspect of gun use and ownership.

Dunbar-Ortiz also explains in detail the historical connection between the Second Amendment, US gun culture and US foreign policies and wars. A brief reminder of one such connection may be in order: The current president of the NRA is Oliver North, President Reagan's right-hand man during the Contra war against the people of Nicaragua in the 1980s. In 1994, North ran for US senator from Virginia. His opponent, Senator Chuck Robb (D. Va.) concisely described North's career up to that point:

“My opponent is a document-shredding, Constitution-trashing, commander-in-chief-bashing, Ayatollah-loving, arms-dealing, criminal-protecting, resume-enhancing, Noriega-coddling, Swiss-banking, law-breaking, letter-faking, self-serving, snake-oil salesman who can't tell the difference between the truth and a lie.”

North narrowly lost the election, became a FOX News host and now continues his career at the NRA.

Dunbar-Ortiz notes that the NRA has written on its lobby wall in Fairfax, Virginia only this portion of the Second Amendment “The right of the

people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.”

In reality the original wording of the Second Amendment has neither been amended nor altered. A good place to begin our self-education about this amendment would be to read and examine Dunbar-Ortiz's new book and educate others about adopting a modern version of the concept of “well regulated” when it comes to the subject of gun control.

Larry Mosqueda is Political Economy Faculty Emeritus at The Evergreen State College and has been active for decades in Olympia Movement for Peace & Justice, and other groups.

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The Jazz Jam is regularly the 1st Sunday of the month. A fine rhythm section of piano, drums, and bass will play throughout the jam with the musicians who sign up to play. Although the jam is free, donations for that rhythm section are gladly accepted.

Friday, September 7 • 7:30 PM • Free

REDS Band

This is a CD Release Party for REDS, and the event is **FREE** to all ages. There's nothing quite as Pacific Northwestern as Olympia's teen fiddle-and-folk band, REDS Band. With no shortage of musical talent, REDS perform a mix of original, popular and traditional music across Washington state, using the bodhran, cello, fiddle, guitar, and mandolin.

Saturday, September 8 • 7:30 PM

Alberto Cumplido & Gwen Franz

Multi-faceted masters of their instruments, Chilean guitarist Alberto Cumplido and Pacific Northwest violist Gwen Franz bring a varied buffet of music to this concert. Items on the menu include beautiful arrangements of Bach violin sonatas, a sampling of jazz tunes, folk songs by Benjamin Britten, and the North American premier of Alberto's new piece, *El Mito de Sisifo*, written especially for this duo. Something for everyone at this show!

Tickets: \$15, Student/low income: \$10

Sunday, September 16 • 2:00 PM, Free

A Bluegrass and Acoustic Music Jam

This is a 3rd Sunday monthly jam of bluegrass and acoustic musicians

Friday, September 21 • 7:30 PM

Michael Jerome Browne

We are happy to present for the first time a Traditions three-time Canadian Folk Music Award winner (Traditional Singer, 2015; Solo Artist, 2012 & 2008), Maple Blues Award Winner (with 30 nominations since 1999), Kerrville (Texas) New Folk Finalist, Four-time Juno Award Nominee in both the Roots/Traditional and Blues categories- MJB is a multi-instrumentalist, a songwriter, and a living encyclopedia of American Roots music.

Tickets: \$15, Student/low income: \$10

Sunday, September 23

Hootenanny 2:00 PM, free

An open sing-a-long of favorite songs from the 60's on up to the current day. A number of performers present songs and Holly Gwinn Graham hosts the event.

Choro das 3 7:00 PM

We are so glad that this Brazilian family can return for a concert. We had an outstanding show with them when they were here. Choro das 3 is a Brazilian instrumental group of three sisters and their father that first started to play as a band in 2002. The music they play is called Choro, a form of urban jazz native to Brazil that shares a similar feel with New Orleans jazz or ragtime or bluegrass. They have performed around the world.

Tickets: \$20, Student/low income: \$15

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