

The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

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

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**Labor in the
Post-Janus World**
By *Lynne Dodson*

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PSARA Screens Award-Winning Documentary in Port Townsend

On Wednesday, October 10, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Port Townsend Community Center, 620 Tyler St., there will be a screening of the award-winning documentary "CARE."

Following the film there will be a panel discussion with Rep. Steve Tharinger, Madeleine Foutch from SEIU 775, and two care workers, one paid and one unpaid, discussing what we can do in Washington and in Jefferson County to address the issues raised by the film.

Sponsored by Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA), the presentation is co-sponsored by Peninsula Home Care Cooperative, the Bluebills, and Dove House Advocacy Services.

The film delves deep into the world of home care. Vilma, an undocumented caregiver, cares for Dee, 92, an active businesswoman until dementia ended her work life. With her only family 3,000 miles away, Vilma is her lifeline.

In an isolated rural area, Laurie cajoles Larry to do his exercises and have hope while he waits for a lung transplant. Larry's wife Tiff says, "This is the hardest job in the world."

Toni knows how hard it is to be a caregiver. When her husband Peter, a former CBS executive, was struck with a vicious form of Parkinson's, she realized the only way to keep him home was to have 24/7 help. At first she was uncomfortable having care workers constantly in her home, but as she realized how dependent she and Peter were on them, her concern changed to "You're not going to quit, are you?"

At a moment when the older population is rapidly expanding, "CARE" reveals the deep humanity and poignancy of care work, as well as the challenges faced by older and disabled



Scene from the film: Vilma and Dee

people, their families, and their care workers.

We will discuss what can be done in Washington State and in Jefferson County to help address these chal-

lenges.

For further information, contact dianefrjones@gmail.com or call Diane at 360-379-9193.

Herstory: Stories of Old Lesbians, October 28

On Sunday, October 28, from 3 – 5 p.m., the PSARA Education Fund and the PSARA Race/Gender Equity Committee are sponsoring a presentation of the Old Lesbians Oral Herstory Project (OLOHP) at the Whidbey Island Center for the Performing Arts (WICA) in Langley.

The program is being co-sponsored by three local groups -- Whidbey Giving Circle, Whidbey Institute, and Hedgebrook -- as well as Puget Sound Old Lesbians Organizing for Change and the Washington State Labor Council.

The Old Lesbians Oral Herstory Project has interviewed more than 600

old lesbians to preserve their stories. These women struggled to live consistent with who they were at a time when there were no books, magazines, or organizations that advocated for their lives. Being an "out" lesbian presented the very real peril of arrest or being committed to a mental institution. Their stories are poignant, brave, sad, and also filled with laughter and joy. We invite all PSARA members and friends to make the excursion to beautiful Langley, WA, to watch this wonderful presentation in the 250-seat WICA theater.

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Make Retirement Security a Priority in 2018 Elections

By *Bob Swanson*

The presentations PSARA members do on Retirement Security have taught me one big thing. If people hear the history of successful movements from the past they will believe we can succeed in the future. Outreach efforts across the state, along with the Education Committee presentations, have indicated protecting and enhancing Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid are supported by the vast majority of people from all backgrounds.

We are prioritizing our campaign efforts in the 3rd, 5th, and 8th Congressional Districts. We are encouraging all candidates to support the effort to "scrap the cap" of \$128,400 on income eligible to be taxed for Social Security. It is only fair that everyone pays into the fund on an equal basis.

It is critical that retirement security is discussed at town halls, rallies, and private meetings with candidates and staff. Ask them to support scrap the cap, if they have not done so. Thank them if they have.

An excellent article by the Economic Opportunity Institute on the impact of Social Security in Washington State can be found at: <https://www.eoionline.org/fairdeal/retirementsecurity/delivering-on-the-promise-of-social-security-americas-pension-plan/>

If you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to call me at 206-661-4207.

Bob Swanson is PSARA's Outreach Vice President.

Bob Shimabukuro Honored by Oregon Nikkei Endowment



On August 10, PSARA Executive Board member and *Retiree Advocate* Associate Editor Bob Shimabukuro was honored by the Oregon Nikkei Endowment at their annual banquet, commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Civil Liberties Act.

The law granted long-awaited reparations to Japanese Americans who had been interned by the US government during World War II, a cause to which Bob devoted years of activism.

For a brilliant account of the struggle for justice for internees, read Bob's book, *Born in Seattle: The Campaign for Japanese American Redress*.

Photo courtesy of Bob Shimabukuro.

Initiative 1631 Would Correct Historical Environmental Inequities

By Diane Narasaki, reprinted from *The International Examiner*

Our Asian American and Pacific Islander communities are historically marginalized communities. Neighborhoods with high concentrations of our communities, like Chinatown International District (CID), Beacon Hill, Rainier Valley and neighborhoods in SeaTac, for instance, have a life expectancy years shorter than communities in North Seattle. In the case of the CID and Beacon Hill, ten years shorter. Higher rates of pollution, which come from the industrial sector around Seattle and Tacoma, cars and trucks all converging on our ports, several crossing highways, and airplane pathways directly overhead, play a significant role in the shorter life expectancies in these neighborhoods. Pollution is literally killing us where we live. Carbon emissions driving climate change respect no boundaries, and are also devastating our families in our countries of origin. Pacific Island nations are rapidly losing their land to rising sea levels, destroying their ancestral homelands and in the worst cases,

Throughout our history, people of color have been pushed out of cleaner, healthier places and red-lined and displaced into the neighborhoods hardest hit by pollution and poverty. I-1631 does more than simply reduce pollution. It works to correct these historic inequities by putting frontline communities front and center in the solutions we know we need to build in order to start moving away from pollution. We know our communities must be listened to in the conversation about our future. Leaders from communities of color worked to ensure that this initiative will charge the state's largest polluters for their pollution. At least 35% of all investments will benefit communities most affected by pollution and poverty, and at least 15% of all clean energy investments will help people with lower incomes to transition to a clean energy economy.

That means career training and new jobs in manufacturing, installations, electricians, designers, planners, and



Diane Narasaki
Photo: *International Examiner*

know reducing pollution and beginning to build new and cleaner options for people is a significant challenge. But when we come together we can create a real solution. We have come together to support I-1631, and ask you to join us.

Diane Narasaki is Executive Director of Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS), Asian Pacific Islander Coalition (APIC) of Washington State Co-Chair, and a member of PSARA.

Want to help pass I-1631?

In September and October, PSARA is planning phone banking parties and a day or two of canvassing neighborhoods.

Please e-mail organizer@psara.org or call the office, 206-254-4910 to join in. It will be fun!

In the meantime, you can also volunteer to help by going to the "Yes On 1631" website and look at the "Events" page. There are opportunities all over the state to take part in phone banking and neighborhood canvassing.

Throughout our history, people of color have been pushed out of cleaner, healthier places and red-lined and displaced into the neighborhoods hardest hit by pollution and poverty.

turning their people into climate refugees. Climate change affects our family members in Asia, eroding coastlines, contributing to epic storms, typhoons and floods with major loss of life.

Our communities experience higher rates of asthma, cancer, and upper respiratory disease because of our exposure to pollution, here at home. And it's not just what's in our air. Many of our community members rely heavily on fishing from local rivers and streams for much of their diet. Without cool, clean waters flowing through places like the Duwamish River, fish stocks are low, scarce, and often far too contaminated to be safe to eat.

everything in between, building new clean energy projects in our own neighborhoods. We can make our homes and businesses more energy efficient, while making our air cleaner and our water healthier. This is a critically important opportunity to take a powerful first step towards a cleaner future.

Change that can truly improve conditions in our community has always involved collaborative leadership. That is why ACRS and APIC joined the largest coalition in state history, including over 120 community of color organizations, labor unions, businesses, health professionals, faith organizations and tribal nations, to support I-1631. We

Not So Random Thoughts

By Robby Stern

Ronald Reagan said if Medicare passes, "we are going to spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it once was like in America when men were free."

The Trump-appointed director of the Center for Medicare Services (CMS) recently stated:

Medicare for All would become Medicare for None.

By choosing a socialized system, you are giving the government complete control over the decisions pertaining to your care, or whether you receive care at all. It would be the furthest thing from patient-centric care.

CMS Administrator, Seema Verma

Same thought pattern, different decade. Because they are aware of the growing popularity of Medicare for All, Trump and the Republicans are engaged in a significant effort to weaken traditional Medicare and drive more Medicare recipients into privately-insured Medicare Advantage plans. When Medicare for All wins the political battle, they want to make sure that access will be via their friends, the private insurance industry.

A recent article in the New York Times discussed the CMS plan to "re-interpret" the definition of "supplemental benefits" for Medicare Advantage plans. Medicare Advantage plans can already provide benefits unavailable under traditional Medicare, like eyeglasses, hearing aids, and gym memberships. The new additions CMS will allow the Advantage plans to cover are "adult day-care programs; home aides to help with activities for daily living like bathing and dressing; palliative care at home for some patients; home safety devices and modifications like grab bars and wheelchair ramps; and transportation to medical appointments."

These benefits make a lot of sense but WHY won't they be available to traditional Medicare beneficiaries?

Seema Verma stated, "This will potentially help people stay in their homes longer and not have to go to institutions. You could provide a simple device or a home modification that could mean the world to a patient, but plans weren't allowed to do that in the past." AND there is no plan as yet to mandate traditional Medicare provide these benefits in the future.

Bankruptcy Increases Among Seniors

The recent study of the growing bankruptcy rates among seniors and older Americans (Graying of US Bankruptcy: Fallout from Life in a Risk Society) may come as a surprise to many. But *Retiree Advocate* readers and other people across the country tracking the effects of growing income inequality on savings, the decline of defined benefit pensions, and increased health care costs are not surprised. This study demonstrates the necessity to expand Social Security AND Medicare benefits. The study cites medical costs as a dominant factor in driving bankruptcy for Medicare recipients.

While a number of the Democrats in the Washington delegation in the House are now supporting scrapping or raising the cap and expansion of Medicare, we have no similar commitment from our two US Senators. Having the new study information should be helpful.

Whenever any of us have the opportunity to speak with our Congressional electeds, we can point to the bankruptcy study that found the representation of older Americans in the Bankruptcy Courts has never been higher! Since 1991, there is a 5-fold increase in the number of people over 65 in the U.S. Bankruptcy system and a 10-fold increase of people 75 and older. In addition, there is a "marked increase" in the

filers between 55 and 64. To quote from the Introduction to the study, "For an increasing number of older Americans, their golden years are fraught with economic risks, the result of which is often bankruptcy."

Additionally, according to a recent article by Ashley Archibald, a staff reporter with *Real Change*, the number of homeless elderly people is also on the rise. She pointed to a 2013 report from National Health Care for the Homeless Council that projected by 2020, more than 58,000 elderly people will be homeless, and by 2050, if the present trend continues, the number will exceed 95,000. The *Real Change* article pointed to a 2016 Congressional report that found that "homeless veterans were 2.4 times more likely to be between the ages of 51 to 61 than the general population of veterans in the US."

All of this points to the necessity of strong and continued advocacy to preserve and expand Social Security and Medicare. We also will remain active in identifying and eliminating the other sources of financial strain, both on seniors and all generations that are struggling to live lives with financial security, dignity, and respect.

Initiative 1631

I frequently worry about what the future will be like for our kids and grandkids as a result of the impact of climate change on their lives. I am 74, and while I am and will be impacted by climate change, I have had a long and decent life. But what is in store for them? I really want to do what I can to mitigate what is coming and help play a role in turning our country and state away from fossil fuels.

Washingtonians have a real chance to take positive steps if we can pass I-1631.

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Members Matter: PSARA's Oral History Project

An Interview with Garry Owens

By Karen Richter and Angie Bartels

PSARA's Oral History project is underway. Our second interviewee was Garry Owens, PSARA member and long-time activist. His interview lasted about an hour and a half and is excerpted here. You can hear it in its entirety by going to the University of Washington Labor Archives at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1upNirO9cl7oBohaCFn3yUp5AHpBNyJi/view>

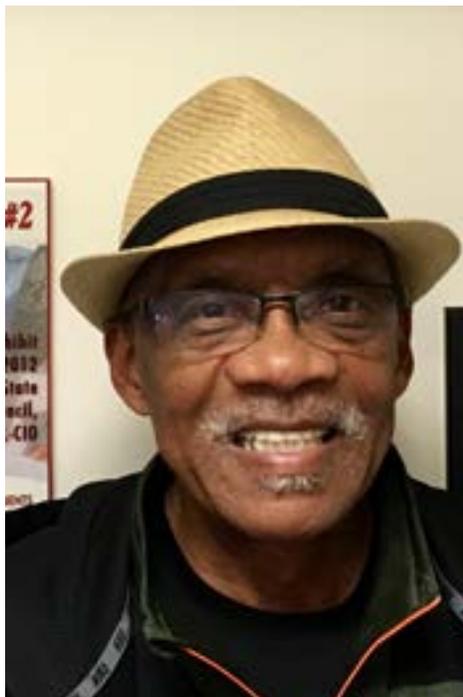
Where were you born?

I was born in Seattle on October 31, 1944. My mother's family was from Ellensburg, and they moved to Seattle during the Depression. Irony about her family -- her grandmother, her mother, as well as she all had their first kid at age 16. They were all young moms, which created closeness between them. My Dad's family was from Louisiana, and they moved here when he was 19 for work. I never really knew him. The man I knew as my father was Sylvester Owens, who adopted me when I was one, so I have his name. I was an only child until I was 12. So the public library became my best friend. I could access information and books, sometimes 10 to 15 at a time. Words do matter, and it helped me be a critical reader.

Where did you live and go to school?

I was born in the International District and lived there until we had to move to Stadium Homes in Southeast Seattle, then to Rainier Vista, and I went to school there. My Mom taught me to read before I started school so I would have a head start. We moved to Beacon Hill when I was 12 and I got a new brother. Two years later, a sister. I finished high school and got drafted as soon as I graduated.

This was the Vietnam era, and I didn't want to go. I went to the Coast Guard Center and was inducted into service and was told I was being taken to



Garry Owens

Photo courtesy of Karen Richter

Fort Ord, so when all the new privates turned left to be shipped out, I went right and went home. I ran into my Mom and told her everything went OK. Then a knock on the door and the military police came looking for Private Garry Wade Owens. I was handcuffed and sent to Fort Lawton. My sense of rebellion was alive and kicking. I got into a fight with a bunkmate who dumped cigarette ashes in my coffee. Monday morning I hitchhiked back to my godmother's house in Seattle who turned me in. I was sent to Fort Lewis for a week then to Fort Ord. I was given a choice -- spend two years in service and be done with it or spend two years in military prison then do two more in active service. I did the two years in military service. I was sent to Fort Bragg and became a radio operator. During this time my Mom died. She was 37. After a month of bereavement leave, there was not enough time [in my required service] to deploy me to Nam so I always say my Mom saved my life.

How did you become an activist?

I went to school at Franklin High with Larry Gossett. He asked me to go to the University of Washington. I wasn't sure. But one day while I was at the Coffee Corral, an English professor read some of my journal. Turned out he was an assistant dean at UW. He gave me his card and asked me to see him. I did, and he sent me to the enrollment office with some paperwork. The person there asked me if I wanted to be a fully matriculated student. I did, and then I was. While I was at UW I helped form the Black Student Union and helped start the Black Panthers with Larry.

Crucial issues for us were health, children and poverty, and food. So many kids were going to school hungry. What could we do about it? We started a free breakfast program for kids, and we opened up several community clinics. We were the first Black Panther Party outside California. It wasn't just about defiance with the police but about people's needs, empty stomachs, health needs, and shaming larger institutions that caused these conditions.

What contributions did the Black Panthers give us?

Our clinics and free breakfast programs were some. We were not afraid to resist! That word is big even now. We had compassion for our community, and we still need to work on that, and we still need to talk more about human rights. We are not each others' enemies, not combatants. The system pits us against each other and makes money from it. We should be using our resources to make sure no one is left behind.

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Report from the 17th Annual Protect Mother Earth Conference

By Brent McFarlane

In late June I joined a group of local volunteers from 350 Seattle invited by the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN), to be part of the 17th Protect Mother Earth Conference. More than 1,500 indigenous peoples, activists, youth, partners, and allies joined at Franks Landing on Nisqually territories near Olympia. This year it was hosted by the Nisqually Peoples (people of the river, people of the grass) and co-sponsored by the Indigenous Environmental Network and Indigenous Climate Action.

Allies were invited to help support logistics of the conference and to learn from indigenous teachers and activists from across the Americas (Turtle Island) as well as international indigenous leaders. It was a chance to hear directly from indigenous people on environmental and social equity issues, to share ideas, common ground for solidarity, and pathways forward. Activists, protectors, and leaders from the US, Canada, New Zealand, Mexico, Brazil, and other regions participated in plenaries, break-out sessions, and sharing stories over a four-day camp and conference.

One of the standout plenary sessions I attended was "Indigenous Principles of Just Transition." It was chaired by IEN Executive Director Tom Goldtooth and included Melina Laboucan Massimo, (Lubicon Solar), and Dawn Morrison, founder / curator for Indigenous Food Sovereignty. They shared strategies for building an economy that will not be as reliant on the continuous burning of fossil fuels. Visionary and pragmatic principles and goals for a transformational economy are spelled out in a newly published document from the Indigenous Environmental Network. The entire text can be found at <http://www.ienearth.org>. Here is an excerpt:

A Just Transition acknowledges the feasibility of transitioning to an economy in the U.S. and Canada based completely on renewable energy, with no carbon dioxide emissions and no nuclear energy.

A Just Transition means to leave more than 80% of known fossil fuel reserves under the soil and beneath the ocean floor and ban all new exploration and exploitation of oil, tar sands, oil/gas shale, coal,

uranium, and natural gas, including transportation infrastructures.

A Just Transition is a vision-led, unifying and place-based set of principles, processes and practices that build cultural, social, economic and political power to shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy. The transition itself must be just and equitable; redressing past harms and creating new relationships of power for the future through reparations.

The speakers recognized organized labor's emerging role in pursuing "just transition" for workers and communities impacted by climate change. Marginalized communities are often on the frontlines of the most destructive effects of toxic pollution to water and land. This is a perspective indigenous people have known deeply from historical and present day experience.

One notable difference from past legislative efforts is that IEN is opposed to carbon pricing or trading and instead favors a pollution-reduction strategy that prioritizes protection of the natural world, invests in renewable infrastructure, and restores economic benefits to those hit hardest by decades of subsidized fossil fuel infrastructure. One of the memorable phrases from IEN is: END CO2LONIALISM. The cornerstone principles are to respect the sacredness of water, earth, and air; incentivize renewable energy systems; and support sustainable local food networks.

We heard moving testimonials. For example, Maori activists who have organized against deep sea oil drilling have gone toe-to-toe with oil / drilling companies wherever they have endangered communities and tribal fishing waters off the New Zealand coast, and they have a solid record of success. The continued battles against mining and pipeline projects that threaten indigenous peoples' lands, water, and life on earth were recounted in personal terms from frontline activists.



A banner at the Conference
Photo: Brent McFarlane

On the morning of June 30, a group of indigenous leaders and protectors organized a prayer circle for people imprisoned at NW Detention Center in Tacoma. On a national day of rallies to reunite children and parents, we joined in solidarity with immigrant families facing forced separation. We were reminded too of the long and cruel history of indigenous children being separated from their families by the US and Canadian governments.

In one of the breakout sessions, I joined a "plants and medicine walk" with ethno-botanist Linda Black Elk. She shared from her extensive study and practice with culturally important plants as food and medicine (often mistaken for "weeds") found in the Northwest. Many examples were within a short walk of the camping area. See her recent column on stinging nettles. <https://Irinpire.com/2018/06/11/our-relative-stinging-nettle-by-linda-black-elk/>

An atmosphere of community, good humor, solidarity, and urgency for the work ahead of us was omnipresent at the Protect Mother Earth Conference. Thank you to the Nisqually people for generously hosting the conference this year.

For more information on the PME 2018 conference see: <http://indigenousrising.media>

Brent McFarlane is a member of PSARA.

The Economics of Health Care: CEOs Rake in Big Bucks, Medicare For All Could Save Even Bigger Bucks

By Mike Andrew

There are 64 health care companies in the S&P 500, one of the leading US stock market indexes. Together, their CEOs hauled in \$1.7 billion in personal income for 2017.

The leader of the pack was Neal Patterson, CEO of the health care IT company Cerner, who made \$148.6 million before dying in 2017. After Patterson's death, the next CEO in line is Regneron pharmaceuticals Leonard Schleifer, who made \$95 million last year.

The numbers come from *Axios* reporter Bob Herman, who based his calculations on the actual realized gains of CEOs' stock options and awards rather than the estimated fair market value of their stock, the measurement that is usually featured in SEC filings. His reporting shows that health care industry CEOs make even more than is normally reported.

These facts are interesting in themselves, but even more interesting for the light they shed on the structure of the US economy. The dominant myth of US capitalism is that The Market is the most efficient way to distribute goods and services. In fact, The Market facilitates astonishing inefficiencies.

Maybe the biggest inefficiency is that The Market allows a small number of people – the 1% of the 1% – to amass enormous wealth, far more than they could possibly use even with their sumptuous lifestyles. While they accumulate surpluses, most people live lives shaped by scarcity.

Nowhere is the struggle to provide for basic necessities more evident than in the health care industry. And that brings us to a second interesting set of numbers.

According to a new report written by Charles Blahous for the libertarian Mercatus Center, Senator Bernie Sanders's Medicare For All bill would save the country more than \$2 trillion over a 10-year period, while virtually eliminating out-of-pocket health care expenses. The federal government would assume most health care costs, so in that

scenario federal health care spending would go up by \$32.6 trillion over the same 10-year period, but that increase would be more than offset by savings for all other spenders, including individual Americans.

Let's look at the numbers. Currently, health insurance coverage in the US is paid for by many public and private sources, including federal and state agencies, employers, and individuals.

During 2016, the US population overall was approximately 325 million, with 53 million people 65 and over covered by the federal Medicare program. The 272 million people under age 65 got coverage from either employer-based insurance plans (155 million people) or non-employer-based plans (90 million), with approximately 15 million military personnel getting coverage through the Veteran's Administration. Some 27 million people were uninsured.

Although Blahous uses 2016 data for his analysis, reports from the year 2017 show a spike in the number of uninsured, who now number 40 million people or more than 12 percent of the US population.

How is it possible to offer health care to 40 million more people and still save money? Easy. By eliminating Market-generated inefficiencies. In other words, take profit-making out of the equation and you have a more rational system that provides for people's needs at a lower cost.

While federal health expenditures will go up a lot under this plan, Medicare For All still means savings for most people. Rather than paying premiums, deductibles, and co-pays for health care, people will pay a tax that is, on average, a bit less than they currently pay into the health care system. Those with lower incomes will pay a lot less.

But – and this is a big but – these savings are only realized if Market forces are excluded so that the health care system can deliver truly efficient medical care based on need and not on profit-making.



This is illustrated by a third set of numbers. According to an article by Susannah Luthi in *Modern Healthcare*, the most recent estimates from the CBO (Congressional Budget Office) show that subsidizing insurance exchanges under the ACA (Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare) – which help Americans buy private insurance – is more expensive than simply covering people under the ACA Medicaid expansion.

This year, the CBO predicts that it will cost an average of \$6,300 per person to subsidize private health insurance. But it will cost only \$4,900 for each Medicaid recipient who enrolled under the ACA expansion of the program.

The gap will widen in the following years, according to the CBO. By 2028, the federal government will be spending 57 percent more, on average, to cover people who purchase subsidized coverage on the exchanges than it will paying for people's Medicaid benefits. Even if you include state spending, signing up folks for Medicaid will still be cheaper for taxpayers than helping to foot the bill for private insurance.

We could look at the ACA as a real-world experiment that demonstrates the value of public health care against for-profit private coverage. Contrary to myth, when you ask which system provides the best coverage for the least money, The Market loses and public health care wins.

No Seremos Complices, We Will Not Be Complicit

PSARA Members Take on ICE

Photos by Garet Munger

July 25: PSARA members joined other activists to block the main entrance to the downtown Seattle ICE office in an action organized by Casa Latina. Here, in their own words, is why they did it.

"No Seremos Complices," "We Will Not Be Complicit," read the t-shirts we wore as we marched up, sat down, and blocked the doors to the ICE office. I'd pretty much felt that way since the US government started ripping children from their parents' arms. My heart broke every time I thought about it. Stepping up to take direct action seemed the only reasonable response. Thanks to Casa Latina for giving us the opportunity.

- Bob Barnes, below with bullhorn.

For a person of faith like myself, when immoral laws or policies are enacted, like zero tolerance, then people of good will and people of all faiths need to rise up and say "Hell No!"

- Rev. Paul Benz, below next to Bob Barnes.



Immigrants are driven here by crime, death squads, and climate change and most of this is a result of US government policies. When they seek asylum here, they are treated like criminals and locked up. I was so glad when a friend asked if I wanted to take part in blocking the ICE office. It seemed the least I could do.

- Bobby Righi, above with raised fist.

PSARA to Co-Sponsor Candidate Forums

Although PSARA does not endorse political candidates, we urge all our members to be actively involved in the political process, and to challenge candidates to support measures that help us live healthier and more secure lives.

PSARA members will have an opportunity to do just that in two candidate forums sponsored by Aging and Disability Services and co-sponsored by PSARA and other groups.

Friday, September 14, 1:00 p.m., at SHAG Tukwila Village, 14350 Tukwila International Blvd, Tukwila. This forum features candidates from the 11th, 30th, 31st, 33rd, 34th, 37th, and 47th Legislative Districts.

Friday, September 28, 2:30 p.m., at North Bellevue Community Center, 4063 148th Ave NE, Bellevue. This forum includes candidates from the 5th, 41st, 45th, 48th, and possibly the 1st and 46th Legislative Districts.

For more information contact Aging and Disability Services, 206-684-0652.

Diary of Resistance

By Moe Yonamine

Edited for length by Bob Shimabukuro

August 2, 2018:

Today, I wept as I watched the construction vehicles, over 400 counted by the end of the day, carry in rocks, metal bars and cement to resume the heliport construction in the ocean right off the coast of my mother's and grandmother's sacred homeland. Henoko Bay is a place known to the world for its coral and beautiful oceans and known to locals for its preservation of ancient, indigenous Uchinanchu culture and our endangered dolphin-like dugong that thrive only here on the planet.

I was joining a group of Okinawan elders fighting through daily sit-ins to block the construction vehicles; there was no media except one local newspaper reporter. No American or Japanese media. Just Okinawan elders in their 70s, 80s and 90s, bravely sitting for hours in the heat and pouring typhoon rain, chanting "You will not destroy the ocean. You will not destroy the coral. This is our Uchinaa ocean."

Today marked the 1,143rd day of these sit-ins. Despite demands by Okinawan Governor Takeshi Onaga, the United Nations, and the overwhelming majority of Okinawans to permanently cease all construction of the heliport, the Japanese government ordered it to resume.

Over the last few weeks, cement blocks and metal bars have already been dropped into the ocean on top of the coral to outline where the base will be cemented. By the end of day today, this outlining process was completed. The next step will be to fill the outlined ocean area with rocks, sand, and then concrete. There will be no reversing the damage to our ocean, our coral, and our sea life.

Moved to urgent action, these elders have constantly come back for sit-ins as mass numbers of police physically remove them one by one.

"This makes me so angry. It hurts my heart. This is my home," said an

83-year-old Okinawan grandfather, in fluent English learned during the US occupation years. "Look at all of these fences (pointing to the barbed wire US military base fences). We are surrounded on both sides (of the road). This is our land, you know. We don't want this. We don't want any of this."

After the elders' sit-in was removed by police force, and the long row of hundreds of construction trucks were allowed in, we made a line side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder, holding up signs toward the truck drivers with messages in Okinawan, Japanese, and English like "No to Heliport," "Save Henoko," "Our ocean, our Okinawa," "Our children's future doesn't need a base," and "Protect our dugong."

Standing with the elders holding signs, I was crushed to see the endless line of trucks turning into the base gate in front of us, carrying tons of large rocks ready to be dropped into our ocean.

An 86-year-old grandmother noticed my silent tears and came to stand next to me and held my hand. "Grandma wants to cry too," she said. "But you don't cry here. Grandma is going to cry when I get home tonight, so I will be crying with you. Here, we fight together," she said, squeezing my hand while looking out at the trucks flooding through the base gate, from which just moments before, she had been removed.

August 6:

Yesterday, as the typhoon finally subsided in Okinawa, local activists, elders, and allies on kayaks went out into Henoko Bay to block further construc-



*Police remove elders
Photo courtesy Moe Yonamine*

tion of the new US military base. The Japanese government continues to order the quickened construction against the will of the Okinawan people. These "kayactivists" have committed to being out in the sea every day. With the Japanese government's recent announcement that they will begin pouring sand into our precious Henoko Bay on 8/17, our call to the world is urgent and dire.

August 11:

Over 70,000 people have gathered in an island-wide rally to stand against the joint US-Japan construction of the new Henoko military base off of our shores. Even in midst of heavy typhoon rain, many generations stood firmly with their signs, locked arm-in-arm in their commitment to oppose the heliport and bowed in silent prayer in the recent passing of Governor Onaga who championed for our land and people until his last moment.

The Japanese government leaders continue to disregard and ignore Okinawan voices, resuming plans to dump sand into the new base boundaries on 8/17. In six days, the northeast

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Labor in the Post-Janus World

By Lynne Dodson

In June, the Supreme Court issued the Janus ruling, overturning 40 years of national law respecting the rights of workers and their unions. We weren't surprised, we weren't devastated. The very principle of a right to unionize has been under attack in the US for decades and the Janus ruling is just another in a long line of attempts to hold working people down.

We aren't afraid. The Labor Movement was born for times like this – we were born to organize and fight for worker rights. When children worked in the mines and mills, when our workdays were 12-14 hours, 7 days a week, when workplaces were dangerous, and dying on the job was nothing unusual, we fought for the freedom to join together.

The Janus case is just the latest jab in a long line of attacks by right-wing billionaires and greedy corporations. It targets our public sector workers – those who teach in our schools, care for the sick and elderly, our first responders, those who fight fires, keep our communities safe, keep our power on, maintain our roads, drive and care for our public transportation systems, make our ferries run smoothly and safely – and so much more. It's a direct attack on those who work to put the GOOD in our public good.

We were prepared. Our public sector unions have been focused on internal organizing, talking one on one to their members since long before Janus. We know no Supreme Court decision can stop the power of working people. Our proud public employees know they need strong unions – not just because unions make life better for them – but also because strong unions give them the voice they need to advocate for the public they serve – that public is all of us. No court decision will stop the power of working people and our unions.

This case shows that elections matter. This Supreme Court will go down

in history as the worst for human rights since the Taney court of 1857. But we are ready – elections matter and that's why the WSLC is doubling down on our labor neighbor program and working hard to elect pro-worker candidates. Primary election results showed that our intentional targeting helped turn out our members. And when we turn out, our members vote for candidates that will not only support working families' issues, but advocate fiercely for them.

Organizing matters – it's more important than ever that we talk to our members, our community, our congregations, our neighbors about the issues we care about, about their rights on the job, about the importance of standing together in union to fight for justice.

The WSLC is building member engagement programs that will train member leaders to talk to more workers than ever before. That's how we build a fighting labor movement that all workers will have the freedom to join.

Enthusiasm for unions is higher than it has been in decades, especially for workers under the age of 35. They know that the Labor Movement is the most organized force for justice in the nation. We need to engage those workers – most importantly, on the job; organizing new workers, in new ways, has to be one of our priorities over the next decade. When we tackle issues they care about – racial and gender equity, climate justice, health care, comprehensive immigration reform, income inequality -- and engage them on issues that matter to them on the job – raising wages, retirement, safety on the job, the rise of automation and artificial intelligence – we will not only make their working lives better, but also energize them to participate in the Labor Movement. When workers of all ages; union and not yet union; white, black and brown; see us working for justice on the job and in the community, they are inspired to fight with us. That's how



Lynne Dodson

we build a fighting labor movement that all workers will have the freedom to join.

We've been here before – from the robber barons of a century ago to the corporate billionaires of today – their attempts to divide workers to turn back wages, weaken safety on the job, and turn back the clock on workers' rights will fail. We know how to fight back. We know how to organize, and we know how to win. No court case will stop us from fighting for good jobs, safe workplaces, affordable health care, and dignity on the job for every worker. No court case will end our freedom to join together and fight for the rights of every worker. No court case will stop our public employees from joining together to serve the public good. The unions of Washington State will **not** stand down. We will redouble our efforts. We will fight to guarantee the freedom to join together, negotiate for better lives, and make our communities strong. And we know – when we fight, we win.

Lynne Dodson is Secretary Treasurer of the Washington State Labor Council and a PSARA member.

Not So Random Thoughts

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This initiative is the most progressive effort in the country to address climate change and also focus on the need to assist the communities most impacted and those workers who earn their living in the fossil fuel industry.

We can expect the fossil fuel industry and their allies to spend tens of millions of dollars to scare Washingtonians about the increase in gas prices caused by the carbon fee in I-1631. This fee will raise the needed revenue to accomplish the goals of the initiative. I plan to walk my neighborhood and ask my neighbors to consider whether the average increase of \$55 per year in gas prices is a reasonable price to pay in an effort to stem the mounting disaster caused by the use of fossil fuels. I also hope to participate in other PSARA-sponsored campaign activity to pass I-1631, a ray of light in these stormy times.

Diary of Resistance

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ocean region of mainland Okinawa will be buried forever to make a new US Marine base, adding to the 1/4 of our islands' land mass already being occupied by US military bases despite over 70 years of opposition.

For the 70,000-plus of us that stood together in the heat and pouring rain today, we say "NO" to the new heliport base construction in Henoko, "NO" to all US military bases on the soils of our Ryukyu Islands. And we say "NO" to war as survivors of the bloodiest battle in the history of the Pacific. Keep up your fight with us around the world: advocate, educate, organize!

"NO MEANS NO!"

Moe Yonamine is a PSARA member. Bob Shimbukuro is a member of PSARA's Executive Board and Associate Editor of the Retiree Advocate.

Interview With Garry Owens

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How did you meet your wife, Cindy Domingo?

I met Cindy at CAMP, the Central Area Motivation Program, headed by Larry Gossett. We both worked there. Cindy worked in the Minor Home Repair Program, and I was the Treasurer. We dated about four years, then we got married and had two kids. The rest is history. I've known her for 31 years.

What keeps you involved and active at this point in your life?

I believe we are all put here for a special reason. I know what I do well and what I don't. I don't want accolades. My grandmother had an apartment building filled with tenants, some who were alone. On holidays she would leave our table and go feed them. She wanted them to know that they were family too, not just tenants. She had a big heart and was kind to others. She knew who needed help. If she could do that I, could too. To be charitable you don't have to ask permission. You just do it.

How did you get involved with PSARA?

That's easy. I went to school with Robby Stern at UW. He was out there

pushing it with the Students for a Democratic Society when I was with the Black Panthers. When he was President of PSARA he kept asking me to join the Board. For four years he kept asking me, and I couldn't commit during those times. I retired after 25 years with the City of Seattle. I was on my way to a funeral when he asked me again, and I finally said yes. Glad I did. PSARA people have passion and a lot of good energy flow. It makes me feel good to go to meetings because it reminds me that age doesn't matter. It's not about how old we are, it's that we care about ourselves. We don't want to be dissed because we are older. If we don't stand up, we get placed in a category -- that we are obsolete and don't matter. Age does matter. We are seniors, and we are here and know our contributions to society.

Thank you, Garry. You inspire us, and we are very glad you belong to PSARA and serve on our Executive Board.

Karen Richter is PSARA's Membership Co-VP. Angie Bartels and Garry Owens are PSARA members. If you would like to suggest a PSARA member to be interviewed, or if you would like to be interviewed, please contact Karen Richter at kerichter100@gmail.com.

To Renew or Donate

PSARA Education Fund

321 16th Avenue S, Seattle WA 98144

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

Name (Please print): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Meetings and Events

Join PSARA for Labor Day: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Monday, September 3, Burien Town Square Park, 480 SW 152nd Street, Burien. Labor Day event hosted by MLK Labor and Discover Burien. Look for the PSARA booth.

West Seattle Hot Topics for Seniors & Senior Wannabes: Noon – 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, September 5, Southwest Library, 9010 35th Ave SW, Seattle (35th & Henderson). Topic: *Election Issues*. Brown bag lunch.

PSARA Climate and Environmental Justice Committee: 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Thursday, September 6, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

PSARA Government Relations Committee: 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m., Thursday, September 6, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S. All are welcome.

PSARA Education Committee: 2 p.m., Tuesday, September 11, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

Green Lake Discussion Group: Noon - 1:30 p.m., Thursday, September 13, Green Lake Branch, Seattle Public Library, 7364 E Green Lake Dr. N, Seattle. Topic: *Figuring Out Fall Ballot Initiatives*. Brown bag lunch.

PSARA Southend Committee: 1 p.m., Thursday, September 13, Burien Library, 400 SW 152nd Street, Burien. This month: *Homelessness*, with Burien Human Services Director Colleen Brandt-Schluter. All are welcome.

Candidate Forum: 1 p.m., Friday, September 14, SHAG Tukwila Village, 14350 Tukwila International Blvd, Tukwila. Candidates from the 11th, 30th, 31st, 33rd, 34th, 37th, and 47th Legislative Districts. All are welcome.

PSARA Fundraising Committee: 10:30 a.m. - Noon, Tuesday, September 18, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S. All are welcome.

PSARA Race/Gender Equity Committee: 11 a.m.–Noon, Thursday, September 20, Seattle office Washington State Labor Council, 321 16 Avenue S, Seattle. All are welcome.

PSARA Executive Board Meeting: 12:30 p.m. – 3 p.m., Thursday, September 20, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

Candidate Forum: 2:30 p.m., Friday, September 28, North Bellevue Community Center, 4063 148th Ave NE, Bellevue. Candidates from the 5th, 41st, 45th, 48th, and possibly the 1st and 46th Legislative Districts. All are welcome.