Elected officials in Thurston County begin allocating new federal funds

A substantial infusion of money—is anyone counting?

Bethany Weidner

Soon after Biden took office, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP Rescue Plan). Thurston County jurisdictions will share a windfall of over $82 million in “fiscal recovery funds.” Half the money came this May and the rest will come next May. It all has to be obligated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2025.

The Treasury Department has published initial rules for spending the money, but it’s not possible to know exactly what expenditures are eligible until the final rule comes out. While each jurisdiction has already made decisions about the use of funds, they might have to be adjusted while working. Who’s deciding how to spend the money?

Officials here have made little effort to include the public in deciding how to allocate the money. This runs counter to the Rescue Plan’s directive to address systemic challenges that contribute to unequal outcomes of the pandemic. The directive indicates that enlisting meaningful participation from the community—including underserved members who are often excluded from civic life—is essential to the best use of the funds.

The task of ensuring that ARP funds are deployed in a way that isn’t wasteful—doesn’t duplicate efforts or overlap other funding—has also been neglected. A Thurston County report on ARP notes that “it has been difficult to plan the best use of these funds when we don’t know what the state or neighbor jurisdictions are investing in.”

Finally, the fiscal recovery fund is a one-time injection of money that shouldn’t create obligations for future budgets. As one analyst noted, the funds should be “transformative,” instead of adding money for existing structures and programs.

A lot of money has been allocated already

Elected officials in all jurisdictions have identified uses for some of the money, but none have publicized their decisions. Olympia and Tumwater have approved allocations for the total amount of the funds. Officially in Thurston and Lacey are still in the process of evaluating some possibilities.

Thurston County—$56.4 million

Details of the County’s process and proposals for use of the ARP funds are in an August 31 report that is available online. (1) The report includes ideas for using $45 million still unallocated.

According to the report, the County will invite community comment on these ideas via survey and outreach through partner organizations, program providers and social media, “to ensure feedback from traditionally underserved populations, including people of color, people with low income and populations with limited English proficiency.”

So far, Commissioners have approved allocation of $11 million of their total, to be distributed as follows: business including minority (51%), intern job hires (14%), nonprofits including youth support (14%), agricultural markets (9%),

The report points out that the County will spend more than $100 million in pandemic-related funds from federal programs and other sources. For context, the County points out that its annual budget is $110 million.

Lacey $11.45 million

At an April 23 retreat Lacey City Council members decided to focus use of ARP funds on increasing the number of permanent supportive housing units available to the home- less population. The idea had been presented and discussed at an earlier work session and a joint meeting with Thurston County Commissioners. Some documents indicate that Lacey has also committed $1.3 million to a regional pot of money to be administered by the Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC).

Federal funds, continued on page 10

How to position Thurston County to be attractive

A Real Estate Forum offers answers from a market perspective

Esther Kronenberg

Growth was still the grail at the Thurston Economic Development Council’s Real Estate Forum on Oct 7. Specifically, growth in the commercial and industrial sector—with opportunities for South Sounders to make money in related real estate developments.

Attendees were primarily from local real estate firms and banks, title companies, attorneys, prominent builders and engineers like Thomas Architects, Kaufman Construction and SLJ Alliance. Also present were elected officials and staff from Thurston County, Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater, Fort EDC and staff and a handful of local businesses and nonprofits, including Homes First and Enterprise for Equity.

Heather Burgess, a high-profile real estate attorney, kicked off the forum touting Thurston County’s attractive investment environment. Burgess is President of the Board of the Economic Development Council (EDC) whose Executive Director, Michael Cade, hosted the event.

The focus of the virtual event was on how to perpetuate business-as-usual in the face of “changing commercial and industrial market impacts.” One focus was on local conditions—how to keep traffic flowing on I-5 and how remote work expanded the residential market—and the other was on how to reach beyond the local economy.

There was no recognition that “business as usual” has brought about a future of catastrophic weather events and encroaching sea levels—not to mention locally creating ever-increasing traffic congestion, a housing affordability crisis, significant loss of agricultural land, worsening water quality and marine habitat, and more.

Adding transportation capacity approval gets old

“Business as usual” was the approach presented by Marc Daily of Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) who identified the 1-5 corridor as the highest transportation priority for our region. TRPC predicts that by 2045, normal weekday traffic on I-5 will be backed up 4 to 5 miles between Nisqually and JBLM, and at the US 101 interchange.

Plans are underway to invest $2.4 billion in new capacity, including development of SR 507 through Yelm as an I-5 alternate and adding HOV lanes from Marvin Road to Market Road. I-5 acts as a dam across the Nisqually River, causing erosion that is predicted to undercut the roadway between 2040 and 2055, endangering the highway as well as salmon habitat. The solution for this dilemma anticipates several billions to replace bridges and to put I-5 on piers, elevating it above the intertidal waters at the Nisqually Delta.

Remote work users in an “era of innovation”

According to the presentation, for every 1% of vehicles taken off the roadway, there is a three-fold decrease in congestion. This suggests telework could have financial implications for our transportation infrastructure—but also for the real estate market.

Real estate, continued on page 8
WIP’s mission is to contribute to the struggle for justice across economic, social, environmental and political realms, and expand participatory democracy across classes, races, and genders.

Editorial policy

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

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

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

We will work with authors on a case-by-case basis. If there is a need for editing that extends beyond those areas.

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Thoughts on the Theme

Gimme shelter

Whether it’s permanent refuge for undocumented immigrants, sustainable housing for low-income people, or a series of protections from electromagnetic frequencies, or making sure habitats remain home for native species, contributors to our theme of “Gimme Shelter” make it clear they understand the primacy of shelter and that safe havens is the right of all sentient beings.

If only so much of it didn’t come down to writing. As our front-page articles make clear, there’s a lot of it flying around these days. Video-tracks by Bethany Weinman labored mightily to uncover how local and county officials plan to allocate funds in two installments under the American Rescue Plan Act, but it’s still far from clear.

Admittedly, budgets of this magnitude are challenging, especially when projects in multiple jurisdictions and the parameters for eligible uses are open to interpretation. Maybe that’s why Olympia seniors have decided that soliciting input from its residents about how to spend their $92 million is necessary. By contrast, Thurston County is inviting community participation through various organizations, social media platforms and surveys.

Residents might want to consider giving the county some feedback about the millions earmarked for the Economic Development Council. The EDC’s raison d’etre is to steer commercial, real estate and industry investors toward profitable investments in a constantly changing marketplace. But as Chester Kronenberg implies in her cover story on the EDC’s recent overview of economic trends in Puget Sound, those investments often benefit the few at the expense of the many. With this public-private entity charged with handling millions in taxpayer-supplied money, who knows how they will use the money? Where is the transparency? Where is the accountability? The writers at GuerrillaThink Press have a few things to say about traditional economics in their thought-provoking piece on innovative approaches to fundraising for low-income housing that sidestep financial meddlers. While most of us are still trying to get a handle on cryptocurrency and tokenized transactions, GuerrillaThink pushes us to get comfortable with NFTs, cooperation, and mutual aid and building housing that addresses the needs of our most vulnerable—instead of yet another luxury apartment building using developer tax exemptions. Talk about economic trends!

Dan Leahy takes a hard look at how much real estate is devoted to low-income housing in Thurston County. You guessed it: not much.

A tangled maze involving a Reagan-era tax credit program, the economic crash of 2008, cuts from the Trump administration, and decisions by local governments and the perennial greed of corporate players has resulted in no new low-income housing since 2017.

We know what you’re thinking. What is it with WIP and their relentless coverage of disturbing local news? We offer two points in our defense: first, someone’s gotta do it. Second, it ain’t all bad.

I’m filling up my neighborhood with these apartment towers built for city life (just keep us separate from the homeless, please, who beg along our street, upset my wife, and interrupt a pleasant shopping trip).

Some nights I fear the flames where I’ll be flung.

That beggar—will he dip a fingertip in water so it cools my burning tongue?

It’s night. I look down at the street and see my beggar looking up and straight at me.

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—LL

Upcoming themes

January: Where do we find light? It’s dark out there but the light hasn’t gone away. Can you see it yet? What helps you navigate dark times? Deadline: January 17

February: Grifters, Moochers & Lovers. Dark players don’t take a holiday on Valentine’s Day but love for regular folks keep their love light burning all year long. Is anyone watching out for us or are we all just as coolly played? Where does love fit in when so many messages tell us just to look out for number one? Deadline: January 17

In this issue

How to allocate federal pandemic funds...............1
How to make money in Thurston County.................1
Election results – Olympia Council and Port of Olympia...3
Fresh models for Olympia’s housing crisis..............4
Who’s building affordable housing in Olympia?.......5
A SafePlace for victims of domestic violence...........
An immigration attorney on immigration policy...........
Satsop music festival, the Woodstock of the PNW........
Good news for gophers.................................8
A watershed moment for the Chehalis River Basin.....9
The Thurston Housing Trust Fund finds its first property...10
Rural residents look for safeguards in 5G rules..........11
Recognizing emergent fascism...........................12
New resources to help avoid evictions......................12
No Good Men Among the Living – book review.........13
Religious exemptions from vaccination mandates.....14
Community Spotlight.....................................15

Fearful prayer of a high-rise developer

Luke 16:19–31

Dear Lord, my latest high-rise plan is this

fabulous views, a Starbucks down the block,

security with cameras you can’t miss,

and rooftop tracks where dogs can take a walk.

I’m filling up my neighborhood with these

apartment towers built for city life

(just keep us separate from the homeless, please,

who beg along our street, upset my wife,

and interrupt a pleasant shopping trip).

Some nights I fear the flames where I’ll be flung.

That beggar—will he dip a fingertip

in water so it cools my burning tongue?

It’s night. I look down at the street and see

my beggar looking up and straight at me.

Steven Peterson

Reprinted by permission of Christian Century magazine

Eric Burdon, Albert Collins and Steve Miller performed there in 1971! You heard it in WIP first (un- less you were there, that is).

Exhibit Two is Charlotte Person’s article on the imminent adoption of the Habitat Conservation Plan, which will help preserve Washing- ton’s prairie land and the endan- gered species who call it home. This fact and butterflies, sparrows and gophers who’ll benefit from the plan aren’t just cute critters at the edge of extinction. They’re not even merely vital to soil aeration, pollination, and animal food webs. They’re indicators of viability. If they’re gone, humans aren’t far behind.

During this winter season, may warm homes and safe havens be found for all creatures great and small.
2021 election results—Olympia City Council and Port of Olympia

Dan Leahy
City Council: incumbents—5, real estate—0

The challenge by real estate to take direct control of the City Council failed as City voters rejected the candidates challenge of Spence Weigand, Robbi Kesler, Cory Gauny and Candace Merzer in the general election, as well as Wendy Carlson’s candidacy in the primary.

The real estate candidates’ general position of more developments like the one proposed by Weigand, Robin Kesler, Cory Gauny and Candace Merzer in the general election, as well as Wendy Carlson’s candidacy in the primary.

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Exploring fresh models of cooperativism and permaculture design for Olympia’s housing crisis

GuerrillaThink Press

Olympia planners must awaken to two things if they hope to fundamentally shift the affordable housing landscape of our city: our bioregional climate reality and the viability of cryptocurrency and related technologies. No number of consultants producing $50,000 reports will ever reduce homelessness when hyperinflation and stagnant wages threaten existing renters’ and homeowners’ right livelihood.

No amount of scouring planning documents will reveal meaningful solutions if the designs fail to acknowledge that our era is marked by increasingly destructive, human-perpetuated, global climate change, and fail to implement any permaculture principles. Further housing developments that neglect the socio-ecological cost of materials and design verge on negligence.

Bioregional technologies, cooperatives and startups to the rescue

The appropriate technologies and social structures needed to employ and shelter the unhoused are already available: autonomous modular micro-grids, biodiesel fuel cooperatives, regenerative agriculture distribution networks, and a natural building industry based on renewable biomaterial composites.

Most of this technology is difficult and expensive to pursue for individuals, yet relatively small and coordinated fundraising efforts could fund ambitious startups willing to tackle the challenge at a bioregional scale.

Affordable housing for employed people can be addressed with the same methods but requires an exploration of integration with cryptocurrency given recent inflation rates. Bioregional land-use planning also requires confronting contractors, developers, financiers, and politicians who prefer business as usual in Cheetwoot (one of many indigenous names for this area of the Puget Sound).

Community support models, such as Mutual Aid Cooperatives, have experienced a resurgence in the financial void left by the pandemic, as people strive to make ends meet in challenging times. Techniques and tools for operating these cooperative technologies are already being disseminated globally by students, entrepreneurs, local organizations and social purpose-driven businesses. Alternatives to centralized internet platforms include Neighborhoods and Hylo, who offer ‘digital agency’ and ‘data sovereignty’ for users coordinating group tasks or economic activity.

Evergreen leads in teaching cooperative innovation

An institution with considerable means at its disposal, The Evergreen State College (TESC) is primed to become a bioregional leader in facilitating strategic public-private cooperative partnerships, providing a platform for students, staff, and faculty to engage with their community. Service-learning programs emphasize cooperative alignment with appropriate technology, team partnerships, permaculture, regenerative agriculture, natural building, and cooperative business dynamics, among other areas.

Evergreen’s Center for Community-Based Learning and Action (CCLBA), Center for Climate Action and Sustainability (CCAS), and Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership and Transformational Change (CELTIC) were early advocates for innovative approaches to persistent social problems through partnerships with existing government agencies. These departments could contribute to Olympia’s “One Community Plan,” which calls for developing affordable housing action plans and leveraging the city’s Home Fund to build at least 300 new units of supported and low-income housing within the next five years.

What if all the units built through One Community Plan were connected in a resilient team-based food sovereignty network that emulated GrubHub and implemented gamified garden education programs for residents, supported through Evergreen-led student service-learning placements? Public funding for these expensive-to-start alternatives is theoretical so far but could be realized with new approaches to financing.

Decentralized autonomous organizations

New ways of raising capital for projects

New methods of financial transacting—cryptocurrencies and Decentralized Finance (DeFi)—could transform current approaches to low-income housing. Once the domain of early adapters, non-fungible tokens (NFTs), unique units of digital art like photos, animated graphics and videos, are now recognized as legitimate fundraising tools—just like selling art for charity traditionally.

Large sales of NFTs by famous (or young) artists at auction houses like Sotheby’s or Christie’s may steal the headlines, but the utility of digital provenance provided by NFTs enables anyone to sell digital art for any purpose. To put it simply, selling digital art to fundraise for social purposes is just a few clicks away.

Combined with hard cryptoassets like bitcoin, these tools may lead to decentralized economies with global liquidity and cooperative governance. Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (DAOs) already accomplish this task, albeit crudely, compared to traditional multi-stakeholder cooperatives using current software. The technology may be maturing, but the public may still need time to digest the concept of using tokenized digital art to raise funds for permaculture designs for eco-villages to solve the housing crisis, or anything else for that matter.

Becoming a WIPster.

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November/December 2021

No company in our hyper-capitalist society should have any business other than making the world a better place for all beings. Using radical financial transparency, open membership models, emergent technologies that support cooperation, and Evergreen’s potential leadership, we can create a sustainably-financed, multi-stakeholder, social purpose meta-cooperative that can solve systemic issues. Such a vision could lead to the development of resilient low-income housing that is place-based and rooted in values of appropriate technology, traditional ecological knowledge and solidarity.

@GuerrillaThink is a distributed identity comprised of eleven individuals who identify as Greeners, changemakers, and cooperatives. Their main activities include guerrilla marketing, cooperative business consulting, cryptonboarding, co-creating NFTs, building naturally, and gardening (guerrilla think.substack.com)
Who’s building affordable housing in Olympia? 

The limits of a federal tax credit program as a way to produce stable housing for low income households

Dan Leahy

I’ve spent the last few years writing about the City of Olympia’s relentless push to construct market-rate, luxury apartments in the downtown core. This policy of increasing the equity ownership of developers like Walker John continues. If you add Walker John’s four new projects to Ronald Newman’s West Bay Yards, this makes 675 more market rate luxury units, unaffordable to the 47% of Olympia’s workforce who are low income.

Are there any low income housing complexes in Olympia? Where are they, how much do they charge and are there any projects under construction? The Housing Authority of Thurston County (HATC) has five low income complexes in Olympia with 204 units, but the biggest source of low income housing in Olympia is financed primarily through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program.

A federal tax incentive for private investors

The LIHTC mechanism was created with the 1986 Reagan Tax Reform Act. It creates low income housing by combining a “Managing Partner” with an “Investor Partner.” The Managing Partner is usually a 501c3 Tax Exempt Non Profit organization like the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) or Mercy Housing. An “Investor Partner” is a corporation or bank that wants to reduce what it pays in taxes via a tax credit for 10 years.

The LIHTC program represents the committee’s largest source of financing for low income housing and has made possible an estimated 3 million housing units since 1986. This program has cost the federal government an average of $8 billion each year in lost revenue, according to the Tax Foundation. Here in Washington State, it generated 183,000 units in the 33 years from 1986 to 2019. However, this financing source can be unfairly unpredictable depending upon corporate income and federal tax policy.

What those incentives have produced in Olympia

There are seventeen LIHTC apartment complexes with an Olympia address. They have 1,738 units that are rent- and income-restricted. The earliest of these, Stuart Place in downtown Olympia, was built in November 1984. This was followed by the Fern Ridge apartments in December 1994, the Courtside apartments in 1996, the Fleetwood in 1997 and the Boardwalk (senior only) apartments in 1999. The remaining complexes were all built four years ago in 2017: the Billy Frank, Jr. and Drexel House I –II, with the majority of their units for the homeless –and an expansion of the Evergreen Villages on Division Street NW.

In the midst of our housing crisis, why have there been no significant LIHTC projects in Olympia since 2017?

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Income levels and maximum rents in these complexes are set according to the Area Median Income (AMI). The Federal Housing and Development Department (HUD) determines each county’s AMI. As of April 2021, Thurston County’s AMI was $90,200 for a family of four. The income limit for the vast majority of LIHTC apartments in Olympia, 1,316 units, is set at 60% of AMI. Rents vary depending on unit size. A studio rent is $948, a one bedroom is $1,015, a two-bedroom is $1,218 and a 3-bedroom is $1,407. Importantly, these rents can be lower if the tenant has a HUD voucher or if the owner chooses to set rents lower than the maximum allowable.

A shift away from low income to market rate housing

The question is, in the midst of our housing crisis, why have there been no significant LIHTC projects in Olympia since 2017? Beginning with the 2007-2008 financial collapse, LIHTC construction slowed down and has declined ever since. In addition, the Trump Tax Cut Act (TCJA) slashed the corporate tax rate to 21% thus decreasing the incentive for corporations to purchase LIHTC tax credits.

The City of Olympia has focused primarily on granting 8-year property tax exemptions for the construction of high-end luxury units affordable only to high-income households. This has supported construction of 1,224 units since 2015, with a tax gift to developers amounting to $10 million dollars over the eight years. The City has authorized an additional 675 luxury units, a total of 1,224. In contrast to the City’s prioritization of market rate units, the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) and the Family Support Center have sought to use the tax credits to build low-income units, 62 units at 2020 Martin Way and 62 units on 7th Avenue SW, respectively.

Lower rents in LIHTC-financed projects aren’t permanent

There’s another difficulty with the LIHTC mechanism. This financing mechanism does not necessarily produce permanent low income housing. Typically, after 15 years, the tenant must purchase the LIHTC unit and the LIHTC investor can make the property available at market rate prices.

This transfer of ownership ensures the project will remain a low income housing project for the foreseeable future. However, with the rise in real estate values, there is a financial incentive for investors, known as aggregators, to challenge the non-profit partner for direct ownership of the property and begin charging market rate prices.

There are four separate lawsuits in Washington federal district courts attempting to do just this.

City Council members talk about equity in housing. Their policies have led to a massive growth of inequity in housing. They’ve promoted 1,224 units of luxury apartments and only 124 units of low income housing. They must change course if enough low income housing will be built to meet the community’s need. Instead of subsidizing Walker John or Ronald Newman, they could be working with the Housing Authority of Thurston County, the only source of permanent low-income housing in the City.

Dan Leahy taught public policy analysis at The Evergreen State College MPA program for six years. He retired in 2000 and lives on Olympia’s Westside.

For a lively and eye-opening read about how housing policy has shaped people’s lives in this country, get a copy of best-selling Color of Law by Richard Rothstein.

November/December 2021 - www.olywip.org
When Becky* unlocked the door to her room at the SafePlace Emergency Shelter, she described it as the first time she could remember having a place she could relax enough to rest. Her home life had become so dangerous that she’d taken to sleeping in a car to avoid her partner’s physical abuse.

A neighbor helped her contact SafePlace’s 24-hour helpline, which connected her with both the Shelter and Supportive Housing Programs. Along with a safe room and brand-new sheets and blankets, Becky received groceries, personal care products and a gas card. She told staffers she’d never before experienced such “great hope that things were unfolding as they should.”

SafePlace’s Cribsa Helpline and downtown Olympia Business Office receives over 100 calls and walk-ins inquiries each week. Whether in person or over the 24-hour helpline, a screening is initiated by a trained advocate who asks about the caller’s experience of domestic violence and intimate partner situation. They inquire whether incidents of stalking have occurred and whether other lethality factors are present. After a screening and assessment, case-conferencing begins.

For those who qualify, a plan is initiated to help get them (and often their children) to the safety of the shelter. Once there, safety planning begins in earnest—connection with housing specialists and legal advocates, individual and group case management and meeting clients’ specific needs such as childcare and/or job training.

Those who stay at the Shelter at night are supported as they search for work or continue to work, navigate the court process as they seek safety from their perpetrator, access community resources, and keep their children engaged in school activities. They are also free to leave the shelter permanently if they choose.

When fleeing domestic violence and entering the Shelter, clients understandably spend less time in public settings but re-entry into public life is always the goal. During their short stay at the Shelter (up to 90 days) they meet often with staff and advocates who help them develop a safety plan for long-term success.

While Becky was at the shelter, she received much-needed support. She is now safe and working, and has made great strides towards recovery.”

Distress calls to SafePlace lead to healing and empowerment

The plans help clients navigate often-bewildering challenges like enrolling for medical care and insurance coverage and sorting through employment benefit options. Many Shelter clients have never been allowed to make decisions about their family budgeting or medical care or even what groceries to buy.

For them, safety planning begins at an even more basic level. Mental health and emotional empowerment are also integral to client success. We often make referrals for outside therapy and counseling services. SafePlace offers both Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault support groups for those who are interested.

When their time at the Shelter ends, clients continue to receive support through legal and housing programs, case management and other services through SafePlace. Before leaving, they are asked to indicate what level of support, if any, they would like SafePlace to continue to provide.

A troubling trend emerged at SafePlace during the first few months of the pandemic: fewer calls to the Helpline. Staff determined that while people were quarantining in their homes, survivors and their children might still be in dangerous situations, but they had less privacy to make calls reaching out for help.

That trend has since reversed. Calls to SafePlace are now the highest ever recorded. Staff believe a big reason for this increase is that isolation during the pandemic means people spend more time than ever in unsafe living situations.

For over 40 years, SafePlace has provided people with life-changing tools, resources and interactions. We serve all ages and genders at no cost to the survivor or their children. SafePlace’s primary limitation is, unsurprisingly, a lack of funding. Because the need for support outweighs resources, many of SafePlace’s programs have a lengthy wait list.

For those who are interested.

When Becky* unlocked the door to her room at the SafePlace Emergency Shelter, she described it as the first time she could remember having a place she could relax enough to rest. Her home life had become so dangerous that she’d taken to sleeping in a car to avoid her partner’s physical abuse.

A neighbor helped her contact SafePlace’s 24-hour helpline, which connected her with both the Shelter and Supportive Housing Programs. Along with a safe room and brand-new sheets and blankets, Becky received groceries, personal care products and a gas card. She told staffers she’d never before experienced such “great hope that things were unfolding as they should.”

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Client confidentiality is maintained throughout the process unless the client has consented to having information shared. Otherwise, the only instances in which information may be shared are as mandated reports when a minor child or vulnerable adult are involved.

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50 years ago there was the Satsop music Festival, the ‘Woodstock’ of Pacific Northwest

Fair immigration policies still elude a nation of immigrants

Lisa Seifert

I have been an immigration lawyer for more than 30 years. My work has always been mainly to help people inside the US to secure permanent legal status. Most of my clients have been or are currently part of an undocumented class. Some have been in deportation proceedings—the government actively trying to detain or remove them from the country. My job is to find a way to stop that and keep the person here with his or her family.

Winning legal cases and becoming documented has never been easy. There are complex rules and processes and court cases that can take four or five years. Some people choose a path to get status that requires leaving the US for a visa interview, risking a chance they won’t be able to return for 10 years. That’s a big risk, but it’s the only way for many.

Many more have no options at all, despite family members and other permanent ties to this country. We are a country of more than 11 million undocumented people. It’s not right and there is reason to fight it.

Outdated laws affect professionals, laborers and those in-between

One in seven US residents—45 million people, or 14% of the population—is an immigrant. One in every 20 Washington residents was born to at least one immigrant parent. Immigration involves not just what happens at the southern border but also what happens when someone comes through immigration at the airport.

It necessitates parceling out per-country quotas of visas for family members, doctors and other essential workers, affecting the gain from Grammy and Pulitzer Prize winners and high-level athletes to agricultural workers and caregivers. The system doesn’t work for most immigrants, their families, or the people who depend on them.

Some workers are here legally as workers in the tech sector. But because of laws written decades ago, their priority date to seek permanent status is never reached, leaving them chained to one employer, unable to easily travel, or make family plans, etc. Because capacity cannot keep up with demand, outdated rules cause the government to “lose” thousands of visas every year for the year in which they are awarded.

A few weeks ago, advocates were excited about the $100 billion in the Senate Reconciliation Bill tagged to support immigration policy and process improvements. This would have been the most significant change to immigration policies since Ronald Reagan’s amnesty program.

Putting these provisions inside the budget bills (where Congress decides what must be spent to keep the country running) was a good idea because it’s the only way for many.

Why are they not as deserving as anyone else

Many, it’s just the perpetuation of temporary, transitory legal status. Immigration courts would get the funding to allow diversification and modernization. A Mason County judge described it this way: “People who are in immigration court are here today and not how? Immigrants are outsiders, mostly of a different race. Most immigrants are now from China, India, Mexico and the Philippines) and a common line of thought was “why can’t they come legally, like my grandpa did?”

The answer is not that earlier generations of immigrants were more law abiding. It’s more that the legal system of the 1920s and 1950s doesn’t reflect today’s reality about who needs to come to the US. Laws need to change after 68 years. But passing legislation is very difficult, as we have seen in the past few weeks.

Yet even in the pared down provisions of the current bill, we seem to be closer to some positive changes than ever before in my memory, improving the lives of some immigrants. But for many, it’s just the perpetuation of temporary, uncertain status leaving them to ask themselves why are they not as deserving as anyone else to have permanent lives in the US? Will immigrants get the changes they need someday soon? I hope so.

Lisa Seifert is an immigration lawyer in Olympia. Learn more at www.seifertlaw.com

Somebody Else’s Dream: Dakota, The Buys, & “Timothy”

by rock journalist Mazum W. Furek

The celebration of the 50th anniversary of the 1971 song “Timothy” and the legendary Satsop River Fair & Tin Cup Races Festival. Although banned by radio stations and called “the worst song ever recorded,” “Timothy” was a huge hit in the Seattle/Tacoma area, selling 6,000 copies in one day. The Buys, who recorded the song, were a local guitar sideman Eric Clapton in his post-Cream, Blind Faith period), Eric Burdon, Flash Cadillac, Albert Collins, John Hammond, Charles Lloyd, Steve Miller, Billy Preston, Jimmie Weatherpoon, Wishbone Ash, Way, and The Youngbloods. Satsop had its share of problems. It rained for much of the four days, and Buys’s drummer, Chris Hanlon, recalled, “They brought the hands in by ambulance. They couldn’t afford to pay for the helicopters.”

Finally, Satsop ran out of money. These groups refused to play. Ike Turner, Berry & The Dominos, Quicksilver Messenger Service, War, Earth Wind and Fire, Leo Kottke, The Everly Brothers, and Captain Beefheart.

After hearing “Timothy,” attendee Irven Lorance wrote a song about an 1899 mine disaster in Carbondale, Washington, called “Black Diamonds,” and “reflection of coal in the eyes of a mule.” Local photographer and attendee John Caldwell said that losses were estimated at $300,000, including $100,000 from ticket countering.

Somebody Else’s Dream depicts a cautionary tale of substance abuse, the pitfalls of fame and the actual price of the rock and roll fantasy—right here in the Pacific Northwest.

For more information or advance copies, contact Sunbury Press at 855-338-8539.

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www.olywip.org

Senate Reconciliation bill fails needlessly to help immigrants

The system needs a significant overhaul, or at least an update. It’s not really a partisan issue, but it tends to be the Democrats who care about this issue more, and who drafted provisions in the Build Back Better bill passed by the House of Representatives. The powerful opposition to change

Demographer Thomas Edsall, in his NY Times essay The Third Rail of American Politics, was still electrifying, saying that hardliners always claim to want to “strengthen the border” before anything else. They feel they can’t risk seeming weak on this issue. They object to any immigration reform, even popular measures such as legalizing “Dreamers,” young people who’ve grown up and even graduated in the US but must maintain the status of their undocumented parent.

These same people often use the issue of immigration to ignite a deep sense of fear and threat among Americans, activating an “us vs. them” narrative to their political advantage.

It’s far easier for many people to react to immigrant issues with emotion than reason. But are objections to immigration reform based on a concern about who is coming and not how? Immigrants are outsiders, mostly of a different race. Most immigrants are now from China, India, Mexico and the Philippines) and a common line of thought was “why can’t they come legally, like my grandpa did?”

The answer is not that earlier generations of immigrants were more law abiding. It’s more that the legal system of the 1920s and 1950s doesn’t reflect today’s reality about who needs to come to the US. Laws need to change after 68 years. But passing legislation is very difficult, as we have seen in the past few weeks.

Yet even in the pared down provisions of the current bill, we seem to be closer to some positive changes than ever before in my memory, improving the lives of some immigrants. But for many, it’s just the perpetuation of temporary, uncertain status leaving them to ask themselves why are they not as deserving as anyone else to have permanent lives in the US? Will immigrants get the changes they need someday soon? I hope so.

Lisa Seifert is an immigration lawyer in Olympia. Learn more at www.seifertlaw.com

www.olywip.org
For over six years farmers, developer and conservationists have agitated for a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). This 30-year plan will cover the entire Thurston County outside the city limits. The planning area is 200,000 acres and it targets four endangered animals—the Mazama pocket gopher, Oregon vernal pool frog, Oregon spotted frog, and Taylor's checkerspot butterfly.

Getting building permits faster, easier and cheaper

Currently if an endangered animal lives on a property, the owner has to apply for a federal “incidental take permit” to build any structure, from a shed to a huge truck depot. The process can take a year or more and is expensive. The landowner must create a mitigation plan to conserve land for the endangered species, but there is little monitoring to check whether the plan actually works.

Lands in Thurston County have been surveyed for prairie soils, types of vegetation and the likely presence of an endangered species. After the HCP is implemented, property owners can apply for a county permit under the HCP at the same time as their other building permits. The HCP provides a system to categorize each land parcel from high to low, according to their suitability to support endangered wildlife. County staff will use that system to compute mitigation fees for each building project. The fees will go into a county fund to conserve prairie habitat.

Conserving rare species and protecting disappearing habitat

The HCP focuses on four endangered species, but it will protect some of the best oak-prairie habitat left in the United States. This ecosystem contains other plants and animals that are increasingly rare but not yet listed as needing protection.

Over time the HCP should create higher quality prairie preserves in contrast with the mitigation areas conserved under the present system.

Real estate

From page 1

EDC's Michael Cade predicted these last prairie clusters and economic development will be looked on as an “era of innovation” in business, as people worked from home and residential markets expanded in a regional context. Cade cited 2021 as a record year for housing permits issued in all three jurisdictions, with Olympia running 55% above last year’s total. He touted the high volume of permits issued, but didn’t reference the fact that none of the new housing is affordable to the 47% of Olympia households who live on a low income. While almost 1000 market rate apartments have come online in the last 4 years, or are currently under construction in the downtown core, only 62 would serve low-income people. There was no response to a later question about how the market might address this imbalance.

From global to national

Keynote speaker Didi Caldwell is the founder of Global Location Strategies, a company that helps corporate leaders identify where and how to deploy their assets for greatest return. She now advises the Port of Olympia, one of many created to help with the Port’s reliance on forestry and in federal funds received to aid recovery from the pandemic.

Through controlled burning, Native Americans maintained the prairies for over 5,000 years to promote medicinal plants and edible plants like camas bulbs and berries. Modern-day prairies must be managed to prevent intrusion of native evergreen trees and non-native invasive plants like pasture grasses and Scotch Broom.

A resource for improved stewardship

Over time the HCP should create high quality prairie preserves in contrast with the mitigation areas conserved under the present system. It targets four endangered species—the Mazama pocket gopher, Oregon vernal pool frog, Oregon spotted frog, and Taylor's checkerspot butterfly.

The Thurston County HCP will protect the plants and animals threatened with extinction in our beautiful and rare oak-prairie habitat better than the current building permit process....” Elizabeth Rodrick, VP, Black Hills Audubon Society. Photo by Rob Gilbert.

The “oak-prairie-wetland ecosystem” was formed millions of years ago by glaciers that left gravelly soils that drain well and become totally dry during the summer. The prairies stretch from northern California to lower British Columbia, but only 1% remain from before European settlement.

The Oregon White Oak, sometimes called Garry Oak, occurs only in dry areas of the Pacific Northwest, and is expensive. Instead, she proposed that companies should site their facilities where the prairies are. The HCP would pay for monitoring and adaptive management to check whether the plan actually works.

She noted that the prairies are currently under construction in the last 4 years, or more and is expensive. The HCP will buy some new preserves where endangered species are present. The prairies will benefit as well from wildlife from the services provided by these open spaces, especially in relation to flood control and carbon sequestration.

The fund will also pay for monitoring and adaptive management to conserve both new and old preserves. When combined with restoration efforts from agencies, tribes, land trusts, and nonprofits, the future looks brighter for our beautiful and unique prairies.

This fall the public can submit comments to the County Planning Commission on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Thurston County Conservation Plan. Staff will consider those comments when drafting the Final EIS, and the County Commissioners’ approval could come within a year.

To learn more about our prairies or how you can visit or volunteer to help them, go to the South Sound Prairies website http://www.southsoundprairies.org/

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The forum was promoted as a way to help explain how Thurston County could “position itself to be attractive” and “what are the critical elements important to attract and keep talent?”

But attractive to whom? Competing with whom? And what is the answer important, but nothing in the forum acknowledged this. Will the goal of economic development in Thurston County be sustainable and serve the people who call Thurston County home? Will it protect our natural resources and diminish our reliance on fossil fuels? Or will it be to maintain “business as usual” even if it means becoming attractive to investment that uses our resources to serve needs beyond our boundaries?

Caldwell's parting advice at the forum to “keep calm and embrace chaos” is not reassuring.

Esther Kronenberg attended the forum and reports regularly on development issues in the Thurston County area.

(1) The EDC is a “public-private” organization, one of many created by statute to coordinate economic development efforts outside the city limits of Port Angeles and the Port of Washington counties. Most recently, officials at the Thurston EDC handled the distribution of over $20 million in federal funds received to aid recovery from the pandemic.
A watershed moment for the Chehalis River Basin

Lee First

A small section of the Chehalis River is easily viewed from I-5 between Centralia and Chehalis, but this river is much more. To start with, it is the largest watershed completely within the boundaries of Washington State. It’s a watershed of immense reach, 2,700 square miles in area, with over 3,300 miles of tributary rivers and streams.

From headwaters in the Willapa Hills, it flows in all four directions before it reaches the Grays Harbor estuary. The mainstem has no dams at this time. In most years, the Chehalis produces more salmon than any other river in all of Washington.

The Chehalis River is known by the Chehalis people as n-su łap, which means “our wealth water.” For thousands of years, the Chehalis people lived with and accommodated flooding as a fact of life.

Building in a flood plain

That changed as settlers came to the Basin to harvest timber, to farm, to fish and to live. They built roads, homes, bridges, shopping malls, airports, wastewater treatment facilities and more infrastructure in the river’s floodplain. Major floods have become more common and climate change will drive an increase in their frequency and intensity.

In 2007, a catastrophic flood shut down I-5 for days and caused hundreds of millions of dollars in damage. That flood is the impetus behind the Chehalis Basin Strategy, a state initiative with an ambitious dual mission: to reduce flood damage and to restore habitat for salmon and other aquatic species.

Identifying impacts of a long-sought dam

As part of the Strategy, members of the Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) proposed a dam near the headwaters of the Chehalis River. Hopes for a dam have been in the works for over 20 years.

The dam was presented as a way both to provide flood control and to restore salmon, but a February 2020 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) revealed instead that construction of a dam would have adverse impacts on salmon.

When the DEIS was issued, questions and concerns about impacts and the lack of examination of any alternative to the dam drew statewide attention. One of the most troubling impacts of the dam was increased water temperature—water over 20 degrees centigrade is deadly to salmon. Extraction of Spring Chinook that spawn above the dam site is virtually guaranteed if a dam is built. The dam would also accelerate the decline of Coho, fall Chinook, Steelhead and culturally important Lamprey.

One of the most troubling impacts of the dam was increased water temperature—water over 20 degrees C is deadly to salmon.

Taking a step back

The consequence of these findings for the dam proposal was made clear in a statement by a Board member serving on Ecology’s Office of the Chehalis Basin (OCB), which is tasked with implementing the Chehalis Basin Strategy. Tyson Johnson of the Quinault Nation stated, “We can’t support the dam based on the DEIS which says the dam would have unavoidable impacts on salmon and our treaty rights.”

In light of the DEIS findings, Governor Inslee in July of this year issued a directive to pause work on the impact statement for the dam and to use the time to develop and evaluate a basin-wide, non-dam alternative. A final EIS is due in 2023.

And a step forward

Today this evaluation is beginning as the Local Actions Non-Dam (LAND) alternative. LAND represents the missing piece of the Chehalis Basin Strategy, providing a critical back-up plan, revealing solutions to flooding that have not been considered. This is especially important for the lower Basin, where a dam would not provide the same degree of flood protection for the Centralia/Chehalis area.

The OCB has approved a new steering committee to work on the LAND alternative. This came after pressure from the tribes and environmental groups, including the Chehalis River Alliance. Members of the steering committee include three OCB Board members (including Tyson Johnson), three representatives of environmental organizations (American Rivers, Conservation Northwest, Wild Salmon Center), one farmer, and representatives from the Lewis County Economic Development Council and the City of Chehalis. According to Johnson, “One of the biggest goals of the LAND is the public engagement piece—we want to hear from all the different communities of the basin to get a sense of what works for them. We have to find ways to maintain community safety without sacrificing the environment.”

Here are three ways to keep informed about the Chehalis Basin Strategy and the LAND. Sign up for the Strategy’s email list; attend the virtual OCB Board meetings and the LAND meetings; learn about the work of the Chehalis River Alliance.

Lee First lives in the Chehalis watershed and is the Twin Harbors Waterkeeper. Read more about the Chehalis River Basin in the April 2021 issue of Works in Progress at www.olywip.org

Aquatic Species Restoration Plan website: https://chehalisbasinstrategy.com/asrp/asrp-implementation/

RETHINKING EVERYTHING #13

Our world on the verge of transition

We are moving from a world in which individual choice and competition made sense to one in which collective choice and cooperation are necessary, not because ideologies have changed but because both the problems we face and the nature of the resources required to solve them have changed.

When the costs of economic activity are collective, capitalism (i.e., private property rights and individual choice) is suicidal; when the benefits are collective (e.g., new vaccines for COVID, new forms of alternative energy), capitalism is inefficient. The main challenge remains how deeply wedded politicians, economists and even the average person are to economic growth.

—Joshua Farley, University of Vermont, Professor of Community Development and Applied Economics
After the retreat, Lacey Mayor Andy Ryder suggested to the members of the Regional Housing Council (RHC) that the three cities and the County work together to leverage ARF funds for a major project on housing. The purpose would be to achieve the goal of the Homeless Crisis Response Plan that had been developed with broad participation in 2019 to make homelessness “rare and infrequent” by 2024. RHC members agreed to seek funding to obtain the 150-200 of the 300 supportive housing units called for in the Crisis Response Plan. Lacey received $2.3 million in funds from the CARES Act. Lacey adopted a budget for 2022 that is below their 2021 budget.

Olympia—$9.2 million* Olympia has taken a staff-led, top-down approach to deciding how to use the funds. Staff conversations produced an “Economic Recovery Plan” that was presented to the City Manager and approved by Council members at their May 4 meeting. That plan covered a total of only $2.06 million and listed items ranging from downtown and homeless camp clean-ups to support for the Downtown Alliance and minority-owned businesses and revenue recovery. $1.357 million was shown as regional investment via the EDC. An amendment by Councilman Cooper to reserve $2 million for non-housing efforts was approved. The City's investment in a 640-acre Grayum to use about half of their 10-year 99-year lease for full and private use of the land. The land, which can be anywhere from 25-35% of the value of a house on a city lot in our urban area, will be owned by the “Trust.” The homeowner will have a 99-year lease for full and private use of the land.

To me, there are multiple benefits to making this donation. Our local community benefits by having a low or moderate income family that can live in a safe and healthy home. Our local community benefits by having a low or moderate income family that can own a home. Non-profit land trusts provide a very important opportunity for citizens and community members to collectively own land preserved for habitat conservation—as well as for economic and social justice initiatives that we as a community work to support. Our Community Conservation Land Trusts, such as The Nature Conservancy or our local Capital Forest Heritage Land Trust and Chehalis River Basin Land Trust, are examples of land trusts that help preserve critical habitat from residential or industrial development. The Community Farm Land Trusts and Community Land Trusts as a successful model that could assure home ownership for low or moderate income families.

In the early 1990’s my family had the good fortune to be able to purchase a house on the westside of Olympia that we could fix up and use for extended family or for rental income. Shortly after, I learned about Community Land Trusts as a successful model that could assure low income family housing for low or moderate income families.

Now in my 70’s I am ready to divest myself of property ownership and management responsibilities. I have enough financial security to live comfortably, so I do not need to sell my rental house for maximum profit. Thus it has been an easy decision to support the THLT by donating the land (the housing lot) so that home ownership can be affordable for a low or moderate income family that only needs to qualify for a mortgage for the house. The land, which can be anywhere from 25-35% of the value of a house on a city lot in our urban area, will be owned by the Trust. The homeowner will have a 99-year lease for full and private use. This reporter was unable to identify CARES funds that went to Tumwater.

**Tumwater**—$2.5 million Tumwater’s decision as to use of the ARF funds is tied to the city’s Strategic Plan and Goals and reflects results from Tumwater’s most recent Community Summit. Mayor Pete Kmet and City Administrator John Ioan presented a conceptual plan for allocating the funds at a work session with Council members.

At a subsequent meeting (September 7, 2021), Tumwater Council members discussed the pros and cons of different housing options for spending the ARF money (each member’s statements are summarized in the text posted online). They decided on a plan that included items ranging from donating a house to Homes First ($400,000), funding local and indigenous artists, renovation of the Brewtowner, donating a utility debt ($50,000), $550,000 for the regional housing project, a two-year position to oversee economic development, and $350,000 to the EDC. Tumwater’s adopted (biennial) budget for 2022-23 is less than the preceding biennial budget. This reporter was unable to identify CARES funds that went to Tumwater.

**Yelm**—$2.6 million At their October 26, 2021 meeting, Yelm City Commissioners discussed and adopted a recommendation by City Manager Michael Grayum to spend $2 million of their ARF funds as follows: 1) pay off the City’s investment in a 640-acre property that is part of a Local Improvement District slated for future development; 2) purchase body cameras for Yelm police officers; 3) recover the City’s investment in remote technology acquired for use during the pandemic. This amounted to about $1.2 million, with the remainder available for future use. Nearly $2 million was identified in the next three years.

**Thurston Economic Development Council—Many millions of dollars** The Thurston Economic Development Council is a “public private” entity, created by state law as and report to the Dept. of Commerce. The EDC, operating through “Thurston Strong” has been the program and grant administrator for millions of dollars in federal funds aimed at alleviating local impacts of the pandemic. This reporter was unable to identify CARES funds or share eligibility criteria for awarding grants.

**How to follow the money?** It isn’t easy to pin down the use of the cash that has flowed into the county during the pandemic. Who decided, how they decided, where exactly the money went—and will remain to be discovered. But with these taxpayer dollars we should demand maximum transparency and accountability.

(1) Thurston County, Washington Recovery Plan, downloadable online under that name. Some documents including the October 26, 2021 meeting of Council minutes are made available. The following are summaries of the three projects that the city’s budget to reserve $2 million related to the regional housing effort brought the total to $4.08 million. On Nov. 1, City Manager Burney presented a proposal that covered Olympia’s full $9.2 million. $6.6 million related to homelessness (purchase of the Quince St. Mitigation site plus operating costs) and $2 million for regional housing, $1.2 million for body cameras, $1.3 million to close overdue utility bills, $700,000 to recover lost city revenues. Despite the Act’s emphasis on one-time-only enhancements and a deepening revenue shortfall projected for future Olympia budgets, few of the proposed expenditures are for new FTEs. (Both the May 4 and the Nov 1 document are seen in this online article at www.olywip.org.)

In 2020, the City of Olympia received $2.4 million through the CARES Act. The city is currently considering raising taxes on some city services along with a 2022 budget higher than the current budget.

**Initial ARF funding decisions**

Thurston County

In a report dated August 31, 2021, Thurston County set our approach to using American Rescue Plan funds. The report identified three projects made up, along with proposals and projects that are under consideration.

The latter include such things as broadband, access to affordable housing, repair of small local water sewer systems, expanding access to government, a safer environment at the county correctional facilities, providing resources to clear court backlogs and replacing lost revenue.

Over the next eight months the county will refine the plan for funding allocation and track the effectiveness of the programs funded.

The three County Commissioners as of Aug 31 had approved funding for proposals listed below. This shows the amount allocated. You can read an explanation for each expenditure plus the other possibilities by searching online for: Thurston County Washington, State and Local Fiscal Recovery Plan, 2022.

**Public Health**

- Vaccine incentives: $100,000
- Body scanners for the county jail: $250,000

**Negative Economic Impacts**

- Food, nutrition, basic needs: $150,000 (seniors), $478,000 (food banks)
- Job champion network program: $1.5 million
- Thurston Strong Microbusiness Recovery Grants: $2.5 million
- Minority Business Investment: $1.3 million, staffing & grants
- Non-profit Organization grants: $900 thousand
- United Way: $120,000 administrative support
- Econ Impact Grants to Youth Support organizations: $540,000
- Tourism, Recreation and Entertainment: $100,000 promo.
- Thurston County Agriculture Market grants: $1 million + $100,000 food
- Services: very discretionarily impacted
- Shelter & other basic needs: $215,000, shelter operations & overtime

**Reflection**

Finally a home in an overheated market

**How the Thurston Housing Trust Fund found its first property**

Russ Fox

This is the story of how the Thurston Housing Land Trust (THLT) was able to offer its first affordable home to a low or moderate income family in Olympia’s westside. Community Land Trusts provide a model for our community to assure people in low-or-moderate income households that they can own a home.

Non-profit land trusts provide a very important opportunity for citizens and community members to collectively own land preserved for habitat conservation—as well as for economic and social justice initiatives that we as a community work to support. Our Community Conservation Land Trusts, such as The Nature Conservancy or our local Capital Forest Heritage Land Trust and Chehalis River Basin Land Trust, are examples of land trusts that help preserve critical habitat from residential or industrial development. The Community Farm Land Trusts and Community Land Trusts as a successful model that could assure low income family housing for low or moderate income families.

In the early 1990’s my family had the good fortune to be able to purchase a house on the westside of Olympia that we could fix up and use for extended family or for rent-rent income. Shortly after, I learned about Community Land Trusts as a successful model that could assure low income family housing for low or moderate income families.

Now in my 70’s I am ready to divest myself of property ownership and management responsibilities. I have enough financial security to live comfortably, so I do not need to sell my rental house for maximum profit. Thus it has been an easy decision to support the THLT by donating the land (the housing lot) so that home ownership can be affordable for a low or moderate income family that only needs to qualify for a mortgage for the house. The land, which can be anywhere from 25-35% of the value of a house on a city lot in our urban area, will be owned by the Trust. The homeowner will have a 99-year lease for full and private use of the land.

To me, there are multiple benefits to making this donation. Our local community benefits by having a low or moderate income family that can live in a safe and healthy home. Our local community benefits by having a low or moderate income family that can own a home. Non-profit land trusts provide a very important opportunity for citizens and community members to collectively own land preserved for habitat conservation—as well as for economic and social justice initiatives that we as a community work to support.
Not so fast, please

Rural residents ask that new wireless tower rules do more to safeguard health

Lori Lively

A popular comedienne touts the hyper speed to safeguard health

While information about the health dangers of every human has a unique electromagnetic signature which is vulnerable to low-level electromagnetic frequencies (EMFs). All "generations" of wireless technology harness electromagnetic microwave radiation. Whereas current 1G-4G broadcasts a limited range of frequencies from which humans are reasonably protected, 5G introduces over 3,000 additional frequencies. Citizens oppose to the County's proposed rules centered on the serious health risks as associated with aggregated 5G towers; the short notice Riverside would have before installation, and on the diminishing property values that would likely follow.

The opposition was so strong that County Planning Commission members took a step back. They created an advisory committee that would work with lawyers, county staff, and private providers to come up with new draft rules that put protection of public health first.

Research has identified head arrays for proliferating EMFs

While information about the health dangers of EMFs continues to be absent from major news outlets, studies in many countries are consistent in their assessment of harm from exposure to low-level emissions. Over the past 20 years, researchers worldwide have found that exposure to frequencies between 300 MHz and 3 GHz results in serious health dangers. Martin Pall, PhD, professor emeritus at Washington State University, has written and lectured extensively on the Specific Absorption Rate (SAR) in human skin and how sweat ducts, which respond to signals and frequencies like tiny surface antennae, coupled with the conductive nature of water, heighten electromagnetic sensitivity. Over time, exposure to those frequencies results in molecular degeneration and altered DNA sequencing.

Devra Davis, PhD and master of public health in epidemiology, is the founder of Environmental Health Trust. In her book, Disconnect, she describes damage to skin, eyes and brains associated with microwave radiation and warns that children are far more vulnerable than adults to its accumulated absorption. Lena Pu is an environmental health consultant for the National Association for Children and Safe Technologies (NACST.org). Her research on blood membranes proved that within 5-15 minutes of proximity to wireless microwave technology, healthy blood heats up, becomes sticky and essentially "cooked."

More health risks—and more opportunities to make money

John Stottlemeyer, a citizen member of the advisory committee, estimates that he has spent hundreds of hours reviewing laws governing wireless towers and their installation. He explains that installation involves three entities: one company scouts the location for the tower, another company installs it, and a third company is the actual service provider, such as Verizon or T-Mobile. Scouting companies are motivated to erect as many towers as possible because they make money on every tower they rent to providers. "The closer a tower is to a large power source, the less expensive it is for the installer," Stottlemeyer says. "Companies prefer to erect as many towers as possible because they make money on every tower they rent to providers. The closer the tower is to a large power source, the less expensive it is for the installer." Stottlemeyer says.

Critics say the risks to human health outweigh any savings on bills, which are far from assured. By design, smart meters are always on, always transmitting data and emitting radiofrequency radiation. Despite US safety limits for RF (1,000 microwatts per square meter), Amy Myers, MD, says "it's not uncommon for some smart meters to produce up to 60 times this amount." Home appliances and cell phones use direct current (DC) of around 12 volts, while modern electrical circuits use alternating current (AC), at 120-240 volts. The constant conversion from DC to AC and the difference in voltages results in spikes and surges through a building's wiring, creating ionizing radiation frequencies and electromagnetic interference (EMI). This "dirty electricity," is thought by industry critics to be the effect of symptoms like anxiety, disturbed sleep patterns and irregular heartbeat reported by some people who have smart meters installed inside their homes. Olympians can opt out of AMI installation by contacting PSE and requesting a Non-Communicating Meter Service Agreement. A charge of about $15 every other month will be added for the replacement and manual meter reading.

Learn more at takebackyourpower.net or the multi-award-winning documentary Take Back Your Power, available on youtube.

FCC guidelines favor telecom companies

Federal law appears to give local governments control over placement of wireless facilities, but municipalities tend to follow the advice of wireless providers who urge them to adopt FCC guidelines. These guidelines generally serve to make wireless installations cheaper and bigger. The advisory committee advocates an interpretation that there can be additional towers only if they fill a significant gap in coverage.

And FCC Commissioners favor their former colleagues

Martin Pall warns the FCC is a "captured organization" in which high-tech executives formerly employed in the telecom industry are now in a position to regulate their friends. In February 2020, FCC Commissioners approved a 280 MHz (megahertz) spectrum for 5G that resulted in 5G towers being "deployed" across the country at a furious pace.

Norm Alster, writing in Captured Agency: How the Federal Communications Commission Is Dominated by the Industries It Presumably Regulates, points out that The Telecommunications Act of 1996 removed zoning authority from local governments, stating that health concerns cannot be used as a reason to deny licenses for towers that are in FCC compliance. "In preempting local zoning authority—along with the public's right to guard its own safety and health—Congress dashed an era of infrastructure build-out...industry has had a free hand in installing more than 300,000 sites. Church steeples, schoolyards, school rooftops, even trees can house these facilities."

“Smart” meters—always on, always emitting

Sound Energy is currently replacing customers' analog electric meters with Advanced Meter Installations (AMIs), commonly called "smart meters." AMIs use a form of electromagnetic energy known as radiofrequency (RF) waves to measure energy usage in your home, transmitting it wirelessly to PSE. Industry proponents insist smart meters will eliminate the need for manual meter-reading, increasing the speed and accuracy of relaying usage data and lowering electric bills. Critics say the risks to human health outweigh any savings on bills, which are far from assured.

By design, smart meters are always on, always transmitting data and emitting radiofrequency radiation. Despite US safety limits for RF (1,000 microwatts per square meter), Amy Myers, MD, says "it's not uncommon for some smart meters to produce up to 60 times this amount." Network operators and cell phones use direct current (DC) of around 12 volts, while modern electrical circuits use alternating current (AC), at 120-240 volts. The constant conversion from DC to AC and the difference in voltages results in spikes and surges through a building's wiring, creating ionizing radiation frequencies and electromagnetic interference (EMI). This "dirty electricity," is thought by industry critics to be the source of symptoms like anxiety, disturbed sleep patterns and irregular heartbeat reported by some people who have smart meters installed inside their homes. Olympians can opt out of AMI installation by contacting PSE and requesting a Non-Communicating Meter Service Agreement. A charge of about $15 every other month will be added for the replacement and manual meter reading.

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Looking Forward

Recognizing emergent fascism

Fascism is a set of behaviors

Dave Jette

In Thinking Like a Terrorist, pub- lished in 2008, Mike German pro- poses a Government Accountabil- ity Scale ranging from “free govern- ment” (democracy). He points out that most governments fall somewhere between these two extremes. One purpose of making such an evaluation is to determine the legitimacy of terrorist groups’ calls for self-determination. For instance, attacking a fascist govern- ment would likely be considered justifiable, but attacking a democra- tic government would not be legitimate. (This consideration is independent of the particular acts of the terrorist group.)

What concerns us here is to under- stand the characteristics of fascism so that we can prevent its rise in a basically democratic country such as our own. To this end, it needs to be clear the features of a “free govern- ment” that occupies the opposite end of the scale, German provides the following list:

Respect for the supremacy of the law
Free and fair elections
Freedom of speech and assembly
Freedom of the press
Freedom of religion
Due process of law and an independent judiciary
Legal protections of minority rights
The right to a publicly funded education
The right to private property and free markets
Civilian control of the military
Open access to government records

The freedom to emigrate
Except for the evidently unrestrict- ed free markets, German believes fas- cists will strive to fully implement these points, notwithstanding that some societies (his does not included) see a substantial role for small-scale private enterprise as an indefinite period. (Please see my column Ralph Nader’s practi- cal model of socialism published in June 2020.)

Quote from Robert O. Paxton’s The Anatomy of Fascism, published in 2004, German lists the “mobilizing passions” that drive the political behavior that marks fascist re- gimes:

A sense of overwhelming crisis beyond the reach of any tradi- tional solutions
The primacy of the group, toward which one has duties superior to oneself, whether individual or universal, and the subordination of the individual to it
The belief that one’s group is a victim, a sentiment that justi- fies any action, whether legal or moral limits, against enemies internal and external
Defeat of the group’s decline under the corrosive effects of individualist liberalism, class conflict, and alien influences.

The need for closer integration of a purer community, by con- sent if possible, by exclusionary violence if necessary
The need for authority by natu- ral (always male), culmi- nating in a national chieftain who is capable of incar- nating the group’s historical destiny
The superiority of the leader’s instincts over the abstract and uni- versal reason
The beauty of violence and efficacy of will, when they are devoted to the group’s success
The right of the chosen people to dominate others without restraint from any kind of hu- man or divine law, right being decided by the sole criterion of the group’s prowess within a Darwinian struggle
Observing the adherence to such passions is an identity where persons are on the fascism-democ- racy scale. Which brings us to the question: Are die-hard supporters of “fascist” beliefs? There are vari- ous ways in which they differ from the members of democracy, so socialists dismiss the fear that “fascism has been laying the groundwork for fascism in our country.”

But while all Nazis are fascists, not all fascists are Nazis. As Germany emphasizes, Nazis is a particular militancy, racist, anti-Semitic politi- cal philosophy. “Fascism,” by con- trast, is not an ideology but rather a set of beliefsus’s “a method of securing and exercising political power.”

The advantage of Germany’s Gov- ernment Accountability Scale is that it allows people’s outlook to be placed in the continuum between outright fascism and full-fledged democracy. The danger is not sim- ply from those who are full-fledged fascists, but also—more important- ly—from those who are approach- ing the extreme of fascism. Thus it is the last group of people whose views we have to combat by vigor- ously promoting democracy. In this sense the die-hard supporters of “fascism” indeed are fascists, and we must not be lulled to sleep by the claim that many of them are not Nazi fascists

Of further interest: In 2019 Mike German published a book Dis- pute Resolution Center (DRC) offers the following help under the Pilot Program. From the DRC website:

For Tenants
If you’re behind on rent, your landlord may serve you with a no- tice asking you to take part in the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program. If you receive a notice from your landlord, you must contact the DRC by the date set out in the notice at the top of the notice to participate in the program. If we do not hear from you by that date, you must issue a DRC Certificate that allows your landlord to file for eviction. You will have to pay back any missed rent through a payment plan or rental assistance funds

For Landlords
If you have a tenant who is behind on any rent you can now submit an ERPP Request Notice to your ten- ant and to the DRC. We can also offer you resources that can help you understand your financial situation in order to make your payment plan work for you.

You can reach the Eviction Resolu- tion Team at (360) 956-1155 ext. 11. To access legal resources and advice, contact Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services at (855) 657-8387.

For Landlords
If you have a tenant who is behind on any rent you can now submit an ERPP Request Notice to your ten- ant and to the DRC. We can also offer you resources that can help you understand your financial situation in order to make your payment plan work for you.

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New resources for landlords and tenants can help avoid eviction

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From previous page

Wireless towers

Would revised wireless regulations protect the health of Thurston residents?

The advisory committee mem- bers have proposed that facilities be placed as far from residential dwellings as possible and that testing be carried out to verify that the electromagnetic radia- tion is within the safety limits. The commission also worked to ensure that right-of-way laws are strictly observed. The origi- nal draft of the bill, to be proposed to the legislature in 2022, was now that the eviction moratorium is over. Landlords are required to present a personalized, reason- able repayment plan for any rent missed up to 6 months after the end of the Covid-19 State of Emer- gency. Prepare for this conversa- tion and consider how you can help your landlord understand your financial situation in order to make your payment plan work for you.

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For Landlords
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BOOK REVIEW

No Good Men Among the Living: America, the Taliban and the War through Afghan Eyes, by Anand Gopal

Jeff Angus

If you’d read Anand Gopal’s 2014 book about Afghanistan and the last three decades of its history, America’s August donnybrook exiting that country would have been unsurprising. Anand Gopal’s sources his material from all kinds of people—Afghans and their perceptions of Bush Junior’s Crusade. He worked for over a decade in-country, reporting for The Atlantic and Harper’s. The book stands apart from other anti-war critics because Gopal sources his material from all kinds of “regular” Afghan people, not just US allies. His informants include men who fought to install the Taliban regime during the 1990s, some commanders who fought against both Taliban and Soviets and non-combatants striving for a modicum of normalcy. Their personal perspectives aren’t always sympathetic, but do consistently describe how events affected Afghan people and their perceptions of Bush Junior’s Crusade. The most engaging of Gopal’s storytellers is Heela Achekzai. Achekzai is a college-educated woman whose tiny portion of privilege melts away through every shift of régime, including the Soviet occupation (1978-89) in Kabul, holding down professional jobs. The husband she chose is a worldly partner, grateful for an educated spouse who works. The Soviet times were beneficial overall to metropolitan residents, benefiting education, health and secular rights for women. At the same time, the Soviets were criminally vicious in the bare-subsistence majority of the country, engaging in war against US-funded “warlords.” Outside Kabul, there was no state, just a crazy-quilt of rival brigade gangs, cashing in on opium crops, preying on farmers and shopkeepers, running police as shakedown machines.

The pro-Soviet régime crumbles. The brigands readily form new alliances, survival depending on taking advantage of every opportunity for gain. Kabul falls to rival gangs. Kidnap-for-ransom, protection rackets and rape become the norm.

Heela’s family escapes to the small town of her husband’s origin. There, he caves to custom. He is subject to “purdah.” Beyond the walls of her house, all her rights vaporize, subject to practices that prevent women from unaccompanied anything, or even letting a stranger hear her voice. She struggles to integrate herself into this very different culture. People finger each other as enemies of envious warlord or another. Those fingered die.

This “civil war” lasts until 1996, when the Taliban take over about two-thirds of the country. The Taliban establish a law-and-order society reflecting their fundamentalist religious values. They eliminate crime, end opium growing and the drug business. Ordinary people ally out of a wish for public order.

Heela was now able to work under great stress, mostly in secret, as a midwife. Basic safety improved, but her rights evaporated further. People see to appreciate the stability, but the Taliban elect not to act as a government, only as a terrifying police apparatus. Institutions and infrastructure erode further. Few folk are Taliban adherents. When the US invades and occupies the country, the Taliban pretty much cease to exist, melting away to return to their prior lives. Achekzai’s family, like most, are hopeful about the US mission has failed (even though the occupation government included Heela as an elected representative). Instead, the US did the lazy thing, dispensing fortunes to many of the same ruthless brigands who made the people welcome the Taliban in 1996. Gopal’s thesis is built on the narratives of the storytellers. Are interviewees telling Truth in all cases? Perhaps. But when you read Heela’s story and that of ordinary people not privileged to have education, people who shift alliances to try to care for their families, it’s chilling. You see how George Bush Junior’s imperial adventure bypassed the historic French practice of adopting the previous war’s victory strategy (“fighting the last war”), instead cloning the Soviets’ losing strategy.

It’s an entirely different perspective, painful and worth reading. For a brief but electrifying outline of the US’ failed Afghanistan venture, listen to Anand Gopal’s recent interview with The Intercept: www.tinyurl.com/Gopal-August-Jeff Angus is a project manager and former US Senate aide specialising in renewable energy

Thurston County Food Bank

Food Distribution at the Downtown, Client Service Center.

Regular distribution 11:00 am – 3:00 pm Mon, Wed, Fri

All food is prepacked and distributed through either the Drive-Up or Walk-Up distribution model.

Follow the signs for the vehicle line—please stay in your car—and friendly staff and volunteers will bring your food out and load it into your vehicle.

If you are on foot, line up along the Thurston Ave wall where there are marked spots to help with safe, social distancing. Your food will be brought out to you once you check in.

For more information go to our website: https://thurstoncountyfoodbank.org/80-2/2/gray-distribution/220-Thurston-Ave.-NE-downtown-Olympia-WA

Supporting the Art and Soul of Olympia since 1996!

Shop with us to support Indigenous communities, Women’s empowerment, economic opportunity, and Cultural survival

Store Hours

Tuesday–Saturday 11-5

Sunday 11-4

Cafe Hours

Tuesday– Sunday 9-4

(360) 705-2819

See our new site at

NewTraditionsFairtrade.com

November/December 2021 — www.olypwp.org — 13
PERSPECTIVES

Granting religious exemptions: church Trumps state

Emily Lardner

Governor Inslee’s vaccine mandates are widely credited with increasing the overall vaccination rate for our state. According to the WA Department of Health, as of November 8, 2021, 78.6% of our state population aged 12 and up have received at least one dose and 73.5% are fully vaccinated. Inslee is widely credited with basing public health decisions in the best available science. The next step would be to eliminate the religious exemption for school vaccinations.

Not all states allow religious exemptions

Not all states allow religious exemptions from school vaccination requirements. New York eliminated religious exemptions in 2019 in response to a measles epidemic that hit the Orthodox Jewish community particularly hard. (1) Maine eliminated its religious and personal belief exemption in 2019. California eliminated religious exemptions from school vaccinations in 2015. Mississippi’s religious exemption was struck down by its state Supreme Court in 1979 as a violation of equal protection laws. West Virginia has never allowed religious exemptions.

Religious support for COVID-19 vaccinations

Leaders of the three largest faith communities in the US have encouraged vaccinations against COVID-19. Among Christians, for instance, the Evangelical Lutheran Church issued a statement saying “there is no evident basis for religious exemption.”

Both the Vatican and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops have said Catholics can receive the vaccine in good conscience given the goal of alleviating suffering. Pope Francis has declared getting a COVID vaccination an act of love.

Leaders of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese declared that “there is no exemption in the Orthodox Church for Her faithful from any vaccination for religious reasons.” Similarly, the National Muslim Task Force on COVID-19 and the National Black Muslim COVID Coalition released a statement in December 2020 encouraging Muslims to get vaccinated. The joint statement addressed specific concerns circulating widely on social media, stating that this type of vaccine does not lead to future genetic changes in the vaccinated person, that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines do not contain porcine products and that they do not contain stem cell products or dead fetal remains.

What is a religious exemption?

Religious exemptions are granted when the person applying is determined to have a “sincerely held religious belief.” The key term here is “religious belief.”

Contrary to what many believe, guidance from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) holds that religious beliefs include not only traditional organized religions but also “religious beliefs that are new, uncommon, not part of a formal church or sect, only subscribed to by a small number of people, or that seem illogical or unreasonable to others.”

According to the EEOC, a belief is religious if it is religious in the person’s “own scheme of things.” The EEOC’s expansive definition helps affirm religious freedom generally. When it comes to protecting public health, which is the rationale for school vaccination requirements, the expansiveness of the definition becomes problematic.

“Sincerely held religious beliefs”

Some individuals are requesting exemptions to vaccine mandates because of their personal, sincerely held religious beliefs, like individuals who believe in healing power of prayer and refuse all vaccinations. Other exemption requests are based on sincerely held religious beliefs regardless of whether they are factual: that the vaccines contain pork, and/or contain aborted fetal cells, and/or that they alter our genes. The way the law is written, religious beliefs that are not in agreement with other members of the faith but are sincerely held can justify an exemption. At stake is the sincerity of the belief, not the accuracy of the information on which it is based.

“How-to” resist “leftist” public health measures

The widespread presence on the internet of materials aimed at helping people successfully claim religious exemptions indicates that more is at stake than sincer-
Community Spotlight

Harlequin Theater performances

Until the Flood, through Sat., Dec 4. This riveting play uses a series of staged interviews to explore the uprising in Ferguson, MO following the shooting of Michael Brown.
A Christmas Carol, through Dec. 31. Lots of special effects make this holiday classic a super way to lighten the mood this winter.

Spaces that Spark

Join Window Seat Media for two community-centered fundraising series
Friday, December 3, 5pm, virtual
A virtual reading and interactive conversation with Pat Holm from her book, The Null Set Remembered, about activism, organizing, and art in Olympia in the mid-1960s.

Friday, December 17, 5:30pm, Olympia

Holiday cheer there and here

Tree lighting ceremony at the Capitol. Friday Dec. 4, 6 pm. An annual event, a 25-foot noble fir.
Lacey lighted parade, Sunday December 6, 6:30 pm. Sleater-Kinney to Hunterman Park to light the holiday tree. Host cocoa and Santa photos.
Tumwater tree lighting festival, Saturday Dec. 11, 1:00—5:30. City Hall & Fire Station HQ. Games, holiday crafts, local and school choirs sing, Santa photos.
LoveOly WinterFest Nov 28, noon—6pm at 5th & Washington and Yelm Winter Market Dec 11, all day. Festivities, activities and featured shopping.

Strengthening Sanctuary Alliance

Meets the first Monday of each month from 6-8 PM via Zoom. Olympia has a strong branch of the Strengthening Sanctuary movement (sidew.org) called “Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest.” They provide news and service as permitted to the inmates of the Northwest Detention Center. New members and ideas welcome: olympia.sanctuary@gmail.com. Or email Bob Zeigler at zeiglerbob@msn.com or call (360) 570-0848.

What is OlyDSA?

Fri, December 17, 6:30pm – 7:30pm
Check out the Olympia chapter of Democratic Socialists of America. Orientation for new members, prospective members, and those looking to plug back in. Attendees will learn more about DSA, the work we’re doing in the South Sound and how to get involved. Via zoom the 3rd Friday of every month from 6:30-7:30pm. www.olydsa.org calendar.

Joy and Justice Book Drive and Gift Giving

YWCA, 220 Union Ave SE, Tues-Thur, Dec. 21-23, 5:00-7:30
For the second year, Justice for Yvonne organizers will be giving away stockings, books, toys and treats to children ages 3—13. During December, contributions and donations of new, unwrapped stocking stuffers can be arranged by contacting j4ymolympia@gmail.com. Last year 168 children received books and other gifts, the goal this year is to serve 250 children and their families.

Birdseye Medical Clinic

Covid Testing, Mon-Fri, 9am—4pm. Next to the old Greyhound bus station, 7th and Capitol Way S. in downtown Olympia. The clinic offers PCR testing in conjunction with the Univ. of Washington. 24-36 hour turnaround around with cost charged to your insurance. Rapid Testing is available for walk-ins with a 15 minute turn-around for $34 with debit or credit card. Visit “testinghem.com” for more details.

Olympia’s new Social Justice and Equity Commission

The City of Olympia is recruiting people to serve on a new social justice commission. Commissioners will receive and investigate complaints about discrimination and advise the City accordingly. The Commission will have a budget and be staffed by City employees. People from all backgrounds, life experiences and skills are encouraged to apply. Applications are due by January 14, 2022. See details at https://engage.olympia.gov/equitycommission.

ASHHO Cultural Community Space

Pay it forward and buy-one-give-one. 5757 Littlerock Rd., SW, Tumwater. Ph. 360-918-8625.
Khushida Begum founded ASHHO (Bangladeshi Society, join us) in 2020 as a place to unite people through food, education and community gatherings. ASHHO, in a beautiful building on Littlerock Road, serves as an event space and catering kitchen. ASHHO has partnered with street outreach organizations to provide food to 4000 people who otherwise have no access to hot meals. Explore or contribute to Khushida’s vision for ASHHO and its community offerings at www.ashho.org.

Longhouse at 25—Across the Waters

The Evergreen State College, Daniel J Evans Building. Through Jan. 29, 2022
TESC’s Longhouse was the first of its kind built on a college campus in the United States. This retrospective features 25 years of indigenous art and culture—clothing, sculpture, weaving, painting—by artists from across the Pacific Rim. Hours at www.evergreen.edu/longhouse/markets-and-exhibits.

Shower Power Plus

Free Showers, Saturdays 10am—4pm. Capital Cristian Center, 4431 Martin Way, (SW Corner of Martin & College) Build-a-bus created a shower trailer with shower stalls and eight sinks and mirrors for personal hygiene for guests. The program is looking for more volunteers and community partners to help provide the people who come for a shower with information about resources for healthcare, mental health, housing options, outreach services. CCC volunteers also provide food. To schedule a shower visit or call 360-890-3133. Walk-ins are welcome.

Parallax Perspectives

Environmental Water Quality Problems and Solutions
In Glen Anderson’s December interview, Harry Branch explores the many pressures on water, from nutrient loading, abuses of estuaries, benefits of daylighting streams, consequences of inappropriate development, government policy contributions and more. Harry will discuss solutions and the movement to recognize a legal right for nature. The program will be on cable Channel 22 Mondays at 1:30, Wednesdays at 5pm and Thursdays at 9pm on Glen Anderson’s blog www.parallaxperspectives.org, along with a transcript from the TV program. Reach host/producer Glen at (360) 491-9093 glenanderson@integra.net

Americans United for Separation of Church and State

This increasingly relevant organization has a monthly publication [www.au.org] that covers actions in places where religion has seeped into the justice system and denied a fair hearing to those who disagree with the tenets imposed by a particular religion. It also speaks to those who fear the increasing demand to imbed religious prescriptions in legislation and civic life.

To have your program or event highlighted in Community Spotlight, send it to olywip@gmail.com by the 26th of any month.
Ooh, a storm is threatening
My very life today
If I don’t get some shelter
Ooh yeah I’m gonna fade away
War, children
It’s just a shot away
It’s just a shot away

Ooh, see the fire is sweepin’
Our streets today
Burns like a red coal carpet
Mad bull lost its way
War, children
It’s just a shot away
It’s just a shot away

Mmm, a flood is threatening
My very life today
Gimme, gimme shelter
Or I’m gonna fade away
War, children
It’s just a shot away
It’s just a shot away

I tell you love, sister
It’s just a kiss away, it’s just a kiss away, it’s just a kiss away

*selected lyrics from Gimme Shelter*
*by Mick Jagger & Keith Richards*