

The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

The Monthly Publication of
PUGET SOUND ADVOCATES FOR RETIREMENT ACTION
"Uniting Generations for a Secure Future"

Vol XXVIII, No 8



August 2012

**Victory at
Seattle Hilton!**

–See page 5

Waiting for the next burst of gunfire

By Will Parry

What do we do, as a nation, to address gun violence?

After the shock, the horror, the weeping families, the prayers, what do we as a nation actually do to address the issue?

PSARA has not taken a position on gun violence. The thoughts and feelings expressed here are those of the editor. We invite the comments of our members.

But again, what do we do? Do we simply wait for the next inevitable massacre, the work of the next sick and desperate individual, hoping it won't happen in our home town?

Do we leave unchanged the laws that enable troubled loners to equip themselves with the slaughter weapons of modern warfare?

Do we accept the National Rifle Association's interpretation of the Second Amendment? That each and every man

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Defend an imperfect healthcare law, and press ahead for single payer

By Robby Stern

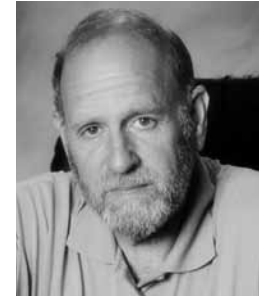
PSARA has a long proud history of supporting a single payer health care system. We advocate expanding eligibility for Medicare to include everyone in the U.S. At the same time, we were and are very active in supporting the reforms in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) as an important step forward in health care reform.

On the other hand, a significant number of single payer advocates – our political allies and in some cases, our members – were disappointed with the Supreme Court decision. They hoped that a decision striking down the law would lead to a genuine battle for single payer as the only rational option to our dysfunctional health care system. We need not debate these differences among friends. At least for now, the ACA is the law of the land.

One of the complex challenges we face is to support the progressive pieces of the ACA and assist in the fight for progressive implementation of the act while we also develop a strategy for moving the ball down the field toward the goal of single payer health care for all.

Some of the progressive advances in the ACA that are already being implemented prior to full implementation in 2014 include:

- Children up to age 26 stay on their parents' health care plans.
- No exclusion of children up to age 19 for pre-existing conditions.
- No life time limits. This positively impacts 2.4 million WA residents including 580,000 children who were subject to life time limits.



Robby Stern

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PUGET SOUND ADVOCATES *for* RETIREMENT ACTION (PSARA)

UNITING GENERATIONS FOR A SECURE FUTURE

For more than a quarter century, we've been a forceful advocate for older Americans, their children and their families.

Today, we're working to unite the generations -- to build a secure and dignified retirement for all.



Here is a panel from our glossy new brochure. Use the brochure to build PSARA. Call the office for a supply.

For up-to-date
information about
PSARA and
issues important to all of us,
go to the PSARA web site:
www.psara.org
Read the Advocate on line,
post your comments
on our blog,
engage in discussions
with other PSARA members or
visit PSARA on Facebook.

Need to reach us?

Here's a directory of Puget Sound Advocates
for Retirement Action email addresses:

PSARA or its President,

Robby Stern: president@psara.org

Administrative Vice President,

Maureen Bo: adminvp@psara.org

Community VP and Outreach Committee Chair,

Bette Reed: outreachvp@psara.org

Treasurer, **Edyth Koch:** treasurer@psara.org

Government Actions Committee Co-chairs,

Chuck Richards & Tom Lux:

govrelations@psara.org

Retiree Advocate Editor,

Will Parry: pscsc@qwestoffice.net

Our web page: www.psara.org

Web Master, **Reed Wacker:** info@psara.org

Or phone our office at **(206) 448-9646**.

If necessary, leave a message and your

phone number. We'll call you back.

The Retiree ADVOCATE

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for Retirement Action, 2800 First Ave., #262, Seattle,
Washington, 98121. Phone (206) 448-9646.

President: Robby Stern

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Editor, Retiree Advocate: Will Parry,

Associate Editor: Mike Andrew

Editor Emeritus: Max Roffman

Layout and Printing: Trade Printery

If North Dakota can do it...

The pros and cons of establishing a "state investment trust" – a state bank – in Washington State will be the topic of a Seattle forum hosted by PSARA at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, September 27.

The forum will be held at the Filipino Community Center, 5740 Martin Luther King Jr. Way South, in Seattle.

We are giving our readers early notice because the forum is of unusual importance. It features a panel of State Treasurer Jim McIntire, community banker Darel Grothaus, and Representative (and senate candidate) Bob Hasegawa, the prime sponsor of the state investment trust bill.

This forum deserves an overflow crowd, so please mark your calendar.

The panelists will discuss the benefits and risks of creating a state investment trust in our state similar to the state bank of North Dakota. That institution has greatly cushioned the impact of the current recession in North Dakota.

During the 2012 Washington State legislative session, PSARA made support for the bill one of its top three priorities. It drew the support of other labor and community organizations as well, but because it was opposed by McIntire, it failed to clear the House Business and Financial Services Committee.

The bill will be reintroduced in the 2013 session. The September 27 forum will present the pros and cons and help us to lobby knowledgeably on the bill's behalf.

Living up to our new name

Since June 21 PSARA has been **Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action**. Our new name emphasizes our commitment to advocacy and action. That's a commitment we take seriously, and even before we changed our name, we've lived up to that commitment. Since June 21, PSARA has definitely been in action.

With our coalition partners, we presented the Seattle City Council with more than 3000 postcards in favor of the Caring Across generations campaign, participated in a conference to plan new community support for Walmart workers, and marched in the annual LGBT Pride parade and the parade to celebrate Medicare's birthday.

But "action" is not only collecting signatures, walking a picket line, or marching for equal rights. Sometimes, one-on-one actions are just as meaningful and just as important in the long run.

One of the most important things we can do is to help add new PSARA members. Our goal is to add 275 new members this year. That's an ambitious goal, but we can do it if we're willing to live up to our new name.

Wherever we are, in our day-to-day lives, at the store, in our churches, when we visit friends or relatives, why not bring up PSARA and see if we can't sign up a new member? That way we build our organization, our numbers, our resources, and our ability to take action in the future when we're called on to protect our interests or support our allies.

Even if you don't have regular contact with some of your friends and relatives, you can give them a PSARA membership and connect them with a new world of political analysis, advocacy, and action. And of course, if your membership is up, please renew it today.

- Mike Andrew

Defend an imperfect healthcare law

Continued from page 1

- No cancellation of coverage after a patient gets sick.
- Bars patient co-pays for many preventive services including preventive services in Medicare.
- Gradually closes the donut hole over a period of years.
- Sharply limits what insurance companies can take from premiums as

Waiting for the next burst of gunfire

Continued from page 1

and woman in the USA has the Constitutional right to buy, load and carry weapons up to and including an AR-15 semi-automatic assault rifle like the one that sprayed death in an Aurora, Colorado, movie theater? And to stockpile 6,000 rounds for that weapon?

The president of the United States, awakened the night of the Aurora shooting, issued a solemn statement, that “we must come together as one American family” and “have the people of Aurora in our thoughts and prayers.”

The Republican would-be president, Mitt Romney, assured the nation that he and his wife Ann were “deeply saddened” and “were praying for the families and loved ones of the victims.”

Is this leadership? To pray but avoid the core issue? To offer no program to check the insane proliferation of military weapons among our people?

Pray. Extend sympathy to the families. Cower before the NRA. And wait for the next wild burst of gunfire.

That burst will come. In the United States, guns claim 84 lives and wound nearly 300 men, women and children each and every day. USA Today reports that there are on average 20 mass shootings each year in our country.

No other country in the world can match such awful bloodshed.

Where is the program that addresses the human toll behind the statistics? Where is the leadership? Where is the political and moral courage?

administrative costs. A much higher percentage of premiums most go to actual care or quality improvement.

In 2014, there will be a very large expansion of coverage in Washington, including an additional estimated 500,000 uninsured being brought into Medicaid and an additional 300,000 being able to receive federal subsidies to purchase health care coverage. Additionally, pre-existing condition exclusions will be absolutely barred under all circumstances. 2014 is also when the individual mandate kicks in.

This very imperfect law fails to achieve universal coverage and also keeps in place a private insurance system that either must be more heavily regulated (like France) or eliminated. Meanwhile, the law is under vicious attack by the right wing. They seek to repeal the law or thwart its implementation.

To quote Paul Krugman, “What was striking about the anti-reformers is their cruelty. It would be one thing if, at any point, they had offered any hint of an alternative proposal to help Americans with pre-existing conditions, Americans who simply can’t afford individual insurance, Americans who lose coverage along with their jobs. But it has long been obvious that the opposition’s goal is simply to kill reform, never mind the human consequences. We should all be thankful that, for the moment at least, that effort has failed.”

The fate of the progressive reforms embodied in the ACA, the fate of future reforms and the make up of the next Supreme Court all rest on the outcome of the 2012 elections.

The PSARA Government Relations Committee has initiated a conversation about how we can both defend and support progressive implementation of the ACA and at the same time push forward the goal of a single payer health care system.

Vermont has led the charge by passing a single payer health care system for Vermonters. They built a broad and effective political movement based on the value that “health care is a human right.” They engaged in a three year intensive grassroots human rights organizing campaign. They helped elect a Democratic governor who was clear and stalwart in his support for a single payer system and they held elected officials accountable to keep their campaign promises to support single payer.

Organizers of the Vermont victory are now saying to the rest of the country that the ability of Vermont to succeed ultimately depends on the ability to win victories in other states.

PSARA does not have the organizational capacity to lead the fight for single payer health care in our state or nation. But we do have the capacity to make a mighty contribution to the effort. Many battles on many fronts lie ahead. One battle we are in for the long term is the fight for universal, affordable, quality health care coverage for all!



Supreme Court Upholds Arizona's SB 1070

Racial Profiling Provision

By Heather Villanueva

Even though Washington is far from Arizona, the ramifications of Arizona's controversial immigration law are playing out locally.

That's how a simple trip to the grocery store turned into a nightmare for one family.



Heather Villanueva

Sira was going to the grocery store with her husband and their son, 12, when they were pulled over by police for a noisy muffler. This wasn't Arizona. It was in Lynden, Washington, about five miles from the U.S.-Canada border and home to many working immigrant families. The local sheriff called Customs and Border Patrol to interpret. The Border Patrol officers proceeded to question Sira's husband and her other son Ramon, who came to help his parents.

Sira began to have a panic attack. She realized that Border Patrol agents posed a threat to her family. She couldn't breathe and an ambulance was called to treat her. Even while being treated, Border Patrol agents insisted on questioning her. They asked whether or not she had additional family and demanded addresses. She watched as her older son, Ramon, and her husband were led away in handcuffs. Ramon was given a choice – either he would be arrested or his mother would go to jail. In the end, the father and Sira's older son were deported.

One America, the immigrant rights advocacy group, recently released a report that included Sira's story and many others that reveal racial profiling and discrimination along Washington's northern border. Incidents like what happened to Sira demonstrate that immigrants in Washington face similar challenges to

those across the nation.

Arizona, in particular, has become infamous for its harsh treatment of immigrants, including its passage of Senate Bill 1070, signed into law by Arizona Governor Jan Brewer in early 2010. The law, which immigrant rights groups, labor unions and civil rights groups agree is profoundly racist and discriminatory, was challenged on its constitutionality and brought to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court issued its decision June 25, striking down three of four major elements but most damagingly, they left in place a discriminatory provision that forces law enforcement to request immigration papers of anyone they suspect might be undocumented. The "Papers, please" provision is under attack by civil rights groups such as the ACLU who claim that it will result in racial profiling and an increased fear of law enforcement.

The provisions that the justices struck down would have made it a state crime to be non-compliant with federal immigration laws, authorized the arrest of undocumented immigrants without a warrant, and forbade undocumented workers to apply for or solicit employment.

Though Arizona is far away, the Supreme Court's decision is being felt by many in Washington. Locally, immigrant rights groups, unions, civil rights, and faith groups want to build support for federal comprehensive immigration reform to put an end to discriminatory laws such as SB 1070 in all states.

"Even without SB 1070 in Washington, taxpaying immigrant families like Sira's are being singled out" said Adam Glickman-Flora, Vice President of SEIU Healthcare 775NW, a union that represents long term care workers. Many of the union's workers and clients who receive in-home care are people who belong to immigrant communities.

"The supreme court ruling makes it clear that it is an absolute necessity to mobilize voters and elect people, from the President to local city council members who will stand up for civil rights for all." Glickman-Flora said. "With a growing numbers of immigrant communities voting across the country in November, we can seize the opportunity to end this hostile era of discriminatory and hateful policy and replace it with fair and just solutions for all of America."

(Heather Villanueva is a community organizer for SEIU Healthcare 775NW and a member of PSARA.)



Photo by Garett Munger

RESOURCEFUL: PSARA members carry their hand-painted interim banner while participating in the march for Medicare.

Victory at the Seattle Hilton!

Company settles with hotel workers

By Mike Andrew

In a major victory for Seattle hotel workers, the Seattle Hilton has settled all its outstanding disputes with its employees. The hotel had been under boycott since October 2011.

The RC Hedreen Company, which owns the Seattle Hilton and several other properties, put the hotel up for sale in September last year, and it is expected to be sold by September of this year.

UNITE HERE Local 8, the union which represents some 100 Hilton workers, demanded that the Hedreen Company sign on to what is called a “successorship agreement,” guaranteeing that hotel workers would keep their jobs, benefits, and union representation when the property is sold.

According to the union, Hedreen has now agreed to make retention of the current workers and continued application of their collective bargaining agreement a condition of any sale.

The terms of the agreement also include wage increases, affordable health insurance premiums, and safer workloads for housekeepers, the union said.

“Richard Hedreen again showed his long-standing leadership in our community, doing the right thing for workers and for Seattle,” said UNITE HERE Local 8 principal officer Erik Van Rossum. “The

agreement protects the livelihoods of a hundred Seattle area families, and that will have a positive effect throughout the region.”

According to UNITE HERE, a typical full-time worker at the Seattle Hilton makes about \$30,000 annually with full family medical coverage, among other benefits.

In contrast, the median wage for a non-union Seattle hotel worker is only \$23,000 a year, barely above the federal poverty level, and often without affordable health insurance.

“My wife and I depend on our medical insurance for our lives. If we didn’t have my job, we’d have nothing,” Hilton bellman Chuck Cruise said in a statement released by the union.

Cruise added that he dreaded the prospect of looking for a new job if the Hilton was sold.

“I know I wouldn’t find a job quickly in this economy,” he said. “especially one that would pay a living wage and cover my family’s medical bills.”

According to a report by Puget Sound SAGE, *Our Pain, Their Gain: The*



SOLIDARITY: Members of Unite H.E.R.E marching in support of Seattle Hilton hotel workers.

Hidden Costs of Profitability in Seattle Hotels, the hotel industry is already rebounding from the effects of the economic crisis, seeing a 10% increase in net profits between 2009 and 2010.

In that same period, hotel CEOs saw an average salary increase of 41.2 million, while hotel workers lost ground because of benefits cuts, outsourcing, and increased work loads. That is why union representation – and protecting existing labor agreements in the event a property is sold – is so important.

Union members said that community support was a crucial factor in securing the new contract from the Hedreen Company.

“This is a great victory for the Seattle community,” UNITE HERE organizer Jasmine Marwaha said in an email to supporters. “Our workers truly represent Seattle, from all walks of life and all corners of the globe, and each of you stepped up to support them in their struggle.

“Many of you were in pickets with us under harsh conditions, and many of you told the Hilton you would not patronize a boycotted hotel. Others offered to arrange huge marches to pass by the Hilton. A couple of you got arrested to take a stand for job security! It ALL had an impact.

“We could not have done this without you.”

These veterans stand for peace

In our June issue, we printed the powerful statement of Leah Bolger, made in court during her trial on a charge of having disrupted a hearing of the so-called “Super Committee” of Congress. A 20-year Navy veteran, Leah Bolger addressed the court as national president of Veterans For Peace. She should have been so identified. We apologize for this unintentional but nevertheless unfortunate omission.

Veterans For Peace (VFP) was founded in 1985 by military veterans opposed to the Reagan Administration’s war against the people of Central America. Today it includes men and women of all eras and duty stations, spanning the Spanish Civil War, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The organization is committed to non-violent activism and “democratic and open” procedures. Its more than 100 U.S. Chapters include those in Tacoma, Olympia, Everett and Seattle. It can be contacted at VFP, Greater Seattle Chapter 92, P. O. Box 31947, Seattle, WA 98103.

Editor Will Parry, who served four and a half years in the Coast Guard during World War II, is now a member of WFT Greater Seattle Chapter 92.

Corporate America's Counterattack against the People – 1970's Forward

By Mark McDermott

By the early 1970's, Corporate America was on the defensive as strong movements for racial justice, a cleaner environment, safer consumer products, women's rights, and worker protections successfully pressured Congress to pass major legislation. Corporate power was being limited in areas of racial, gender and age employment discrimination, polluting the environment, selling unsafe and unhealthy consumer products, and keeping workplaces needlessly unsafe and unhealthy. This was the second major wave of reform in less than 40 years that further limited the power of corporations and expanded greater economic and social justice.



Mark McDermott

These great people's victories provoked deep discussions among Corporate America about how to reverse this loss of power and regain dominance. On August 23, 1971, Lewis Powell, an influential corporate lawyer, wrote a confidential memo to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce entitled "Attack of the American Free Enterprise System." This influential document described an alleged systematic assault on the survival of free enterprise. Most importantly it laid out the need and strategy for Corporate America to launch a broad-based long-term counterattack against their enemies.

Powell called for broad-based, long-term educational campaigns and aggressive political action to regain corporate dominance. Re-establishing the primacy of business perspectives on economic life and the central role of business in our nation was needed. He singled out the key targets as business critics from

the universities, the pulpit, and the media, thought leaders in the arts and sciences and unreliable politicians. To quote Powell, **"The first essential is to establish the staff of eminent scholars, writers and speakers, who will do the thinking, the analysis, the writing and the speaking. It will be essential to have staff personnel who are thoroughly familiar with the media, and how most effectively to communicate with the public."**

His strategy was clear and direct: Develop the idea machine to shift public consciousness, effectively work the media, and relentlessly attack the enemies of Corporate America.

Again to quote Powell, **"It is essential that spokesmen -- at all levels and at every opportunity -- be far more aggressive than in the past.**

There should not be the slightest hesitation to press vigorously in all political arenas... Nor should there be reluctance to penalize those who oppose it... The type of program described above... if undertaken long term and adequately staffed, would require far more generous financial support from American corporations than the Chamber has ever received in the past."

Two months after Powell wrote this secret memo, President Richard Nixon nominated him to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. Congress confirmed him. Powell was not the only corporate advocate calling for a broad-based war of ideas and disciplined political action to regain corporate dominance. This was not conspiracy theory run amok but very thoughtful strategic thinking and planning. Did anyone listen to Powell and his ideas?

The 1970s and 1980s saw an explosion of corporate-oriented think tanks: The Heritage Foundation was founded

in 1973; the Cato Institute (1974); the Manhattan Institute (1978); Citizens for Sound Economy (1984) founded by the Koch Brothers; State Policy Network (1986) which has 59 affiliated state think tanks. The long established American Enterprise Institute grew from 10 to 100 staff between 1970 and 1980. There were others.

With the idea machine well-funded, Corporate America and its intellectual and political allies unleashed a decades-long war of ideas. They triumphed with the election of Ronald Reagan, the Great Communicator, who promised a new day in America.

The message was simple and clear. Government is the enemy strangling the free enterprise system. Get government

Corporate America and its intellectual and political allies unleashed a decades-long war of ideas.

off the back of business and the people through deregulation. Cut

taxes on corporations and the wealthy to spur job creation and prosperity. This came to be known as trickle-down economics. Cut government social programs because they weaken the people they claim to help. Privatize government whenever possible because the private sector is always more efficient than the government. Last but not least, promote free trade and export manufacturing jobs. We don't need to make things any more. This bold approach would bring rising prosperity to our nation and the people. Trust Corporate America. They will deliver.

The late 1970s and early 1980s were a fundamental turning point in how our nation would approach issues of economic justice and fairness. Our nation embarked on a great experiment. How did it work? Part 4 next month will tell that story.

(Mark McDermott is a member of the PSARA Executive Board and the developer of an economic justice education program.)

Social Security and Medicare: Are they really protected in sequestration?

By Steve Kofahl

In August, 2011, Congress and the White House negotiated a deal that slashes \$1.2 trillion in Federal spending over 10 years, as the price for raising the debt ceiling for about 15 months. Across the board cuts are supposed to begin in January 2013 through sequestration, equally divided between military and domestic spending, unless another agreement replaces the one made last year.



Steve Kofahl

The deal spared Social Security and Medicare benefits themselves, but there would be deep cuts in funding and staffing needed by the Social Security Administration to run these programs. It is not enough just to continue paying benefits, if there are delays and errors in new benefit applications.

By the end of this year, the Agency will have already lost 9,000 employees through attrition over three years, due to flat budgets. The same rate of attrition will continue. However, in his June 27 testimony before the House Ways & Means Social Security Subcommittee, SSA Commissioner Michael Astrue stated that the Agency might have to lay off another 1,000 employees next year, due to sequestration. The Agency would go from a flat budget to a likely 8% cut, crippling service delivery at a time when 10,000 people are filing for retirement benefits every day, and record numbers are applying for disability benefits.

The public has already felt the pain of cuts to SSA's administrative budget. The Agency has closed dozens of field offices, and chopped office hours everywhere by 30 minutes a day. It takes longer to get a decision on a disability benefit application. It's often hard to get through on the phones.

The employees of Social Security know that service has suffered in ways that are not apparent to the general public. Internet self-service, marketed aggressively by the Agency, is costing applicants money. Traditional benefit applications have been "streamlined" for the Internet, and important information is no longer collected, resulting in underpayments that will never be detected. Too many applicants have no discussion with a trained SSA employee who can explain their rights and responsibilities, what kinds of benefits are available, and when it may be best to start payments.

The American Federation of Government Employees has raised these issues with SSA

and with Congress for the last five years, but our expressions of concern have largely fallen on deaf ears. That may be about to change. Entities responsible for oversight are beginning to notice. The independent Social Security Advisory Board reported that front-line Agency employees in Georgia complained to them on May 9 that Internet disability applications are often incomplete, and

that applicants have problems selecting the most advantageous month for retirement benefits to begin when they file online.

A May 2012 report by SSA's Office of Quality Performance assessed the impact of Internet application streamlining. It projected that streamlining of marriage history questions alone will result in \$2.8 million in underpayments to applicants (mostly women) who filed in the year ending September 2011. The report concludes that a reassessment of the streamlining policy is warranted.

The SSA Office of Inspector General sent a report on Internet disability claims to the Commissioner early this year, but it has not been made public. This is the first time

OIG embargoed a report in this way, to my knowledge, so it probably has more disturbing data about lost benefits and diminished service.

Congressmen Dicks, McDermott, and Reichert; as well as Senators Murray and Cantwell; serve on committees that affect SSA administrative funding and oversight. Let them hear from you.

The agency has already closed dozens of field offices and chopped office hours 30 minutes a day.

To Subscribe, go to . . .

<http://www.psara.org/membership.pdf>

Meetings and Events

PSARA Government Relations Committee:

12:30 p.m. – 2 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 15th, Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue, Rm. 226. Discuss and help plan PSARA's participation in city, state and national issues, including Social Security, Medicare and the Caring Across Generations campaign. All PSARA members welcome.

PSARA Executive Board Meeting:

1 p.m. – 3 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 16th, Central Area Senior Center, 500 30th Ave. S., Seattle. All PSARA members are welcome.

PSARA Outreach Committee Discussion Group:

1 p.m.- 2:30 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 23rd, Green Lake Public Library, 7354 East Green Lake Drive North, Seattle. PSARA led senior and near-senior discussion group on issues determined by participants.

“Reclaiming the American Dream – Learning From the Past to Build a Better Future”: Sponsored by PSARA and American Federation of Teachers of Washington, Tuesday, August 21, Renton Technical College. Interactive workshop intended to help participants learn valuable lessons from our history that we can use to win a better future for us all. The workshop is an inspirational overview of the history of the fight for economic and social justice in the U.S. For further information contact Edie Koch...treasurer@psara.org. (Limited space available.)

WASARA CONVENTION: 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 23, at the Teamsters Hall in Tukwila. Alliance for Retired Americans President Barbara Easterling will speak. A \$35 registration fee covers food and materials. but anyone “living light” will be accommodated.

M.L. King County Labor Council Labor Day

Celebration: Monday, Sept. 3rd, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., Lower Woodland Park, Shelters 1, 2, & 3. N. 50th St. & Woodland Park AV N., Seattle. Free ice cream, hot dogs, soda, popcorn & kettle corn. PSARA will be there. Bake some cookies and bring them to share. Look for the PSARA banner.

Forum: Would the Proposal for a State Investment Trust (state bank) Be Beneficial to the People of

Washington?: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 27, Filipino Community Center, 5740 Martin Luther King Jr. Way South, Seattle, 98118 (M.L King Jr. Way South & South Orcas). This very important forum will feature State Treasurer Jim McIntire, Rep. Bob Hasegawa, and community banker, Darel Grothaus discussing the potential benefits and risks of creating a state investment trust. See story, page 2.

Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action
2800 First Avenue, Room 262
Seattle, Washington 98121
(206) 448-9646

Japan's Nuclear...

... and Industrial Safety Agency reports that since the Japanese earthquake on March 11 and subsequent explosions at three reactors, the plant operated by Tokyo Electric Power Co. has released 168 times more radiation than was released by the atomic bombs that razed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.