

The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

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

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**Claudia Balducci to
Speak on
Sound Transit 3**

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Upcoming Fall Events

Compiled by Susan Levy

PSARA is planning four outreach events this fall in neighborhoods throughout the Puget Sound area.

Two Forums on Expanding Social Security and Medicare for All Generations

Green Lake Area: September 26, noon, The Bridge at Village Cove, 6850 Woodlawn Avenue NE, Seattle.

By Denise Malm and Vicki Nino Osby

When we attended the forum in West Seattle in May, Denise Malm, Lanie Riley, and I were inspired by Robby Stern's presentation about protecting, preserving, and expanding Social Security. As participants and members of the Wallingford Community Senior Center as well as PSARA, we are aware that many North Seattle residents are impacted by income insecurity and concerns about adequate support now and in the future. As a follow-up to continue the momentum that we felt around this social justice issue, we decided to explore how the message of activism could be brought to our community. At a meeting with PSARA we decided to hold a forum on Protecting, Strengthening, and Expanding Social Security and Medicare in the Green Lake area this fall. Along with others, the Wallingford Community Senior Center will participate in sponsoring this event.

Denise Malm and Vicki Nino Osby are PSARA members.

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PSARA Endorses Seattle Housing Levy

By Sarajane Siegfriedt

PSARA members voted to endorse the \$290 million, seven-year housing levy that will be on the August 2 primary ballot.

The median cost to homeowners will be \$122 a year, based on a median assessed home value of \$480,000.

Seattle is in the midst of a homeless and affordable housing crisis. It has disproportionately impacted seniors on fixed incomes, people with disabilities living on Social Security, low-income people of color, and people in low-wage jobs. Homelessness has increased and mental health services are inadequate.

The Housing Levy addresses this crisis by: 1) producing and preserving 2,150 affordable apartments over seven years; 2) reinvesting in 350 affordable apartments; and 3) providing operations and supportive services for 510 affordable apartments.

The Housing Levy addresses the need to preserve older housing by providing short-term loans for strategic purchases of rental units and also of land to be used for future housing projects. Levy loans can help landlords make critical repairs and then keep rents affordable.

The Housing Levy will assist 280 low-income renters to become first-time homeowners through down payment assistance or investment in permanently affordable homes. One-time loans can be made to prevent foreclosure.

Short-term rent assistance funds can help families at imminent risk of eviction and homelessness due to illness, loss of work, or other family emergency.

Since 1981, Seattle has voted five times to produce and preserve affordable housing, and each levy has exceeded its goals.

Sarajane Siegfriedt is a member of PSARA's Executive Board.



Renewing Your Subscription/Membership Online

After hearing from many of our members that they would prefer to renew membership and donate online, we have finally created that option. You can go to the PSARA website, www.PSARA.org, and click on Membership & Renewal. You can renew, donate to the 501(c)3, give gift memberships, and make monthly sustaining contributions. This method could save PSARA the cost of mailing reminder letters, although PayPal does take a small cut of what is contributed online.

You can also receive this newsletter online if you let us know that is your preference. The online version of the newsletter comes in living color! If you prefer hard copy, we are happy to keep mailing it to you.

The Retiree ADVOCATE

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Two Special Photos

The Retiree Advocate features many great photos by our own Garet Munger, but we hardly ever show photos of Garet. This time we caught him in front of a camera, at the 2016 Pride Parade. He's in the center, flanked by Bobby Righi on the left and Susan Levy on the right. As you can see, Garet is still clutching his camera ready to go to work. To see his photos of the Pride Parade, go to Page 7.

(Photo courtesy of Karen Richter)



Mothers and daughters at a fundraising party for PSARA hosted by the Martin Luther King County Labor Council (MLKCLC). From left, Maura Grant, her daughter Nicole Grant, MLKCLC Executive Secretary and PSARA member; Kushay How, her daughter Eunice How, UNITE HERE Local 8 organizer and PSARA member; Rivka Burstein-Stern and her mother Dina Burstein, both PSARA members.

(Photo: Garet Munger)

Sound Transit 3 Presentation with Claudia Balducci

By Karen Richter

This November, voters will be asked to approve a \$53.8 billion plan to improve transit across King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties. Dubbed ST3, the Sound Transit Board unanimously approved this infrastructure plan on June 23, 2016, and is submitting the plan for voter approval on the November ballot.

The ST3 Plan is complex, and November is fast approaching. To help us understand ST3, PSARA will host ML King County Council Member and Sound Transit Board Member Claudia Balducci to discuss the Plan prior to the August 18 Executive Board meeting. From 12:15 – 12:45 p.m. Ms. Balducci will provide a 10 minute overview of the Plan, and then answer questions.

The draft plan was released for public comment in March and was amended to include some of the changes advocated by groups like the Transit Riders Union, Sierra Club, Transportation Choices, and the BlueGreen Alliance.

Some highlights of the ST3 Plan include:

- A new light rail line from Ballard through downtown to West Seattle
- A new light rail line connecting South Kirkland, Bellevue, and Issaquah
- Bus rapid transit service on I-405 from Lynnwood to Burien and on SR 522
- Expanded capacity on the Sounder commuter rail service linking Seattle, Tukwila, Kent, Auburn, Sumner, Puyallup, Tacoma, and Lakewood, with an extension to reach Joint Base Lewis-McChord
- The Tacoma light rail would be extended from Hilltop to Tacoma Community College
- And lots, lots more. For more information go to: <http://soundtransit3.org>

Accelerated Delivery Schedule

In a big win for advocates like the BlueGreen Alliance, transit projects will be accelerated by three to five years. Concerns about the long timelines were



King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci will address PSARA members on August 18, 12:15-12:45 p.m., at the Washington State Labor Council, 321 16th Avenue S., Seattle.

consistently voiced during public feedback/comment periods after the draft plan was released in March, and the ST Board worked with staff and found a way to build projects faster.

Affordable Housing & Transit Oriented Design (TOD)

Sound Transit is already at the front of affordable housing development, due to the legislative requirement that ST sell 80 percent of its surplus land for affordable housing use. ST3 goes even further by developing land acquisition policies to help ensure that the land bought can be used for housing development near its stations.

Good Jobs

As part of the TOD language, the developer selection criteria for ST properties may consider the types of business-

es and whether jobs proposed for that development pay “prevailing wages.” It is estimated that the plan will produce 50 million labor hours providing tens of thousands of building construction jobs as well as opportunities for local hire. ST3 will also provide a training program for young apprentices.

Multimodal Access

Getting riders to and from transit stations is important to ensure the best ridership possible. The ST3 plan includes a fund for sidewalk improvements, protected bike lanes, shared paths, improved bus-rail integration, and pick-up/drop-off areas along the entire system. This will help each station create safe, direct walking and bicycling routes to surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, and community places.

130th Street and Graham Street Stations

ST3 now includes these two stations as a win for transit equity. The Graham Street station in South Seattle will be built five years earlier, and a brand new 130th Street station has been added to the plan and will provide high-capacity transit access to lower income communities.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions/Air Quality Effects

By expanding transit, it is estimated that ST3 will reduce vehicle miles traveled on our roads by 313 million miles by 2040. This translates into an annual reduction of carbon dioxide (CO2) of 125,000 metric tons per year or 9 percent of our region’s greenhouse gasses.

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"I think that being tortured has been the best experience in my life."

Part VI of an interview with David Ayala, Field Organizer with the Pramila Jayapal for Congress campaign

By Peter Constantini, reprinted from *Foreign Policy in Focus*

Editor's Note: This is the final part of Peter Constantini's interview with David Ayala. In previous issues of the *Retiree Advocate*, Ayala recounts how he became radicalized in his native El Salvador, how he was arrested and tortured, and finally how he was released and came to the United States.

Karma

The Salvadoran civil war finally ended in 1992 with the Chapultepec Peace Agreement, signed in Mexico City and brokered by the United Nations.

The report of the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador confirmed what human rights groups had been reporting throughout the war. It estimated that over 70,000 people had been killed, thousands more had been disappeared, and more than 25 percent of the population had been displaced as refugees. It also found that death squad killings and torture were overwhelmingly the work of government forces. Some 85 percent of the large sample of complaints it collected attributed the violence to the military and its death squads. Only 5 percent of the complaints accused the FMLN.

During the first elections after the peace, Ayala returned to El Salvador to work for the FMLN, which had become a political party. The first elections didn't go so well. "We were completely defeated. I remember coming back in the airplane, I was crying. I was remembering all the folks who died for peace, and I was thinking, 'They don't deserve this.'"

The right-wing party founded by Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, the kingpin of the death squads who ordered the murder of Archbishop Romero, governed the country for a decade and a half more. That changed in the 2009 elections, when the FMLN won the presidency and a plurality in the

National Assembly. In 2014, the party narrowly won the presidential elections again.

Meanwhile, international developments also hold out some hope to victims of war crimes that a measure of justice may yet be attainable. Despite an earlier amnesty declared by the Salvadoran government, three torture victims who brought a civil suit in a U.S. federal court against two retired Salvadoran generals — both former defense ministers — won a 2002 judgment of \$54.6 million in compensation. One of the generals was deported by the United States to El Salvador this April based on his complicity in the torture, rape, and murder of civilians.

In 2011 a Spanish judge issued indictments and arrest warrants for 20 former Salvadoran military officers, charging them with crimes against humanity and state terrorism for their roles in the 1989 murders of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her 16-year-old daughter. And just this April, the U.S. government filed a request for the arrest and extradition to Spain of one of the officers for his role in the killings.

Finally, this past May, Pope Francis beatified the martyred Archbishop Romero, clearing his path to sainthood.

Generation Next

Today, Ayala has a son who just graduated from university, and two younger daughters.

A few months ago I ran into David with his daughters at a rally celebrating Seattle's minimum wage increase. He said they often go with him to events like this. The key for him is not forcing the issue, but rather trying to communicate at their level. "I need to use my best tools to organize my kids to join the fight," he explains, "so they don't feel that it's something crazy my dad



is doing. I don't make them come with me."

Eight-year-old Maura wrote a story at school about some people who were trying to put on a play. The theatre manager, though, told them he didn't think they could sell enough tickets. "But we're going to pass out fliers, we're going to knock on doors," the people replied. "It was really good to see that," Ayala said, "because it's about the things that her dad is doing, that sometimes we do together."

His 12-year-old, Maggie, is now a seasoned demonstrator. "It's interesting the questions they ask sometimes. We once went together to a march for Martin Luther King's birthday. And the chants were about the minimum wage. And my daughter asked me, 'Dad, why are they shouting "Fifteen dollars now!" and not "Long live Martin Luther King"?' The march is in his memory."

"It was a lovely moment that gave us a chance to think about it, to say that Martin Luther King was very involved with labor and that it was an aspect of his thinking that was very controversial back then.

"I have a lot of pictures of them marching with me."

Peter Constantini and David Ayala are both PSARA members.

Lights Go Out in the “Shining City on the Hill”

Trump Wants to Be Nixon, Not Reagan

By Mike Andrew

The lights have finally gone out in Ronald Reagan’s Shining City on the Hill.

You remember – the mythical America that would awe the rest of the world with our self-evident goodness, vitality, and prosperity.

Donald Trump switched off the lights on July 21.

True, the mythical City on the Hill was always merely mythical. An America without glaring social contradictions – poverty, racism, sexism, crime – has never existed outside of the imagination of Republican myth-makers.

But it was a convenient myth for an entire generation of Republican politicians who cited it as an article of faith and for whom Reagan rose to the status of a secular saint.

Reagan’s sun-shiny Republican Party is dead and gone now. Or, if not completely dead, it’s clinging to life only in the hearts of the Republican exiles who couldn’t bring themselves to attend Trump’s convention.

Trump’s Republican Party is something quite different.

In his July 21 acceptance speech to the convention, Trump channeled Dick Nixon rather than Ronald Reagan, and a particularly dark and vicious Nixon at that.

“The crime and violence that today afflicts our nation will soon come to an end,” Trump told the party faithful. “Beginning on [Inauguration Day] January 20, 2017, safety will be restored...”

“We will lead our country back to safety, prosperity, and peace,” he said. “We will be a country of generosity and warmth. But we will also be a country of law and order...”

“The American People will come first once again. My plan will begin with safety at home – which means safe neighborhoods, secure borders, and protection from terrorism. There can be no prosperity without law and order...”

“I am the law-and-order candidate.”

“Law and order” has always been code for “lock up people of color, and throw away the key.” It was in 1968 when Nixon said it, and it is now.

No wonder ex-Klan Wizard David Duke tweeted “Great Trump Speech, America First! Stop Wars! Defeat the Corrupt elites! Protect our Borders!, Fair Trade! Couldn’t have said it better!”

To be fair, Trump didn’t invent racism, and he wasn’t the first to manipulate white workers into voting Republican by promising them a return to a mythical past when they were kings of the world. That appeal was part and parcel of Nixon’s winning Southern Strategy in 1968, and it was an unspoken component of Reagan’s Shining City myth.

Never mind that such a world never existed and never could exist. The myth won votes. It was a winner both in the harsh Nixon version and in the much prettier Reagan version.

Now it’s taking on an especially ugly and dangerous form with Trump. Will it win again? We’ll see.

Senator Elizabeth Warren said on CBS’s *The Late Show* that the Republican gathering “was the nastiest, most divisive convention that we’ve seen in half a century...”

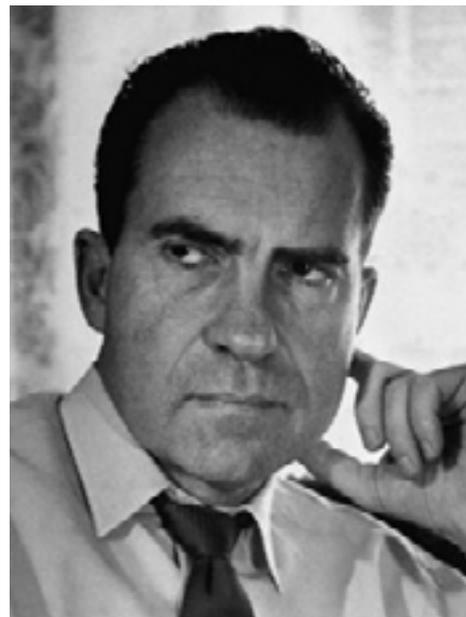
“That speech tonight, he [Trump] sounded like some two-bit dictator of some country you couldn’t find on a map,” she said.

“He sounded like a dictator of a small country rather than a man who is running for the highest office of the strongest democracy on the face of the earth.

“What Donald Trump says is, ‘There’s a problem out there, and what you have to understand is, it’s all about each other. What you need to be afraid of is every other American.’”

Warren added that she understood why Trump had an appeal to working class voters.

“People are angry, and they have good reasons to be angry,” she said.



“Incomes are flat, expenses are up, young people can’t make it through college without getting crushed by debt, seniors can’t stretch a Social Security check to cover food and rent. Let’s be really, really clear: Donald Trump does not have the answers.”

The challenge we face is that the Democratic Party has not offered real answers to these problems either – at least not yet.

Just the opposite, in fact. Reagan’s Shining City dazzled Democrats as well as Republicans, and the Democratic Party embraced many elements of Reaganism.

Bernie Sanders offered Democrats an opportunity to break with the myth. Some took the opportunity, some did not. Others said they did, but only to stave off the challenge from Bernie.

By the time you read this, the Democratic National Convention will be over, and we may know better whether the Democrats will be in a position to fight Trump convincingly and win.

In any case, we’re in the twilight of the great political myth of our era. No more Shining Cities. What will light the way to the future is still unclear.

Reality Check

By Bob Shimabukuro

"It's guys like you that put Nixon in the White House," Tom said. "Of all the stupid things to do."

I was shocked. This was one of the very few times he had admonished me for anything. He had always supported my endeavors.

Despite all the crazy things that were going on, I was feeling a little better about my chances of living at least five more years. I sat down on June 11, to write a soothing (sort of) article that this was not the craziest Presidential Election year. At least not as crazy as... say 1968.

I had just come home from "Rock for Rice" (fundraiser for Asian Counseling and Referral Service) headed by Geo (aka Prometheus Brown), and Daniel Pak, feeling good and not able to go to sleep right away. So I started to write. About my brother Tom accusing me of doing something stupid, by not supporting Hubert Humphrey.

Suddenly, "Orlando," "mass murder," "gay Latinos" and I don't remember what else streams across my screen. I follow the story for a little while, start thinking about my other brother Sam, then decide, "I can't deal with this now." I shut down the computer, went to bed. I hardly slept.

I was writing about Tom because our whole family was going back to Honolulu for his inurnment. Tom wanted his ashes/urn to be as close to our parents' urns as it could be. Though he died in September, with so many people in the family working on a school schedule we decided that a summer date was best.

Different family members were in charge of different things, and my brother Ned and I decided we'd take care of the program. I was going to emcee and say a few words about Tom. By the time the Seattle chapter of the family left for Honolulu, the whole world situation had turned too bizarre and there is no way 1968 is even relevant. 2016 has become its own special year.

This has been my mind flow, of events in Hawaii and the world in brief (This list does not even include refugees from wars in Africa; the indigenous people in North, South, and Central America; French labor, and Okinawans fed up with the U.S military presence.):

June 11, Rock for Rice
Morning June 12, Orlando killings
June 19, Father's Day, Zen Uncle dies
July 7, Philandro Castile shot & killed by police in Minnesota
July 7, Alton Sterling shot and killed in Baton Rouge
July 10, Five officers shot in Dallas
July 14, Leave Seattle, arrive in Honolulu around 2 p.m.
July 15, Nice attack (84 killed)
July 16, Services for Tom

Tom Shimabukuro, a man driven by the most basic traditional cultural value of our parents, Zenshu and Yasuko, that families survive and thrive only when we all "stick together." And the most basic subset of that community value lies in the role of the eldest son.

As Tom always said, "it's good if you're a rich man's son, but if you're a poor man's son, it's really bad."

Tom took on his responsibility seriously and never questioned it: He was the eldest son, he paid all the debts, and ensured that the following generations would not be as "poor as we were growing up."

July 17, the morning after the services

*Sunday morning
sitting on one bench
Kailua Farmers Market.
Stay watch da kids play, and
Thinking 'bout
Zenwa Uncle talking dis & dat
Life, hard work, death, rebirth
Yesterday was good fun;
remember, talk story 'bout Tom.
But also tiring, need for concentrate;
today, no need concentrate*



Bob Shimabukuro

*My mind drifting
all over da place.
I tell myself,
OK fo' drift today, Bob.
Tomorrow different, maybe.*

July 17, after Farmer's Market, go Uku-
lele Festival.
July 17, Baton Rouge shooter kills three
police officers
July 18, Ned's friends come over, play
some music, good time for all
July 19, trip to Maleakahana. Zenwa
Uncle used to be the groundskeeper/
caretaker and Fumi Auntie was the
cook/ housekeeper for the Spalding/
Cooke family beach home at Maleaka-
hana.

Scattered Sam's ashes in the Park a
few, well, now lots, of years back.

*No mo' white ash, brown dirt
No sign of Sam at Maleakahana
Just the posts from the fern garden.
All da oddah stuff green
think dis da last time can see Sam spot
When old, hard time travel.
Shed some tears, walk away.
Greenery one sign of new growth for
Sam.
I know, I know, he no care about dat kine
thinking,
but wen make me feel better thinking
that way.*

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Pride Parade, June 26, 2016

Photos by Garet Munger



Only a Strong Social Security System Can Guarantee a Secure Retirement

By Mike Andrew

How can we guarantee a secure retirement for all seniors?

There's a short and simple answer. Only a strong Social Security system can guarantee a secure retirement. Let's look at some facts:

More than 50 percent of U.S. workers have no retirement savings plan whatsoever, and 401(k)s just can't provide the financial security retirees need.

The day after Britain voted to leave the European Union – the historic June 23 Brexit vote – the British national currency, the Pound, suffered its largest-ever single-day drop in value. Conversely, the price of gold reached a two-year peak of \$1,358.20 per ounce.

Even the U.S. felt the effects of Brexit. The Dow, for example, dropped 610 points on June 24, the day after the referendum, and another 260 points on June 27, the first day that markets reopened after the weekend.

With a loss in stock values on top of the disruption of international money markets, the average American's 401(k) lost \$3,112 in value.

For younger workers who may have 20 or 30 years to recoup their losses, this might not be so bad. But for a worker close to retirement age, this could be a substantial blow.

That's the problem with 401(k)s. Your retirement savings are invested in stocks and money markets, so they're extremely vulnerable to national and even international economic trends.

But even defined benefits pensions are vulnerable to the same trends.

In June I wrote an article on the Teamster pension fund. As it turns out, the fund performed much better when it was invested in Mafia-owned properties in Las Vegas than when it was managed by respectable Goldman Sachs.

The problem was that the pension fund was paying out more in benefits than it was taking in in contributions. Goldman Sachs gambled on a quick fix – invest in high-risk, high-yield securities, mainly in real estate derivatives. When the real estate bubble burst in 2008, so did the pension fund.



The underlying problem with the Teamsters fund was that many of the employers paying into the fund went bankrupt. Beginning with the oil crisis of 1973, rising fuel prices worked against the smaller independent trucking companies who were the core of the pension fund's contributors.

Deregulation of the trucking industry also had an adverse effect, allowing a few big companies to drive their smaller competitors out of business.

Today, only three of the plan's 50 largest employers from 1980 still pay into the plan. And for each active employee, it has more than five retired or inactive participants. A retiree covered by the pension fund will be lucky to get half of what she or he originally counted on.

While there are many advantages to defined benefits pensions, and workers are wise to fight any attempt to take them away or substitute 401(k)s, they are also vulnerable to economic trends that can leave them without enough assets to meet their obligations to pensioners.

The Social Security Trust Fund, in contrast, is almost invulnerable to adverse economic developments.

Social Security's financial operations are handled through two federal trust

funds — the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) trust fund and the Disability Insurance (DI) trust fund – which are known collectively as “the Social Security Trust Fund.”

All of Social Security's payroll taxes and other earmarked income are deposited in the trust funds, and all of Social Security's benefits and administrative expenses are paid from the trust funds.

In every year since 1984 Social Security has collected more in payroll taxes and other income than it has paid out in benefits. (Republicans take note: Social Security collects more than it pays out!)

The Treasury Department invests the surplus in interest-bearing Treasury bonds and other Treasury securities, which are the safest investment possible. Nothing is going to happen to the Social Security Trust Fund unless the U.S. government itself goes out of business.

Social Security can redeem these bonds whenever needed to pay benefits. The balances in the trust funds provide backup to pay Social Security benefits even when the Social Security program's current income is insufficient.

Could Social Security be strengthened? Sure. For a start, scrapping the cap on taxable income would bring much more money into the system. With that financial backing, benefits could be increased so that retirees get more than the average \$1,300 monthly benefit (a little over \$1,000 per month for women).

In addition, expanding Medicare benefits to include dental and vision would allow retirees to put the money they save on those services toward their other living expenses, making their Social Security dollars go further.

These ideas make up the core of the PSARA-endorsed Seattle City Council resolution passed unanimously on June 13. Soon a similar resolution will be introduced at the King County Council. Stay tuned for further developments.

Justice Denied: Inequality and Violence

By Bobby Righi

Over the past several weeks we have been greeted almost daily with news of another police shooting of a black man or woman and the news that police involved in earlier killings were not going to be charged or were found not guilty of any crime.

This has been going on for as long as we have had policing. As Ta Nehisi Coates writes in the June 2016 issue of the *Atlantic*, "it is the reality that police officers have been getting away with murdering black people since the advent of American policing. The injustice compounds, congeals until there is an almost tangible sense of dread and grievance that compels a community to understand the police as objects of fear, not respect."

And, he says, "...wanton discrimination is definitional to the black experience, and very often it is law enforcement which implements that discrimination with violence. A community consistently subjected to violent discrimination under the law will lose

respect for it, and act beyond it. When such actions stretch to mass murder it is horrific. But it is also predictable."

Coming back from a march with Black Lives Matter folks in downtown Seattle on July 7, I read that a sniper had killed five police officers in Dallas. Ten days later, a shooter in Baton Rouge shot and killed three more police. Both of the shooters were veterans of U.S. wars in Iraq and were trained to shoot and use automatic weapons. I assume that they had experience in shooting from a distance. In our militarized society, how do we think that this is not going to happen?

We have increasing inequality and, connected to that, a big increase in people working as police and guards for prisons and private firms. We now employ as many private security guards as high school teachers — over one million of them, or nearly double their number in 1980. If we add police officers, members of the armed forces, prison and court officials, civilian

employees of the military, and those producing weapons, we get a total of 5.2 million workers in 2011. (Samuel Bowles and Ariun Javadev in *The New York Times* Feb 15, 2014)

Their jobs are to protect the status quo — and the poor and oppressed are often in the way. So, despite the best intentions of many of these police, soldiers, and guards, many of whom have little or no training, they are often thrust into situations that are difficult to handle, and they respond the way we as a country respond — with lethal force.

It is horrible that there is so much blood in the streets, but we have to look much broader for causes than a few "bad cops" or a sniper who may have been depressed. Our culture produces these actions and reactions. We are the most violent and most unequal country among "developed" countries and worse than many countries that are poor. We all have to work to change this.

Bobby Righi is PSARA's Administrative Vice President.

ZoomCare Running Scared

Ever wonder if what we do has an effect in the real world? Now we have an answer.

Within 24 hours of our picket line at ZoomCare's Fremont location, a post on our Facebook page attacked PSARA for our stand against the for-profit health care outfit that excludes Medicare and Medicaid clients. Suspiciously, the post originated in Oregon, where ZoomCare is based.

Obviously we hit a nerve, and just as obviously PSARA members had to respond to this new challenge.

And that's just what we did! Before the day was out, PSARA members responded with our own posts, Likes, and five-star ratings. At last count, responses were running more than seven to one in our favor.

Joining PSARA were WA CAN!, UFCW 21, UNITE HERE 8, SEIU 1199NW, Physicians for a National Health Program, Healthcare for All Washington, the Labor Chorus Flying Squad, and many others.

(Photo: Garet Munger)



Reality Check

Continued from Page 6

July 20, Services for Zen Uncle (102 years old). Another happy/sad time.

July 21, just before we go airport, I hear about the behavioral therapist who got shot, while trying to help his autistic client get back to his group home. Police say it was a mistake. The SWAT team said they thought the autistic man had a gun and so were trying to save the therapist's life. But accidentally hit the Black therapist instead. This so bizarre I don't know what to think. A SWAT team guy aims at a guy with a toy truck, "trying to save the therapist," misses his target and hits the Black therapist instead. We are supposed to believe that?

July 21, return to Seattle. Glad to get home. But the first thing I hear as we reach the airport gate: Trump giving his acceptance speech. Real hard to take.

In 1968, I was watching TV. California Presidential Primary. Bobby Kennedy shot. Pandemonium on TV. Cathie walks in the door. She watches for about 10 seconds, then asks, "What's going on?"

"Bobby Kennedy shot. Think he's dead, but they no like say."

After a moment, she says quietly, "This country's really f\$%^d up."

I nod my head in agreement.

Today, I think, even worse.

Let's Catch a Breath, then keep moving.

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

Upcoming Fall Events

Continued from Page 1

Kent: September 26, noon, Kent Senior Center, 600 E Smith Street, Kent.

By JoAnne McGaw

I recently had the pleasure of attending a PSARA workshop, "Making Retirement Security Real for Everyone." Several SKCCARA members (South King County Chapter of Alliance for Retired Americans) also attended a PSARA Forum on Protecting, Strengthening, and Expanding Social Security and Medicare for all Generations at the West Seattle Senior Center. Our group (SKCCARA) voted to co-sponsor a similar event in South County. We met with PSARA members to scope out the location and to set a time, date, and place and then met with the Executive Director of the Kent Senior Center. She was a joy to work with, welcoming our ideas and offering her own. There's a lot more to do and more to learn, but it has already been a rich learning experience. I was greatly impressed by each individual and all three organizations that participated. I'm anticipating a good lunch, a good time, and some great learning for those who attend at the lovely Kent Senior Center on Monday, September 26, 2016.

JoAnne McGaw is a PSARA member.

New Discussion Groups

Southwest Branch of the Seattle Public Library, 9010 35th Avenue SW, Seattle.

Calling all West Seattleites and all others interested. PSARA announces the formation of a new lunchtime brownbag discussion group in West Seattle, in partnership with the Seattle Public Library, Southwest Branch. The group will be similar to the current

Green Lake Discussion Group and will meet on the first Wednesday of each month from noon to 1:30 p.m., beginning September 7.

The discussions will be a place to explore a wide range of issues of interest to seniors and to engage members of the local community and beyond. Potential topics might include health care, benefit programs, housing, transportation, hospice and palliative care, and creative aging, as well as other issues of interest to members.

The topic of the first meeting will be "What are the most pressing issues/concerns for seniors and senior wannabees today?" All are invited to attend and contribute ideas for future sessions. Please come, and bring a brownbag lunch and lots of ideas and enthusiasm. Join us in creating this new community forum. For further information, contact Susan Levy at PSARA (206) 448-9646 or outreachvp@psara.org

International District/Chinatown and Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority (SCIDPDA).

PSARA is in conversations with the ID/C branch of the Seattle Public Library and SCIDPDA about the possibility of a voter information series starting in October in the International District.

I am really excited about the opportunities for PSARA and our campaigns around Social Security and Medicare for All Generations. For details on these events, be sure to check the events page in the September *Advocate*, or contact Susan Levy at (206) 448-9646 or outreachvp@psara.org

Susan Levy is one of PSARA's Outreach Vice Presidents.

Sound Transit 3

Presentation

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Funding

If approved by voters, the \$53.8 billion ST3 Plan will be funded through new regional taxes authorized by the Washington State Legislature and Governor. The new funding sources for ST3 include sales, car tab, and property taxes. Other funding will come from federal grants, bonds, existing taxes, fares, and other sources. According to ST, ST3 will cost the average household in its taxing area about \$17 per month or about \$200 in new taxes per year.

Here are the details: \$27.7 billion of funding would come from new local taxes between 2017 and 2041. An additional 0.5% sales tax would be added in addition to the 0.9% currently collected and would raise \$16.8 billion. A motor vehicle tax (MVET) of 8% (about \$80 per \$10,000 of a vehicle's value) would raise \$6.9 billion, and a property tax of \$1 per \$4,000 of assessed value (a \$400,000 house would have an additional \$100 property tax) would add \$4 billion.

The additional \$26.1 billion required to fund the ST3 Plan would come from federal funds, existing taxes, bonds, and fares.

There has been lots of discussion about how ST3 is funded. While car tab taxes are considered a progressive tax, and property taxes are somewhat regressive taxes (for those on fixed incomes), sales taxes are regressive. However, ST3 is a major investment in cleaner air and less pollution, tens of thousands of jobs, affordable housing, and connecting jobs to workers.

So come to the meeting, on August 18, hear all the details and issues from Ms. Balducci, ask as many questions as we have time for, and help us decide whether to endorse ST3.

Karen Richter is a member of PSARA's Environmental Committee.

I-1433 Qualifies for November Ballot!

Initiative Would Increase Minimum Wage and Set Up Paid Sick and Safe Days

Good news! I-1433, the Raise Up Washington initiative, has officially qualified for the November ballot.

The Washington Secretary of State's office made the announcement July 22. I-1433 will raise the state-wide minimum wage to \$13.50 over four years and give all Washington workers the opportunity to earn paid sick and safe leave. The campaign is led by a coalition of workers, unions, business owners, faith leaders, and community organizations.



By raising the minimum wage, I-1433 will add \$600 a year to the paychecks of more than 730,000 minimum wage workers across Washington. It will also allow more than one million workers without access to paid sick leave to begin earning it — a policy that a recent independent poll found 71 percent of Washington voters support.

After invalid signatures with errors or missing information were removed, some 345,907 signatures remained – more than enough to get on the ballot.

More than 1,000 individual volunteers joined the signature drive effort, which began in March.

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

Name (Please print): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Meetings and Events

PSARA Environmental Committee: 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Thursday, August 4, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S., Seattle. All welcome to this active and exciting committee. We will be working on updating our position paper on Jobs and Clean Energy, which we published about three years ago.

PSARA Government Relations Committee: 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m., Thursday, August 4, Seattle Labor Temple, Room 226, 2800 First Ave. All welcome as we finalize PSARA position papers on mass transit and continue work on affordable housing and homelessness issues.

Green Lake Discussion Group: Thursday, August 11, Noon -1:30 p.m. The Bridge at Village Cove, 6850 Woodlawn Ave NE, Ste. B, Seattle. Topic: Images of Aging in Western Art . Join Rebecca Albani for an engaging discussion. Known for her quick wit, informative commentary, and

deep knowledge of art history, Albani lectures for the Frye Museum and other venues.

PSARA Diversity Committee Meeting: 11 a.m. - noon, Thursday, August 18, Washington State Labor Council, 321 16th Ave. S., Seattle. Discussion of a proposed organizing project in South King County.

PSARA Executive Board Meeting: 12:15 p.m. - 3 p.m., Thursday, August 18, Washington State Labor Council, 321 16th Ave. S., Seattle. All are welcome. We are meeting earlier than usual because Claudia Balducci, a member of the ML King County Council, will speak about Sound Transit's ST3 at the beginning of the meeting.

Forums on Expanding and Strengthening Social Security coming to a library near you! Please see the article in this issue of the Advocate about upcoming forums in September.

Two Types of Power



In a democracy there are only two types of power: there's organized people and organized money, and organized money only wins when people aren't organized.

Ben Jealous, former President of the NAACP

