Olympia’s rising tax exempt skyline

Dan Leahy

I came home to Olympia in late May after a trip to Ireland and began to see the Olympia skyline.

Yes, the seven story 123 4th Ave building was still there with its noodle shop, empty retail spaces and rumors of vacancies, but now the nine story, 138-unit Mistake by the Lake was taking shape on the 13th Avenue flood plain with rumors of Russian money.

One, two, many new buildings

A seven story Harbor Heights was rising near the Farmer’s Market with 116 luxury apartments for the 55–plus crowd. Annie’s Lofts on Adams street with 48 units was getting ready to open. Les Schwab on State had morphed with plans for a “Water Street Redevelopment” project on two lots purchased on the 44 unit Dockside Flats to the “Laurama,” named after Captain Sam Percival’s wife.

Matt Scheibmeir, the Centralia lawyer hired by Mayor and Council as Hearing Examiner to make controversial decisions, followed his approval of the Dockside Flats and the Mistake by the Lake “Views on Fifth,” by approving the 86-unit Westman Mill on State Avenue. The Mayor and Council issue 8–year tax exemptions for its “upscale” Percival Condominium News.

What surprised me the most, however, was that the Rants Group expected an exemption for its “upscale” Percival Condominium News. Set forth in its own Percival Condominium News:

“The Rants Group estimates that the savings to condominium buyers from the exemption could be $60,000 to $120,000 over the eight-year period.”

Even with all this, there was still more on the “skyline.” Walker John dropped a million dollars and bought two vacant lots at State and Water for his aptly named 5–story, 60 unit “State Lofts” on the next door parking lot.

The City of Olympia has joined in with plans for a “Water Street Redevelopment” project on two lots purchased for $505,000 at Water and 4th, followed up by the purchase of two lots on Adams street next to Fertile Ground ($315,000) in August 2018, followed by lots containing Ben Moore’s paint shop. The Mayor and City Council are acting like the project in a target area. The residential or commercial space. The residential part of the building is exempt—but it asks for 20% of the units to be “affordable” units. An eight year exemption does not require that any portion of the units be affordable. The requirement for getting an exemption downtown is siting the project in a target area. The owner then pays property tax only on the land and any associated retail or commercial space. The residential part of the building is exempt—in other words, tax free. So, who picks up the tax bill for this residential portion? You guessed it. The rest of us.

What happens to our property tax as a result of the exemptions?

The County distributes our property taxes to thirteen different districts. These include the City itself, Medic One, the Port, the FUD, the School District, etc. If the Mayor and City Council exempt a developer from property taxes, the amount due the districts doesn’t change. What happens is that people who actually pay their property taxes pick up the balance.

In other words, the public subsidizes those who don’t pay. More specifically, the Mayor and City Council are using our increased property taxes, paid directly or through rents we pay, as a public subsidy to those who own the tax exempt, market rate apartment buildings or condos that increase in asset value regardless of rental income.

Exempt, continued on page 5

Volume 30, No. 1 Serving the Olympia community and the cause of social justice since 1990.

July 2019

8 Year tax exemptions on multi-family units

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<th>Mill 2019</th>
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Exemption agreements requested not yet acted upon

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Olympia Municipal Code Chapter 5.86

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The community we want to build

For all practical purposes we live in a society founded on increasing the economic value of those who are already wealthy by decreasing the economic value of the poor. The success of the first project requires the completion of the second: the two are directly proportional to each other.

From a biological perspective, one could argue that we all belong to a single community because we are a social species, and such behavioral norms exist for such human communities necessarily become fragmented as a multitude of large or small collectivities such as the Nation, the state, the city, and the neighborhood.

Agriculture is a human activity that must also be disassembled in the face of consequential differences including class, gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, and so on.

The problem with biological argument is that we are a single species and thus value like our plant and animal coexist within and among all the existent collectivities are not abstract but real. Rather, social relations among and between groups have specific forms in the way that the economic community organizes to produce, distribute and consume the wealth and benefits generated. Within the same city, all social collectivities, therefore, can also be said to either own the means of production (i.e. industries, land, and capital in general) or work as direct or indirect producers for those who own the modern production.

At basic level, two antagonistic communities exist in the world: the community of labor and the community of capital. In terms of group size, the community of wealth represents a tiny minority, while the community of those who are disenchanted is large and getting larger.

As the 4th of July and the upcoming Presidential election approaches, we are witnessing the way in which the official propaganda of the White House and the Republican Party coexist itself in the bloated sounds of patriotic slogans like “Make America Great” and “America First.” By using patriotic language, their intent is to create a false representation of the US as a unified community (inaccurately described in the Pledge of Allegiance as “One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all”) while at the same instilling docility and acceptance among people by implying that criticism of the status quo is anti-patriotic and anti-national.

The insincerity and inconsistency of this patriotic language is demonstrated by the fact that in America, the government’s real loyalty lies not with the majority of people but instead focusing on the destruction of wealth by corporations with ties to the financial-industrial-military complex.

The aim of WIP is to confront the official propaganda of the White House and the Republican Party cloaks itself in the bloated sounds of patriotic slogans. The problem with biological argument is that we are a single species and thus value like our plant and animal coexist within and among all the existent collectivities are not abstract but real. Rather, social relations among and between groups have specific forms in the way that the economic community organizes to produce, distribute and consume the wealth and benefits generated. Within the same city, all social collectivities, therefore, can also be said to either own the means of production (i.e. industries, land, and capital in general) or work as direct or indirect producers for those who own the modern production.

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It is time to call into being a new type of community willing to put in the hard and long hours to argue for our purpose State and Government. It is time to call into being a community that is made up of all “collective workers” of the nation willing to struggle in solidarity against capitalism and all forms of exploitation. Only then, at last, will the last words of the American Pledge of Allegiance make some sense: “With Liberty and Justice for All.”

Theme for September: What future are we creating? (deadline July 21)

Theme for October: The rest of the world

About the cover: Will the market support 674 new high-priced residential units and 80,000 square feet of commercial space coming on line in downtown Olympia? Photos by Lori Lively.
How hard work and a family dream created a community business

The best food is often hidden away in the corners of nondescript strip malls. These types of family-run multi-generational businesses must work hard to stand head to head with corporate outlets. They succeed by connecting with the community and by reflecting the values of their employees and customers, in contrast with bland chain stores that primarily serve to funnel profits to their remote corporate headquarters.

So it is that Ramirez Mexican Store and Restaurant can be found near an auto parts store and next to a nail salon in Tumwater. Signs in the window support local labor unions and tales of the many local school groups who have received numerous rounds of fundraising support are just one indication of how integrated Ramirez Mexican Store is in the community.

A labor of love

The moment you meet Maria Jimenez and her family, owners of the store and restaurant it is apparent how much they love their work, their family recipes, their customers, and their community. That might explain why they’ve had one of the most highly rated restaurants in the area for more than ten years.

Maria is from Jalisco and her husband Jose Ramirez is from the neighboring state of Zacatecas in central Mexico. Starting this business was a longtime family dream for them. Jose was a hard worker, often having two jobs at the same time. Maria worked to support him in creating a family business they could own for themselves.

Family is part of the culture

What does Maria mean when she says “family business”? In addition to her husband, Maria’s three sons (Andres, Oscar, and Sergio), her mother, daughters-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, and three nephews all work together in the business. The definition has expanded so that Maria feels that all the employees in the business are family to them.

And it isn’t just the employees—it’s the neighborhood vibe with a stream of locals coming for a meal, or take-out, or some Mexican groceries. The way children can entertain themselves checking out shelves of exotic food while their parents enjoy a meal—or even a drink. Groups are welcome to come celebrate and other events in the bar area. There’s a Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) sign in the front window of the store and Maria says they are proud to work with the labor union to provide food for many WFSE events. They’ve even been part of weddings—preparing food for as many as 500 guests.

Offering the flavors of a different world

Maria and Jose started with a small store in 2008. Over the next 12 years the store has grown to encompass a whole south-of-the-border world: dried chilies and spices, a range of produce with whole and prepared nopales cactus, imported canned and packaged goods, a drinks section with hard-to-find guava Jarritos, Mexican candy. A large refrigerated case filled with containers of sauces, entrees, condiments, desserts made from scratch from Ramirez family recipes—mainly the mothers of Maria and Jose. In time, they added a tortilla factory to produce that traditional staple without which there is no authentic Mexican meal—fresh corn tortillas.

At the meat counter there are cuts familiar to anyone who’s traveled in Mexico or learned to love Mexican food, many of them seasoned with the flavors of Mexico and ready for grilling. Adventurous home cooks come to the store with printed recipes, looking to find some of the ingredients they need and often thrilled to discover they can find everything on their list at the Ramirez store.

Building on success

With the success of the store, the next step was to offer prepared food in a restaurant setting as well as catering. Like the store, the restaurant is a world in reach of your fork and spoon: six different varieties of soups, tacos with 11 filling options, burritos, bowls, enchiladas, tamales, seafood platters including mangos fritos (fried whole tilapia), salmon, and red snapper—and breakfast too.

In 2014, the family opened Ramirez To Go—yes, tucked away next to a service station on Olympia’s Westside—run by their son Sergio. The menu is shorter, but it’s the same delicious food. After they added a bar to the Tumwater location in 2018, Maria began referring to seating areas as Section A for the store portion which is a little quieter and more private, Section B for the restaurant portion which has more space and natural light from the windows, and Section C for the bar portion where groups sometimes like to throw birthday parties and celebration events. On Friday nights you might encounter a happy crowd of locals in for the karaoke.

Sharing the love

Maria’s eyes light up when she describes two more retail realities of the Mexican table: tamales and beans. Anyone who has experienced the tradition of a family getting together to make tamales during the Christmas holiday season knows this is a huge labor of love. Even though the store makes its own masa, it is less labor intensive for a restaurant kitchen like theirs to structure operations to produce large batches of tamales. Many customers appreciate that they can buy authentic, traditional made-from-scratch tamales by the dozen from the Ramirez Store when they aren’t able to turn their home kitchen into a fully fledged tamale factory. Tamales are available year-round, but thousands upon thousands are sold from Thanksgiving to New Year’s, so pre-ordering is wise.

As for the beans, many customers beg Maria for her recipe (which she graciously shares on occasion), but few are able to master the process. They come back to her to say “they still didn’t taste as good as yours.” Maria replies with a wink and a smile “maybe my husband puts extra love into our version.”

When asked what is her favorite thing about working together with so many family members Maria enthusiastically replies “that I have them all with me and we are growing together.” She then follows up with “if I had to choose all over I would do it again in a heartbeat, we really appreciate our customers and really enjoy serving our community.”

Top Work in Progress Page 3

Co-op Local grows our economy

8am - 9pm daily • www.olympiafood.coop
"We the undersigned scientists, doctors, environmental organizations and citizens from 187 countries, urgently call for a halt to the deployment of the 5G (fifth generation) wireless network, including 5G from space satellites."

Particularly concerning are the effects of these EMFs on the eye. Given the cellular reactions caused by ultra-high frequencies, we may encounter a "gi-gantic" epidemic of each of the four types of blindness: cataracts, detached retinas, glaucoma and macular degeneration. Pali also cites a concern for the bio-excitation of the microwave radiation on the body. Since the kidneys have much fluid in the form of blood and what will become urine, 5G EMFs will be expected to impact both glomerular filtration and reabsorption, both essential to kidney function. Pali has said that installing essentially millions of 5G antennae without any biological testing is the "stupidest idea anyone has had in the history of the world."

Ongoing rocket deployment and ozone depletion

Rocket deployment is a part of the 20,000 necessary satellites — two 5G test satellites were launched by SpaceX in February 2018. On March 28, 2018, the FCC gave approval to SpaceX to launch 4,425 satellites into low orbit around the Earth, and it is expected that hundreds of satellites will be launched into low and midrange orbit in 2019. All 20,000 satellites could be put into orbit over the next two years. The companies with the biggest plans to launch satellites include:

- SpaceX: 12,000 satellites
- OneWeb: 4,560 satellites
- Boeing: 2,956 satellites
- Spire Global: 972 satellites

There are several ways to fuel a rocket launch and none of them are friendly to the environment. Rockets that use solid fuel create massive ozone depletion. Liquid kerosene can also be used, and while this fuel destroys less ozone, it releases massive amounts of black carbon soot into the air, especially at high altitudes.

Computer models suggest that if the annual number of rocket launches increases by 10 or more times, the combination of ozone depletion and the black soot could produce a 3-degree warming effect over the Antarctic and reduce the ozone in the world’s atmosphere by 4 percent. And, since 5G satellites have a lifespan of about five years, there will need to be ongoing launches.

A third mercury-based rocket propulsion system is currently being developed by Apollo Fusion. This rocket works on the basis of ion propulsion and uses powerful magnets to push away small charged particles at high speeds, thereby generating thrust. But, if there was ever a malfunction causing this type of engine to explode, the environmental consequences would be enormous as mercury, an extremely toxic metal, would spread throughout the atmosphere and over the Earth.

In addition, these satellites, which are each the size of a small refrigerator, are claimed to weigh about 880 pounds, will circle the Earth at about 18,000 miles per hour. The rocket exhausts created by these launches will contribute to an enormous amount of space junk over time as they complete their orbit.
A personal version of this petition, reprinted with permission from Shankman has worked in business, lived in raindrops. The lineage of technology generations started in the early 1980s when 1G was released, supporting cell phones with the analog transmission of voice-only calls. These first phones had poor battery life and voice quality, little security, and were prone to dropped calls. 2G was released in the early 1990s, evolving from analog to digital operation, which introduced cell and text encryption, along with data services that created the capacity for different kinds of picture and communication.

The introduction of 3G networks in 1998 ushered in faster data-transmission speeds allowing cell phones to be used in more data-demanding ways, such as for video calling and mobile internet access. The term “mobile broadband” came about with 3G cellular technology. The fourth generation, 4G, was released in 2008. Going beyond the mobile wireless access of 3G, 4G also supports gaming services, HD mobile TV, video conferencing, 3D TV, and other features that demand high speeds. Most current cell phone models support both 4G and 3G technologies. (1)

The applications supported by 4G have evolved to offer connected cars, cheaper monitors and TVs, digital health devices that can report data directly to doctors, laptop/tablet combinations, curved TVs, 3-D printers, smart homes allowing a wide range of remote functions from afar, and wearables such as smart watches. In the tech world, these creative applications have spawned the vision of connecting all kinds of things through the internet. (2)

In a January 13, 2014, Time magazine article, Tim Bajarin wrote that “The Internet of Everything (IoE) has become a catch-all phrase to describe adding connectivity and intelligence to just about every device in order to give them special functions.” He went on to describe the advent of everything “smart,” that we are now so familiar with — “… All end up with the ‘smart’ moniker in front of them when they become part of the Internet of Things and its network and interconnect to ecosystems of devices, software and services.”

Note: Now, these years hence, this is more commonly referred to as the Internet of Things — IoT.

Bajarin pointed out that developing this market would yield an enormous financial impact as well: “… during a meeting I had with the CEO of Cisco, John Chambers, he outlined Cisco’s thinking on IoE. The financial numbers he predicts for the impact of IOE in the public sector alone: $4.6 trillion. He believes it will have a dramatic impact on everything from city planning, first responders, military, health and dozens of other environments.”
I gathered 3,000 signatures to defeat a corporate conference center, which would have used funds available for a Children's Museum.

I've been a school volunteer for over thirteen years, and I've spent twelve years as a Legislative District 22 Chair, and I'm currently serving as the District 22 Chair in 2018 and more.

Finally, I worked for 17 months with Olympians for Smart Development and the Olympia Civic plateau, asking the City of Olympia to start over with the Missing Middle. I think it's important to have a democratically developed Comprehensive Plan for growth. I also followed and protested House Bill 1523, which is Miss-ing Middle on steroids as it cuts citizens out of an appeal process. Instead, I will promote the Missing Middle, a housing type that modifies current city codes.

I would like to be on the Transporta-tion Commission which oversees bus service in our city. I believe that bus service is a priority and that we need adequate funding to maintain a good system.

In addition to these goals, I would like to support policies that encourage more bus shelters. These shelters not only provide a comfortable place to wait for the bus, but they also encourage more people to use public transportation, which is good for the environment and for reducing traffic congestion.

I have also joined the efforts to develop a Missing Middle, a type of housing that allows for more diverse and affordable housing options in our city. This type of housing is gaining popularity as it provides a solution to the housing crisis we face today.

In conclusion, I believe that we need to work together to create a more sustainable and equitable community. By supporting policies that encourage public transportation, bus shelters, and Missing Middle housing, we can create a more livable city for all residents.
Humbert, continued
who repeatedly violate standards. I want public buildings to adhere to sustainable standards, and old buildings retrofitted for maximum efficiency. I have heard from many families about the need for affordable and trustworthy childcare in our city’s public spaces. One concrete step forward that I will push for is to provide childcare during council meetings so that families can be civically engaged.

I am not foolish enough to believe that I can fix every problem that afflicts every Olympian. I can promise that I will listen to your needs and do my best to represent you. I promise that I will not only do what I think is best for you, I will try to empower you to do what you think best for yourself.

A conversation with Dr. Matt Goldenberg
(candidate for Pos. 3 held by Nathaniel Jones)

Jeff Sowers

Like much of the Country, the City of Olympia is grappling with growing homelessness, rampant drug addiction and untreated mental illness, skyrocketing property tax, lack of affordable accountability and transparency, and climate change are among the daunting challenges facing our City on the High- ern tip of the Salish Sea. It was with all this in mind that I sat down to have a conversation with Matt Goldenberg. I have felt frustrated with how the City Council has dealt with a number of these pressing issues including home- less camp sweeps, the Missing Middle rezone, and the handling of the Olymp- ia Police Department of Yvonne Mc- Donald’s unexplained death. I was curi- ous and anxious to find out how Matt Goldenberg planned to take on these challenges.

Matt is running for position 3, which was abandoned by Nathaniel Jones who is now running for mayor. His challenges in the race are Dari Maar- drone and Boudwica Walsh. Dr. Goldenberg is a clinical psycholo- gist with a small, active practice here in Olympia who is particularly in treating trauma, specifically trauma due to various forms of racism, xenophobia, homophobia, etc. In addition to his private practice, he also part-time as an adjunct professor at South Puget Sound Community College, and works as an “equity consultant” for schools and government agencies. He con- nected with some of the issues that would like to see the whole council receive equity training, as well as racial bias training for the Olympia Police Department. He talked about a “Human Connect” program that could address issues of police ac- countability and transparency, as well as human rights concerns for our City’s residents. In general he wants to see the Council make effort of an effort to reach out to the house- less community, such as by holding a Council meeting at a houseless camp- site.

He would build community by push- ing for action on the City’s “sanctuary city” language. Just as it is under- standing about how trauma in its various forms affects people, in particular those suffering from depression and other “crimes of poverty.” He is calling for a city-led coalition to connect entrepreneurs of color with local credit unions and small business consul- tants in order to diversify our market and ensure that we are creating oppor- tunities for all families to thrive.

Houseless crisis
Matt strongly opposes the sweeps of unsanctioned camps, and the idea of simply “policing” the city council meetings, lack of outreach to those who are experiencing housing crisis, criminalizing homelessness generally as residents of unsanctioned camps, and treatment of the family of Yvonne McDonal.

Matt passionately believes we need a city that is not only strong but has direct ser- vice experience with the houseless community. He points to his own ex- perience on King County’s first mo- bile crisis team where he worked with chronically homeless adults. He also worked at Childhaven, a three-part- daycare for infants who were home- less and/or insecurely housed, and as a social worker for Neighborhood houseless in their drop-in homeless youth clinic.

How Matt would promote an inclusive community
With his background in treating trauma in oppressed communities, as an advocate for the homeless, and as an equity consultant, Goldenberg believes he has the skills to lead the council toward creating a more inclusive community. He would like to see the whole council receive equity training, as well as racial bias training for the Olympia Police Department. He talked about a “Human Connect” program that could address issues of police ac- countability and transparency, as well as human rights concerns for our City’s residents. In general he wants to see the Council make effort of an effort to reach out to the house- less community, such as by holding a Council meeting at a houseless camp- site.

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Relation of Progressives to the Democratic Party
Dave Jette
The current situation
Despite Trump’s election, the present President in recent history—he is sys- tematically bringing about fascism. For a description of this see Humbert’s “Neo-Fascism in the White House” in the April 2017 issue of Monthly Review Press, or Electoral work can nonetheless play a critical supporting role by actually electing people (ideologically) the various progressive organizations that are currently working on the ground. He does not believe that bypassing envi- ronmental restraints of “Missing Middle” developments is a good idea.

With regard to the shortage of low in- come housing, Matt suggests that being concerned with the high-income groups will only do so much to solve the problem. Matt believes that “residents should be given information and time to respond” and that “housing applicants should receive exact copies of their credit re- port” so that applicants don’t need to pay mul- tiple fees as they search for housing.

The last thing we discussed was the minimum wage, which he supports raising to $15 per hour. I find it surprising that a City as pro- business as Olympia has not already adopted a $15 minimum wage. A recent Quinnipiac Poll showed that 57% of Olympia residents support the minimum wage to $15, and support in Olympia must be significantly higher than this. Who is our City Council lis- tening to?

Fortunately, we have some great can- didates running this year, and I think we have one clearly one of them. We need fresh perspectives on the Council, and Matt clearly has a valuable perspective and needed skills to offer. He is definitely worth voters’ serious consideration for Olympia City Council, position 3.

You can find more about Matt’s platform and campaign at www.electmattgold-enberg.com.

Progressives realize that [decent living conditions for everyone] can be accomplished only through fundamental change away from our current capitalist system.

Progressives realize that [decent living conditions for everyone] can be accomplished only through fundamental change away from our current capitalist system.

necessary mechanism for transform- ing society in a progressive direc- tion. (Historically, the tendency not to associate with partners who don’t fully accept the ‘core line’ has been a great weakness of the Left in our country, and it must be overcome.

However, the electoral arena is also critically important for winning elections and gaining traction for our ideas about neces- sary changes to make in our society.

Thus some progres- sives who are most likely to involve themselves in electoral poli- tics, while realizing the deep structural transformation of our society can be achieved only through mass struggle. Electoral work can nonetheless play a critical supporting role by actually electing people who can im- plement progressive demands to some extent at least, and by tying together (ideologically) the various progressive struggles. That is why we need to address all these issues as a whole, for their own liberation.

November 2019 Works In Progress Page 7
perspectives

Whizzing past public process: Will Kaiser Woods become a playground for mountain bikers?

Evonne Hedgepeth, Ph.D

“Developments never die. They just come back in another form.” — Andy McMillan

In March I received a postcard from the Olympia Parks and Recreation Department announcing its plan to develop the 68.67-acre forested natural area above our neighborhood as a “dedicated mountain bike park.”

This is how many Westbrook Park neighbors first learned that the site we had worked hard for six years to protect from three housing projects had already been repurposed. Like many of them, I felt as if I had been gun-punched. OPARD had renamed Park Heights “Kaiser Woods.” This meant that many neighbors most directly affected didn’t realize the postcard referred to the beloved park at the top of the dead-end main road in their own neighborhood.

The notice invited recipients to visit engageolympia.org to view the results of a feasibility study that had already been performed and to fill out a survey with feedback.

As residents within 600 feet of the property, we were the most affected stakeholders. But we had been left out of the planning process while a coalition of mountain biking organizations had been working with OPARD staff for at least two years to plan the park’s new designation.

A lack of transparency

The morning after the notice arrived, I called OPARD Assistant Director Johnathon Turlove with concerns about the park that had excluded neighboring stakeholders. I noted the survey had a short time frame for response, could be filled out multiple times by one individual, and was tailored to bikers. After first refusing, Turlove eventually agreed to extend the survey deadline and allow a public meeting.

Concerned neighbors and environmentalists came to the meeting with a list of questions about the plan but they were outnumbered 30 to 1 by bike park supporters. When a Westbrook Park resident attempted to ask a question, she was told that only questions about OPARD’s presentation would be entertained.

Looking beneath the surface

I decided to look through the files of Andy McMillan, one of the original visionaries who proposed Kaiser Woods be designated as a neighborhood park with hiking and biking trails. To understand the implications of the City’s plan, I studied Andy’s copies of developer plats, hydrology reports, a traffic study of the City’s plan, I studied Andy’s copies of developer plats, hydrology reports, a traffic study and his notes and correspondence. I discussed the plan with people in the park. I conducted interviews with mountain bikers, bikers, Westbrook Park and Ken Lake neighbors, environmentalists, state agency specialists, OPARD staff, staff at the Department of Natural Resources-Capitol Forest (where there are 166 miles of biking trails for all skill levels), park planners from other mountain bike parks in the state, and the resource manager of Manke Timberland, which owns 800 acres right next to Kaiser Woods and contains numerous intermediate and advanced trails for bikers.

I discovered that OPARD had inaccurately scored “Kaiser Woods” on three key criteria in feasibility studies and site plans it conducted for four parks—Watershed Park, Fraser Trails, Kaiser Woods and LBA Woods. This had the effect of pushing Kaiser Woods to the top of the list as the preferred site for off-road mountain biking.

Over a six-week period I uncovered other serious questions about the plan. The 2018 feasibility study for the project, for example, had overlooked the two wetlands and two streams on the site. The private mountain biking advocacy group, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (hired to produce three plans for the park) didn’t address them in their designs, despite having spent many hours studying the site.

When I alerted OPARD staff about the wetlands and streams, they said they were moving forward anyway and could “mitigate for the wetlands later.”

Meanwhile, Westbrook Park and Ken Lake residents inquiring about the status and timeframe for the park’s development were told repeatedly that nothing was likely to happen at the park anytime soon and that their desire to be involved in the planning process was “premature.”

Other key people and groups were aligned with the mountain biking park advocates, including two law firms and two state agency staff members who claimed “conflict of interest” and/or refused to pursue concerns about impacts on wildlife and possible misuse of the grant monies, the latter acknowledging they are bikers who support the park’s creation.

The Ken Lake Homeowner Association board also decided to remain “neutral,” despite the increased risks to their residents of flooding, waterborne illness, sedimentation, changing water levels and toxic algal bloom in the lake if Kaiser Woods becomes a mountain bike park.

Several Ken Lake residents reported that communications about the park were not relayed to them.

But, according to the Washington State Department of Ecology website, the first step of the state’s mitigation sequence is to avoid the wet areas in the first place.

“Nothing going on here…”

The deeper I dug, the clearer it became that OPARD’s decision rested on no rationale other than enthusiastic support from three local mountain biking organizations named specifically as the key stakeholders in the new process. Friends of Capitol Forest, South Sound Mountain Bike Alliance and Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance. The City’s plan is for volunteers from these groups to design, build and maintain the park.

The culture of mountain biking

Mountain bikers are a diverse group, but one with its own ethos, language, beliefs and practices. Some describe their sport as high risk, thrill-seeking, expansionist (to acquire more trails) and addictive. Many bikers wear protective gear such as a full face mask and body armor. Mountain bike parks post signs to warn other users that they should enter the park only “at their own risk.”

Kaiser, continued on next page

The circuit of mountain biking

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Kaiser, continued on next page
Some bikers are environmental stewards, but the state’s largest mountain bike advocacy group says their mission is to acquire as much public land as possible for new trails while simultaneously focusing on “sustainable recreation, trail maintenance, advocacy, education, recreation, volunteerism and trail building.” As one advanced biker said, “If we’re going to hike on clear-cut land, we’re here for the trails, not the trees.”

Because bikers move faster than hikers and the risk of collisions with pedestrians is high, hikers have the right of way in mountain bike parks. Many hikers exercise caution around bikers but also expect people to get out of their way, quickly.

**Fast-tracked decision-making process**

Like mountain bikers themselves, the decision-making process for Kaiser Woods has moved fast. From the time it appeared out of nowhere and expects other stakeholders to get out of the way. Bike park advocates kept their planning with OPARD staff secret even from their own members, announcing on their website only two months before the City published their plans. OPARD staff kept the secret as well. At least two long-time Kaiser Woods park stewards were outraged when the decision was unveiled at the same time as the flawed feasibility results along with a survey that would skew results and inflate “vote” counts giving a false picture of public support for the plan.

**Environmental and other concerns**

Some mountain bikers are vocal about the disturbing trend of developing the environment with aggressive, irresponsible biking and leaving trash and human waste on trails. Research on environmental impacts of mountain biking reveals many reasons for concern about the fragile Kaiser Woods site, which has and sold to become the site for a large multi-sports park (which would include extensive mountain biking and running trails). If the Manke Model policy is sold to developers, the Kaiser Woods property may be needed as a natural space buffer between that facility and the neighborhoods below it, an impossibility if it already has been developed as a mountain bike facility.

From hiking and open space to exclusive mountain bike facilities, Olympians voiced their park priorities in a 2016 OPARD process that identified participants’ preference for “neighborhood parks, open space, preservation of wetlands, walking paths and restrooms.” The current plan ignores these priorities, which have serious impacts on park neighbors, and is unrealistic, environmentally destructive, socially irresponsible and short-sighted. As one online survey respondent commented, mountain bikers’ desire for a park within city limits “skates dangerously close to privatization of public land.”

We may look back some day and regret allowing 2060. 400 to sell Kaiser Woods for one user group, instead of retaining it as a low-impact, neighborhood park with some biking and biking trails—which also would honor the legacy of Andy McMillan. This genie should be called back into the bottle by its master—the citizenry of Olympia.

**Houselessness, human dignity, and the right to survive**

The July 2019 interview on “Glen’s Parallax Perspectives” series provides information and insights about the growing number of people who do not have reliable places to live.

Two savvy guests – Jamie Joy and Tye Gundel – take a fresh look at homelessness. (We explain why “houselessness” is a better term.) We dispel some of the myths that interfere with realistic understanding and smart solutions.

Instead of talking about the topic from afar, one guest is houseless. The other co-founded a great local grassroots organization, “Just Housing,” in 2016 and has been working with houseless folks and allies. These guests and others work to inform the public and local government:

- conduct effective advocacy for solving the problems,
- provide smart, effective direct services for houseless people,
- and work to develop long-term solutions to houselessness.

We understand that people’s first need is for a decent, stable place to live. Local governments need to recognize this basic human right—and to reform public policies instead of using heavy-handed policing to criminalize poverty and disrupt makeshift communities.

Workable solutions do exist, and our society can end houselessness if we muster the political will. We need to reject stereotypes and understand the problems adequately. Houselessness is a social and economic issue rather than a law-enforcement issue. We need to work for long-term solutions (changing our society’s values, attitudes and economy), and we need short-term solutions to meet immediate needs so every person will have a decent, reliable place to live.

Cable TV subscribers in Thurston County can watch this interview on Thurston Community Television (TCTV) three times a week throughout the entire month: every Monday at 1:30 pm, every Wednesday at 5:00 pm and every Thursday at 9:00 pm.

Questions? Contact Glen Anderson, the TV series’ producer, at 360.459.8893. glenanderson@integra.net

**Apparent Decision-Making about Kaiser Woods to Date**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>OPARD Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Rw purchased with $a mountain bike park in mind (per Turkel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Wildlife and Conservation; City OFP grants approved for “hiking and biking trails”</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Site feasibility study mis-scored, names Kw as “most desirable site” (MBA hired to design plans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Engage Olympia opens on-line survey of mountain bikers; solicits input on conceptual plans.</td>
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**About Kaiser Woods**

Kaiser Woods is one of the more popular mountain bike parks in the region and has seen a significant increase in use over the past few years. The park is located in the southwest corner of the city of Olympia and is a former gravel pit that has been transformed into a multi-sport facility. The park includes a mountain bike trail, a running trail, and a variety of other activities such as frisbee golf and skateboarding. Kaiser Woods is managed by the City of Olympia and is open to the public for trail use.

**Kaiser Woods: Volunteering and Trail Building**

Volunteerism and trail building are key components of efforts to make Kaiser Woods a success. The park has a volunteer group called the Kaiser Woods Trail Stewards, which meets regularly to maintain and improve the trails. Volunteers can be found working on a variety of tasks, from clearing brush to building new trails.

**What’s Possible at Kaiser Woods**

Kaiser Woods offers a safe spot to take a break, a clear-cut space for the Medivac helicopter to land, and “the fewer rules, the better.” Has anyone noted there is currently no water or electric power at Kaiser Woods? Does the City plan to shallow soils over fractured basalt rock? One of the stated reasons for turning Kaiser Woods into a mountain bike part is that it provides access to Manke Timberland trails. These are on land that could be foreclosed at any time.
Block parties: A recipe for creating community

Robin Ivey-Black

New Traditions
Fair Trade
Café & World
Folk Arts

Robin Ivey-Black

New Traditions
Fair Trade
Café & World
Folk Arts

Robin Ivey-Black

Mary’s house. Those in the ‘hood who want to sell items get a letter from our master of accounting, Doug. You mark your items with the letter. Different people volunteer to take money and everything you sell is noted under your letter. This in itself is a fun social time as we gather to turn items at the checkout table, eat scones

Most important is for one or two people to go door to door and meet each resident, talk up the event...

Aaliyah Varghese, age 9, on the left, and Nani Rousseau, age 10 on the right.

Nani, age 10, said “I like the music, the good food, and it brings people together that you don’t know. I think the block parties Molly, a violin player who loves to come and play music, introduced Nani to her instrument. It became one of the reasons she has taken violin classes in school this year.

Other tips for having a block party
The city’s computer access to the permit process is a little fussy. I suggest googling ‘Block Parties City of Olympia’ and calling the present facilitator Marygrace Goddu, who is very helpful, at 360-403-2040.

Don’t feel like you have failed if not everyone comes. There will be some people who never come, some that sometimes come, and those that will come for part of the event.

Hopefully many will join with you to grow a safer, stronger, and happier neighborhood because after all, we are social beings.

Robin Ivey-Black is an Olympia writer, artist and community builder.

Carolyn Barthelf

On Saturday, June 15, 168 community members came together in downtown Olympia to call for the initiation of the impeachment inquiry process. Olympia Indivisible, Puget Sound Communities4Impeachment, and local members of ByThePeople hosted the event. It was part of a National Day of Action called for by Indivisible, MoveOn, By-ThePeople and other partners. The responses from our community were overwhelmingly supportive of this effort.

The Mueller Report confirmed what we’ve always known. The President abuses his authority, has violated the law and tried repeatedly to obstruct justice. Daily he becomes more emboldened to behave as a king. He has failed if not every member of our House of Representatives, and it must be clear to everyone that his abuse of power and his attempts to obstruct justice are impeachable.

The People deserve to be heard.

Carolyn Barthelf

Stand up and be counted

Carolyn Barthelf

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The People deserve to be heard.

Carolyn Barthelf
Introducing the Port of Olympia

Esther Kronenberg

Calling for a Vision 2050 survey, Voters of Thurston County.

And you can where WIP

News boxes

Lacey Transit Center
Pericel Landing
Olympia Post Office
Olympia Farmer’s Market
West Central Park
@ Harrison/Division
Olympia Greyhound Stn
Thurston Co Courthouse
Olympia Transit Center
College St. @ Yelm Hiway

WIP is also available at

New Traditions Fair Trade Café
Bud & Bronson
Blue Heron Bakery
Orca Books
Olympia Library
Lacey Library
Westside Oly Food Co-op
Thurston Co Food Co-op
The Evergreen State College
The Capitol Campus
SPCC
The Pit Stop on Boulevard
Vic’s @ Division
Vic’s @ Wildwood
Ramirez Restaurant
New Moon Café
Bar Francis

Dave Jette holds a Ph.D. in theoretical physics, and taught at Rush University in Chicago. He is one of the original founders of Works in Progress. He lives in Seattle, where he has been active in progressive struggles for fifty years, particularly in the electoral sphere. He’s an avid backpacker as well.

Howard Zinn

Lesson 1 – Rethinking everything

Civil disobedience is not our problem. Civil obedience is our problem. Our problem is that people all over the world have obeyed the dictates of leaders. And millions have been killed because of this obedience. Our problem is that people all over the world have been obedient in the face of poverty, and starvation and stupidity and war and cruelty. Our problem is that people have been obedient while the jails are full of petty thieves and the grand thieves are running the country. That’s our problem.

Voters of Thurston County.
in praise of pint

High Voltage Women: Freedom is a constant struggle

Alice Rogoff

Ellie Bellevue’s book High Voltage Women: Breaking Barriers at Seattle City Light (Red Letter Press, 2018) is a major feat of researching, organizing and writing what is very complicated information. It is also an inspiring Northwest story that is an illustration of the song “Freedom is a Constant Struggle.”

The book begins with the social background of federal, county and city legislation as it applies to the construction industry and projects. After Affirmative Action was first introduced in the 1970s, Clara Fraser and the trainees developed the Electrical Trades Trainee program for ten women at Seattle City Light.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the city of Seattle, Seattle City Light, the ACLU, the National Lawyers Guild, Radical Women and the Freedom Socialist Party are all key players in what became a prolonged series of discrimination cases against Seattle City Light.

The obstacles the women faced were sexual harassment, improper pay, inadequate termination and layoffs, lack of facilities and red-baiting because of the political views of some of the trainees who belonged to Radical Women and the Freedom Socialist Party. The women had problems advancing from apprentices to journey positions. As Helen Gilbert described, ‘common accusations against Clara Fraser were that she was being ‘abrasive,’ ‘defiant,’ and ‘controlling’ reflecting a deep discomfort at a woman exhibiting strong traits that would have been tolerable in a male.’

The management of Seattle City Light led by Superintendent Gordon Vickery often resorted to retaliation when faced with complaints.

The practices that led to the strike were victorious, regaining their jobs and back pay. Stiffed by the feds

The book describes their organizing efforts involving the Seattle City Light, the federal government, and the courts; the outbreak of the strike in 1970, her suit for sexual discrimination resulting in a judgment that dealt a blow to the Freedom Socialist Party.

Clara Fraser has an individual chapter which spotlights her freedom of speech case. Fraser and the trainees were some of the first women to organize, regaining their jobs and back pay. Looking at how worker solidarity in general created a bond among women of different backgrounds and goals adds greater understanding as to how their victories were accomplished (one trainee did not participate in the cases).

Below includes a humorous satirical song, “The Ballad of Clara Fraser” by Paul Letakon, as well as a harrowing poem by Joanne Ward, a crew chief, about the dangers of the job, which I found good additions in the material.

The book ends with an update on what the trainees are doing today, how many women are going into the trades and the legacy of the program. It leads one to consider the importance of Affirmative Action which became outlawed in Washington State. While there have not been substantially more women workers in the electrical industry, women who are in the trade and other jobs have more often been inspired to raise issues and complaints. An Afterword also looks at the input of the MeToo movement.

I would recommend this book to anyone interested in civil rights or labor law, and any woman going into a male-dominated trade.

Alice Elizabeth Rogoff has received awards for her writing about women in labor organizers in San Francisco. She is a contributor to Giving Voice, a LaborFest writers group anthology. In 1949, her satiric novel about sex discrimination resulted in the company being barred from discriminating against women in a one-man workplace for a year.

She belongs to CWA and CLUW. Her book is enhanced by photos of the women workers.

High Voltage Women is available from Orca Books in Olympia. Order by mail or learn more about the book at http://www.redletterpress.org/highvoltagewomen.html

From news services

On June 12, farmworkers at King Fuji Ranch in Mattawa began a strike after reaching a crossroads of labor. The Mattawa workers are here on H-2A visas, which are designed to bring agricultural workers from abroad when an employer expects a shortage of workers domestically. Most of the guest workers at King Fuji Ranch are men recruited from Mexico, subject to various restrictions during their temporary stay.

Working conditions enforced by threats

The H-2A workers in these apple orchards and grape vineyards faced untenable production quotas imposed by the company. They were supervised using intimidation and threats. King Fuji Ranch consistently retaliated against farmworkers who have spoken out, using tactics including firing, blacklisting, and sending groups of workers back to Mexico.

In February of this year dozens of workers reported getting hypothermia after working in below freezing temperatures. In early May the workers were guaranteed over 100 workers who were exposed to mumps, isolating them from each other and making it nearly impossible for them to get to town to seek medical attention. At the same time, farm management has taken no measures to ensure eno any blacklists. In other words, if they didn’t speak out and accepted work under unsuitable conditions with untenable quotas, they could keep their jobs, whereas after at least three instances this year of groups demanding better working conditions being sent back to Mexico, this June new H-2A workers experiencing the same intimidation tactics said “enough.”

Stiffed by the feds

The practices that led to the strike by workers at King Fuji are common throughout the agricultural sector. H-2A workers are restricted in many ways. The fact that these workers are tied to a single employer makes them vulnerable to abuses, and subject to coercion. Groups like Community to Community Development and Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJI) have organized to demand oversight of the program as H2A workers’ reports of abuse get little response from state agencies. The program requirements are set by the federal government, which provides states with a level of funds drastically lower than the cost of managing them.

Washington legislators step up

Help may be on the way, in the form of a law creating and funding a new state office to monitor housing and health and safety requirements for farms using the H2A program. Rosalinda Guillen from Community to Community pointed out that it is long overdue that corporate farms like King Fuji Ranch end worker abuses and dangerous working conditions. “It’s time the agricultural industry in Washington changes its labor practices, and that the culture of the H-2A program recognizes us as human beings that want to work in a food system free from exploitation and with respect and fairness,” said Ramon Torres, President of Familias Unidas por la Justicia.

Months and years of organizing for fair working conditions for people who’ve been here specifically to grow and harvest our food came to fruition when Representatives Debra Lekanoff (D-40th District) and Senator Jon McCoy (D-36th District) championed SB 5438, which was signed into law by Governor Inslee in May.

These workers are keeping their part of the bargain

Rep. Lekanoff, the first Native American woman to serve in Washington’s state legislature, speaking at a hearing said, “Washington state is the third largest user of H2A workers. It is also a fact that these workers boost our economy. In 2017 each worker provided a benefit of approximately $5000. That is a contribution of about $123 million to the local economy. The funds are not showing up to help us, so we as the Washington state legislature will take control of this issue. The problem with this bill is not what we hoped for, it is where we are today. We will strive to do better, we will strive to end this problem, we will strive to take care of those H2A workers who have come to rely upon us to welcome them into our American family.”
"I am the master of my fate—
and the fate of the other"

Jeff Nygaard

A state that deprives people of equal rights and privileges cannot call itself an egalitarian, democratic state. Yet we've taken as a common principle that racial and economic democracy is exactly what makes the United States "exceptional."

So the dissonance between the practices that were defining aspects of the early United States (and the European project of which it was the primary exemplar) and the one hand, and the soaring rhetoric of democracy, on the other, is addressed. "The way it was addressed was to define some of the subservient "subpersons," as less than human. Once that is accomplished, then any injustices visited upon these lower creatures would not be moral crimes, but could be the necessary actions of superior beings as they imposed order and justice upon the inferior species.

We don't need to think about those other "people"

This is not only a historical problem. The idea that some people are naturally inferior is still with us, and it's wreaking havoc on people of color throughout the world in 2019.

Consider the innocent victims of US drone strikes in Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan and elsewhere, the scatty coverage of those events (if they occurred at all in this country), would be inconceivable were the victims white.

The racial "otherness" of the major targets—Palestinians, Iraqis and Afghans—is used to justify US failure even to count the innocent victims. Or the not-so-innocent, for that matter. The European colonial project of "civilizing" native peoples in order to elevate them (if the savage at work in this country), would be inconceivable were the victims white.

Dehumanization in real time

Here at home, examples of the tragic effects of the ongoing dehumanization of people of color are endless. One example is the recent shooting of black teenager Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, officer Darren Wilson said that Brown looked "like a demon" to him. The defense, apparently in that shooting a "demon" is different than shooting a human being.

Another example. When Hillary Clinton referenced in 1996 "kids that are called superpredators — no conscience, no empathy," everyone knew she was talking about black kids. Locking up a superpredator is different than locking up a human being.

The historical European imperialist project required the subjugation, enslavement, and murder of untold numbers of "others," whose existence as people stood in the way of white European dominance in the emerging world system. So great, caused so much cognitive dissonance, that it was difficult to admit that the victims had to be reduced to "subpersons," to something less than human.

Just because the world is different, do we have to think about it differently?

Eventually an entire thought system evolved with the "tragic outcome that whites will, in general, be unable to understand the world that they themselves have made."
Settling in with Anatolian Muslims:
Reflections on community and contemplation

Michael L. Basile

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, we Americans have been subject to a relentless barrage of news, analyses, and reports about terrorism. In light of recent terrorist incidents in Europe as well as our homeland, we are tempted to conclude that Islam itself is somehow to blame, that inherent in this faith is a call to violence. When I went to submit to this, our collective 21st century national dread, I look back gratefully that I spent a year in a Turkish village 50 years ago.

For the urgency of today’s anxieties prods me to think back on time spent among Muslims, a culture that still bore graysish and sometimes whitewashed walls so intensely that it’s as if I were there still toiled and used to stand from modern urban life, set in the midst of the conservative, pre-modern, and rural plains of central Anatolia. The village was typical of rural living, values, customs, and rituals of its time. While isolation afforded a varia-
tion among villages, particularly from region to region, many things were shared across the country; universal beliefs in the modern Turkish state, one common language, trust in politi-
cal leaders, a shared religion, and pride of heritage.

True it was that in 1965 when the Peace Corps was in its fifth year of existence, the world was far less troubled. When I moved to smik, smack in the middle of Konya’s flatland province, I was aware that in his mission work near-
ly 2,000 years ago, St. Paul had traveled through that very region. Over succeeding centuries the entire area had grown to embody the juncture of western and Middle Eastern history: the remnants of a Roman road lay less than a mile north, the city of Konya’s Ottoman-style government buildings were as grand as any there is today, and the village’s houses were built entirely of mud-brick, as they had been for generations.

There was no electricity, running wa-
ter, or reliably passable road that could accommodate transportation beyond jeeps, automobiles, and a small truck, and just one telephone in the only tea house.

The people there were religiously con-
servative. In my three-month inten-
tive training I had been taught the basics of the Turkish language, the concept of community development theory and practice, and lots about local cultural norms and customs. After my initial shock at the village’s strict observance of the five pillars of Islam—open profession of faith in the merciful one God and his last prophet Mohammed, alms giving, pilgrimage to Mecca, the five times daily, and fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, which coincided that year with my first days there.

Thankfully, I was assigned the first of many “superior” rooms, which who had grown up on a Mennonite farm in northern Indiana. I was fortu-
ately correct in my assumption that I would not survive the dry winds from across the plains in the open. The entire town, all 360 degrees of it, was near arid, the only plant life visible being the cultivated parched grain fields spreading under the village. It was harvest time.

The village itself seemed like a mono-
tone of dust and gray-brown walls. Having lived in the furnishings only the roof of the village-circuit bus, we came to a stop in the middle of a dusty, brown, nearly barren square. After a few calls from the bus assistant, our landlord, Mevlut, appeared to show us when to take our cute, mattresses, what have you, to his neighborhood “guesthouse.” It was a mud-brick, dilapidated-looking structure of one room with an ante-
room set above a straw and donkey stable.

With his and others’ help, we got our furnishings and belongings up the stone stairs and set them onto the small, 10x12 ft. room. We crashed onto the roof of the 10x20 ft. room. Shared by related families in that part of the village, our compound had no walls to separate us from casual passers-by. To our great relief, the first evening Mevlut invited us for a meal in his family compound’s guest room.

What I saw inside its cooling, three-
foot thick adobe walls was surpris-
ing and comforting at the same time. Tucked into the main wall just below the requisite photo of modern Turkey’s revered founder, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, was a collage of old magazine photos of the Kennedy family—the two kids, Jacqueline, and John him-
self. Now what could this display of respect and affection be about? How was it that in the mid-east of this land, without ready, two-way communica-
ion, where most of its inhabit-
ants could neither read nor write, the American president’s family merited a place on the guest room wall just be-
low Turkey’s founders? In this remote village of about 340 families!

Over the succeeding months we were frequently visited in the evening by the men of the village, young and old. We’d sometimes play cards, smoke sub-standard cigarettes and talk. Most-
ly they came around, I guess, out of curiosity. We were the entertainment. But as time went on and our Turkish countrymen came to place in a lifetime, ritual prayer five times daily, and daily fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, which coincided that year with my first days there.

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were the entertainment. But as time went on and our Turkish countrymen came to place in a lifetime, ritual prayer five times daily, and daily fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, which coincided that year with my first days there.

So, too, did discussions about world events. I still can feel the intensity that developed among us as alien policies. Their need to understand their foreign visitors proved penetrat-
ning and persistent, exceeding ours by far. I recall an in many potentially in-
flammatory question, perhaps asked many times over until we could un-
nerve it, that means something like, “Did you know that it was Johnson who had Kennedy killed?”

Yet, as I ponder the conversations, I am struck with how civil they were in tone. They did not argue or press the truth. Instead, they probed, pushed, and ratcheted their abilities to reason in this new tongue. Here we were among men whose lives, perhaps the commonality of making two years’ military service in a remote part of the country—had in all probability been spent in a region of 10 miles or so whose curiosity was as boundless as it was constant.

After the visitors, I often found myself talking to solitary individuals, such as the light of a kerosene lantern. It was during these quiet moments that my veneers of the voters’ questions developed into a pattern of introspec-
tion. I wrote letters to my mother and father, college faculty that I had known, and others that entered my imagina-
tion (some of the letters to the latter were anything else). On especially self-proaching occasions I came to insights about the social, reli-
igious, cultural influences that made a voter of a voter’s questions, his be his American, Catholic, and human being.

So what is it exactly that these rural sheep, goat, and grain farmers gave the American, Catholic, and human being. What is it exactly that these rural sheep, goat, and grain farmers gave

For most people, the power of the “other” is a reality that has come one of those rare and sought-after

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“We can do more together than alone”

Community connections and collaboration

Thurston Food Rescue

[Ed note: As WIP is going to press, Ziegler and her team were completing the Lacey Food Bank community art project. Concrete is poured and the stencil described below is to be incorporated in the sidewalk. Make time for a visit to the bank at 7027 Martin Way in July.]

Art is more than a pretty picture. It’s a way to speak out using shape and color. It’s a call to action sculpted by its creator – local artist, Carrie Ziegler. Ziegler is using her art and the local students to encourage her community to rescue food and fight hunger.

“I use art as a way to teach and inspire,” explained Ziegler. “In college, I started melding art and science. Throughout my evolution, I have held firmly that blending art, the sciences, and community education results in collective action.”

Ziegler’s background includes working for Thurston County Solid Waste. For a number of years, she was an educator active in the Food to Flower program. Thurston County Solid Waste program made a difference by sending less food to landfills, but the idea of stopping the food from ever getting to the compost pile came to the forefront. “My job suddenly shifted from composting to food rescue.” It “makes so much sense to have a food rescue program.”

When community leaders began planning the Lacey Food Bank, they wanted to include a strong art piece. “The food bank approached me to create an art installation and community engagement project around food rescue,” explained Ziegler. “It was an assignment that was unique andI couldn’t relate my background and approach to art and science.”

“My process is a collaborative one,” Ziegler said. “I like to put the project on the table and see what happens.” The students at North Thurston School District students in creating concepts for the art installation intended for the Lacey Food Bank. She held several workshops to help come up with concepts for the art installation design.

First, Ziegler presented data and imagery demonstrating the need to and benefits of rescuing food. During the workshop, she gave the students the ap- proprietary constraints for the art installation.

A key principle established in the beginning was a consensus decision-making process. The CSF leadership group reviews grant applications, project ideas and funding requests. Applicants are invited to in-person interviews, currently held at the Community Room at OFC.

Around 1985, a group of community activists identified the need to create grants for social change projects that had no funding opportunity or source of revenue. Often the ideas for action were outside the mainstream. The spare change left when you round up to the next whole dollar, instead of jingling in your pocket, adds up to become a whole dollar, instead of jingling in your pocket, adds up to become the Lacey Community Foundation, which was the CSF in 1987 to provide start-up funds for projects that would otherwise go unfunded. In the spring and fall each year the CSF accepts applications for grants up to $10,000.

A meeting of the fund award for each project until consensus is reached.

CSF has provided micro grants to projects in the community twice a year for over 30 years. Groups that received CSF funding are a veritable who’s who of radical progressive individuals and groups in Thurston

Groups that have received CSF funding are a veritable who’s who of radical progressive individuals and groups in Thurston County. Many of those projects have taken root and continue to provide a reminder from the cashier, asking if you want to round up. You can choose CSF or another cause at the time of purchase. Or say “not today.” There is no obligation, only a reminder. If you are able to “round up” at the Olympia Food Co-op, please do. Every penny counts.

Leadership group members volunteer time to publicize grant cycles, organize fund-raising, review applications and make consensus-based decisions. CSF is always seeking new board members who can bring time, energy and enthusiasm to the process. Join us in our good work in support of our community! You can contact CSF at thurstoncsf@comcast.net.

Many of the projects CSF funds would not be eligible for funding from any other source. The original goal of pro- viding a fund source where no other is available continues to fill a need in our community.

SUSTAINING FUND LEADERSHIP GROUP

Do you ever “round up” for the Community Sustaining Fund (CSF) when making a purchase at the Olympia Food Co-op (OFC)? The spare change left when you round up to the next whole dollar, instead of jingling in your pocket, adds up to become the Lacey Community Foundation, which was the CSF in 1987 to provide start-up funds for projects that would otherwise go unfunded. In the spring and fall each year the CSF accepts applications for grants up to $10,000.

The CSF has provided about $125,000 to more than 200 projects in Thurston County.

CSF has supported environmental projects like the Estuarium, Westside Community Center, the Lacey Food Bank community art installation elements, the primary benefit, to help others, and to better solutions, students worked rapidly to generate impact throughout and create creative installation ideas. “There were so many amazing ideas,” said Ziegler. “We had great conversations during the brainstorming process. The students and teachers were really into it. It was quite a wonderful experience. I collected their themes and presented their ideas to the food bank.”

This collaborative and creative process resulted in a sculpted artwork made of concrete. The six-foot sculpture will have three hands coming out of the ground like roots that turn into a tree. Within the tree is an apple that reflects the imagery of the earth. With the6th of November, the students were asked to collaborate again with Ziegler to create artwork that would adorn the pathways leading from the sculpturing to different food bank structures and elements – including a spa- cious courtyard and large garden area.

“We decided to install a mosaic of leaves in the concrete walkways,” said Ziegler. During subsequent educational workshops with Ziegler, almost a thousand students designed and cut-out images that resulted in leaf shaped stencils. Each student’s leaf is unique and contains a visual message to adorn walkways around the Lacey Food Bank.

While food rescue is at the heart of all art installation elements, the primary focus is on developing and sustaining a healthy Lacey community. According to Ziegler, “The students chose to work with live near the yet to be built Lacey Food Bank. This is their future. They and their families are coming to take on food rescue – for their own benefit, to help others, and to better their community.”

If you would like to help rescue food anywhere in Thurston County, please visit www.thurstonfoodrescue.org and get involved.

Community Sustaining Fund: An Independent Entirely Community-created Entity

Sustaining Fund Leadership Group

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“Rugged individualism will not save humanity from the crises it faces. We only win this thing as a collective. The trouble is that malignant manipulators hijack our healthy impulse to move as a collective and get us collaborating against our own interests. They’re the problem.”

Some of the (printable) responses:

In harsh times or frontier conditions, communicators and collectivists survive while rugged individualists die off.

Yes! Rugged individualism is a damned lie. We are all interdependent from birth. If someone doesn’t teach us we die. And the wealthy who live in houses they didn’t build, eat foods others grew and use tech they don’t understand are as far from rugged individualism as can be.

People see collectivism as a legacy idea. In fact it is the next stage of evolution. The world is now too small for individualism and anyone who persists with that idea is a fool. The damaged adolescent mind can’t grasp that within collectivism there is still uniqueness.

Rugged individualism is the only thing that can bring down the biggest and most perverse form of collectivism there is: the all-pervasive American surveillance/security state. You’re one of those rugged individuals who speaks the truth and thus has an outsized influence.

“There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth. We are all crew.” – Marshall McLuhan

When the time comes to topple the power structure it will look nothing like a Twitter thread. There will be destruction, much blood, and much death. My guess is most folks here will be shaking in a closet with poopy drawers.

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