A local group ‘comes out of the closet’ in support of LGBTQ youth

Nigel Weiss

A group for supporting LGBTQ youth in Olympia, after nearly five years of doing its work quietly, finally revealed itself to the whole community this year. Pizza Klatch – a diverse coalition of mental health professionals and queer rights activists provides support and education space to lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning high school students at several schools in Thurston County.

“We felt early on, when we started, especially with what happened to the two kids who were sent away with our first group, that we’d get such a backlash that we wouldn’t be able to do it, that the schools would be afraid to stand up (for us),” said Pizza Klatch coordinator Lynn Grotsky.

When the group began, Grotsky said, it was an educational program, but it quickly became apparent that there would be problems with this approach. “It started out with three or four kids, there were maybe six by the end, and then two parents from two different families found out their kids were attending, and sent them away to straighten them out. So at that point we all got together – and we put out an announcement to all the groups – to Stonewall [Youth], to PFLAG, to maybe PIFP – saying what do we do as a community to help these kids? ... And they all came forward, including St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church ... and said let’s do something at lunch where the parents can’t know, and we’ll all work together. And that’s how it was started.”

Now, after years of work, Pizza Klatch has groups in a half-dozen schools in the county. At each of these schools, a group of students sits down every week to chat over hot pizza about everything at lunch where the parents can’t find out … So at that point we all got together – we put out an announcement to all the groups – to Stonewall [Youth], to PFLAG, to maybe PIFP – saying what do we do as a community to help these kids? ... And they all came forward, including St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church ... and said let’s do something at lunch where the parents can’t know, and we’ll all work together. And that’s how it was started.”

The organization published a 2008 report on bullying, which concludes that “LGBTQ students are more than five times as likely as their straight-identified peers to miss school due to feeling unsafe; 32.7% of LGBTQ students missed a class and 57.7% missed a day of school in the past month because of feeling unsafe, compared to only 5.3% and 4.3% of their peers; and LGBTQ youth from rejecting families are up to nine times more likely to attempt suicide.”

“I mean, living in Olympia, where I think it’s one of the safest places in the world to come out as [gay or] trans, it’s still not safe, it takes so much courage.”

According to Youth Suicide Prevention Program (YSPP), Washington is among states with the highest rates of suicide, with about 13 per 100,000 people attempting suicide in 2008. These facts demonstrate the connectedness among social problems in our society – homophobia, mental illness, and homelessness – but they should also remind us that our own communities are not exempt from the same sorts of oppression that exist elsewhere in the country.

According to Grotsky, violence and bullying are common-place for LGBTQ youth, and suicides are sadly not unknown in many of our high schools. Grotsky says she was motivated to form Pizza Klatch after a rash of teen suicides in the Olympia area during the mid-2000s. And many still remember the shock when seventeen-year-old Bill Clayton, a student at Olympia High School, committed suicide in 1995 after being brutally assaulted by four other teenagers for being gay or lesbian.

By working with trained facilitators and counselors, the Pizza Klatch groups build both confidence and empowerment for its students through education. Grotsky says that the main thing the organization needs is money – the groups all give out free pizza every week. There’s more about Pizza Klatch and how to donate online at Pizzaklatch.org.

“The thing that best’s happened is how many people are coming out as trans or as gay or lesbian, because it’s really easy to be transphobic or homophobic if you don’t know anyone who is gay, right?” Grotsky said. “So as people find out that people they love are trans or gay or lesbian or bi, it starts changing those biases.”

Grotsky is an Olympia activist who graduated from Evergreen this spring with a degree in Political Economy. He can be reached at jlnweiss@gmail.com.

The so-called science of the pro-life movement

Marco Rossi

The American Atheist Conference this March was joined by some surprising guests. In between the usual secular suspects selling literature and soliciting memberships was a table representing the organization Secular Pro-Life, a non-theist anti-abortion group that is, in its own words—“pro-life for a reason.” According to the organization’s website, the mission of Secular Pro-Life is to expand the pro-life movement “beyond the cathedral walls” mobilizing “like-minded atheists, theists, and agnostics who are eager to save lives and fight the media portrayal of pro-lifers as ‘religious extremists’” by focusing on the science of abortion. Could it be true? Is there really such a thing as a pro-life atheist? What’s next; intelligent designagnostics? How about secularists for Sharia law?

It is difficult to take an organization like Secular Pro-Life seriously. Their table at the American Atheist Conference was staffed by only two people, and their website is far from professional; most of its links connect to opinion pieces on blogs. But, it would be dangerous to write them off completely. It is quite possible that organizations like Secular Pro-Life may actually reflect the thinking of the average American than most people realize. A recent Gallup poll showed that the number of Americans who identify as “pro-choice” has dropped to its lowest point (41%) in recorded history, while those who identify as “pro-life” have continued with their decade long increase. In 1995, the amount of Americans who considered themselves pro-life was only at 31%. Today, that number has climbed to 50% – with a remarkable 9% jump in the last five years. Pro-choice advocates on the other hand have experienced the opposite phenomenon. In the mid-1990s, the pro-choice population had a noticeable but delicate majority in America. Today they are battling for their political lives to just maintain a relatively even split among the population. With such a large portion of Americans now identifying as pro-life it is only natural that a significant segment of them are nonreligious—especially if we consider how the pro-life movement has been able to make such dramatic leaps in such a short period of time.

Part of the reason for this shift in the...
Lawsuit filed against second Explosives Handling Wharf at Trident nuclear submarine base

Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action

Today, two groups took action to halt construction on a second Explosives Handling Wharf at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor until the public is fully informed about the project. The groups filed a lawsuit in US District Court in Tacoma alleging that Navy secrecy surrounding the project is a violation of the National Environmental Policy Act.

The new wharf would be built close to the existing wharf where submarines dock for loading and unloading of Trident missiles. Plaintiffs are concerned about harm to birds, salmon, seals, whales and other marine life from drilling up to 1,250 pilings and covering an area of water the size of six football fields in ecologically sensitive Hood Canal.

According to Kathy George, Seattle environmental attorney for the plaintiffs, “Before the Navy spends hundreds of millions of tax dollars on this project, Congress and the public are entitled to a complete and open discussion of the risks and less harmful alternatives.”

Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action member Glen Milner stated, “The Navy's environmental analysis essentially says 'Don't worry, trust us.' But the Navy's own Joint Staff had already concluded that the project was not ‘environmentally sustainable.’”

The suit states that the Navy's plan to exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's permit for the $75 million second Explosives Handling Wharfs to support the ‘Life Extension Program’ for the Trident submarine's missiles and Trident strategic weapons on the submarines at Bangor. The Life Extension Program involves the upgrade of guidance systems, rocket motors in the missiles and other components, which requires additional missile handling operations in Hood Canal. The Navy announced its decision to proceed with the wharf project on May 18. The wharf will take four years to build.

Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility member Steven Gilbert stated, “As major disasters such as Fukushima become more common, our nation must decrease the potential risk to our communities and the environment, just as with the second Explosives Handling Wharf in Hood Canal.”

The operation of the second Explosives Handling Wharf will double the amount of explosives handled at one time in Hood Canal. The net explosive weight of the two wharves is equal to 7.4 million pounds of TNT in the form of rocket propellant in the missiles. The propelant is classified as HC/D 1.1, explosive, and is how there is a single story put forward by the powers that be. It serves the former by making people feel that their world isn’t falling apart, that it is how 9/11 was orchestrated by criminal elements of the US government, what the apparent reasons were for this criminal archonship, how I have again to submit my thoughts on this subject between those who decide what will and no one else finds useful or important. Should the falsity evaporate under this sun of human reason, and 2. this opinion is the prerequisite of my views being the only one of consequence that a non-millionaire such as myself (hypothetically) has access. The easy excuse is to deride my self and what I say as insanity or a product of a delusion. This should not be a reason for even poor judgement. For indeed, the evidence that I present to bolster my position is how the power of defining truth may be more reliable than forensics scientific evidence that is presented in court proceedings.  

The Olympian needs to serve the public rather than the official story

Democritus Blantayre

The following is a letter sent to The Olympian Editorial Board on June 21. Two years ago I submitted a letter to the editor that exposed my opinion regarding how 9/11 was orchestrated by criminal elements of the US government, what the evidence was for this claim, and what the apparent reasons were for this criminal archonship. My submission was rejected and soon I received a phone call consisting of a mere denunciation of my entire opinion and effort to marginalize it. I have tried again to submit my thoughts on this important subject, and would like to know if once again a simple difference of opinion on this subject between those who decide what will and no one else finds useful or important. Should the falsity evaporate under this sun of human reason, and 2. this opinion is the prerequisite of my views being the only one of consequence that a non-millionaire such as myself (hypothetically) has access. The easy excuse is to deride my self and what I say as insanity or a product of a delusion. This should not be a reason for even poor judgement. For indeed, the evidence that I present to bolster my position is how the power of defining truth may be more reliable than forensics scientific evidence that is presented in court proceedings.  

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Send submissions to olympwip@gmail.com or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 293, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool

The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Works In Progress newspaper.

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The Westside wants to know
Where does the Olympia City Council stand on the City’s Comprehensive Plan?

Dan Leahy

To the Mayor and Council members:

In our successful effort to stop the 7-Eleven at Harrison and Division, we argued from the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) public comment period, through the two hearings before Thomas Bjorgen, through the numerous hearings in front of Superior Court Judge Jon Sutton that the City staff was not enforcing provisions of the Comprehensive Plan, the Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) and the City’s Design and Development Standards (EDDS).

Judge Sutton agreed with us. However, in all of the quasi-judicial and judicial venues, the City Attorney argued against our position. At the final hearing before Judge Sutton on May 24, 2012, the City Attorney argued that the City’s Comprehensive Plan is not a development regulation. That is, the City argued its Comprehensive Plan may not be considered when land-use proposals are reviewed, let alone be used to limit or deny a proposed development. Is this the position of the City Council?

I would greatly appreciate an answer.

We think the City Attorney’s position is contrary to state statute, case law, and contrary to the direction given by the Olympia City Council in at least six sections of the Olympia Municipal Code—by which we will be glad to share with you if you will email an excerpt below from a portion of the hearing with the City’s Attorney’s argument so you can make your own judgments. [see below]

“The capital facilities plan as an element of the comprehensive plan is just that; it is a plan. And under the Growth Management Act (GMA), the comprehensive facilities plan is not a development regulation; it is an aspiration of the city. Representation to the Olympia City Council in at least six sections of the Olympia Municipal Code—which we will be glad to share with you if you will email an excerpt below from a portion of the hearing with the City’s Attorney’s argument so you can make your own judgments.” [see below]

The capital facilities plan as an element of the comprehensive plan is just that; it is a plan. And under the Growth Management Act (GMA), the comprehensive facilities plan is not a development regulation; it is an aspiration of the city. Thus, although therein is the guidance of the Comprehensive Plan, the City Attorney’s position is contrary to state statute, case law, and contrary to the direction given by the Olympia City Council in at least six sections of the Olympia Municipal Code—by which we will be glad to share with you if you will email an excerpt below from a portion of the hearing with the City’s Attorney’s argument so you can make your own judgments. [see below]

Perhaps you can ask the City Attorney to explain his position on the Comprehensive Plan before the Council so you could decide whether you agree with his position or not. Thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your answer.

Transcript excerpt of statement by Mr. Nienaber, Assistant City Attorney

“The capital facilities plan as an element of the comprehensive plan is just that; it is a plan. And under the Growth Management Act (GMA), the comprehensive facilities plan is not a development regulation; it is an aspiration of the city. And under the Growth Management Act (GMA), the comprehensive facilities plan is not a development regulation; it is an aspiration of the city. Thus, although therein is the guidance of the Comprehensive Plan, the City Attorney’s position is contrary to state statute, case law, and contrary to the direction given by the Olympia City Council in at least six sections of the Olympia Municipal Code—by which we will be glad to share with you if you will email an excerpt below from a portion of the hearing with the City’s Attorney’s argument so you can make your own judgments. [see below]

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Perhaps you can ask the City Attorney to explain his position on the Comprehensive Plan before the Council so you could decide whether you agree with his position or not. Thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your answer.
Peter Bohmer

I spent 10 weeks in Venezuela in early 2009, when I was a group of 30 students from the Evergreen State College and then two weeks continuing my travels with a group of Evergreen students. The 20-week experience in early 2009 and also spent three weeks in Venezuela in 2011. Based on my 2009 study and travel in Venezuela, I wrote a paper that can be found at http://www.cen- sources.org/venezuela-socialism-for-the-21st-century-by-peter-bohmer.html.

The very strong love and respect the population has for Hugo Chávez is very impressive as national government behavior at the municipal, state council level, which is 200-400 families, has gotten worse. I think Chávez is very aware of this but most of his criticisms are not in a continual process of amendment and there is little in it about worker control over the work place. The process of writing a book should have been more participatory and there is little in it about worker control. Workers and unions were asked to comment on the final report but the report is not in a continual process of amendment and change. This was a critique we heard while we were there.

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The State and the PSUV

We heard a lot of criticisms of local and State governments and of the Unit- ed Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), critically analyzed by Hugo Chávez, of rampant bu- reaucracy.

The word, bureaucracy, has a much broader meaning than in the United States. Bureaucracy in Venezuela includes corruption, favoritism, clientelism, nepotism, incompetence, indifference, and needless red tape, etc. This sit- uation does not seem to have improved in Venezuela since 2009 and perhaps has gotten worse. I think Chávez is very aware of this but most of his criticisms of corruption are aimed at the opposi- tion and not enough is aimed at those PSUV leaders who have power in local, State government, in the National As- sembly, and as ministers and who, in addition, do not further democracy and social policy. The judicial system is universally criti- cized by the population for its inability to solve crimes, corruption, taking of bribes and lack of fairness. Hugo Chávez, in his book, called "Socialism for the 21st Century," said that 20 years ago, leaders of the PSUV were more naive and honest and committed to furthering and building socialism in Venezuela. Chávez supports people's power but does not control it. People from below makes it possible for him to initiate more socialist-oriented policies and cultural changes. This spurs the government to continue to further support popular power. The government isethe-21st-century-

The PSUV, the United Socialist Party of Venezuela, is primarily a political party organized to win elections with not enough focus on furthering social movements and popular power. There are many, many outstanding individu- als in it who are honest and committed to furthering and building support for Hugo Chávez's "Socialism for the 21st Century." The PSUV is more connected to the population with more egalitarian policies than for example the Democratic Party in the United States or the Socialist Party in France. Yet there is insufficient political and popular education of its membership, insufficient discussion of direction, and little accountability of its leaders to its base. The PSUV is a party where a significant part of the leadership does not share a participatory democratic vision and is primarily concerned with their own adv- anancement. Major changes in the PSUV are necessary.

This building, abandoned for 9 years, was transferred under an Organic Law allowing land or buildings left unused to be transferred to a community in need. It now houses multiple families. (Photos with this article taken by Evergreen students.)

Venezuela:
The revolution continues

A new and major labor law was announced on May Day. It has many good aspects: social security for all including the informal sector, for housewives, and for self-employed artisans; and three weeks paid vacation for all workers.

The number of communal councils has continued to grow. They continue to be independent of popular control, self-gov- ernment and substantive discussion and decision making by large numbers of its members in a considerable number of neighborhoods and communities. In most communities, they are mainly ve- ry strong love and respect for Hugo Chávez but there is little in it about worker control. Workers and unions were asked to comment on the final report but the report is not in a continual process of amendment and change. This was a critique we heard while we were there.

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Workers and unions were asked to comment on the final report but the report is not in a continual process of amendment and change. This was a critique we heard while we were there.
It is very important that Hugo Chávez is in the news. It gives me hope that the state can be a new one based on participatory democracy, but with the claim that he will run them as an anti-clientalist, top-down system. The attempt to divide the opposition is supported by the state, which also greatly improves its media. There is a coalition of social movements, community groups, the PSUV and the Communist Party of Venezuela (the popular classes comprise as much as 80% of the people of Venezuela.) President Chávez's health is a worry. The hope for improvements in the Barrio Adentro (primary health care community) programs continues. The minimum wage is being increased but not common harassment. There are others where funding follows loyalty. There are high levels of popular power to grow and the government continues to have legitimacy and support by the majority. It is not clear why poverty is high in Venezuela. It is not clear why poverty has not decreased. In most urban communities there are high levels of popular power and participation in social wage continued to grow. The real wage has begun to grow again in 2012. The minimum wage is being increased from $3 to $4 a day. From what I read and observed, production of food is again growing. It seems to be primarily in public construction and the related private and state sectors. It is difficult to spur production in Venezuela as the currency is still significantly overvalued as a means of insuring minimal profits. The official rate for the currency is 4.3 bolivars to the dollar but we were consistently offered 8 bolivars or more for our dollars. Using the official rate of 4.3 bolivars to the dollar, prices of most goods and services are very high. The attempt to diversify production and be less dependent on oil has not yet been very successful and food production is not growing enough to reduce the 70% of food that is imported. Yet, Venezuela is very close to achieving food security, the right for all to have enough to eat. However, food sovereignty, producing most of one’s food locally and nationally, also a goal, has a long way to go.

To me, a socialist economy in Venezuela would require the continued growth of the state and social economy at the expense of the private sector. By the social economy I mean cooperatives, and firms that are jointly run and owned by the workers and the state, and production organized by communal councils and comunas. The state sector and social economy would merge to become one sector where there is self-manage ment by workers, increasingly equal incomes and an orientation towards living in harmony with the environment. The objective of production would be to meet human needs not maximizing revenues and profits. There would be decreases in income and alternatives to market determined prices and wages. This would be a long way to go to be the entire Venezuelan political economy. As indicated throughout this paper, there has been significant progress in this direction in the last three years. (See my 2009 article cited in the introduction to this article for further elaboration.)

One of the many communal councils, or “consejo comun” in Venezuela.

Democracy and Human Rights
In terms of the more general issue of democracy in Venezuela, the US and right-wing-charges of Venezuela as a dictatorship are ridiculous and hypocritical. Venezuela has demonstrated its commitment to diversity and protection of human rights through public policies, and against local or national leaders, almost every case we have as evidence. Someone could be called from the left, others from the right; others could not be identified politically. We are seeing various forms of squalid one and is sometimes used to stigmatize honest critics. However, Venezuela does not have the feeling of a repressive state. For the most part, people are not afraid to criticize Chávez, the PSUV, the economy, the social programs and violations of individual rights but the criticisms by many human rights and travel in Venezuela, are over harsh and also hypocritical. The U.S. sanctions standard is often applied to Venezuela than to countries, e.g., Honduras. So while the limited progress towards greater human democracy and democratic socialism since my 2009 visit is somewhat worrisome, Venezuela has not moved backwards. It was inspiring to see so many Venezuelans whose lives have improved so substantially over the last 13 years, who believe that the lives of their children and communities will continue to improve in major ways.
The right to self-govern
A citizens coalition's long struggle to implement a "community bill of rights" in Spokane

Kai Huschke

Editorial note: The following article was originally published in Readthedirt.org, an alternative online newspaper headquartered in Bellingham, WA. Readthedirt specializes in articles on environmental issues written by Northwest professionals and community activists. WIP is pleased to collaborate with this new publication.

It's election night 2011, 8:45 in the evening in a small neighborhood situated along the Spokane River near downtown Spokane. An excited roar erupts from around the kitchen table. Fifteen seconds later an even larger explosion of cheers booms from the basement. Delayed as it was (the difference between website and television election results), what each group saw was that local Proposition 1—a community bill of rights—was deadlocked at 50/50 against corporate rights. Quite stunning, considering that at the same house, on virtually the same date two years earlier, many of those same people watched a similar measure to elevate community rights over corporate rights torched by the influence of corporate powerbrokers three to one. The citizen-led coalition that is Envision Spokane has been in a seven-year battle. That effort continues on with the very narrow defeat of Proposition 1 in 2011. You see, for the last 100 years in Spokane corporate developers have had more rights than neighborhood residents, corporate polluters have had more rights than the Spokane River, and corporate employers have had more rights than workers. The sum total of that reality is corporations have more rights than the City of Spokane and its residents. And guess what, Spokane is not alone. Step into any community and you will see this same scenario playing out.

So what's at the crux of why the residents of Spokane are being trumped by corporate interests? It is because our system of government legally disempowers local communities from making the decisions that affect them the most. Attorney General of Pennsylvania Tom Corbett (now Governor) stated it this way in January 2008, "There is no inalienable right to local self-government." His words were part of the state's legal response to small, rural communities who had exercised their right of self-government by passing local laws against the expansive, localized harms of corporate factory farming.

"There is no inalienable right to local self-government." His words were part of the state's legal response to small, rural communities who had exercised their right of self-government by passing local laws against the expansive, localized harms of corporate factory farming.

Outraged? Shocked? Stunned? Fissed? Confused? You should be, because his comment shatters what we have been lead to believe our democracy is about, whether you live in Pennsylvania, Washington state, or any other state. You see, we have a system of government legally disempowers local communities from making the decisions that affect them the most. When it comes to the environment, regulations are passed by passing local laws against the expansive, localized harms of corporate factory farming.

This process of state control achieves is a couple of things. One is that it validates a corporate activity as being "safe" because it makes polluting a legal practice, and secondly it restricts or in many cases prohibits local communities from adopting more stringent environmental protections. You see, the state is more interested, in fact makes it a priority, to advocate for the corporate pursuits over the protection of the environment and community health.

How many of you would welcome with open arms a 15,000-head hog factory farm into your town, toxic waste being applied to your farm fields, or trains bringing thousands of tons of coal through your town on a daily basis? Guess what, like it or not, that is exactly where Spokane and other communities are situated today, in that they are unable to exercise their right to local self-government—whether we want to say no to a corporate harm or advocate for greater sustainability.

Highlighting Spokane and the Spokane River specifically, what happens today is that the state allows corporations (i.e. they issue a permit) to pollute the Spokane River. The state also negotiates with a single corporate entity—Avista, Spokane's main utility company—every 50 years on their operation of dams along the Spokane River. We the people can make comments during the permitting process, but don't worry, we have no power to advocate on behalf of the river. Keep in mind that it wasn't all that long ago that year after year millions of salmon used to spawn beneath Spokane Falls.

So, what have been the results of this practice of placing commerce over the existence of the river? The Spokane River is one of the most endangered rivers in the country. A legacy of mining pollution, continued pollution through state issued permits, restriction of flow, decimation and toxic trespass of fish populations/species, and excessive water withdrawal are choking off an ecosystem that is already on life support. Envision Spokane's effort to adopt a Community Bill of Rights in Spokane represents a fundamental shift in how government should operate. It is about democratizing the key values of the community and making sure residents decide on whether they want significant developments in their neighborhoods, that residents can protect the health of the Spokane River and aquifer, and that workers rights are not trampled upon.

It is about elevating community rights over corporate rights. It is about corporations working for the good of the community and the environment not the other way around. It is up to residents to push for the adoption of local self-government laws in places like Spokane, Bellingham, Seattle, Yakima, Ellensburg, Pullman, Olympia, Kettle Falls, and small and big towns in between, as the first major strides towards establishing something that many say has never existed in this country before—a true democracy.

Kai Huschke is a Washington organizer for the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund and Campaign and the Director of Envision Spokane, which is working to pass a community bill of rights that recognize the rights of neighborhoods, the environment, and workers as superior to corporate rights in the City of Spokane.
State evicts Occupy Olympia again but few take note

Marissa Luck

For a flicker of time, the Occupation returned in the form a 24-hour public restroom and free street clinic. The dearth of accessible health care became a focal point for many activists during the fall Occupation as they attempted to provide basic first-aid services at Heritage Park. A small group of Occupiers have continued to work on issues of accessible health care and homelessness in Olympia, and the Olympia Med Shed was the latest effort in that struggle.

On June 1, Occupiers set up a port-a-potty, mobile kitchen bus, and large tent offering first aid services in the parking lot of a vacant state building. The old Department of Personnel building was vacated last year in process of a state consolidation that made it “a surplus to the needs of the state.” In a letter to Governor Gregoire, Occupiers wrote that the building was “not a surplus to the needs of this community.” By including the port-a-potty in the setup, activists also wished to address the lack of 24-hour bathroom in Olympia. Although the old DOP building is vacant, the parking lot is being leased by individual employees of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Department of Enterprise Services is attempting to sell the building.

Having a group of protesters camping outside a building doesn’t make it very marketable, pointed out Steve Vlandaras of DES. His department also received complaints from office workers who couldn’t access their parking spaces. After discovering they were on individuals’ leased property, Occupiers moved their Med Shed tent to a small non-leased square of parking lot. Still, DES said the Med Shed was an “unauthorized use of state property” and moved to evict protesters on June 4, just three days after the street clinic started.

During the eviction, a group of 25 activists watched somberly from the sidewalk as DES employees disassembled the Med Shed. I asked some of the protesters why they were there to witness the eviction. Activist Jeff Berryhill pointed towards the Med Shed, “I think being here we can recognize and further analyze what kind of system permits this kind of thing to take place – why using an empty building here or a tent in a park is threatening.”


Marissa Luck is a freelance journalist and regular contributor to Works in Progress. When not reporting on local issues, she works as a content director at a web-design firm. Marissa graduated from Evergreen with an emphasis in political economy and international studies. Contact her via Twitter@marissaluck7 or email marissaluck7@gmail.com.

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In recent months, Wendy Tanowitz, Wally Cuddiford, and Sandia Slaby have each decided to move on from Works In Progress. All of us at WIP wish of them the very best.

WIP workers move on

Now delivering lunches downtown for Kitzel’s Crazy Delicious Delicatessen. (360-357-7747)

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Madonna sings for apartheid; yet campaign to boycott Israel grows stronger

Alexander Billet

Madonna kicked off her “MDNA” tour on June with all the spectacle one can expect to see from her. First-rate choreography...
A century ago, W.E.B. Du Bois wrote that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.” The problem is still alive for the twenty-first century, and it is not confined to the United States; it haunts most societies. The problem has been endlessly described, and it is not as if we lack arguments about why the problem exists or what we should do. Yet, we are in the same place as the last century and the problem persists. We are in the same place as the last century because the problem is a problem in the production and reproduction of capitalism. It is not a personal problem, or a problem of individuals, but a problem of a social system. It is a problem of a way of organizing production, of a way of organizing the division of labor, of a way of organizing the means of production.

The problem is not new, and it has been described in many ways. It has been described as a problem of race, of class, of gender, of sexuality, of nationality, of religion, and of other ways of organizing social relations. It is a problem of the production of inequality, of the production of poverty, of the production of exploitation, of the production of power. It is a problem of the production of suffering, of the production of death, of the production of oppression.

The problem is a problem of capitalism. It is a problem of the way capitalism produces and reproduces social relations. It is a problem of the way capitalism produces and reproduces inequality. It is a problem of the way capitalism produces and reproduces poverty. It is a problem of the way capitalism produces and reproduces exploitation. It is a problem of the way capitalism produces and reproduces power. It is a problem of the way capitalism produces and reproduces suffering. It is a problem of the way capitalism produces and reproduces death.

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a woman with an ectopic pregnancy swelling of which is not possible to mask the faith-based nature of your beliefs. The answer: follow the lead of creationists and develop your own "science" to mask the faith-based nature of your beliefs.

How has the pro-life movement remained politically relevant in the United States? The answer: follow the lead of creationists and develop your own "science" to mask the faith-based nature of your beliefs.

The pro-life movement needs to "stop using Biblical arguments to debate abortion..." according to Charmaine Yoest—CEO of the nation's most prestigious medical journal in the United States (and possibly the world)—Life. The pro-life movement has had to develop its own special type of "science" to justify its policy blithely on reproductive rights. Currently, five states require doctors to warn women of the link between abortion and breast cancer, and eight states require doctors to warn women about the possible psychological problems that abortions can cause. The published medical research does not support either of these requirements. The National Cancer Institute (NCI)—a branch of the National Institutes of Health—has researched the link between breast cancer and abortion. Their findings are that previous studies which established a correlation between breast cancer and abortion were based on poor methodology and insufficient samples. According to the NCI, the most recent research "consistently showed no association between induced and spontaneous abortion and breast cancer risk." Similarly, the most recent research on abortion and psychological stress shows that the phenomenon of PASS—Post Abortion Stress Syndrome—does not exist. The New England Journal of Medicine, the most prestigious medical journal in the United States (and possibly the world) published a study from Danish researchers which confirmed that the majority of women getting an abortion in the first two weeks of pregnancy are not even aware of the abortion. It is enough to attract some of the pro-life movement's traditional opponents—and other secular humanists—into their ranks.

The pro-life movement has failed to back up either of these requirements. The National Cancer Institute (NCI)—a branch of the National Institutes of Health—has researched the link between breast cancer and abortion. Their findings are that previous studies which established a correlation between breast cancer and abortion were based on poor methodology and insufficient samples. According to the NCI, the most recent research "consistently showed no association between induced and spontaneous abortion and breast cancer risk." Similarly, the most recent research on abortion and psychological stress shows that the phenomenon of PASS—Post Abortion Stress Syndrome—does not exist. The New England Journal of Medicine, the most prestigious medical journal in the United States (and possibly the world) published a study from Danish researchers which confirmed that the majority of women getting an abortion in the first two weeks of pregnancy are not even aware of the abortion. It is enough to attract some of the pro-life movement's traditional opponents—and other secular humanists—into their ranks.

The science of life is in our favor, and we should embrace this. Indeed, "the science of life" can be persuasive stuff. It is enough to attract some of the pro-life movement's traditional opponents—and other secular humanists—into their ranks.

The only problem is that the "science of life" is not on their side. If anything, the pro-life movement has had to develop its own special type of "science" to justify its policy blithely on reproductive rights. Currently, five states require doctors to warn women of the link between abortion and breast cancer, and eight states require doctors to warn women about the possible psychological problems that abortions can cause. The published medical research does not support either of these requirements. The National Cancer Institute (NCI)—a branch of the National Institutes of Health—has researched the link between breast cancer and abortion. Their findings are that previous studies which established a correlation between breast cancer and abortion were based on poor methodology and insufficient samples. According to the NCI, the most recent research "consistently showed no association between induced and spontaneous abortion and breast cancer risk." Similarly, the most recent research on abortion and psychological stress shows that the phenomenon of PASS—Post Abortion Stress Syndrome—does not exist. The New England Journal of Medicine, the most prestigious medical journal in the United States (and possibly the world) published a study from Danish researchers which confirmed that the majority of women getting an abortion in the first two weeks of pregnancy are not even aware of the abortion. It is enough to attract some of the pro-life movement's traditional opponents—and other secular humanists—into their ranks.

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Jacob Kostecka and James O’Keeffe LIVE Friday, June 29, 7:00pm until 9:00pm. Traditions Cafe

LAWN BOY - Portland’s tribute to PHISH a... Friday, July 6, 9:00 pm Olympia Ballroom

The Ballroom is excited to present 80s & 90s rock band Pigeon - an awesome show complete with a mega-awesome light show. The show is going to blow minds.

Registration deadline July 10 for Natural Resources Youth Camp

UCF Center for Sustainability at Pack Forest, Eatonville, WA

Campers, ages 12 - 17, spend your summer with Natural Resources Young Camp - NRYC offers a up close look at our natural resources through hands-on activities, led by professional instructors. Camp includes a fun-filled day of field trips, hiking, campfires and ropes course! BackCountry Adventure program includes a 4 day backpacking trip!

Middle Eastern Dinner and Silent Auction

Thursday, July 12, 5:30pm Huber’s Gasthaus, 2312 Friendly Grove Road Northeast, Olympia, WA

The Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice invites you to a Middle Eastern Dinner & Silent Auction to Support Shuruq- Olympia’s first Arab Festival coming in October!

G.l. Resistance and Coffee Strong

July 6, 9:00 pm at The Midnight Sun

G.L. Resistance and Coffee Strong are excited to be part of this year’s New Direction Fest.

The Joe Baque Trio with Dennis Hastings

Saturday, June 30 at 9:30pm The Olympia Ballroom

610 Water Street Olympia, WA

Master pianist Joe Baque and his trio, Osama Arab, and Michael Olson persuasion with Vocal sensation Dennis Hastings will blend a night of favorite Jazz & Blues and Popular tunes with The Waterstreet Cafe’s award winning menu. For reservations or information call 709-9090.

Resident Kings CD fund raiser!!!

HHHHHHEEE!!!

Sunday, July 1, 8:00pm Brotherhood Lounge

In June we’re going into Sound House Studio to record a CD with Mr. Jack Endino. We’re very excited to be making a quality recording. As such we’re pretty broke and need some monetary support. Won’t you help us? Mosquitos and Survival Knife have jumped on board to lend their support and to provide a well rounded rock experience for you. We’re recording it a $5 cover, but any extra you can swing will be great, and if you’re really poor but still want to help you can work with ya! We hope to see a ton of you out to The Broho for this fun event. Thanks!

Scott Yoos’ Next Hearing Monday, July 2, 9 am Thurston County Courthouse (2000 Lakeridge Dr, Olympia)

This “Ominbus Hearing” will mark Scott’s 10th plus years of being in Courtroom around this matter in the past year. The hearing begins at 9 am, but a number of Scott’s many supporters will show up at 8 am, for a sign-holding support vigil before we head into the “chambers of justice.” (If you’ve never been to the circus, here’s your chance!)


Water is Life Walk – Sacred Journey 2012

Wednesday, July 4, 2012 at 4:45am T’Swax to Bus-chut-hwud – now known as (Mt Rainier to Capital Lake in Olympia, WA)

FOUR MAJOR WATER BLESSING SITES – Ti’Swaq at Christine Falls (Mt Rainier), Bus-chut-hwud (in Lushootseed) or Stci-hun (in Chehalis) ~ meaning (place of) the Black Bears).

Myth of Democracy - anti-fascist- anti-imperialist, anti-corporatocracy - gay-positive-pro-human-and-non-human-rights punk rock on an acoustic guitar from New Zea-

Land! Monday, July 2, 5:00 pm Last Word Books


Stonewall Youth Presents

The Queer Rock Camp Showcase Saturday, July 28 6:30pm doors/7:00pm show Olympia Film Society

In one week campers ages 12-18 learn new instruments, form bands and write original songs. Don’t miss your chance to celebrate their creations at StoneWall Youth’s second annual Queer Rock Camp Showcase. There will be raffle prizes, Queer Rock Camp merchandise, and an inside look at what happens at this unique day camp. Queer Rock Camp empowers youth and builds community through music. We support the fluidity of gender and sexuality and see music and self-expression. Visit queerrockcamp.org for more details. Tickets are limited – register now! For more information and to register, visit www.nyr.org.

New Direction Fest 2012

The practical application of the radical ideas and values of hardcore punk

August 4 from 3:00pm until August 5 at 11:30pm Friday at The Midnight Sun (113 N Columbia St, Olympia)

Doors open at 3pm Saturday/Sunday at Eagles Ballroom (805 Fourth Ave. E, Olympia)

Doors open at 9am, first workshop at 10am

New Direction Fest 2012 will be a space for people of the worldwide hardcore and punk community to share experiences, skills, ideas, and information about community organizing, activism, labor organizing, and other forms of radical action. This convergence will include live bands, workshops, and speakers engaged in the practical application of the radical ideas and values of hardcore punk. Through these, we hope to inspire and to mobilize one another to form a global network of resistance and a movement for radical change within the hardcore and punk community. The goal of this fest is to breathe new life into the hardcore tradition of resistance and to push our networks towards a NEW DIRECTION where we can bridge the gap between hardcore values and the application of these values through practical action.

Adjustment to Society (Olympia)

Agatha (Seattle)

Between Earth and Sky (Seattle)

Big Eyes (Seattle)

Brigada Roja (Monterey, MX)

Crude Thought (Olympia)

Cynarae (Seattle)

Dehumanized (Olympia)

The Detonators (Eugene, OR)

Dick Binge (Olympia)

Disparate (Olympia)

Erode (Tacomam)

Grimace (Seattle)

Hysteric (Olympia)

Iska (Victoria, BC)

Komatose (Anchorage)

La Bella (Los Angeles)

Latterman (Huntington, NY)

Mary Christ (DC)

Di Pollo (Scotland)

Doo-Ick (Olympia)

Poison Planet (Chicago)

Rape Revenge (Calgary, Canada)

Rivers (Oakland)

Resist and Exist (LA)

RVVR (Olympia)

Skate (Seattle)

Socialized Crucifixion (SoCal)

Sojournner (Tacomam)

Stresscase (LA)

Ugly Parts (New Jersey)

Wretched of the Earth (Portland)

Venganza (Anahiem)

Workshops:

• Dismantling Capitalism, Dismantling Patriarchy

• Anarchism and Popular Education Panel

• Antiwar and Anti-Fascist Panel

• A Brief History of Anti-Fascism in Punk

• Police Reform or Police Abolition?

• Worker Co-operatives

• Worker Co-operatives

• Urban Guerrilla Gardening

• Consent and Boundary Setting

• G.I. Resistance and Coffee Strong

• Labor Struggle in the 21st Century

• and more to be announced

Buy your pre-sales at http://newdirectionfest.net/

Please check our website and/or facebook or updates/changes! (http://www.facebook.com/newdirection.fest) for updates/changes!

Community Special Events

Each summer the Thurston County Progressive Network (TC PRO-NET) holds its very popular annual picnic on the second Sunday in July. “It’s an old-fashioned picnic with delicious food, wonderful people, lots of opportunities for networking, and a unique opportunity to visit with our local politicians.” This year meet candidates for county commissioner, PUD, 22nd LD legislature and senate candidates, judicial candidates, and local elected officials. The MC for the event will be Mary Hall. This year’s picnic will feature keynote speaker, Bill Grace PhD, author of Shar-

ing the Rock. “He is a social justice activist, a traveling teacher, and an architect of ideas. Bill speaks and leads seminars around the world, touching audiences deeply with a heartfelt commitment to global justice, peace, and sustainability.”

The menu includes 50 pounds of wild-caught salmon, tenyaki chicken, home-baked breads, beer, wine, and lemonade. In addition, attendees are asked to bring a potluck item. Locally grown foods are encouraged.

WHAT: Picnic and Candidate Forum with 150-200 attendees (growing ev-

every year). Used to be free, but are unable to afford to do that any-

more. There is a $10 donation. RSVP please: barb@tcpronet.org.

WHY: The picnic is a public service to the local progressive community—

it’s NOT a fundraiser.

WHEN: Sunday, July 8 from 3:30-6:00 pm.

WHERE: Sherri Goulet and Don Anderson’s back yard at 3516 Pifer Road, SE, Olympia

TC PRO-NET is a 501(c)[3] nonprofit organization working to increase commu-

nity self-sufficiency. For more info: www.tcpronet.org or 360-352-8215.

Send in announcements to olywip@gmail.com or Works In Progress PO Box 295 Olympia WA 98507
Local hunger strikers protest Congress starving the USPS

Three local members of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) staged a hunger strike in Washington state last week in solidarity with their fellow unionists and community activists in Washington, DC and other locations across the nation. The local APWU hunger strikers, Clint Burelson (Olympia), Anthony Foster (Tacoma), and David Yao (Seattle), contend US Postal Service cuts are a result of a 2006 law that pumps more than $5 billion per year from USPS coffers into the Federal Treasury. They say Congress is responsible for its failure to reverse that law. Labor and community supporters joined them as they carried out public protests in across the state. Activists carried a large facsimile check for $22 billion, representing the amount paid by the USPS to the U.S. Treasury from 2006-2011.

Hunger Strike actions in Washington, DC, will be staged on the US Capitol grounds to illustrate that America’s postal service is being starved financially by Congress. The hunger strikes occurred after announced cuts of 25-75% in hours for many small offices, and just days before the July 1 slowdown of some first-class mail. They highlight the connection between loss of service to postal customers, and congressional delay in fixing overpayments into federal benefit funds.

“The internet, not private competition, not the recession — Congress is responsible for the postal mess,” said Jamie Partridge, a retired letter carrier traveling from Portland, OR, for the hunger strike in DC. “Corporate interests, working through their friends in Congress, want to undermine the USPS, bust the unions then give the work to private, for-profit interests.”

David Yao of Seattle, a 26-year postal employee who traveled throughout the state while on hunger strike, said, “Big cuts in hours at small offices in the state aren’t necessary. Delaying first-class mail, starting July 1, is not necessary. Reducing delivery days and ending door-to-door delivery aren’t necessary. But Congress will not stop the needless transfer of $5.5 billion annually from the postal budget onto the federal budget. They are using the Post Office as a cash cow.”

The activists claim that a 2006 Congressional mandate, which forces the USPS to prefund 75 years worth of retiree health benefits in a ten-year window, accounts for the bulk of losses that are sending the service into a death spiral. Not only would the postal service have been profitable from 2007-2010 without the mandate, say strikers, the USPS has also overpaid tens of billions into two pension funds. US Postmaster General Donahoe announced in May he would begin closure of half the mail sorting plants in the US, which would delay nearly all first-class mail delivery. He also plans to cut hours in half the nation’s post offices, mostly rural.

On July 1, next-day delivery of first-class mail will be reduced to mailings within local distribution areas (there are five in Western Washington, and four east of the Cascades). As of Feb. 1, 2013, next-day first-class mail will be completely eliminated for the mailing public, unless Congress releases sufficient postal funds. The hunger strikers are calling on Postmaster Donahoe to suspend cuts and closures, and calling on Congress to immediately fix the finances by repealing the prefunding mandate and refunding the pension surplus.

The Stand is the Washington State Labor Council’s online newspaper providing news about and for working people.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

8th Annual PROGRESSIVE TOWN HALL PICNIC and Candidate Forum

Guest Speaker Bill Grace

SUNDAY, JULY 8
3:30-8:00 P.M.
$10 donation appreciated

Please bring a potluck dish and RSVP to: barb@tcpronet.org

Location: 3516 Pfifer Rd. SE
Olympia 98501, 352-8225

Pizza Klatch comes out of the closet

The “science” of the pro-life movement

Venezuela: Update on the revolution