

The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

The Monthly Publication of
PSARA EDUCATION FUND
“Uniting Generations for a Secure Future”

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November 2017

Register Now for the Legislative Conference November 21

You still have time to register for the annual Legislative Conference on November 21.

We'll meet from 1-3 p.m. at the Machinists Hall, 9125 15th Place S, in South Park. Senate Democratic Leader Sharon Nelson will be the keynote speaker.

By the time we convene the conference, we should know whether Senator Nelson will be the new Majority Leader in the Senate – which she will be if Democrat Manka Dhingra wins a Senate seat in the 45th District.

If control of the Senate does flip after five dreary years of Republican control, we have a much better chance of enacting PSARA's Legislative Agenda, and our conference will be particularly interesting and productive.

PSARA lobbyist Pam Crone will also speak at the conference, outlining our agenda and talking frankly about the chances of passing key legislation.

You will have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues with both Senator Nelson and Pam Crone.

After the speeches, we'll divide into groups based on our legislative districts and coordinate in-district meetings with our elected representatives and meetings in Olympia on Senior Lobby Day in February.

To register for this exciting conference, email govrelations@psara.org or call the PSARA office, 206-448-9646.



Sen. Sharon Nelson (left) and PSARA lobbyist Pam Crone (right) will be featured speakers at our 2017 Legislative Conference.

Beverages and light refreshments will be available. The Machinists Hall is served by Metro Route 132 and has plenty of parking in the building's lot.

For additional information, see the flyer on Page 7.

Birding Fundraiser January 6

Unfortunately, we had to reschedule our November 11 birding fundraising field trip. However, we rescheduled this event for Saturday, January 6, and decided to take you to the Skagit Flats for an incredible birding experience. Plan on seeing tundra swans, trumpeter swans, maybe short-eared owls, and lots and lots of sea birds and raptors!

We hope you can join us. Karen Richter and wildlife expert Noelle Congdon will be your leaders. Details will follow in the December *Advocate*.

If you have questions contact Karen at fundraising@PSARA.org

Holiday Pot Luck, Elections, and Silent Auction December 14

Please join with PSARA members to celebrate the holiday season and support PSARA as we elect new officers. After eight years as President, Robby Stern will step down, and new officers and staff will assume the leadership of PSARA.

Enjoy the always fabulous potluck and participate in the silent auction, which will provide abundant opportunity to purchase holiday gifts. You will also have the time to express your appreciation for Robby's leadership for the past eight years.

We will gather on Thursday, December 14, at noon in Joe Crump Hall at the offices of UFCW 21, 5030 First Ave. S, Seattle, 98134.

Please RSVP to organizer@psara.org or call the PSARA office, 206-448-9646. Let us know what food item you will bring, and please consider bringing a non-perishable food donation or a cash donation for the Puget Sound Labor Agency food bank.

Let's share this holiday season together and renew our commitment to creating a better community and world in this challenging holiday season.

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www.psara.org
or visit PSARA on Facebook

An Oral Herstory of Old Lesbians

Photos by Garet Munger

PSARA's Diversity Committee and the Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project (OLOHP) teamed up to present a program of live selected readings from the life stories of 660 old lesbians. In the photo below, some of the OLOHP readers. At right is PSARA Executive Board member and OLOHP member Aganita Varkentine, who read a few selections from the Herstories Project and led in organizing the event.



Some readings were funny, some sad, some harrowing, but all were charged with emotion. The experiences shared by the women who took part in the OLOHP interviews portray the resilience of the LGBT community in the face of generations of discrimination and repression.

The stories also demonstrate that old people -- and the women intentionally describe themselves as "old" -- have valuable life lessons to share with people of all generations.

At right, PSARA member Amy Davis, one of *The Advocate's* team of proofreaders, pitches in to read a part in the event.



An Ending to My Cuba Diary

By Robby Stern

Writing the final column about our trip to Cuba seems particularly poignant at this time. Super Hurricane Irma struck Cuba as a Category 5 storm. The damage and suffering was severe. Ten people died from the storm in Cuba. Remembering the poverty of the people and the grass-covered huts of so many in the rural areas leaves me sad, knowing the additional challenges Cuba faces.

I am also certain that they are meeting the challenge in a more humane way than the US. To the extent that the US media will report the news from Cuba, we know that Cubans were prepared. The level of organization community by community and block by block through the local Committees to Defend the Revolution allowed them to prioritize saving lives, evacuating more than 1 million Cubans, and assisting their most vulnerable fellow Cubans. Their medical system is well developed, and the Cuban government was even able to provide medical personnel to other Caribbean islands that were devastated by the superstorm.

Electricity was restored throughout the island within two weeks of the storm.

Those who suffer the most, whether in the Caribbean islands, Florida, or Texas, are the poor, people of color, and those with the least financial resources. That is what is so damned unfair about the effects of global warming and climate change. Those impacted the worst are those who have the least to do with creating the crisis. PSARA has aligned with organizations, nationally and locally, who are insisting that we respond to global warming and climate change by prioritizing solutions that reduce and ultimately eliminate dependence on fossil fuels and also assure justice and equity for those most impacted (the frontline communities). Our hope is that an initiative will be on the Washington ballot in 2018 that takes such an approach.

Summing Up What We Learned in Cuba

We spent our final day in Varadero, a beautiful beach resort town. Our delegation gathered to summarize our experiences and the lessons we learned. Our reflections were made more interesting by our being a multi-generational (but mostly older), multi-racial group. We all shared the joy of feeling that in almost all of our encounters, the Cuban people we had met and heard from had been genuine and very honest.

Jeff mentioned that it became clearer to him how challenging it is to make a revolution last. He also learned more about the conflicts that can develop when powerful enemies of the revolution actively promote attitudes that could conflict with the values and goals of the revolution. He was heartened to know that you can build a revolution that takes care of basic needs, including culture and art. The resiliency and unity of the Cuban people is inspiring.

Becky talked about her admiration for Nefal, our bus driver, and Merte, our waitress in Bayama. Both had recounted their memories of how the revolution changed their lives – Nefal by his participation in the Literacy Campaign and Merte by the response of the government when a hurricane devastated her rural village. Becky was really impressed with the ability and commitment of the Cuban government and Cuban people to organize as a community to assist each other and make their lives as a community better. The Cubans we met did not complaining a lot. Rather they believed they were living a process.

Gabriela, one of our younger delegation members, talked about how in-



PSARA President Robby Stern joined a panel at the National Network on Cuba meeting on October 21 about building support in labor for ending the economic blockade and the restrictions on travel to Cuba. Joining him were two graduates of Cuban medical school and a recent participant in the Che Brigade that did agricultural work in Cuba. (Photo: Garet Munger)

spired she was by the school we visited in Santiago where we heard the kids talk about what they wanted to be. It choked her up to know that their goals were attainable. She said you could feel their spirit and their pride of country and its history.

May, another young person in the delegation, talked about how the Cubans seem to believe they are still living the revolution. She was excited to see that the Cubans actually have a government determined to help the people rather than protect the wealthy.

There were many more interesting observations, and we all agreed that we would like to see life easier for the Cubans. We all came away wanting to defend the Cubans' right to control their own economy and their own land, including Guantanamo.

Nefal sat with us when we talked and said, "Not everyone is doing well, but we share what we have. Fidel gave us that model, and we try to walk that path."

We drew some lessons to apply to our own work and lives. We recog-

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You Can Tame Bigfoot!

By John Birnel

Here's a great way to join your neighbors in having fun and helping fight climate change. Enter the Taming Bigfoot contest. Win prizes! It's a competition to reduce your carbon footprint. Enter as an individual or a full team at ww.tamingbigfootseattle.org

Taming Bigfoot is a competition that makes reducing your carbon footprint fun, rewarding, and educational. We are basing our competition on a successful competition in Port Townsend last year. Multi-aged teams of seven (including one community leader) were pitted against one another to devise and carry out different strategies to reduce their carbon footprint. Each team established a baseline during the month of February, 2017, and then worked to reduce their carbon footprint during March and April, 2017.

One example of changes made in behavior in the Jefferson County contest: people who had never taken public transit before took it and liked it.

Our first event, designed to recruit team members, will be a talk by retired NASA Antarctic glaciologist Robert Bindschadler at 7 p.m., November 8, in Nathan Hale High School's Performing Arts Center. Dr. Bindschadler is the researcher who designed and managed the first Taming Bigfoot in Port Townsend. We would love for you to attend this event—it should be interesting and informative. If you miss this event, there will be another event a bit later. Training will be provided to teach competitors about ways to reduce their carbon footprints.

As extra motivation to participate, we want to offer prizes from local businesses to teams and team members that are most successful in lowering their carbon footprints. Endorsers lend their name to the event and may donate prizes under \$100; sponsors donate prizes, services, and/or money



totaling \$100 or more. Donations to Taming Bigfoot in Seattle are tax deductible.

We hope that PSARA members will form at least one team to compete in this fun event. If anyone is especially excited about Taming Bigfoot Seattle, there are ways to help. Our steering

committee is currently meeting 7-9 p.m. every other Monday in Northeast Seattle. You can also help in other ways. Contact John Birnel at 206-782-6129 or at jbirnel@comcast.net to get connected.

John Birnel is a PSARA member.

Clean and Fair Economy Summit

By Tom Lux

Nearly two hundred people attended the Blue-Green Alliance Foundation's highly successful Clean and Fair Economy Summit in Olympia, Washington, on September 14 and 15. This gathering featured plenary and breakout sessions that inspired meaningful discussions on such subjects as *Principles, Lessons and Policy Recommendations for Effective and Equitable Climate Policy*; *If You're Not at the Table You're on the Menu: Labor's Role in Addressing Climate Change*; and many more. Keynote speakers included Senator Jeff Merkley, Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, and Congressman Denny Heck.

The Summit focused on building an unstoppable movement nationwide—as well as field trips and an awards ceremony that demonstrated how the power of Blue-Green collaboration is creating jobs and increasing prosperity in Washington's communities.

PSARA member Steve Garey received a Blue-Green Champion Award for all the great work he has been doing. Steve's acceptance speech was heartfelt and received a standing ovation.

You can listen to his speech (minute 38) and other summit talks at <https://www.bgafoundation.org/programs/clean-and-fair-economy-summit/>

Tom Lux is PSARA's Treasurer and Co-chair of the PSARA Environmental Committee.

Climate Change Puts Health at Risk

By United Auto Workers Local 4121, representing Teaching and Research Assistants at the University of Washington

This summer, climate change was visceral to everyone living in the Puget Sound area. Record-breaking heat and bone-dry weather hit Western Washington and British Columbia. Smoke from wildfires caused by these extreme conditions choked the air for weeks.

Back in January, when NASA announced that 2016 was the hottest year on record, Gavin Schmitt, Director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, predicted that 2017 would not break that record because this is not an El Niño year. But this July, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced that 2017 is on track to be Earth's new hottest year on record.

While the issue tends to get framed in terms of future generations and ecological disaster, the dangers of climate change aren't limited to dying polar bears and distant future problems. The smoke that irritated our throats and lungs over the past few months clearly illustrates the more immediate health risks of extreme weather. As climate change continues to alter temperature and precipitation patterns, wildfire seasons are expected to lengthen and the intensity of the fires could worsen.

Some people face greater risk than others. According to the King County Department of Public Health, the smoke posed a higher risk to adults over age 65 and those with pre-existing medical conditions such as heart, lung, and respiratory problems. The department advised staying inside and keeping indoor air as clean as possible by keeping doors and windows closed during periods of low air quality, as well as staying well-hydrated to protect yourself from smoke traveling too deeply into your lungs.

The American Public Health Association does extensive work with public health officials and medical care providers so they are better equipped to respond to the health crises associated with climate change. Periods of extreme heat, for example, result in more deaths from heat stroke, cardiovascular disease, and increased hospitalizations

for heart-related illnesses, including kidney problems and irregular heartbeat. Extreme heat can bring with it an 8 percent increase in calls to emergency medical services and a 10 percent increase in mortality.

Depending on overall health, the temperature doesn't have to break 100 degrees for people to suffer heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Longer stretches of hot days can increase that risk if precautions aren't taken to keep cool and hydrated.

Less obviously, climate change can worsen allergies. As the growing season lengthens and temperatures warm, some plants produce more pollen for longer periods, aggravating allergy symptoms and asthma. Shifts in the growing season also increase the spread of influenza and insect-borne disease such as West Nile Virus and Zika.

Even more concerning, certain illnesses can exacerbate these problems. Illnesses and medications that diminish sensation may make it hard for some seniors to perceive dehydration and discomfort from especially hot or cold weather.

The myriad and devastating problems caused by climate change can feel overwhelming, but the root of the physical problem lies in our excessive consumption of dirty fuels. This is a tractable problem.

We can protect our air and limit more damage to the climate in a number of ways. Today, we use dirty fuels that pump heat-trapping gasses into our air. We need to create rules to curb pollution and to impose fines on businesses that pollute, while growing a clean economy with wind and solar energy. By doing this, we can limit damage to the climate and create healthy and safe communities.



Smoke from wildfires seen from space. This smoke poses health risks for seniors and people with heart or respiratory problems.

There's good reason to believe this is well within our reach. Surveys from Yale Climate Communications show that the majority of Americans across the political spectrum support locally made clean energy. This past February, the Clean Energy Institute at the University of Washington opened the Clean Energy Testbeds, a facility to support the development of new scalable solutions that will spur the transition to clean energy.

To fight for these solutions, UAW 4121, the union representing academic employees at the University of Washington, and PSARA have joined a broad and diverse coalition of labor unions, environmental groups, social justice groups, small businesses, and faith communities, called the Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy, to protect our health and build a better future for our families and communities. The risks of inaction are dire, but we can overcome them by collective action.

UAW 4121 is an organizational supporter of PSARA and one of our partners in the Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy.

Social Security Works President Nancy Altman Appointed to the Social Security Advisory Board

House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi has appointed Nancy Altman, President of Social Security Works and Chair of the Strengthen Social Security Coalition, to the seven-member Social Security Advisory Board (SSAB).

The SSAB is a bipartisan, independent federal government agency established in 1994 to advise the President, Congress, and the Commissioner of Social Security on matters of policy and administration regarding the Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance and the Supplemental Security Income programs. Altman's term is for six years and begins on October 1.

"I am grateful to Leader Pelosi and am honored to be joining the Advisory Board," said Altman.

"I look forward to working with my fellow Board members towards the goal of assuring and increasing the economic security of all. I feel especially pleased and privileged to be succeeding my friend and colleague, Congresswoman Barbara Kennelly, who remains a tireless advocate for Social Security."

"Nancy has been a friend and an inspiration for decades and an unabashed advocate of protecting and expanding Social Security and Supplemental Security Income," said PSARA Executive Board member Steve Kofahl. Kofahl is retired President of AFGE 3937, the union that represents Social Security workers.

"With Congress determined to bust the budget by ramping up endless war and passing record tax cuts for the rich, income and health security programs are on the chopping block," he continued.

"We need a steadfast, knowledgeable champion on the Board more than ever before. Nancy, Labor's choice for Social Security Administration Commissioner during Obama's second term, certainly fills the bill.

"She will stand up strong against any efforts to use the Social Security Trust Funds as a piggy bank or to sacrifice quality public service at the altar of austerity."

A lawyer by training, Altman brings more than 40 years of expertise on Social Security and pension policy to the role.

From 1983 to 1989, she was on the faculty of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and taught courses on private pensions and Social Security at Harvard Law School. In 1982, she was Alan Greenspan's assistant in his position as chairman of the bipartisan commission that developed the 1983 Social Security amendments.

In the mid-1980s, Altman was on the organizing committee and the first Board of Directors of the National Academy of Social Insurance. She is currently the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Pension Rights Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection of beneficiary rights.

Altman is the author of *The Battle for Social Security: From FDR's Vision to Bush's Gamble* (John Wiley & Sons, 2005), and co-author, with Eric R. Kingson, of *Social Security Works! Why Social Security Isn't Going Broke and How Expanding It Will Help Us All* (The New Press, 2015).

Why Do Catalans Want to Be Independent of Spain?

By Mike Andrew

Why do Catalans want to be independent of Spain? The short answer is that they're not Spanish.

Catalunya has its own distinct language – as different from Spanish as Portuguese is – and a cultural heritage that dates at least as far back as the ninth century CE.

A longer and more complicated answer is that neither Spain nor the European Union – at least as they're presently constituted – work to the advantage of working people or the poorer nations of Southern Europe.

It was an accident of history that Ferdinand of Aragon (1452-1516), who was also Count of Barcelona and therefore the feudal overlord of Catalunya, married Isabella of Castile and set the stage for the unification of most of the Iberian Peninsula under a Spanish-speaking government.

During the 35 bleak years of the fascist Franco dictatorship, all the minority nationalities within Spain – Catalans, Basques, Galicians – were treated as enemies of the state. It was actually illegal for Catalans and the other nationalities to use their own languages in public.

Catalunya was more industrialized than other parts of Spain, and its workers' movement was also targeted by Franco. Some 4,000 Catalan workers were executed by fascist forces between 1938, when Franco captured Barcelona, and 1953.

The current Spanish Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, is head of the inaptly named People's Party, an offshoot of a traditionalist Catholic movement that backed Franco's 1936 rebellion against the Republic.

Franco died in 1975, and three years later Spain enacted a new constitution that allowed Catalunya and other regions a certain amount of autonomy within



Photo: Rohaut blog

Spain, including the right to use the Catalan language and practice Catalan culture. Nevertheless, the 1978 constitution required that Spain would stay united under a Spanish-speaking government.

In 1986 Spain joined the European Union and consequently was under EU mandates when the global economic crisis struck European banks in 2009. Like Greece and Portugal, many private Span-

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2017 PSARA Legislative Conference

***Tuesday, November 21
1 p.m. - 3 p.m.***

**South Seattle Machinists Hall
9125 - 15th Place South • Seattle WA**
METRO Route #132 Burien / South Park/ Downtown

***Learn about the impact of the November 7 election
on the 2018 Legislative Session***

Featured Speakers:

Senator Sharon Nelson

34th LD, Senate Democratic Leader

Pam Crone
PSARA's Lobbyist

Discuss and approve our 2018 Legislative Agenda

***Gather with PSARA members from your legislative district
and plan for meetings with your legislators
to advocate for PSARA's legislative agenda.***

**To help us plan materials for the conference,
please RSVP to PSARA at 206-448-9646 or to govrelations@psara.org.**

Trump Tax Plan: Tricklers At It Again

By Michael Righi

Have you heard the one about how cutting taxes for the wealthy leads to more jobs and higher wages for working people? Well, yes, I guess you have, for the last 30 years or so. And you also know what has happened to the incomes of the rich (way up), and the wages of workers (flat to down) over that time.

Now, Trump and the crowd of Republicans hiding behind him, want to slash corporate taxes. And this, according to our liar-in-chief, will raise wages and create jobs! Corporate profits trickling down. We can feel it.

US corporations are already sitting on trillions of dollars of cash (and they are holding even more overseas to shelter it from taxes). Are they using this cash to create jobs and raise wages now? How will even higher profits change that, do you think?

Another lie is the one about US corporations paying the highest taxes on profit in the world. The paper tax rate may be 35 percent, but all kinds of special exemptions bring that down to close to 10 percent. Boeing has paid an average of 3 percent over the past several years. Is there some reason corporations should not contribute a fair share to the running of the government that shields and protects and, in many cases, subsidizes them?

This is the same old right-wing Republican goal of enriching themselves further, cloaking it in a faux populism of helping out working families or “the middle class.” (What exactly is wrong with being working class, anyway?) So what we really have is “plutocracy populism.” (That is Noam Chomsky’s term. I borrowed it.)

We haven’t seen a specific tax plan yet. Trump is too busy throwing paper towels, disrespecting service members’ families, and concocting other distractions. But Republicans and lobbyists are working behind the scenes, and we know what they want. They want a



Michael Righi

tax cut for corporations, the end of the estate tax, and special provisions for their kind of income -- capital income, not labor.

Whatever plan they eventually come up with, it will have a few crumbs thrown to the “middle classes” (and Democrats better not agree to that). But the point is pretty clear. From the few specifics we have, analysts have estimated that the top 1% of households (incomes above \$730,000) would get a tax break of roughly \$130,000 a year. This is what Republican donors have paid Trump for.

Bad enough, right? But I don’t think this is the only thing the right-wing establishment is after. What have they been trying to do since Reagan (and abetted by Clinton)? Shrink the government, reverse the New Deal, and gut social programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. The budget resolution the Senate just passed explicitly makes it a goal to cut a trillion dollars or so from medical care over the next 10 years.

So if a tax cut takes effect, a few years down the road -- and particularly during the next recession or financial crisis -- the government budget deficit will

skyrocket. Republicans, and unfortunately some Democrats, will wail and howl that programs will have to be cut back even further. Count on it.

The budget deficit is not the problem. We need more spending, not less: on infrastructure, on shoring up our income security programs, on job guarantee programs, on building a fossil-free energy future. The problem is that the rich are intending to loot the Treasury with tax cuts and then in the longer run decimate needed spending programs.

Sure, tax reform would be a good idea. There are way too many loopholes making Swiss cheese of the tax code, loopholes only available to those who can pay the accountants and lawyers. I am not sure we should trust the present crowd to worry about that.

But we need to fight for our own, progressive (in many senses), tax agenda. Let’s put a small transactions tax on financial speculation. That could slow down the speculators and their next financial crisis. Let’s tax carbon pollution while we use the funds to help build out the new energy economy and help workers and communities make a transition to it. We certainly need higher tax rates on obscene income. The highest rate on extra income used to be 70 percent a few decades ago, now it is in the upper 30’s.

One more crucial point. Yes, we need to stop Trump and the Republicans and their attempts to enrich the rich even more. But the main way to fight the rampant inequality we are living with has to focus on income before taxes. That’s where the inequality comes from. That fight is about wages and union power and jobs, from the bottom up, not trickling down.

Michael Righi is a retired economics professor and a member of PSARA.

Internalized Economic/Racist Oppression

By Bob Shimbukuro

Poverty story 1: 'lectric Man Blues

A light Manoa drizzle tapped gently on our roof. I was laid up with an asthma attack, trying desperately to breathe. Mom was with me, gently rubbing my back, singing. My brother's cocker spaniel, named Ronnie Hansen Shimabukuro after the Baltimore Oriole shortstop, lay just off the futon as close as he could get to us without being shooed off. As was usually the case with Mom, my undivided attention was not expected. Often I just drifted off. But this time I felt her anxiety as a car drove up our driveway.

Mom stopped singing, got up, peeked out the window, returned quietly, gently petted Ronnie, and sat down next to me again. "Electric man," she said softly. "Shhh," she admonished Ronnie.

The bill collector pounded on the door. "Anybody home?" he asked loudly. Ronnie growled softly, looked at Mom, who again warned him to be quiet with the old "stink eye." Ronnie calmly went back to his spot, stretched out, and carefully watched my mom with his inquisitive eyes.

After about five minutes of absolute stillness inside the house and a racket outside our front door, the "electric man" left.

"Good dog, Ronnie. I guess you can stay in the house today," sighed Mom with relief as she went to the door to pick up the all-too-familiar termination-of-service notice.

"Well, at least we gained another 24 hours by sitting still. . .and tomorrow's payday," she said as she laughed softly.

Poverty story 2: Watah Man Blues

The dreaded knock on the door. This time the younger kids had come home from school already, no way Mom could avoid the "watah man."

"You get the money?"

"No," Mom answered.

"Oh, no, I got to shut you down, you know."

"Yeah, I know." Mom sighed.

Watah man look very uncomfortable. He could see all the kids in the house. After a pause he say, "Tell you what, I come back in an hour. Get all da kine containahs you get, fill 'em up wit' watah. Okay? Maybe get enough so last till tomorrow."

Sam and I, we wen' fill up a lot of stuff. Das my memory. Don't know what Mom did, but the next day, the watah man came by about noon in a much better mood, because he could turn on da watah. My mom thanked him for his help. Someone had paid the bill.

Mom w'en figure out a solution.

Poverty story 3: Lunch Blues

After pau college, thought about the following "small kid time" incident often.

While living in Portland, in Los Angeles, in Seattle

I was in the third grade, Sam was in fourth, and Roy was at R.L.Stevenson Intermediate. Ann was in first grade. I have no idea where Ned was, he was not with Mom.

We didn't have enough food for Mom to make our lunches. Maybe she thought Toki and Roy could fend for themselves, but Mom told me that it was pay day and she would pick up Dad's check, cash it and buy us some hamburgers, and bring them to school for us.

At school, started to cry. No lunch. No money fo' buy lunch. Standing in line waiting for Mom. Mom sees me in line, hands me one of those hamburgers (Wikiburger, cheapie ones that all the kids like, but no adult would eat). I was so relieved, the only time other kids were jealous of what I had for lunch.

Mom said she had to take Sam his lunch, so she hurried off.

Talking with Sam later in Seattle, I asked him if he remembered that day that Mom brought us hamburgers and he said, "Yeah, I cried because I was so upset and embarrassed about being so poor I couldn't have lunch, and then I



cried again because I was so relieved that Mom had brought me lunch."

When I told him, "Me, too." we both started laughing and crying at the same time. Both of us wondered what Mom must have thought.

Postscript: Internalized Racist Oppression

Bob: "Zenwa, you ever hear about BIRO?"

Zenwa: "Not the Oppression part. But the 'Internalized Racism' part, yeah."

"Well, what does it mean?"

"Internalizing our own racial stereotypes."

"An inferiority complex based upon treatment by the dominant culture." Bob Shimabukuro

"How to deal with yourself in a world of crap is a major part of coming to terms with internalized racial oppression." Alice Ito

"The devaluing of one's own identity and culture according to societal norms." Kenneth Jones, Western States Center

"The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed." South African freedom fighter Stephen Biko

2017 Lummi Nation Totem Pole Journey Launches in Northwest

By Bob Barnes

Since 2013 the Lummi Nation House of Tears Carvers, led by Jewel James, have created a new totem pole that has traveled the country educating people about the disasters of climate change and highlighting victories, such as stopping the oil shipping terminal at Xwe'chi'eXen (Cherry Point).

Each year the totem pole ultimately ends up being gifted to a tribal community battling to defend their sacred lands and waters against the threats of the fossil fuel industry.

Last year the Journey stopped at Standing Rock to lend their support and vision to the struggle there. This year, the totem pole will end up at the National Library of Medicine's "Native Voices" exhibit.

As always, and everywhere, there are current struggles to highlight. Among them are Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion bringing tar sands oil to British Columbia and the Salish Sea; Tesoro Savage oil-by-rail terminal in Vancouver, Washington, and Puget Sound Energy's (PSE) effort to build a liquefied "natural" (i.e. fracked) gas facility in Tacoma.

The Tacoma totem pole stop, at the Foss Waterway Seaport, highlighted the Puyallup Tribe's fight to stop PSE from continuing to build the facility and its



Bob Barnes, the totem pole, and Ken Workman, member of the Duwamish Tribal Council and great-great-great-great grandson of Chief Seattle. (Photo courtesy of Bob Barnes)

accompanying pipelines. PSE has not been granted the permits required for the project, but they are rushing ahead, hoping that it will be hard to deny a project already well under way. We can play an active role in supporting the Puyallups' battle to preserve their sovereignty. This

will include testifying at hearings and engaging in direct action to stop this illegal project. Stay tuned for details.

Bob Barnes is a member of PSARA's Environmental Committee.

Why Do Catalans Want to Be Independent of Spain?

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ish banks owed money to German and French banks – money they could not repay when the global economy tanked.

And just like Greece and Portugal, Spain was forced to convert this private debt to sovereign debt – money owed by the Spanish government to the European Central Bank – as a condition of EU bailouts that would prevent the country's private banks from collapsing.

Austerity programs – draconian cuts in government spending – were also a condition imposed by the EU, and the consequence was 25 percent unemployment in Southern Europe, with the rate for young workers going as high as 60 percent.

Catalunya, one of the most industrial-

ized parts of Spain, was particularly hard hit by austerity. It was also hit by the tax policies of the Spanish state, which took money from Catalunya to pay off its mounting international debts.

Catalans were also dismayed that the loans they were expected to finance did not benefit their region, but supported projects in Spanish-speaking regions like Castile.

In 2012 the Spanish government enacted a fiscal "reform" that would allow autonomous regions like Catalunya to take on their own sovereign debt.

Ostensibly this would allow the regions to tap into international capital that the heavily-indebted Spanish government

could not access. In fact, the "reform" simply shifted debt burden onto the regional governments, leaving the national government in the clear.

While Catalunya has been the biggest borrower under this scheme, Catalunya's debt now amounts to only 35.4 percent of the country's GDP. In contrast, Spain reported debt equivalent to 99.40 percent of the country's GDP in 2016.

This means that Catalunya is still a cash cow for the Spanish government, since it is a relatively rich region with developed local industries, a high tax return, and a low debt-to-GDP ratio. And these facts go a long way to explaining why the Rajoy government wants to keep Catalunya in Spain.

An Ending to My Cuba Diary

Continued from Page 3

nized that we could do more work to strengthen our communities and develop a common narrative and common understanding of the problems we face as a community and nation. There are multiple narratives based on race, gender, and class, and we have to listen better to each other and include the lessons from those experiences in our overall narrative. Groups and individuals who are used to leading need to learn when they must follow the lead of those who may be the most effected by the problems being addressed.

We can get to know our neighbors better. Fidel took the time to learn in detail what the problems were and then, with comrades, formulated a vision and strategies and tactics for addressing those problems and creating a better path forward.

Mark, a teacher at Rainier Beach High School in Seattle, talked about needing a common pedagogy. He discussed working to transform our education system and developing an approach to pedagogy that is inclusive, truthful, communal, and caring. Understanding and teaching the role of racism (and the other "isms") and reformulating what is meant by patriotism is a challenge for all of us.

I understand that for many PSARA members it will be too expensive and/or too physically demanding to travel to Cuba. But tourism helps the Cuban economy and is a form of resistance to the oligarchs and right-wingers who control our federal government. Traveling there gives you the opportunity to aid the Cuban economy and at the same time witness the struggle of the Cuban people to create another, more humane, way of life. It does represent an alternative model to our predatory capitalist system. Cuba is not perfect but the undelying values and goals are admirable.

Cindy Domingo, a PSARA member, takes delegations to Cuba on educational tours. If you are interested, you can contact Cindy at cindydomingo@gmail.com

An Easy Way to Help and Keep Your Membership Up-to-Date

Just a Few Clicks Will Make You a Sustainer

By Mike Andrew

We love our members! You're the ones that keep us going with your generous contributions of time and money.

Sometimes, though, even our most dedicated members forget to renew their memberships. That means we have to send you letters – sometimes a whole series of letters – to remind you to renew.

We do that gladly because you're that important to us, but to tell you the truth, we'd rather use the time and energy fighting for a more humane world. And we're sure you'd want that too.

So here's what you can do. Become a Sustainer. Just commit to donate a fixed amount to the PSARA Education Fund or PSARA every month. If you do it through PayPal, they'll send us the money automatically, without even having to ask for it.

This helps us because we know we'll get your financial support month after month. It also helps you, because it means that your membership will never accidentally expire when you forget to send in your check. Your support will keep coming until you cancel – which we hope you never want to do!

It's easy to become a Sustainer. Just a few clicks on your computer will do it.

Go to www.psara.org and click on Membership & Renewal. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click Donate. That will open a page that asks you how much you want to give to the PSARA Education Fund or PSARA.

You'll see a spot that says "\$0.00." Just click there and enter how much you want to donate every month -- \$5, \$10, \$20 -- any amount will help.

Click the box that says "Make this a monthly donation." Then click the blue tab that says "Donate with PayPal." After that, all you have to do is follow the prompts on the website to sign up with PayPal and donate on a convenient monthly basis.

If you don't want to use PayPal but you do electronic banking, you can also have your bank send us a regular monthly donation.

Once again, thank you for your wonderful support.

To Renew or Donate

PSARA Education Fund
2800 1st Avenue, Room 262, Seattle WA 98121
Donations are tax deductible

- Basic contribution: \$20
- Limited income/living lightly: \$15 or whatever you can afford
- Supporting: \$50 New contributor
- Sponsoring: \$100 or more Renewing contributor

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Meetings and Events

West Seattle Hot Topics for Seniors & Senior Wannabes: Noon – 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 1, Southwest Library, 9010 35th Ave SW, Seattle, (35th & Henderson). Topic: *Getting Your Voices Heard*. Brown bag lunch.

PSARA Environmental Committee: 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Thursday, November 2, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All welcome.

PSARA Government Relations Committee: 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., Thursday, November 2, Seattle Labor Temple, Room 226, 2800 First Ave. All welcome.

PSARA Book Group: *No Is Not Enough*, by Naomi Klein. 10 a.m., Saturday, November 4, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S. Part II of the discussion. Please read the book before the group meets.

PSARA Fundraising Committee: 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, November 7, Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave., Room 262. All welcome.

PSARA Southend Committee: Noon, Thursday, November 9, SeaTac Community Center, 13735 24th Ave. S, SeaTac. All welcome as we plan PSARA events in South King County.

Green Lake Discussion Group: Noon - 1:30 p.m., Thursday, November 9, Green Lake Branch, Seattle Public Library, 7364 E Green Lake Dr. N, Seattle. Topic: *Clearing Space -- The Liberating Effect of Both Physical and Emotional Downsizing*. Brown bag lunch. For information contact Susan at sjlevy.01@gmail.com

PSARA Diversity Committee: 11 a.m. – noon, Thursday, November 16, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All welcome.

PSARA Executive Board Meeting: 12:30 p.m. - 3 p.m., Thursday, November 16, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All welcome.

PSARA Legislative Conference: 1 p.m. – 3 p.m., Tuesday, November 21, Machinists Hall, 9125 15th Pl. S, Seattle. Featured speakers: Senator Sharon Nelson and PSARA lobbyist Pam Crone. All are welcome as we discuss and approve our 2018 legislative agenda. Register by emailing govrelations@psara.org or calling the PSARA office, 206-448-9646.

Save the Date!

Saturday, December 9, 1 p.m. at the Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle.

CARE Documentary: A moving story of long-term care workers and the people they care for. More information in the December *Advocate*.

