

Dennis Kucinich in Olympia

A seasoned advocate talks about the importance of public power

Paul Pickett

On February 4, Paul Pickett met with Dennis Kucinich for an interview. The following are excerpts from that longer conversation.

Paul: Dennis, why are you in Olympia?

Dennis: I'm here to support the initiative to create public power in Thurston County, to give the people a chance not just to own the system, but to have local control: control over rates, control over service reliability and control over the policies of their electric system that impact the environment.

We're at a moment in the history of our country where people are coming to understand that having control over utilities is critical. This is a time for people to strengthen communities too, by having public power, to empower communities, to control their destiny economically and to have true local control.

Paul: Talk about your experience with public power when you were Mayor of Cleveland.

Dennis: My acquaintance with the issue of public power goes back 50 years, when I was a city councilman. I saw that efforts were being made to undermine Cleveland's publicly owned utility, then known as Muny Light. I witnessed the private utility attempting to persuade city council members to give away the city's electric system. I saw what was being done to subvert the city's ownership. In 1976, the City of Cleveland actually transacted a sale of the electric system to the private utility, giving it a complete monopoly in Cleveland.

I intervened with a petition drive that blocked the sale. In 1977, that petition drive was so effective that people began asking me to run for mayor. I ran for mayor on a promise to save the citizens' electric system. I was elected on that promise in November of 1977. And on my first day in office, I effectively cancelled the sale.

A year later,, the biggest bank in Ohio told me that if I didn't sell the city's electric system to the private utility, the bank would not renew the city's credit on loans. I said no. The banks put the city into default, even though we had millions of dollars in property we could have used to pay off the debt. It was totally corrupt. Every agency in town, including the media, was in on it. When I said no they put the city into default—and I lost the next election. But the



Dennis Kucinich speaking In Olympia at the Community Center. Photo by Paul Pickett

municipal electric system stayed.

Fifteen years later, the system expanded. The people of Cleveland then became aware that my decision saved the city hundreds of millions of dollars in electric bills for the people. People realized I had sacrificed the mayor's office to make sure that people had a power system they could call their own, which at that point provided electricity at 20 percent cheaper.

That opened a door for me to return. And in 1994, I was elected to the Ohio Senate on this campaign slogan: "Because he was right." Two years after that I was elected to Congress on a slogan that said "Light up Congress". So people really understood in Cleveland that I laid it all on the line.

A former mayor of Cleveland, Tom Johnson, who was responsible for the creation of public power over

100 years ago, said this: "I believe in municipal ownership of all public service facilities, of parks, of water-works, of electric systems. Because if you do not own them, they will in time own you. They will rule your politics, corrupt your institutions, and finally destroy your liberties."

It sent a message around the country that there's something worth fighting for - your own public power system. That it really does mean power, not only in the sense of electricity when you flip a switch. But it's true political power to be able to make decisions affecting your own destiny and not be at the mercy of corporations.

What's happening in Thurston County is really a sign of hope where people still believe that they can do something to control their own destiny when it comes to utilities. There is an awareness out here and people are ready to do battle. I'm here to support public power.

Paul: I remember your strong progressive stance when you ran for president. Talk about your roots – when did you start realizing where your values lay?

Dennis: My dad was a truck driver, a member of Teamster Local 407. Mom was a housewife, with maybe a year of college. When the war started, she went to work as a lot of young women did at that time – in defense related industries.

The first big break in my life was that my mother taught me to read

► Kucinich, cont. on page 6

Ditch the car! Get on the bus and go

Our roving reporter

In January people in Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Yelm suddenly found boarding the city bus a pleasure! No fumbling for exact change, counting out pennies, searching for a pass, stuffing wrinkled dollar bills into a resisting slot: riding the bus is free!

And there's more. As of February 3, ruralTransit (rT—the IT partner serving Bucoda, Grand Mound, Rainier, Rochester, Tenino and the Confederated Tribes) also stopped collecting a fare.

The new zero-fare policy is already showing how significant a barrier fares were for people who might otherwise have taken a bus instead of a car (or walking). According to boarding figures for January, as many as 60,000 car trips might have been eliminated. That's a lot of traffic! That's a lot of fossil fuel exhaust! And if you think of the savings in fares—that's a lot of money left in pockets!

Based on the experience of other communities who tried zero fare, IT

Intercity Transit ridership figures for o-fare demonstration project				
January	2019	2020	Difference	% change
Weekday	288,284	331,675	43,391	15.1%
Weekend	46,410	69,348	22,938	49.4%
Combined	334,694	401,023	66,329	19.8%

Source: Intercity Transit

estimates there could be as much as a 60% increase in ridership. They're pleased with the overall 19.8% in the first month as a good start. And look at that nearly 50% increase in weekend riders: IT had heard during its outreach that people were giving up shifts working on the weekend because they didn't have transportation. As a result, IT changed the weekend span of service (starting earlier and ending later) to mimic weekday runs. Based on these January figures it's already making a difference to people.

More riders, fewer barriers, faster trips?

Ridership is only one measure of success of the new policy. Another factor IT will look at is speed—

whether by not collecting fares it allows the bus to move more quickly. They're also looking at ease of use/ removal of barriers as a factor. Hearing from riders about how elimination of fares has changed their travel habits will contribute to their ability to evaluate the project.

Building an efficient system

Our fare-free rides come thanks to a 5-year demonstration project, developed after voters passed a sales tax increase in November 2018. Checking in with voters over the next year, IT found that people wanted a public transportation system that could get them where they needed to go faster and easier. They also wanted

► Get on the bus, continued on page 4

Works in Progress (WIP), is a community newspaper based in Olympia WA, that has been published monthly since 1990.

WIP's mission is to contribute to the struggle for justice across economic, social, environmental and political realms, and to expand participatory democracy across classes, races, and genders.

Editorial policy

Our priority is to focus on stories that are ignored or misrepresented in the media, especially those that relate directly to our mission. We seek well-researched news stories, serious analyses of issues confronting our communities and account of personal experiences or reflections by local writers. We encourage articles that relate to the monthly theme, but material on other topics is also welcome.

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

Once we receive a submission, we may choose to publish it or not. While the views expressed in the material we print are those of the author alone, WIP aims to print material that is consistent with our mission. WIP reserves the right to edit all submissions for accuracy, length, and clarity of expression. We will work with authors if there is a need for editing that extends beyond those areas.

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The First Amendment

When paid speech replaced free speech, actual speech faced criminal penalties

It might seem from news stories that the biggest “threat” to free speech today comes from intolerant students—both those who shout down speakers promoting white supremacy, and those who disrupt presenters arguing for Palestinians. In fact, there are few such incidents, though those are extensively reported, especially by the right-wing media. (Data do show another threat to free speech: schools dismiss faculty for “political speech” and most often it’s for “liberal” or “left” speech).

Thinking Out Loud

The real threat to free speech comes from another direction entirely: the overpoweringly loud noise of corporations as they make ever-greater inroads into American life. Over the past several decades, corporations have been able to amass and deploy once unimaginable amounts of money. Similarly, individuals who run the corporations now can amass and deploy once unimaginably huge fortunes of their own.

They use the corporate treasuries (other peoples’ money) and their fortunes to spread this gospel of the marketplace and money as the measure of all things. They funded think tanks, academic departments and researchers to denigrate public institutions and paint government as the enemy. We learned not to trust public services, schools, transportation systems, government agencies, and more—obliging us to welcome their replacement by private companies run by those multimillionaire CEOs.

They moved into the political realm, selecting and supporting willing individuals to run for positions in local, state and federal government where they would make the law. Those people in turn appoint people to courts to interpret the law.

Once this was accomplished, corporations went to court to contest laws that might impede their pursuit of power. In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled against limiting contributions by individuals to campaigns and candidates because the “unfettered interchange of ideas [was necessary] for bringing about political and social changes desired by the people.”

In the following years, the justices struck down laws that would have limited spending by independent groups, by the candidate of his or her own money and any limit on total expenditures during an election cycle. By 2010 and 2014 the justices remembered that corporations were persons and they could spend as much as they liked on elections as long as they didn’t give directly to a candidate (that might seem like bribery).

It was as if the justices read the First Amendment to say, “Congress

shall make no laws abridging paid speech.”

The justices reasoned that any restriction on spending for political communication “necessarily reduces the quantity of expression.” Supporters of the ruling went further: “to speak effectively, people have to spend money — on things like paper and pencils, signs, computers, printing presses, and broadcast facilities.” (Steve Simpson in *The Hill*, Sept. 2016)

That says it all: to speak effectively people have to spend money. Which is to say, those who have unlimited amounts of money to spend will be able to indulge in unlimited political communication. That consigns 99% of the people to things like paper and pencils, shouting on the street corner—drowned out on the internet by “content creators,” on the airwaves by ad agencies, and on other avenues by paid consultants.

Courts have ruled that money in political campaigns may involve speech alone, conduct alone, or a mixture of speech and conduct—and since all of these involve communication all are protected under the First Amendment.

But is other communication and conduct similarly protected?. Congress and state legislatures have adopted gag orders and other measures that constrain actual political speech. Some give corporations the right to burden speech: 13 states let food manufacturers sue anyone who disparages their products.

Journalists who have written accurately about activities our government wishes to hide from the public have been imprisoned: Julian Assange, indicted by the US and threatened with 175 years in prison is only the most famous. On page 10 of this issue there is an example of further erosion of the right accorded actual communication. The federal government used its “terrorist” list to label a man criminal for filming someone in the political act of shutting an oil pipeline valve.

Imagine if the Second Amendment guarantee of the right to bear arms were deemed subject to regulation as to time, place and manner—like the First Amendment guarantee of free speech. But it turns out that where speech is concerned, money is like guns—there is no limit to its use.

—BW

Upcoming themes

April: Will convenience destroy us? “A new way to enjoy cheese without dealing with the rind.” Carrots peeled and sized; salads washed, tossed and bagged. A new smart technology to run our appliances. Keurig pods that speed up coffee making. What do we give up in the name of convenience, of saving time? Send your submission to olywip@gmail.com by March 18.

May: Linkages. What things connect us to one another: Nextdoor online or a visit to the next door neighbor? What things connect our political analyses and organizing? Send your thoughts to olywip@gmail.com by April 15

June: Unintended consequences. There are certainly unintended consequences to actions small and large, but maybe some of those consequences are predictable. Write about your experiences and exposure to these and send the result to olywip@gmail.com by May 13.

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A modest proposal

Mike Pelly

Because of our topsy turvy economy and the rise of e-commerce Olympia now has a number of empty Big Box stores. One glaring example is the empty Toys R Us store with a huge parking lot sitting all alone on Cooper Point road. We could be using buildings like

these to get people into warm, dry, safe housing on a temporary basis. Timely access to a stable, orderly place to live is key to preventing someone from becoming a “homeless person.”

Why not turn Toys R Us into temporary housing for people living outside, in cars—or “camping” be-

hind fences and in church parking lots? Why is it thinkable to create “sanctioned tent camps” but not to make use of empty buildings?

The transformation of a place like the Toys R Us building could be carried out in a few months if all city agencies got behind it. We learned recently (via the internet) that the Chinese built a large hospital in 10 days to deal with the coronavirus! Olympia can certainly do as well! To entice (absentee?)

owners to lease their property, the city could provide a tax break — something more justifiable than the 8-year exemption given to developers for high-end apartments downtown (!)

Members of the faith community and others—including the unhoused—might willingly volunteer to help construct and staff the site. Residents could form their own management teams. Set up interior partitions for privacy and to create an area for families with kids. Install a couple of simple kitchens for food prep—and a communal commons for eating. Set up a job-search room with phones, computers, internet access and charging stations. These buildings are located in commercial areas near bus routes that would give residents easier access to job interviews and kids to school.

Olympia's population of homeless people grows every year. Programs like Rapid Rehousing have been successful in other cities. It's time Olympia, our Capitol city, steps up to the plate. We should be beyond “sanctioned tent camps” periodically raided by the police.

Mike Pelly presented this idea to Olympia City Council members at a recent meeting.



This building on Cooper Point Road was vacated by the Toys R Us company a few years ago and now sits empty at the head of an easily accessible and extensive parking lot. Photo by Mike Pelly.

You write to WIP Is the rule of law extinct in Olympia?

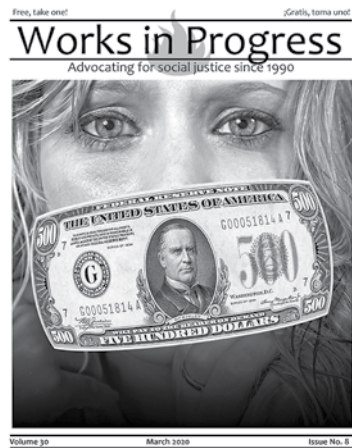
Dear WIP,

Recently I spoke to Olympia's assistant city manager, who told me that the Parks Department had a meeting with mountain bikers to plan a bike park at Kaiser Woods. He said that they didn't need to follow the Open Meetings Law. That's not true!. It's perfectly clear. *All* meetings must be open to everyone. Secret meetings are not open to everyone, and are violations of the Open Meetings Law! The City

broke the law and is still denying it! I notified the City Council, but no one responded. Is the rule of law extinct in Olympia? You can read the Open Meetings Act yourself at

<http://olympiawa.gov/~ /media/Files/Executive/AdvisoryCommittees/General-Information/Advisory-Committee-RulesofProcedure>.

Mike Vandeman, Ph.D
1609 - 6th Ave SW, Olympia



About the cover: Picture of model by Qsimple, Memories for the Future Photography. Available under Creative Commons license. Composite created by Paul Peck. \$500 courtesy of John Roberts, Jr., Antonin Scalia, Anthony Kennedy, Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito -- \$100 each. Thanks to Citizens United, the 2020 campaign is shaping up to be a bonanza, with estimates that those with deep pockets will spend nearly \$7 billion on paid advertising.

Then this happened...

...Lohen Che’s landlord kicked him and everyone else out of affordable duplexes on 10th Ave SE—and then applied for a tax exemption from the City Council for “market rate” apartments across the street. This month, the City Council granted an 8-year exemption from property tax on those apartments. Before being forced to move, Lohen had paid \$790 per month for a one bedroom. A one-bedroom in the refurbished duplexes now rents for \$1600. As Lohen wrote in the October WIP, landlords moving renters out in search of higher profits is a main source of homelessness in Olympia. (Read about what the Angelos' tax exemption is worth on page 5)

...Olympia councilmember Dani Madrone testified for the city in support of a new law that would “supercede, preempt and invalidate” local zoning that didn’t permit triplexes in every single-family lot; and in all neighborhoods allowed

dup- tri-quad-six plexes plus townhouses, stacked flats and courtyard apartments. Madrone wants the state to mandate these things because people who resisted were like parents who didn’t immunize their children: they had to be ordered by the state to submit.

...David Iyall was elected to the Thurston Conservation District Board of Supervisors in a vote that completes the reformation of the Board after an investigation by the state removed two previous members for malfeasance and neglect of duty. (See March 2019 WIP) The TCD website at www.thurstoncd.com is now a model of transparency and straightforward information about the role the District plays in Thurston County—and how it sets its rates.

WIP will gladly receive short & sweet reader contributions about things that relate to new development in stories covered in the pages of WIP. Bring ‘em on.

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Bernie Sanders captivates a rowdy crowd at a packed Tacoma Dome

Filemón Bohmer-Tapia

The night began with the Puyallup Tribal Council setting the tone for a historic rally in honor of Bernie Sanders and his supporters. In a powerful speech, Tribal Chairman David Bean welcomed the crowd to the homelands of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. The council raised their hands in appreciation to Sanders for his support and dedication to “protecting and preserving Mother Earth.” The Chairman emphasized resistance to the looming devastating incursion by the Tacoma Liquified Natural Gas (LNG) facility. Tribal canoe families honored murdered and missing indigenous women with a solemn tribute.

Musical performances from Portugal. The Man, Stephanie Anne Johnson and Travis Thompson kept the crowd going through the night. Among other speakers, 18-year-old climate justice organizer Jamie Margolin, National Asians and Pacific Islanders Organizer for the Sanders Campaign Supreet Kaur, Seattle City Council members Teresa Mosqueda and Kshama Sawant and Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal took the stage. Then it was time for the main event: Vermont Senator Bernard Sanders.

As Bernie emerged the capacity crowd erupted into a thunderous standing ovation. Bernie spoke

about his vision for a more just society. Among them: Single-payer healthcare (Medicare for All), a Green New Deal to combat climate change, tuition-free higher education and student debt cancellation, federal legalization of marijuana and the building of 10 million low income houses. Sanders called for an end to demonization of undocumented immigrants and justice for those seeking asylum, and for ending inhumane family separation at the border.

Bernie took aim at adversaries and obstacles standing between him and the presidency. Targets included Donald Trump, who Bernie called a fraud and a hoax;

and billionaire Michael Bloomberg, who Sanders labeled an oligarch attempting to buy the election. When Bernie took shots at foes in the Democratic Party establishment the crowd broke into some of the loudest applause of the night. The speech ended with a hopeful message of victory.

The Democratic National Committee, the corporate sector and a complicit mainstream media have done everything in their power to stop Sanders’ momentum. Examples include Party support of more corporate-friendly candidates in the primaries, a frequent media blackout of the Sanders campaign and the discrediting of his fol-

lowers. The healthcare industry, pharmaceutical companies and the entire Democratic Party establishment are under major threat if the movement that Bernie represents achieves success.

If victorious, the mandate arising from a Bernie win will activate more progressive candidates across the US and set off a wave of insurgent candidates taking down establishment incumbents. Increased access to a much-needed, better standard of living will only come to reality if large masses of people apply continuous economic and physical pressure to disrupt business as usual. The wealthy and powerful will look for any way to block the implementation of these social and economic programs. People must be prepared for a struggle to achieve the changes that a Bernie presidential win can bring.

Filemón Bohmer-Tapia is a community defense organizer based out of Olympia, WA.



Photo by Filemón Bohmer-Tapia



First Amendment to the US Constitution

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Get on the bus

From page 1

IT to address population growth, congestion and generally improve livability in the community.

Most of the funding for public transportation—like the funding for streets, roads and highways—comes from federal, state and local government. Fares in past years made up only about 10% of the system's budget.



The zero-fare approach allows IT to pursue all of the desires outlined in their outreach to people without having to spend taxpayer dollars investing in capital and operating costs for a fare-collection system. As stated by an IT official, “Other systems are spending dollars administering low income fare programs while some spend scarce dollars on fare enforcement. We decided that a zero-fare approach would be a better fit for our community.”

So many reasons to take the bus

The IT Board could choose to end the demonstration project before 5 years is up. Over the next few months and years, they will be tracking how well it's working. They're expecting that we as a community will take advantage of this opportunity.

Take the bus—it's ours: a publicly owned system run by local board members! Respect the ride, take good care of our union operators, our equipment—and each other. That way we'll all get where we all need to go quickly, safely and efficiently. And have a conversation with fellow riders—it's another opportunity that no car can match. And we can keep riding for free for years to come. Thanks to Ally McPherson at Intercity Transit for helping get answers to questions about the new policy.

Where did Intercity Transit get the funds to eliminate fares? Federal funds for transit dried up for several years, leaving bus systems in the lurch. In 2018, the IT Board determined that they would have to make cuts in service—unless they got new money. They went to voters with a request for a .4% increase in the sales tax. They promised to maintain, improve and even expand service. Voters passed the tax increase by an overwhelming (65%-35%) margin in November 2018. It looks like IT is keeping their word.

A short tale about the City Council incentivizing homelessness

Dan Leahy

Tenants in three duplexes located on 10th Avenue SE received a sixty-day notice to vacate in early July, 2019. A one-bedroom in the duplexes rented for around \$800 per month. Some of the tenants went to the City Council to connect the elimination of their affordable housing with the increase in homelessness.

The tenants were out by mid-September. The duplexes were remodeled. A one bedroom now rents for \$1600 per month.

In the same month the tenants were removed, the owners of the duplexes, Aaron and Holly Angelo of Vancouver, Washington, applied to the City Council for an 8-year tax-exemption. The exemption would apply to a 21-unit market-rate apartment complex across

the street from the duplexes. The Angelos estimate the residential cost of the complex at \$4,320,000, which is the amount they want exempted from tax.

The Olympia City Council considered the Angelos' request at their February 4, 2020 meeting. As is her practice, Councilmember Renata Rollins asked to have the request pulled from the Consent calendar, saying the Council should in-

centivize affordable housing, not market rate housing.

Nevertheless, when Mayor Selby called for the vote, otherwise silent Council members Bateman, Cooper, Gilman, Madrone and Parshley voted with her to give the tax exemption to the Angelos. Council member Rollins voted no.

What the City Council's vote means is that other taxpayers will cover Aaron and Holly's property taxes on the residential cost of their building at the rate of \$52,963/year or \$423,704 over eight years. It also confirms that "developers" like the Angelos will be rewarded by the Council when they eliminate housing like the duplexes. Worse, continuing to award tax exemptions for new market rate construction will mean more evictions from affordable housing and more homelessness.

Councilmember Gilman voted in November to give an 8-year tax exemption to J. Brent McKinley's market rate Harbor Heights, but suggested a temporary moratorium on new 8-year exemptions to begin January 1 of this year. The suggestion, obviously, remains just a suggestion. But maybe before the downtown is transformed by avarice and a corrupted system, citizens should demand a moratorium.



One of the six duplexes vacated by long-term tenants in September after the Angelos sent them a 60-day notice to leave. The graffiti appeared the week of February 20. Photo by Paul Peck



The Angelos' apartment building across the street from the duplexes were awarded an exemption from property taxes worth \$423,000 over 8 years. Photo by Dan Leahy

This winter, some farm workers are out in the cold

UFW

This winter, some Washington state farmworkers shared personal stories with representatives from the United Farmworkers union. Some have UFW contract protections, while non-union workers are literally left out in the cold.

Farm work is among the most dangerous industries in the nation. Performing the demanding physical tasks necessary in farm work becomes more dangerous when every part of you is frozen. There are few options for farm workers during winter -- but the conditions are different for workers who have a UFW contract. Same cold, but there are way more precautions taken.

Chateau Ste Michelle Winery in Woodinville signed a binding contract with its workers after the United Farm Workers waged an 8-year fight including strikes, boycotts and grassroots mobilizing. Today, Ste. Michelle offers working conditions that prove the benefits of unions for both employer and worker.

For the last 13 years, Fortino Lopez has worked for the Chateau Ste Michelle winery under a UFW contract. "One of the benefits of my union contract is that when the temperatures are below 25 degrees, we get the day off and we have paid leave that we can use to cover the day. Also, when the roads are really dangerous, the company

cancels work and we have a special bank of paid hours to cover the day.

José Cruz, another Chateau Ste Michelle employee told a similar story. "For me, it's very important to know that I work for a company that ensures my safety because I want to see my family every day after work. I am thankful that I belong to a union because I feel safer at work. At my job, we have safety meetings often to ensure that we know how to protect ourselves during the winter. My contract ensures that I have paid time off to cover the days when I have to take time off because of the bad weather. At companies where there is no union, they don't have this benefit. When the weather is bad, they still have to go to work otherwise they would lose a whole day's pay."

Other farmworkers don't have a choice—or a union

The situation is profoundly different for Rocio Olvera, a mother of three. She has worked in Washington state for 20 years. "In a single day I have had to work in all of the elements, in rain, sleet, and snow. I have gotten sick from working in really cold air. The freeways can be very dangerous when there is snow and ice, but I still have to find a way to work. We don't have any paid time off to cover our day if we can't work. When they close the schools because of snow I have to find someone to take care of my kids so I will be able to go to work."

In many cases, people work with equipment not designed for cold and have to supply their own protective gear. Agustin Martinez has worked in the apples, pears, cherries, grapes and more for 30 years. "The cold weather causes me a lot of pain in my hands while I work. The company doesn't give me equipment or protective wear for the cold or any training. If you have an accident because of the snow and you have to take a few

days off work, they fire you. They don't give anyone a chance to recuperate."

For more information about the United Farmworkers and issues facing those who harvest our food, go to <https://uflw.org/organizing>.

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Public Power advocate barnstorms Puget Sound

Paul Pickett

In February, former member of Congress and presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich flew from Cleveland to kick off Power to the Public, a campaign to bring public power to Thurston County. Kucinich has deep roots in the public power movement, going back to his successful efforts to save Cleveland's municipal electric utility when he was mayor.

If the Power to the Public initiative appears on the ballot in November 2020, and if it passes, the measure would give Thurston Public Utility District the authority to provide electric service. This could lead to Thurston PUD replacing electric service currently provided by Puget Sound Energy.

Kucinich raced through a packed schedule of meetings with activists, visits to schools and colleges, and public events. He gave eye-opening presentations to students at Olympia High School, SPSCC and St. Martin's University. He then swept from Olympia to Bellevue and on to Bellingham, speaking to large crowds in each city.

In Olympia, Kucinich gave a rousing talk to over 100 attendees, describing his history and the cause of public power. Audience members peppered him with questions from "how do you finance a take-over of PSE?" to "what do you think of the Green New Deal?"

In Bellevue, he spoke to those seeking to create a new PUD in East King County. Many are climate activists who see the PUD as a way to end PSE's addiction to coal and natural gas, using local control to promote conservation and renew-

able energy. If created, East King County PUD would have one of the largest customer bases in Washington State.

In Bellingham, Kucinich pitched public power and local control to an enthusiastic crowd of several hundred people. Whatcom PUD provides electric service, but the beneficiary is a single customer—an oil refinery. Bellingham is considering a plan to phase out natural gas, and many residents would like to gain local control over their energy future by having Whatcom

PUD take over PSE. With one progressive PUD Commissioner already in office, the initiative hinges on electing a second progressive Commissioner (on a board of three), this fall.

After an intense week in Washington state, Kucinich returned home, but he left behind activists inspired to ramp up the effort for public power. You can support Power to the Public by collecting signatures and making a donation. Learn more at www.powertothepublic.org.



Supporters of the public power initiative expressing some of the enthusiasm generated by Kucinich when he described the benefits of the community owning its electric utility system. Photo by Mike Pelly

Kucinich in Olympia

From page 1

by the time I was three years old. That changed my life. Being able to read at such an early age changed everything.

Then when my parents repeatedly fell on hard times, I learned that life isn't easy for a lot of people. I learned that for some people, paying the bills rivets your attention, every day, every week. That making ends meet in a big family – very difficult. Being able to put food on the table when you want to – very difficult. Being able to pay the bills – tough. If you have an illness in the family, it can change everything. If you can't afford the rent, it can change everything.

I still live in a city. Right now in Cleveland, Ohio I live in the house I bought in 1971 for \$22,500. It's in a working class neighborhood. My neighbors want to make sure that if government isn't working for them directly, at least they don't want government to be against them. But as we've seen in recent years, government has actually gone against the interests of the people. Everything from what happens on Wall Street, to sending kids off to war, to die for wars that are based on lies.

I'm always about speaking out and trying to do something to change things. And that's how I started and that's where I am now, 53 years later. I will tell you, I'm a little bit wiser, but the same passions, the same spirit, the same integrity informs my actions.

Paul: You've heard the story about how we were outspent 60-40 in 2012 when we tried to get public power. Tell us what you learn from losing an election?

Dennis: Now, I'm speaking as someone who started a career in

1967, my first race for office. I lost. Two years later, I won by 16 votes. Counting primaries and general elections, a recall election and a ballot issue, I've had 41 election campaigns. I've won 32 of them and lost nine. The message, very simple: if at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again. This world is not kind to people who quit. But for people who are relentless, for people who don't quit: courage opens all doors. So don't quit. And do understand that you have the right to have an electric system you can call your own - that's the first thing.

In Thurston County, people will have an opportunity in November, hopefully, to reclaim that right. So you lost in 2012. So what? You come back and try again, and you learn. You see, it's important to learn from a defeat. Never learn that you shouldn't try.

Paul: One last question. What are you going to run for next?

Dennis: That's interesting. I chose not to be involved in 2020 as a candidate. A year and a half ago, I said, I'm just going to take a break from all this. Because you have to be careful, when you're in politics, not to get so absorbed by it. That it becomes the end-all be-all. You have to be able to step away from it. Otherwise it controls you and you don't control it. I never let pursuit of an office cause me to lose perspective about what's important in life. So there'll be opportunities that come up. I'm here and I'll be back.

Paul: That's what Arnold Schwarzenegger said in that movie.

Dennis: He did, and he did come back.

Paul Pickett is a former Commissioner for Thurston PUD and a steering committee member in the Power to the Public Campaign.

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Public forums address sea level rise, health of Washington waterways

Esther Kronenberg

"We do not inherit the earth from our parents, but rather borrow it from our children."

Squaxin Tribe

Protecting water resources as the sea level rises

Global sea levels have risen about nine inches in Olympia since 1880, and the rate is accelerating. It is estimated that another 2 - 7 feet of additional rise will occur by 2100. We are already feeling the impacts of climate change on our area, from increased storms and wetter winters to drier summers, increased forest fires and ocean acidification.

Delve into the details with the Squaxin Tribe on March 6

The Squaxin Island Tribe will present a talk on the subject of sea level rise. Candace Penn, Climate Change Ecologist for the Tribe's Natural Resources Dept., and Brian McTeague, Geographic Information Services (GIS) Specialist, are working on future modeling to assess the effect of sea level rise on

salmon, shellfish and forage fish habitats in the Tribe's territory. They have created an interactive website to show the impacts of sea level rise and the strategies they are devising to mitigate its effects (available at <http://slrsto-rymap.squaxin.us>).

Hunting, shellfish harvesting, fishing for salmon, and harvesting other traditional foods are vital to the Squaxins, who are known as the "People of the Water." These activities form part of their cultural heritage and the basis for a subsistence economy. Water quality and intertidal habitats are critical to the continued health and preservation of shellfish resources. Members of the Squaxin Tribe have been preparing ways to protect water quality. One mitigation strategy will be to preserve and restore intertidal areas such as estuaries that act as natural buffers to sea level rise and storm surges.

A lively and informative presentation will help the public understand what is at stake and what can be done to preserve our natural resources.

Ensuring sufficient clean water for future generations

Though 2019 was the driest year since 2001, Thurston County was shielded from the worst effects of drought. First, groundwater was at normal levels, so much of the groundwater was already stored. Also, summer rainfall was unusually well-spaced throughout the season, keeping moisture in surface soils. Streams throughout the County, however, were very low, six of them at their lowest cumulative discharge since at least 2008. Groundwater levels also declined to their lowest recorded levels in many wells.

We owe this information to Thurston County's Water Planning Annual Report for the 2019 Water Year. The report discusses volumes and quantities of water, rather than water quality. Results in the report are based on data collected from 74 monitoring stations throughout the County that measure atmospheric conditions, streamflow, groundwater and lake levels. The millions of collected data points per year are available at <http://monitoring.thurstonwater.org>.

Public forums

Sea Level Rise, presented by the Squaxin Tribe, March 6, 5:30-7:30 pm, Olympia Center, 222 Columbia St. NW

Water Quantity and Quality in Thurston County, March 26, 5:30-7:30 pm, Olympia Center, 222 Columbia St. NW

Speakers are scheduled to begin at 6 pm. View past forums at http://www.lwvthurston.org/water_study_update.

*To get a taste of the League's ongoing efforts or to volunteer, come to **Coffee with the League**, Tuesday mornings at 10 am at Mud Bay Coffee, 1600 Cooper Point Rd. SW.*

Refine your understanding of our water status on March 26

Quantity and quality of our local water supplies will be the topic at a second water forum.

Kevin Hansen, Thurston County's hydrogeologist, Art Starry, Thurston County Director of Environmental Health, and Julie Rector, City of Lacey Department of Public Works Water Quality Analyst, will present the latest findings from recent water studies.

Thurston County Environmental Health (TCEH) has been sampling ambient water quality in streams since 1983. In its Water Report for 2017-2018, the department monitored 35 sites. Staff sampled them once a month throughout the year and compiled the results into a Water Quality Index (WQI) for each stream, which then receives a score. Each stream is also classified based on designated uses including recreational, public health and aquatic life.

In Thurston County, aquatic life use is further classified to describe conditions for spawning, rearing and migration salmonid habitat, and for core summer salmonid habitat. High temperatures detrimentally affect salmonid survival at all life stages. For most stream sites analyzed, water temperature increased over the 11 seasons considered, and the concentration of dissolved oxygen, also vital to aquatic life, declined.

For 33 Thurston County monitored streams, the average score was 68, or "moderately impaired" on a scale where one is the most polluted and 100 the least. Seventy-three percent (73%) of the sites were classified as being of moderate concern. Nutrient enrichment, largely caused by septic system and stormwater runoff, was widespread. Ninety percent (90%) of sites were impaired by high concentrations of phosphorus and 74% were polluted by excess nitrite and nitrate. Most trends pointed to continued degradation of our surface water resources.

Esther Kronenberg volunteers with the LWV water study.



This photograph is from a display created by the League of Women Voters as part of their continuing study and public discussion of Thurston County water issues.

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Get Involved!

Remembering Tom Nogler: Organizer, activist, brother

Tim Nogler

Spring brings a new beginning with freshness in the air and increasing light each day. It's a time of optimism and energy. This January, our community lost a man who embodied that optimism and energy.

Thomas Wilson Nogler passed away while helping a friend clear brush. Tom was known to family and multitudes of friends as an involved, educated, tireless pillar of the radical progressive community. He was a constant figure on the streets and in meeting rooms, from City Hall to the Artesian Well at the Cop Watch station and on picket lines. Tom was at his best canvassing neighborhoods, going door to door and working telephone lines. Many in Thurston and Lewis counties also knew him for his recent role in organizing mental health workers and advocating for prevention of child abuse.

Tom’s activism had a long history

Tom's sense of humor and organizing skills showed up early at WF West High School in Chehalis when he arranged a fund-raising dance marathon and a baseball game between the Pigs (police department) and the Freaks (Tom's friends and relatives). Even as Student Body President in senior year (1970-71) Tom was out in the open with his radical ideas. When an Elma High school student sent a letter complaining about WF West students' poor behavior at a ball game, Tom sent this reply to Elma High School:

My humblest apologies for the actions of members of our student body at the game on Friday night. Unfortunately many of [them] have no realization of the Revolution yet, although as soon as they do, I'm sure our basketball games will be more peaceable. Love is coming.

A political philosophy formed in the woods

In the winter of 1971, Tom arranged work with a contractor to plant trees for Weyerhaeuser. Tree planting is considered by employment experts “the hardest physical labor known...one person in fifty succeeds the three week training period.” For me it was miserable. For Tom it was an adventure. It also offered a lesson for a developing radical: On the final day of the contract, we met the crummy (crew truck) at the cottages where the migrant workers stayed. We saw a sheriff's car parked by the cottages, and realized that, now that the contract was nearly finished, our co-workers were being loaded on the bus to be deported.

Beginning in the 1930s, a federal government policy called for reforestation plans. In defiance of the policy, timber companies cut and ran. In 1945 in Washington state, Governor Wallgren directed the state forester to formulate a law

requiring replanting of clear cuts. The Forest Practices Act was passed, but timber companies still largely refused to comply. Finally in 1974 the Act was revised and rules were adopted creating an enforcement mechanism that would force timber companies to plant trees.



Tom Nogler in the forest during his hoedag years

The new rules created a demand for cheap labor to plant millions of trees. The standard practice of hiring migrant labor evolved into the local labor pool. The timber companies contracted work to the lowest bidder, and more local workers signed on. Work was plentiful as Oregon had a law similar to Washington's Forest Practices Act requiring logging sites to be replanted.

Working cooperatively in a time of social ferment

After working for a season with a contractor, some tree planters in the early 70s saw the opportunity to organize their own work crews. In Eugene, Oregon, the Hoedads incorporated as a cooperative and encouraged others to adopt the model to bid for contracts. Worker co-ops made sense for tree planting contracts, with low overhead and assets, and the need for large crews. Members were organized by crew, each with a colorful name like Natural Wonders, Thumbs, Cougar Mountain. Other groups formed throughout the region including Marmots in Seattle and Bellingham, a woman-owned business.

The 70s was a time of turbulent social action, with the anti-war and other movements. The working conditions were primitive, but inspired many, drawn by nature, wilderness, ecology, restoration, and encouraged self-sufficiency, stewardship and group dynamics. It also provided fertile ground for exercising alternative and experimental modes of living.

In 1975, Tom and I called a meeting at one of the food conspiracy houses near The Evergreen State College (TESC), Suburbia in the Woods. We had a contract with Weyerhaeuser to plant trees and needed workers. We had a 1953 one-ton Chevy flatbed truck with a plywood canopy and tools, hoedags and tree bags. (A hoedag, or hoedad, is a long curved hoe blade mounted on an ax handle.) We formed Nogler Tree Farm (NTF).

Not a hierarchy but a circle

To bid contracts and obtain work we had to be incorporated, either as a sole ownership or a partnership. There was not an option to be a collective. When we were low bidders on a contract to plant trees at Fort Lewis, we arrived at the site to meet with the foresters. They had a lot of trees to plant and were anxious for us to start. They said “be sure you have your paperwork in order.” When we met with the contracting officer, Major Barbara we called her, the jig was up.

She sent us to the Small Business Administration in Seattle. The federal employee there explained in good faith about bookkeeping; how to run a business. They showed us an organizational chart with a box at the top of the page and lines connecting to a row of three boxes and then a row of six boxes and so on. One of our group stood up at the chalkboard and drew our crew: a circle of boxes connected together. They sent us away saying “Even in communist China there are bosses!”

The NTF crew was mostly college-educated idealists, with a goal to restore the natural environment and exercise principles of an egalitarian collective. We were not able to pay a family living wage so in order to survive, we camped close to planting sites, sometimes sleeping in the back of the crummy.

Organizing for collective benefit

Tom had a vision that the group could work together to do more than plant a lot of trees to make some money. Instead he wanted to exercise principles of a worker-organized economy. He had a much larger idea: revolution. He liked to quote great revolutionaries like Marx: “From each according to their ability, to each according to their need.”

The tree planting collectives diversified to bid work other than tree planting, including cone picking and trail building, and manual removal of milfoil. Tom was part of forming a worker's union, the Northwest Forest Workers Association. NWFA brought together workers from throughout the region as far away as Northern California, Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Among other issues, NWFA helped fight against the use of pesticides and herbicides, a previously standard forestry practice.

A life devoted to social and political justice

After the adventures in tree planting as part of a collective, Tom continued in his passion for organized labor and challenging the status quo. He was a national and international leader on the issue of men's role in prevention of child abuse. He was actively engaged as a member of the Child Abuse Prevention Council.

Tom's belief in working for the common good extended to public ownership of utilities: A privately owned corporation should not control a public resource. He began working in the early 1990s on campaigns to create a Public Utility District (PUD) in Thurston County. Tom was instrumental in getting a public power initiative on the ballot in 2012, collecting signatures and coordinating fundraisers. The initiative failed by a narrow margin so Tom persevered, lately working on an initiative to bring public power to the city of Olympia. Another group, inspired by Tom, is pursuing a new effort to create a Thurston Co. PUD. His efforts helped bring Dennis Kucinich to Olympia to support that initiative.

Still a Wobbly, still connected to the forest

Our last woodworking operation was on Ham Hill in Centralia, where our father planted 50 black walnut trees in the 1980s. This past November, Tom and I travelled together to Centralia to attend an IWW commemoration of the 100th anniversary of a violent confrontation between Wobblies and members of the American Legion. Tom, a card-carrying Wobbly, was actively engaged in discussion in the room crowded with Wobblies, still debating what actually happened that day 100 years ago.

After the meeting we drove up the hill to the orchard and cut down a black walnut tree to transport to Olympia in the back of Tom's Toyota pick up, where he planned to mill it into boards. I hope to put those boards to use.

Tim Nogler is retired from the state and lives on Olympia's Westside where he plants trees among other pursuits.



Check out this book:

Birth of a Cooperative: Hoedads, Inc., a Worker Owned Forest Labor Co-Op, by Hal Hartzell (order from Last Word Books on Cherry St.)

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Why add a dam when dams are being removed?

Lee First

The era of dam building is over. In 2018 alone, 86 dams were removed from rivers and streams in the United States. 550 miles of streams and rivers were returned to a free-flowing state, generating an ecological revitalization comparable to that seen on the Elwha River after dam removal.

However, on the Chehalis River, flooding continues to threaten people, farms, churches, businesses, and communities, and planners are thinking about a new dam. Recent flooding has been exacerbated by climate change-fueled storms, aggressive logging in the headwaters, and construction of major transportation infrastructure (including I-5 in the floodplain). A sense of community trauma still lingers if you speak with people who lived through the floods of 2007 and 2009.

A free-flowing main channel

The Chehalis is one of Washington's grand coastal rivers and with the most robust wild salmon population of any river in Washington State. While there are no dams on the main channel today and populations of salmon are not listed as threatened or endangered, the populations of spring and fall Chinook are severely depleted. If a dam is built, the Chinook that spawn above the site of a dam will very likely go extinct. This in turn will threaten the stressed Southern Resident Orca whales who rely on these Chinook for food.

The river's epic journey

The Chehalis River is the historical homeland of the Confederated Tribe of the Chehalis. The tribe has lived with the river and managed its flooding for thousands of years. For all those years, the river meandered without undue burden from its headwaters in the Willapa Hills to the estuary known as Grays Harbor. During heavy rains, water from the Willapa Hills was metered by huge trees whose abundant in-stream wood moderated flows. Water was diverted into adjacent forested wetlands and floodplains. The water was clear and clean, with banks full of migrating salmon.

Unchecked exploitation of the river

Much has changed since then. The river's headwaters are now a checkerboard pattern of clear-cuts and immature trees. The channel bed and banks have been eroded by the massive number of logs being transported to mills. Gravel and sand have been mined from the channels. Shade-producing riparian forests have been cut; water is withdrawn to irrigate farms. The river receives sewage, along with polluted municipal and industrial storm water and other discharges. Downstream where the river forms the estuary, its banks are completely transformed by riprap and dredging and used by international shippers. Salmon populations are a fraction of what they once were.

Despite areas where floodplains have been turned into commercial hubs served by freeways and railroads, the river still provides. It is used for Tribal and recreational fishing, boating and swimming. The estuary supports cultivation



The site near the headwaters of the Chehalis River that is considered a possibility for construction of a new dam.

and harvesting of shellfish and provides habitat for aquatic species including gray whales. Yet development along with increasingly heavy storms threatens to undermine the river's health and put people, transportation systems, farms and businesses at risk.

For all those years, the river meandered without undue burden from its headwaters in the Willapa Hills to the estuary known as Grays Harbor.

A dam in the headwaters

The Chehalis River Flood Control District is proposing to build an expandable dam on the headwaters of the Chehalis River to reduce flood damage in the Chehalis-Centralia area. Ever since the cata-

strophic flood in 2007, plans have been underway to build a dam. The Office of the Chehalis Basin, created by Governor Inslee in 2017, was developed to work toward a dual strategy: flood control and aquatic species restoration.

A more effective long-term solution

A better solution is to aggressively restore natural floodplain function to the upper Chehalis River with techniques like culvert removal, de-channelization and habitat restoration. These approaches are sensible ways to protect and keep people and structures out of harm's way. Conservation easements and improved forest practices in the headwaters are great opportunities to give sustainable techniques (as described in the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan) a chance, and create a more effective, long-term solution.

Adding public voices

Please attend one or both public

hearings for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), released on February 27. The DEIS will provide information about the probable, significant, and adverse environmental impacts of the proposal. The purpose of the hearings is to receive public comments on the DEIS. This information will be used by the Chehalis Basin Board to help form their recommendations on the long-term goals of the strategy.

Meeting Locations

Tuesday, March 31, Centralia College, TransAlta Commons. 600 Centralia College Boulevard, Centralia. 5:00 - 8:30

Thursday, April 2, Montesano High School, Commons Room. 303 Church Street North, Montesano. 5:00 - 8:30pm

Lee First is the Twin Harbors Waterkeeper. She writes often on environmental issues.

Find out more: <http://chehalisbasinstrategy.com/eis/>
To receive more information about this project and others affecting the Chehalis River, Grays Harbor, and Willapa Bay go to: Twin Harbors Waterkeeper

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Works In Progress

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“Terrorizing people into silence” while the planet burns

Emily Lardner

The Antarctic has registered a temperature of more than 20C (68F) for the first time on record, prompting fears of climate instability in the world's greatest repository of ice. (February 12, 2020, The Guardian)

It's like being on a bus. Up in front is the driver; the passengers are in the back. We are traveling on a highway. The bus is picking up speed and it seems like we're heading toward a cliff. Some people shout for the driver to stop. The private security officer grabs them and locks them in the bathroom. The bus hurtles forward. The rest of us sit frozen.

A recent article in *The Intercept* reports on private companies profiting from suppressing protest movements nationwide. The article details how Pembina Pipeline Corporation conducts surveillance on Oregon residents who oppose the installation of a liquid natural gas (LNG) terminal in Jordan Cove. Between 2016 and 2020, Pembina paid 1.2 million dollars in salaries, benefits, and overtime to the Sheriff's Department of Coos County. They also paid for social media archiving software, a drone, and an acoustic sound canon.

The Pembina Corporation participates in the activities of the Coos County Sheriff's Department based on a loose interpretation of the 2005 Energy Policy Act. One provision required fossil fuel companies to come up with a cost-sharing agreement with public agencies that have responsibility for safety and security of LNG sites. The Jordan Cove LNG site hasn't been approved – let alone built – but the sheriff's Department formed an “intelligence sharing” group that monitors “extremists” in southern Oregon.

Environmental activists become terrorists

In April 2019, Donald Trump signed two executive orders aimed at speeding up oil and pipeline projects. One goal was to radically weaken states' environmental review processes. As Trump put it, “Too often badly needed energy

infrastructure is being held back by special-interest groups, entrenched bureaucracies, and radical activists.” Another goal was to reinforce the idea that activists who speak up about climate change are radical extremists.

In 2018, the ultra-conservative legislative activist group ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) finalized language for a “critical infrastructure protection” act. The language provided the blueprint for legislators to draft laws criminalizing acts of disobedience directed against the fossil fuel production and distribution apparatus. Language about “protecting critical infrastructure” morphed into a definition of domestic terrorism.

In January 2020, the Guardian published a story about a document obtained from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that defined “domestic terrorism” as “any act of violence that is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources.”

DHS claimed that “racial and environmentally themed ideologies” are the biggest threats facing the US today. DHS labeled the Valve Turners, the group who shut off pipelines carrying crude oil from Canadian tar sands in coordinated acts of civil disobedience, as “suspected environmental rights terrorists” and listed them as extremists along with white supremacists and mass murderers.

My son, Sam Jessup, is among those being compared by DHS to white supremacist mass murderers. He was convicted on felony conspiracy charges along with Valve Turner Michael Foster in North Dakota. In an email to the *Guardian*, Sam wrote that “this whole infrastructure of so-called security has done little more than secure the future of the fossil fuel industry by terrorizing people into silence.” It was Pembina lawyers who prosecuted Sam's case.

Profitable era ends—damage already done

Ken Ward, another Valve Turner, now preparing for his third trial in WA State where he will be able to use the necessity defense, wrote, “Our government is directly complicit in this crisis. By subsidizing fossil fuels and leasing public lands to the carbon industry, the US is in large part responsible for the current state of our planet.”

Ward doesn't hold much hope for working through regular channels: “There is next to no possibility that the immediate steps required to stave off widespread catastrophic climate change – including ending the burning of tar sands oil and coal – will be undertaken by the Trump administration, our divided Congress or by the voluntary action of the fossil fuel industry.”

Careening toward the cliff

In his state of the union address this year, Trump boasted about America's success producing oil and natural gas, and urged the nation to follow its fossil fuel course. In Davos, he urged international leaders to ignore Greta Thunberg and other young activists, because “fear and doubt are not good thought processes.”

Amid widespread speculation that the profitability of fossil fuel companies has peaked come reports that industry leaders and US politicians knew the destructive environmental impacts of their products. According to several sources, BP, Shell, Chevron, Exxon, and Total spent nearly \$200 million per year lobbying to “delay, control, or block policies to tackle climate change.”

Still, evidence of the climate crisis is becoming harder to contain. BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, announced in January that it would put climate change at the center of its investment strategies and divest from companies generating 25% or more of their profits from coal.

The anxiety of (not) speaking up

Clinicians are starting to document what they call “climate anxiety” – the fear that the current system is pushing the Earth beyond its ecological limits. At the same time, they have discovered that the only solution to climate anxiety is action.

We are all on the bus, hurtling towards the cliff. As Elizabeth Kolbert wrote in a January 2020 *New Yorker* article,

“Every decade is consequential in its own way, but the 2020s will be consequential in a more or less permanent way. Global CO₂ emissions are now so high—in 2019, they hit a new record of forty-three billion metric tons—that ten more years of the same will be nothing short of cataclysmic.

Unless emissions are reduced, and radically, a rise of two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) will be pretty much unavoidable by 2030. This will make the demise of the world's coral reefs, the inundation of most low-lying island nations, incessant heat waves and fires and misery for millions—perhaps billions—of people equally unavoidable.”

Reflecting on what another decade of the climate crisis will bring, Kolbert writes, “really waking up, and not just dreaming to ourselves that things will be OK, has become urgent—beyond urgent, in fact. To paraphrase Victoria's fire authority: The world is in danger, and we need to act immediately to survive.”

Ending the right to speak—or act

Those of us who know Kolbert is right are like the people in the bus trying to stop the driver. To speak and act through historically recognized means of non-violent disobedience, risks serious prosecution. Once environmental activists are labelled as terrorists, there are no due process rights. At the same time, we must stop the bus.

Emily Lardner is part of the WIP publishing committee and writes often about the intersection of environmental issues with activism.

Bring back the Fairness Doctrine

Once corporations succeeded in remaking the narrative of democracy in their own interest, the idea that the airwaves belonged to the public disappeared. From 1947 to 1987 the “Fairness Doctrine” required holders of broadcast licenses to present both sides of a controversial issue of public importance, and to do so in a manner that was honest, equitable and balanced.

The Fairness Doctrine was eliminated in 1987. Imagine if it were still the law of the land: Fox News – as well as MSNBC, CNN and others—would have to allocate time for views opposing the propaganda that routinely runs on their stations – for free. Now, that would be free speech

Rethinking everything

It is worse, much worse, than you think. The slowness of climate change is a fairy tale, perhaps as pernicious as the one that says it isn't happening at all, and comes to us bundled with several others in an anthology of comforting delusions: that global warming is an Arctic saga, unfolding remotely; that it is strictly a matter of sea level and coastlines, not an enveloping crisis sparing no place and leaving no life undeformed; that it is a crisis of the “natural” world, not the human one; that those two are distinct, and that we live today somehow outside or beyond or at the very least defended against nature; not inescapably within and literally overwhelmed by it, that wealth can be a shield against the ravages of warming; that the burning of fossil fuels is the price of continued economic growth; that growth, and the technology it produces, will allow us to engineer our way out of environmental disaster; that there is any analogue to the scale or scope of this threat in the long span of human history, that might give us confidence in staring it down. None of this is true.

--*The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming, David Wallace-Wells, 2019.*

Winds of change in Cosmopolis

A heavy haze hovers over the area more days than not. Foul odors travel along the Chehalis River shoreline south towards Westport. About 12 miles south of the mill you can step out of your front door into acrid smelling air. The smell increases as you get closer to Aberdeen, but once across the Chehalis River bridge into the city, it usually dissipates.

The smell emanates from the Cosmo Specialty Fibers, a dissolving wood pulp mill in Cosmopolis. The mill's air quality permit was recently the subject of a hearing called by the WA Department of Ecology (DOE)—in response to an increase in complaints about bad air. About 50 people attended the hearing—mostly residents of Cosmopolis and adjoining neighborhoods. Many had worked in the mills or have relatives and friends who do.

Cosmopolis is a small town situated on the Chehalis River about 3 miles southeast of Aberdeen. The town's first sawmill opened on the banks of the river in 1888. The community is predominantly working-class, dependent from the beginning on timber mills for jobs, and disproportionately affected by their polluting processes.

The Weyerhaeuser Corporation operated a dissolving grade pulp mill in the town from 1962 to 2006. Dissolving pulp is not made into paper, but dissolved using a sulfite process that allows it to be spun into textile fibers or chemically reacted to produce forms of cellulose. The sulfite process produces emissions and effluents that require substantial treatment before they can safely be discharged.

Over the years of Weyerhaeuser operations, people living in South Aberdeen and Cosmopolis experienced health problems from emissions and odors coming from the mill's settlement ponds and smoke stacks. Even though the mill was then the area's largest employer, and many worried that the action might lead to closure, local residents filed a class action suit



against Weyerhaeuser in 1991. The case settled in 1993 with some payments to plaintiffs. Weyerhaeuser operated the mill for another 13 years until, in 2006, the owners announced that it would not be profitable for them to make necessary upgrades. The closure put over 250 people out of work.

The mill sat idle until 2011, when the Gores Group, a private equity firm in California, purchased the mill, refitted it to produce dissolving wood pulp utilizing a magnesium-based acid sulfite production technology, and brought new life to the community when it hired 200 workers. At the time of purchase, the company, incorporated as Cosmo Specialty Fibers, was allowed to take over the Weyerhaeuser air quality permit.

Residents attending the hearing voiced general frustration and deep concern about the pervasive odor and the particulates emitted from the smokestacks. Some particulates were identified as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitric oxides among other toxic pollutants.

One question was whether to adjust Cosmo's air quality permit before renewing it for another five years. People wanted better protection for themselves, their children and the community. Many spoke about the impact the fumes had on kids at the elementary school near the mill, about increased incidence of asthma and fears of cancer. They described debilitating smells and the cumulative effects of living under an endless haze. Some said they would like the mill to close and an effort made to retrain workers.

The experiences and reports from the people at the hearing were challenged—air quality monitoring consistently showed “good.” A worker checks levels at the mill and sends reports to DOE. Some monitoring is visual—for example the density or opacity of the plume coming out of the stack. DOE visits once a year or if there is an issue. Testing devices are supposed to be inspected for accuracy once a year. The DOE staff admitted that they lack staff to increase on-site visits.

When the DOE staff revealed that the only air monitor in the area is on N. Division Street in Aberdeen it caused a stir in the audience. The consensus was that since odors are rarely detectable in Aberdeen, those monitor readings of "good" are meaningless.

When asked about moving the monitor or adding others closer to the mill so as to get more meaning-

ful readings, the DOE staffer said there was no money for that. How much money? Around \$50,000 was the reply. One attendee asked, "How expensive is cancer treatment?" Another suggested placing a monitor on a van to collect readings in a variety of places. Many were worried about their health; some were angry.

As for the position of Cosmo Fibers, their website addresses air emission and water effluent limits in words that start with an all-too-familiar reminder:

The mill must be financially sustainable to remain open. To be financially viable, the mill must be globally competitive in terms of product mix, quality and cost. These operational characteristics drive the feedstocks we use, which, in turn, results in certain potential mill effluent and emission levels. These effluent and emission levels cannot leave the mill until they are within strict limits determined as environmentally acceptable by the DOE and EPA.

If DOE doesn't have adequate staff to enforce limits and the only air quality monitoring device is located beyond the reach of emissions, what assurance does the immediate community have that their health and their children's health is not being endangered?

Breaking news: An informant of the Olympia Observer, close to the National Association of Evangelicals, reported that their lobbyists have quietly begun, based on an intuitive religious certainty that President Trump will be re-elected, to urge the president that the national anthem be changed from

Is it likely that the impacts on air quality from emissions at Cosmo Fiber will improve? The concern is real for rural communities where mills provide living wage jobs and maintain their profitability by overlooking environmental consequences. Demands that industrial polluters in Grays Harbor clean up their act have often been met with hostility because of the supposed threat to jobs.

Still, Cosmo Fiber touts its understanding of the importance of air quality to the community:

We know that maintaining great air quality will encourage families and businesses to locate here and remain here.

This suggests a commitment to clean air, though history tells us that private corporations often make public statements later contradicted by their actions. Outside investors' decisions reflect profit goals, not environmental sustainability or local community values.

The larger issue is a societal one. Too many communities with little power or influence have been held hostage by extractive polluting industries and lax enforcement of regulations. They accept air and water pollution under the threat of unemployment. Would cooperatively owned businesses calculate the return on their investment differently and move away from extractive industries? Perhaps the time has come for a change.

Linda Orgel lives in rural Grays Harbor County on the south shore of Grays Harbor Estuary.

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Assembling for environmental justice

On April 19th 2019, Olympia Assembly will be hosting a Spring Assembly, focused on ecology and food systems. The assembly will occur at 5:00 at Mixx96 (119 Washington St. NE). Our general assemblies occur once per season (winter, spring, summer and fall) and are a place for community members to come together to discuss social, political and economic issues facing Olympia and actions that we can take to address them. According to Kali Akuno of Cooperation Jackson, a People's Assembly is "first and foremost a mass gathering of people organized and assembled to address essential social issues and/or questions pertinent to the community."

Building Revolutionary Community Olympia Assembly

We chose the topic of this upcoming assembly because we recognize the importance of connecting ecological action to social issues and local action to global problems. In an era in which climate change poses an existential threat to humanity, non-human life, and the biosphere, it is more important than ever that we find ways of building resilient communities in harmony with ecosystems we are connected to and embedded within. We need to build a mass movement capable of fighting back against a ruling class dedicated to endless extraction and colonial expansion at the expense of all other life on earth. We also need to build soil, provide free high quality food to people, and engage with nature in a mutualistic way.

We hope that through this assembly we can bring together groups and individuals across Olympia and surrounding areas to create space for common dialogue, brainstorming, and problem-solving. Participants will be able to present the ecological work they are already doing, find areas for collaboration

and coalition building, and get community feedback on potential new projects to take on.

One group involved with this upcoming assembly are the Vangardeners, a radical gardening collective and partner organization of Olympia Assembly. The Vangardeners are starting a mass chestnut planting project and are also involved in ongoing gardens, gardening skillshares, and ecological restoration projects. Other groups interested in participating should reach out to us at OlympiaAssembly@gmail.com.

In the past, our general assemblies have been host to a variety of discussions rooted in our points of unity and core values of participatory democracy, direct action, collective liberation, cooperative economics and ecological stewardship. By engaging with the existing frustrations of members of Olympia Assembly and the wider community, we've been able to tailor our projects and campaigns to the needs of our communities. When tenants were angered by rising rents and abusive landlord practices, we helped to form Olympia Solidarity Network to organize tenants to fight back. When there was rising anger over the inhumane treatment, and intensified imprisonment and deportation of our undocumented neighbors by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, we formed an Abolish ICE working group and participated in nationally coordinated direct actions against financial firms invested in immigrant detention.

Because we have left the agendas of previous general assemblies open to a wide variety of topics, we have been able to engage Olympia's activist community to participate and take action. The vagueness of the assemblies has also made it difficult to reach out beyond already politicized and socially conscious people, though. By focusing this assembly on a specific theme, we hope to be able to more effectively reach out to people outside of our milieu by drawing the connection from environmental crisis to their daily lives. From access to healthy and affordable food to responding to rising sea levels that threaten to put downtown Olympia underwater, ecology and food systems affect us all.

Olympia Books to Prisoners



Olympia Books to Prisoners works to offset the dehumanizing effects of incarceration by sending quality used books free of charge to prisoners all over the United States.

olympiabtp.org

Green Cove Park Ignoring federal jurisdiction and city preservation policies

Esther Kronenberg

In his application to build 181 houses on an environmentally sensitive site at Green Cove, Jerry Mahan has benefitted continually from city assistance. Staff at the Department of Planning and Community Development recently decided to give Mahan another 90 days to respond to further questions that arose during their substantive review of his project.

Choosing to dodge federal review

In an even more generous assist, the city apparently intends to refrain from notifying federal agencies of the need for certain required reviews of the application. Reviews by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection agency are required because there are jurisdictional wetlands on the site, and because waters from the site connect directly to federally protected waters (Butler Creek, Green Cove Creek, Budd and Eld Inlets).

In addition, because there are salmon, mud minnow and orca in these waters protected by the Endangered Species Act, the US Fish & Wildlife (USFW), National Marine Fisheries (NMF) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have jurisdiction. Another reason relates to the fact that sediment-laden water leaving the site plays a role that significantly affects the integrity of habitat in navigable waters, regardless of whether there is known contamination on the site.

A recent letter from the Squaxin Island tribe to the city also made clear that contamination from the Green Cove site can affect the environment for decades unless it is identified and remediated.

The city's position is that it doesn't need to contact these agencies because there is no in-water work involved. In choosing to ignore feder-

al jurisdiction, the city risks losing federal funding as well as losing its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit if it allows contaminated water to leave a site and enter tidal waters where salmon and Orca live.

City departments in conflict with one another - and the state

The City of Olympia as well as Thurston County and the state of Washington are actively working to preserve salmon and orca. The Green Cove Basin Comprehensive Plan, written in 1989 and subsequently adopted by the city and county, noted the loss of fish habitat in Green Cove Basin resulted from several factors. Besides vegetation clearing and fish barriers, altered hydrology and water quality degradation are the primary causes of loss of habitat. Both of these would significantly increase if this Project is built.

Recently, Thurston County applied for a grant to remove fish barriers on Green Cove Creek. Olympia's Department of Parks regularly schedules Orca Recovery Days - - community cleanup of creeks flowing into Budd Inlet. Such efforts are necessary to stop further decline of salmon in Puget Sound, already down 90% from historic levels. House Bill 2550, proposed by Governor Inslee's Orca Recovery Task Force, would shift criteria for evaluating actions from No Net Loss to Net Ecological Gain.

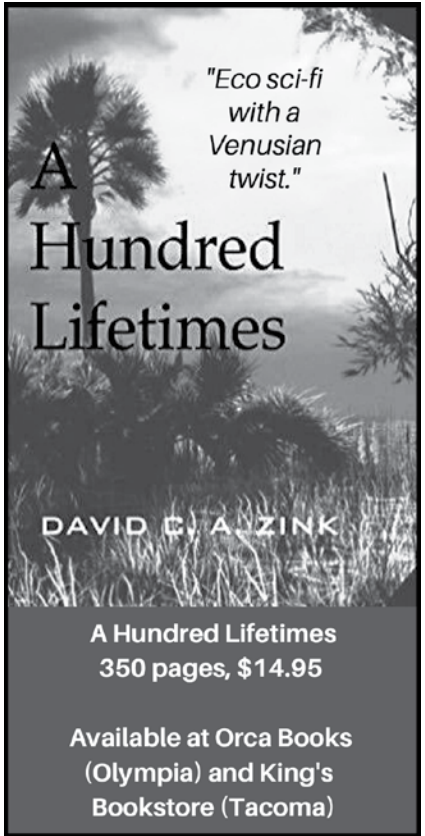
It defies reason that the Planning Department's would continue to enable a development proposal that directly threatens the continued viability of species that other departments are working so hard to defend. Stormwater runoff was the #1 problem identified in the Green Cove Comprehensive Plan: "The single biggest threat to the basin's beneficial surface water uses is posed by future excess stormwater runoff to Green Cove Creek." Mahan has requested to implement a stormwater plan that deviates from Olympia's Drainage Design and Erosion Control Manual, using measures that are less stringent and less protective of the environment.

With the increase in impervious surface that would come with development, runoff from this site would significantly degrade the Green Cove and Butler Creek ecosystems and threaten the endangered species who live here. Add to this the likelihood that serious toxic contamination exists on site, and the prospects for Green Cove Creek, a priority stream in the Deschutes watershed, will grow dimmer if it is not protected.

Esther Kronenberg is a resident and ally of the Green Cove Watershed.

To email the city about development at Green Cove:
Cari Hornbein chornbei@ci.olympia.wa.us,

Tim Smith tsmith@ci.olympia.wa.us, Council members
CityCouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us



Another US trial where racism decided the outcome

Max Elbaum

It's no accident that on the same day the Senate voted not to hear witnesses in its sham impeachment trial, the Trump administration announced it was adding six countries, including Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, to its restrictive travel ban.

Beneath the rhetoric, both actions are about race and racism. As have been the outcomes of so many trials and so many immigration policies in US history.

The basic consideration in those Republican senators' minds when they voted against hearing witnesses was revealed by a conservative former GOP policy director Evan McMullin in a tweet:

Republican leaders in Congress believe—and privately say—that they fear the country is quickly changing in ways that may soon deprive them of power, and that they must use the power they have now to delay it as long as possible, *even by harming the Republic if necessary* [emphasis added].

Why the GOP refused to allow witnesses

It doesn't require re-reading the jury verdict from *To Kill a Mockingbird* to decode that tweet.

“The country is quickly changing” means “the proportion of people of color is growing and white people soon might not be a majority.”

“They must use the power they have now” means “democracy is a nice idea that we’ve said we believe in for decades, but when it comes right down to it, maintain-

ing white power in general and our white power in particular is more important.”

“Even by harming the Republic” means “if authoritarian rule and an above-the-law strongman president will do the job, then let's get it on. All we need is four more years to create the necessary facts on the ground. We helped the Israelis do it and now, in face of a “demographic threat” in this country, it's our turn.”

That's the mind-set underlying the “no witnesses” vote and the subsequent acquittal.

Finding racism useful

This does not mean every Trump voter or registered Republican is motivated by hate. It doesn't mean that over time many in the Trump camp, especially those facing economic hardship, can't be won over to a different world view. It doesn't mean the robber barons on top of the fossil fuel industry or military-industrial complex or Koch brothers empire are mainly driven by racism. But they do see riding this mentality as the necessary route to advancing their class interest in a changing world.

The Senate vote does show that outright racist authoritarianism is in the driver's seat in today's GOP. It's “get in behind the Supreme Leader” or be kicked out of the club.

This is how fascism comes to power. People who start out quite a distance from blatant haters will cut deals with them because they share some common aims and think they can stay in control.

It's a slippery slope

Many who don't jump off the toboggan soon enough find themselves abandoning every principle they once claimed to hold dear (Lindsey Graham, Marco Rubio, Lamar Alexander). They may squirm but they keep rationalizing one destructive, sycophantic action after another until lies, self-dealing and great-leader-worship become normalized. And millions get numb or “go private” hoping to find some shelter from the storm.

We can stop them if we act

In today's US the Trumpists can be stopped. But only if the most conscious sector of the opposition is clear-eyed about the danger and absolutely determined to do two things:

First, confront the drive toward a racist authoritarian regime with a passionate resistance rooted in defending the humanity and equality of everyone across the globe;

Second, inspire and bring into unified action the substantial majority of people in the US who disagree with one another on many things but agree that Trump and his enablers are a danger to people and the planet, Defeat Trump and the GOP at the ballot box in November, Take to the streets to defend that victory in the days after the balloting when he declares the results illegitimate. Then keep on pushing toward a society that works for all.

Max Elbaum is the author of *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao and Che* (Verso, third edition, 2018), and an editor of *Organizing Upgrade*.

Black English matters

Another kind of freedom to speak

Chi Luu

African American Vernacular English (AAVE) speech or Black English (often used as an umbrella term for the many varieties of speech used by African American communities) is a prime example of how a regular way of speaking can have a major impact on people's lives. On absolutely no scientific basis, linguistically consistent grammatical features like double negatives, along with other marked grammatical differences to standard American English, such as use of habitual be, as in “he be walkin’,” or perfective, as in “he done did it,” have stigmatized the speakers of Black English as linguistically backward, uneducated, or unintelligent.

It once did happen that some tried to elevate the status of Black English to the level of a language in the eyes of the general public. For decades, linguists and other educators, pointing to the logic and science of language, have tried to convince people that Black English exists, that isn't just a politically correct label for a poor version of English but is a valid system of language, with its own consistent grammar. In 1996, with the unanimous support of linguists, the Oakland School Board voted to recognize AAVE, or the more politicized term “Ebonics” (a portmanteau of “Ebony” and “phonics”), as a community language for African American students, a decision which might have opened up much needed additional funding for education.

Incorrect beliefs persist

Instead it resulted in intense public backlash and derision due to the still widespread, incorrect belief that Black English was an inferior, uneducated form of English associated with illiteracy, poverty, and crime. It's hard for a language to get ahead when it keeps getting put down. Some linguists, such as John Russell Rickford, have noted how even sympathetic linguistic research, which has derived a lot of benefit and understanding from Black English grammar, can unknowingly focus on data that represents African American communities negatively, giving “the impression that black speech was the lingo of criminals, dope pushers, teenage hoodlums, and various and sundry hustlers.” The

term “Ebonics” even now is used mockingly by some as a byword for broken English.

Filled with linguistic innovations

Black English is not just one monolithic dialect spanning the many millions of speakers across the country. There are rich regional and class differences with a deep linguistic history intertwined with stories of migration and movement, and there are dialects that grew to include more standard as well as vernacular forms. There's an almost relentless creativity to the linguistic innovations found in Black English. In fact, as linguists have found, there's a lot more that Black English speech can teach about language in general and a lot more that Black English has contributed to American cultural life, both past and present, than it may ever get back in kind, given its reputation as a broken language.

This is the remarkable twist to this tale. All along, while standard American English was busy convincing everyone that it was a superior dialect, it's Black English that's been a true cultural and linguistic force in contemporary society. Standard English is in fact deeply indebted to this so-called impoverished speech. It's Black English that has left its mark on the popular culture we participate in, sliding seamlessly into the language of art, music, poetry, storytelling, and social media. Perhaps no other variety of speech has been quite so significant, innovative, and influential to the development of standard American English.

Good enough for the NY Times

Linguist Margaret G. Lee notes how black speech and verbal expressions have often been found crossing over into mainstream prestige speech, such as in the news, when journalists talk about politicians “dissing” each other, or the *New York Times* puts out punchy headlines like “Grifters Gonna Grift.”

These many borrowings have occurred across major historical eras of African American linguistic creativity. Now-common terms like “you're the man,” “brother,” “cool,” and “high five” extend from the period of slavery to civil rights, from the Jazz Age to hip-hop: the poetry of the people. This phenomenon reflects how central language and the oral tradition are to the

black experience. As Lee points out, from “the disguise language used by enslaved Africans to conceal their conversations from their white slave masters to the lyrics of today's rap music, [the magical power of] the word has been shaped by a time when, as observed by Harlem newspaper writer Earl Conrad, ‘it was necessary for the Negro to speak and sing and even think in a kind of code.’”

An outsized impact

It's a kind of code that's highly creative, and conducive to sharing. Despite this speech being “low prestige,” there's a strong covert prestige to using African American vernacular speech. As outside the mainstream as it is, it's often seen as cool for rebellious outsiders to use these expressions, from fans of hip-hop and jazz to other marginalized but influential African American sources of language such as in camp or drag queen linguistics. It's a sign of a strong linguistic culture, tradition, and community that linguistic innovations can be so widely distributed and end up having such an outsized impact on the standard language.

It's ironic that Black English speech is still dismissed and devalued as being linguistically broken, and at the same time is one of the richest sources of lexical innovation in English. It's clear that the linguistic creativity of Black English and African American vernacular speech, which across history has contributed so much to standard American English and American culture, is something to celebrate, not despise. It's not just another language. To those who speak it, and to those who feel its cultural impact—Black English matters.

Chi Luu is a computational linguist with degrees in *Theoretical Linguistics and Literature*. She has worked on dictionaries, multi-language search engines, and question answering applications.

A longer version of this article appeared in the February 2020 issue of JStor Daily.

Have a tip for WIP?
Tell us at olywip@gmail.com

Sovereignty and connection: lessons from Standing Rock

Rafael Plentywolf

Recently, someone told me they went to college to study the meaning of being an Indian. It does pose a funny question: what is the meaning of being an Indian? I've always felt I needed to create spaces where there have been none for someone like me. Many Indigenous people feel this way - navigating colonialism is difficult.

I belong to the Oglala Lakota Tribe. I was born on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, in South Dakota, not too far from the Standing Rock Nation. When I was twenty I went to the Standing Rock Tribe to help protect the water against the pipeline that was being built.

My Grandfather told me that water was the first medicine the Creator gifted to humans. This is why I went to protect the water. I spent a lot of time with my elders there and remember some pinnacle moments from that time. One day in September I was a part of a group of protectors attacked with mace

and German shepherd dogs. That day was hard for a lot of people, and it was important for the camp to regroup after that.

I would pray every night with my family. We would be in intense prayer for hours, and the Creator could feel how much we wanted to protect the water. A lot of healing went on inside me, as well as a lot of hardship, all of which aided my growth and my sense of what it means to be an Indian.

I remember driving away from Standing Rock feeling many emotions all at once. I cried as much as the rain fell over the plains that evening. Everything I absorbed at Standing Rock impacted my choices at The Evergreen State College.

I spent much of my time at college studying Indigenous sustainable agriculture. My research began as an intern in the Pacific Northwest at the Nisqually Tribal Garden. I learned how the community benefits from locally grown and harvested food. I also strengthened

my connection to medicinal plants. Later, when I studied agricultural education for nine weeks in Aotearoa (New Zealand), my understanding of what it means to be Indigenous and decolonize my lifestyle grew even more. If I hadn't followed my family to Standing Rock, my education at The Evergreen State College would have been much different. I'm not sure I would have studied decolonization as much as I have because of that experience.

Decolonization is an interesting subject, delicate and complex. In fact, studying it for two years has been a lifesaver for me. My professors frame colonization as not a period of time five hundred or so years ago. However colonialism is a system that we all live in. Decolonization for Indigenous peoples means complete sovereignty. I control how I live and embrace my culture. Decolonization also means that I go back to the land and break away from capitalism. I realized that the more disconnected I am from my traditional ways of liv-

ing, the harder it is on my mental health and overall well-being.

I'm not suggesting there is only one way to be Indigenous, I have just noticed that for me, there is a disconnection and that, as I decolonize, I see a difference in my quality of life.

I love talking about decolonization because I always learn something new, and it can help open the doors for discussion and change. Which is what we all want as humans, I think. We are always evolving and progressing. I believe issues imperative to Indigenous nations are important to everyone because every human being should care about compassionate topics. In future articles I hope to discuss the relationship between certain governments and Indigenous people, two-spirit identity, and what it means to be an Indian.

Living under a capitalist system is complex for Indigenous people and our voices and perspective aren't often heard. I'm grateful to be able to share my perspective with WIP readers. *Wopila* (thank you)!

Rafael Plentywolf will graduate from The Evergreen State College in 2020 with an emphasis on Indigenous Studies.

Make this dream a reality

Allan Hill

I am the creator of A Green New Global Deal Facebook page. I ask you to remember that the fight over climate change is not just for us. It is our children and future generations who will be dealing with the full effects of the reshaping environment. It is time to do the right thing for them and these changes are on you and me. It is a fight we cannot afford to lose.

As a Caucasian male of Iroquois Nation and Scot descent, I have always had other voices in my blood which are older and much wiser. I have learnt from them and abide by them. Being human, I have made my share of mistakes in life. However, I have learned that when people of conscience do nothing, the earth dies just a little bit more.

We are all mere fibers in this web of life, inextricably connected to each other in one way or another. What happens to one community affects all communities. When one segment of society is marginalized for so long, society at large will pay an exacting price.

As a veteran I took the Oath of Enlistment and swore to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies 'foreign and domestic.' " The last time I looked, the rights of all citizens were not included. There was no time limit on that oath and I didn't sign up to watch this kind of behavior from any state in the union, regardless of how "Deep South" they are politically. While the US purports to spread democracy abroad, it also has a history of actively suppressing women and minorities at home.


In 2012 I had a daydream in which I experienced one possible future for humanity. Two years later, a second vision played, roughly

mimicking my dream of months earlier, although this one had a definite message: *something beautiful is going to happen*. The dream included an event at Evergreen—a three-day public and privately funded festival, held in July, that, at its very heart would be A Green New Global Deal.

The three-day affair would expound on every aspect of our changing environment through public lectures, a theatre showing top notch documentaries, and tented corporate presentations showcasing product demonstrations. A physicist told me once that we live in a "persistent universe." With this as a badge of faith, I take the City of Olympia and The Evergreen State College to task: We demand "A Greener New Global Deal" festival!

This planet cries out for help. For change. Be that change! Speak up, act up... for mother Earth and all her inhabitants. All of her species. If you drink water, breath air, or love someone, winning this war is up to you and me.

Presently houseless, Alan Hill is a 68 year-old activist. He can be reached at batai52@yahoo.com.




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Community Spotlight

Concert by Tom Rawson, Folksinger and Storyteller; Opening acts: Piper Josephine and Raging Grannies

Saturday, March 7, 7:30pm, New Traditions Café, 300 5th Ave SW, sponsored by Fellowship of Reconciliation. Proceeds from the concert will go to outreach and support for youth activists in Olympia. FOR projects emphasize the rights of conscience and nonviolent alternatives to conflict. Tickets \$20 / \$12 for students & low income. Get tickets by phoning 360-252-0684 or email fsilsby970@gmail.com. New Traditions Café: 360-705-2819.

March on Parallax Perspectives: International Humanitarian Law

Glen Anderson will interview Joanne Dufour on TCTV this month. Joanne Dufour will explain the origins of International Humanitarian Law in the 1800s, its evolution through the Geneva Conventions, the Rules of Engagement and the International Criminal Court. Joanne has taught social studies and volunteered with the Red Cross, where she worked in disaster services and served as a trainer in International Humanitarian Law. Watch online at parallaxperspectives.org or on cable via TCTV Mondays at 1:30 pm, Wednesdays at 5:00 pm, Thursdays at 9:00 pm. For more info, contact Glen Anderson at 360.491.9093 or glenanderson@integra.net.

Inside‘Outsiders’ - What one city can teach us about homelessness

Wednesday, March 3, 7:30-9:00 pm. Town hall meeting with reporter Will James and three *Seattle Times'* Project Homeless team members. Public radio station KNKX website declares “Homelessness on the West Coast is rising to crisis levels, even at a time of historic economic growth and prosperity. To understand why, KNKX Public Radio and *The Seattle Times'* Project Homeless team spent one year watching homelessness unfold in Olympia, Washington. Town Hall, 1119 8th Ave., Seattle. Free and open to the public ...but it's in *Seattle!*

Special Events

Shut up and write!

Mondays March 1, 15 and 29. 10 am - noon. 115 Legion.

Join together for inspiration and discipline to practice your writing (maybe write something for WIP?!). Continuing each month as participation warrants.

Power to the People public meeting

Monday, March 2, 5:30-8:30 pm, Updates from committees working on the Thurston County Public Power campaign, Bruce Wilkinson Jr., More info at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/2161300714179193/>.

Rental housing community conversation

Thursday, March 5, 6-8 pm. Washington Middle School, 3100 Cain Road SE, Olympia.

Talk about your experiences as a renter or a landlord. Some cities have codes that make it easier to find affordable housing and avoid costly evictions. Sponsored by Olympia's Land Use and Environment Committee.

Transracial adoption

Thursday, March 5, 7-8:30 pm. Olympia Center.

Lecture and discussions explore ways to support development and adjustment of adopted, multiracial children with parents of different cultural identities. Sponsored by WA Society for Clinical Social Work

Masjid al-Nur Islamic Center open house

Friday, March 6, 12 noon - 2 pm.

Members of the Center invite nonmuslim friends and colleagues to learn more about the Muslim faith. Welcome brief-

ing at noon, services 12:10-1, followed by Q and A and mingling with community members. Details for attending at <http://www.islamiccenterofolympia.org/>

Tom Rawson Concert

Saturday, March 7, 7:30 pm

Benefit supporting local youth activities. See spotlight for details.

IWW orientation

Saturday, March 7, 3-5 pm.

Learn about the IWW and history, tactics and structure. Olympia Center, Presented by the IWW. More info at organize@OlympiaIWW.com

Talking about Injustice: a conversation with Dawud al-Malik

Sunday, March 8, from 6:30-8 pm. Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation 2200 East End St. NW.

Freed after nearly 50 years in prison, Dawud al-Malik will describe his experience as a black man in the criminal justice system. He has maintained his innocence and his case is being reviewed by the King Co. Prosecutor's Office, where he was originally sentenced. Open to the public. Free

Dine out 4 Girls on International Women’s Day

Sunday, March 8, 11 am to 9 pm. Mercato Ristorante is donating 20% of the proceeds from diners on International Women's Day to Empowerment4girls. From the website: through empowerment camps, conscious minds conscious bodies™ intentional sexuality programs and teacher trainings [we] educate, nurture and empower girls. Find out more online at: Empowerment4Girls.com

Workplace Organizing Collective Tuesday, March 10, 6:30-7:30 pm.

Olympia DSA organizers and community members meet to teach one another concrete organizing skills to build power at work. Oly DSA, see ad this issue. Contact <http://olydsa.org>

Bikini Kill and Table Sugar Concert

Friday, March 13, 8-11 pm. Capitol Theater,

Benefit for Interfaith Works, whose volunteers work with all people, businesses and organizations to make our community safe and give everyone the chance to thrive. More info at: <http://olympiafilmsociety.org>

Maria Joyner-Wulf quartet with the SPSCC Jazz Combo and Big Band

Thursday March 19, 5:30-7:30 pm. Percival Place at Ben Moore’s, 112 4th Ave. W, Olympia.

Enjoy an evening of jazz featuring the SPSCC Jazz Combos and Big Band along with Maria Joyner-Wulf. Free

Olympia Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons,

Thursday, March 19.MIXX96 meeting room at State and Washington. (Please don’t park in the adjacent parking lot.)

Join with others working strategically to abolish nuclear weapons and reduce the likelihood of their use.

Blintzapalooza!

Sunday, March 22, 10 am - 2 pm. Temple Beth Hatfiloh, 201 8th Ave. SE, Olympia.

Bagels, blintzes and books! Frozen

blintzes will be available for purchase to take home. Bake-off competition: strudel. The bulk of the proceeds will support work of attorneys and other professionals and staff who provide a meaningful voice and advocacy to those escaping oppression and worse. Cash or checks only.

S. Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group

Thursday, March 26, 5:30-8pm. Lacey Community Center, 6729 Pacific Ave. SE, Lacey.

Annual meeting of SPSSEG to celebrate successes and plan for 2020. More info at 360-412-3191

David Rovics Live!

Wednesday, April 1, 7:30 pm. New Traditions Cafe

Benefit for Public Power to the People. Amusing political songs, and a Public Power expert to wow the crowd with the exciting benefits of public power. . <https://www.facebook.com/events/530107877622054/>

Earth Day Climate Rally

Wednesday, April 22. on the Capitol steps.

Get ready! Young climate activists are organizing a rally Stay tuned for more information.

Check our WIP facebook page for events that came in after deadline. Also LocalMotive calendar. Send your events to olywip@gmail.com before the last Thursday of each month..

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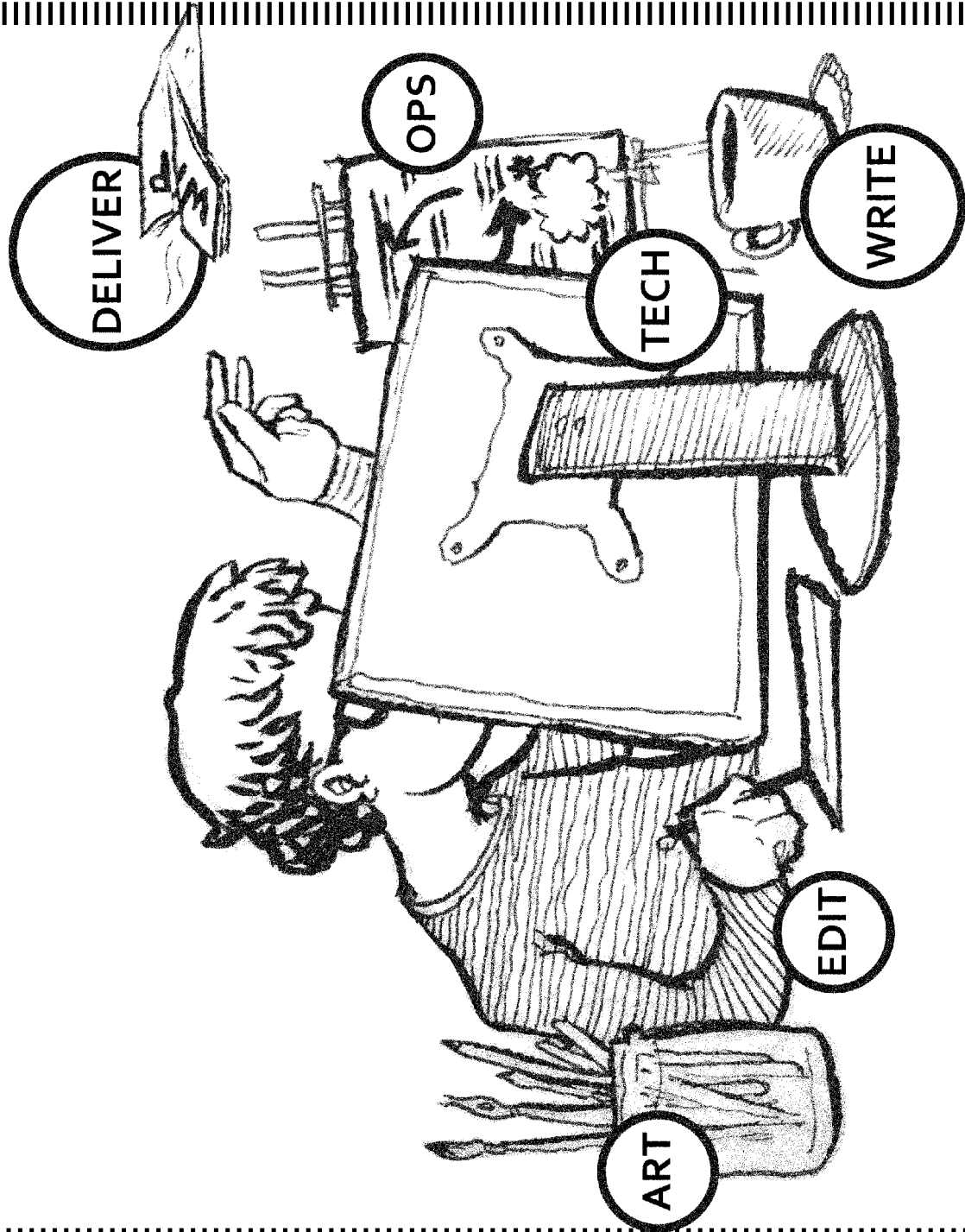


Works in Progress

Advocating for social justice since 1990



This issue: The First Amendment



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