

PSARA Legislative Conference November 21

Senator Sharon Nelson to Speak

PSARA members will gather for our annual Legislative Conference Tuesday, November 21, from 1–3 p.m. at the South Seattle Machinists Hall, 9125 15th Place South in South Park.

Our keynote speaker will be Senator Sharon Nelson (34th LD), current Senate Democratic Leader, sharing with us her views on the election results. If there is a change in the party majority of the Senate, this will be vital in choosing tactics for PSARA's 2018 Legislative Agenda.

Also speaking will be Pam Crone, PSARA's lobbyist in Olympia, offering insights into likely post-election legislative strategies emerging in each of the Democrat and Republican party caucuses.

Then members will break by legislative districts and consider revisions to PSARA's current legislative agenda (posted on the PSARA website) in light of the November 7 election returns.

The South Seattle Machinists Hall is served by Metro bus #132 Burien/South Park/Downtown. Ample parking is also available. Beverages and light refreshments will be available.

Top issues carried over from PSARA's efforts last year will be efforts to (a) enact more progressive tax measures, (b) expand low-income housing, (c) protect those currently with health care coverage and broaden coverage to all residents, (d) support enactment of the Long Term Care Trust Act, and (e) support a progressive policy approach to ending dependence on fossil fuel.



Senator Sharon Nelson, Democratic Leader in the Senate, will be the keynote speaker at PSARA's Legislative Conference.

Fall Book Group Co-sponsored by PSARA's Diversity and PSARA Environmental Committees. Space is Limited! Start Reading Now!

We are going to read and discuss Naomi Klein's, *No Is Not Enough* in two sessions, and, in a third meeting, hear from local organizations working for climate justice and work to find ways to unite our struggles.

According to Goodreads, “This book is to help understand how we arrived at this surreal political moment, how to keep it from getting a lot worse, and how, if we keep our heads, we can flip the script and seize the opportunity to make things a whole lot better in a time of urgent need.”

Danny Glover agrees, saying, “Naomi Klein has written a compelling book that we all need to read and act on. *No Is Not Enough* is an essential handbook for economic, social, and political forces that produced the current crisis we are facing

-- and how we can effectively organize to win a better world.”

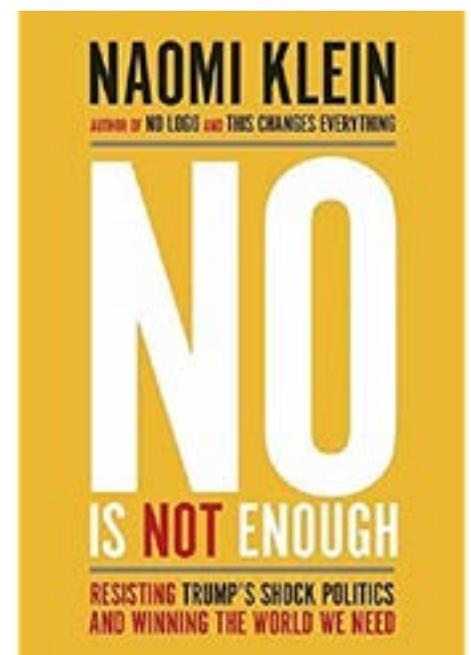
Sign up by emailing adminvp@psara.org, subject line: Fall Book Group -- I'm Interested!

Space limited! Sessions 1 and 2 are for PSARA members only.

Session #1, Saturday, October 21, 10 a.m. - noon at the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle.

Session #2, Saturday, November 4, 10 a.m. - noon at the WSLC office.

Workshop, Saturday, December 2, 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., at the Columbia City Library, 4721 Rainier Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome, and we encourage people from front-line communities to attend.



The Retiree ADVOCATE

Published monthly by the PSARA Education Fund, 2800 First Ave., #262, Seattle, Washington, 98121. Phone (206) 448-9646.

Officers of PSARA Education Fund:

President: **Robby Stern**, president@psara.org

Vice President: **Sally Davis**

Secretary-Treasurer: **Garet Munger**

Advocate Editor: **Mike Andrew**, organizer@psara.org

Associate Editor: **Bob Shimabukuro**

Photographer: **Garet Munger**

Printing: **Trade Printery**

PSARA Directory:

President: **Robby Stern**

Administrative Vice President:

Bobby Righi, adminvp@psara.org

Membership Vice President: **Jessica Bonebright**, membershipvp@psara.org

Outreach Vice Presidents:

Vivian O. Lee & Susan Levy,

outreachvp@psara.org

Secretary: **Frieda K. Takamura**, secretary@psara.org

Treasurer: **Tom Lux**, treasurer@psara.org

Diversity Committee Chair: **Frank Irigon**,

diversitycommittee@psara.org

Education Committee Co-chairs: **Steve Bauck & Bob Swanson**,

educationcommittee@psara.org

Environmental Committee Co-chairs:

Kristen Beifus & Tom Lux,

envirocommittee@psara.org

Government Relations Committee Co-chairs:

Chuck Richards & Tim Burns,

govrelations@psara.org

Our web page: www.psara.org

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

Board Members: Mauricio Ayon, Steve Bauck, Kristen Beifus, Maureen Bo, Tim Burns, Jim Grayson, Frank Irigon, Diane Jones, Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney, Steve Kofahl, Tom Lux, Mark McDermott, Mac McIntosh, Xochitl Maykovich, Bonny Oborn, Mildred Ollee, Garry Owens, Chuck Richards, Karen Richter, Bob Shimabukuro, Ronnie Shure, Sarajane Siegfriedt, Bob Swanson, Aganita Varkentine, Michael Warren, Imogene Williams, and Katie Wilson.

Visit our website for up to date information or to renew:

www.psara.org

or visit PSARA on Facebook

Seattle City Council Says Health Care Is a Human Right



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Rosenbloom

September 18: PSARA member Dr. David Springer testifies at a Seattle City Council hearing on the need to recognize health care as a human right. The Council unanimously passed Councilmember Kshama Sawant's resolution supporting "Medicare for All."

The resolution declared the City's support for SB 1804 and called on Washington's Congressional delegation to support it.

Washington's US Senators -- Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell -- have yet to take a stand on this crucial piece of legislation.

The resolution also called on the state legislature to look into forming a statewide single-payer health insurance program if federal lawmakers fail to do so.

PSARA Supports Striking OPEIU Local 8 Workers



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Rosenbloom

September 14: PSARA members join local labor and community activists to support a strike by OPEIU Local 8 workers against Welfare and Pensions Inc. They had been on strike for more than a month.

At left, labor leader and Seattle City Council candidate Teresa Mosqueda, PSARA President Robby Stern, Martin Luther King County Labor Council (MLKCLC) Communications Director Kamaria Hightower, and MLKCLC Deputy Executive Secretary Katie Garrow lead more than 100 workers in singing "Solidarity Forever."

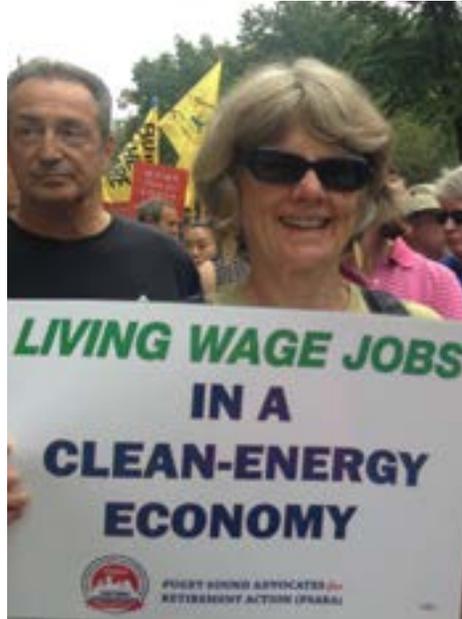
Climate Change: Not Just a Theory Anymore

By Bobby Righi

Climate change isn't so theoretical anymore.

The past few weeks of spreading smoke and ash on the West Coast while the Gulf Coast was flooded by a "500 year" rainfall caused by Hurricane Harvey and then Hurricanes Irma and Maria, which raked across the Caribbean Islands and up the Florida coast, have caused a state of high anxiety for me. My relatives live in Beaumont and Port Arthur, Texas, and they lost their homes when the water rose to the rafters. But my relatives had the means to get in a car and flee before the water rose. Many did not, and those that could not flee were poor, old, and infirm – and black or brown.

Southeast Texas and Hurricane Harvey have given us a great lesson about inequality and sacrifice zones. You only have to read past the headlines and you see that the people who live by the toxic, life-shortening chemical and oil refineries are Black and Latino, and many have now had their homes swept away by the toxic slush. Most are not eligible for federal or private insurance. They have lost everything, their jobs, and their homes and belongings. The toxic chemicals will be in the ground and the air for a long time, and there are no federal agencies rushing to their



Bobby Righi

aid. The same climate changes have caused over 1,000 deaths due to flooding in south Asia during this same time period. Lives sacrificed. Again.

The seas are warming, producing bigger storms. The fires and pests are spreading. We are now drinking plastic particles with our drinking water, eating plastic just like the fish and birds. "Sacrifice zones" are growing. Meanwhile the black and brown folks facing the

harshest effects are being treated as if they are the problem. We have to wake up and fight the racist heart of climate change while we step up the fight for clean air and water. We need to make the fossil fuel companies and their Koch brothers pay to help clean up the mess. We must demand that people who have been living in sacrifice zones for over a hundred years be first in line for jobs and homes in healthy areas where the children do not have their lives cut short by drinking lead in the water and breathing life-choking chemicals.

One group trying to do this here in Washington is the Alliance for Jobs and Clean Energy, and PSARA is a member of this coalition. The coalition plans to put an initiative on the ballot next year to tax carbon and use the funds to develop clean energy and jobs and "ensure that communities hardest hit by pollution and climate change receive a significant share of clean energy, forest, and water investments and provide financial assistance to low-income families." This will not be easy to win, but we have to try. And I hope PSARA members join me in this fight.

Bobby Righi is PSARA's Administrative Vice President and a member of PSARA's Environmental Committee.

"Herstory": A Special Presentation

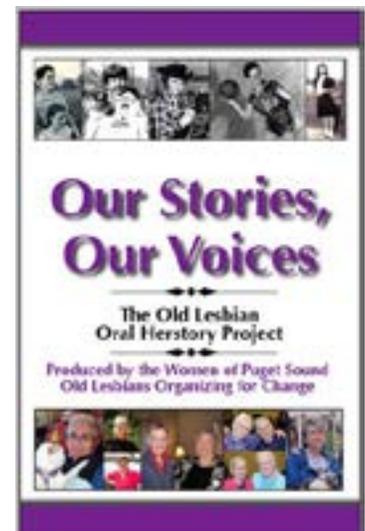
By Aganita Varkentine

The Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project (OLOHP) will present a program of live readings from the stories of old lesbians at 11 a.m. on Thursday, October 19, at the Washington State Labor Council office at 321 16th Avenue S in Seattle. PSARA's Diversity Committee is sponsoring this event for PSARA members and guests.

OLOHP has been collecting these stories, usually from women born in the 1920s, '30s and '40s, for many years. The group already has more than 650 completed interviews from women in the United States and from several other countries.

A program of dramatic readings from some of these herstories was first put together for a regional conference in 2011, and the program has been shown to varied audiences since then. In 2015, the group applied for and received a grant from the Pride Foundation to help produce a DVD about the project which contains some of the dramatic readings.

For more information, contact organizer@psara.org, or call the PSARA office, 206-448-9646.



A Better Way to Invest Seattle Taxpayers' Money

By John M. Repp and Cindy Cole

When the City of Seattle receives tax money and payment for services like electricity or water, they deposit the money in Wells Fargo Bank. If more money comes to the city than they need to pay the bills, the Seattle City Treasurer buys US Treasury bills and CDs. This is the City's investment pool. The pool's average value in 2015 was over \$1.4 billion. The value goes up and down depending upon the income and expenses of the city. But it never goes below a certain amount. The City earns less than 1 percent on this pool.

If a portion of this investment pool, specifically an amount below what always remained in the pool the last decade or so, became the capital of a municipal public bank, it could earn many times the current return. The Bank of North Dakota (BND), a bank owned by the state of North Dakota, earned 18.5 percent return on investment in 2014. As a bank, they can leverage their capital and earn the money from the interest on the loans they make.

In February of this year, the Seattle City Council voted to stop banking with Wells Fargo by the end of 2018. The reason for the vote was Wells Fargo's investment in the Dakota Access Pipeline, a fossil fuel infrastructure project that locks us into using too much oil, too long into the future. Wells Fargo has also engaged in fraudulent practices before and after the financial crash of 2008. Therefore, this is an excellent time for the Seattle City Council to charter a Seattle Public Bank (also called Seattle Municipal Bank) to become Seattle's banker. In addition to earning much more on its investment pool, the Seattle Public Bank would be able to finance needed affordable housing and transportation projects. With a public bank, these projects will cost the city half of what it would cost if the city borrowed money from Wall Street banks or from wealthy investors by selling bonds. This is the real dividend we need in our rents through-the-roof and car-choked

city. This is why a Seattle Public Bank is a much, much better way to invest taxpayer money. It is the perfect complement to the income tax ordinance the Council passed.

We must expect legal challenges to an ordinance chartering a Seattle Public Bank. The Wall Street banks like their current position of power and will use the legal system to challenge the bank. But a report from the City Attorney's office saying that a legal challenge would make a Seattle Public Bank a financial "risk" is wrong. Here is why. The Seattle Public Bank would have but one depositor, the City of Seattle. The ordinance creating the bank would require the City to deposit its money in its own bank. So Seattle as the sole depositor would not panic and withdraw its funds as we might expect in the case of a private bank with hundreds of depositors under legal challenge. Also the loans the bank would make would be like other bank loans with a contract to protect the bank.

Opponents of public banking like to cite several clauses in the Washington State Constitution which they think prohibit a government entity from establishing a bank. But those clauses have been interpreted to mean that if the government loans money to private individuals or companies, it would be constitutional if the loans fulfill a legitimate governmental purpose and serve the public interest primarily. The very fact that the bank would receive back both the principal and the interest means the public interest is served primarily.

The Bank of North Dakota make most of its loans in partnership with local community banks and credit unions.



John and Cindy

One way this is done is the community banks make the loan and BND buys the loan from the community bank. Because the BND has been in business since 1919, North Dakota has more community banks per capita than any other state. The state of North Dakota also has no public debt. The state did not suffer any of the effects of the 2008 financial crisis, such as failed banks, lost jobs, and lost homes. The executives of the bank work for civil service salaries, not huge bonuses. All this is what we can expect from a Seattle Public Bank after a few years in operation if the capitalization is large enough.

The anti-big government attitude that may cause some people to oppose the idea of a public bank inadvertently supports the big banks of Wall Street.

We are now in an election campaign for Seattle Mayor and two City Council members. These candidates should be asked at public forums whether they support a public bank for Seattle. For more information, search the Internet for "Seattle Public Banking Coalition."

John Repp and Cindy Cole are PSARA members. John retired from Boeing and is a delegate for SPEEA on the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council. Cindy retired from SEIU 925 and works with SEIU 925 active retirees.

Clean and Affordable Energy Conference November 2

By Kat Plimpton

Nearly everyone agrees the Northwest should transition to the cleanest possible electric system. But knowing what that system looks like and how to get there forces us to answer three challenging questions:

- How can we make the transition to a clean energy future equitable for frontline communities and for workers affected by the decline of fossil fuels?
- How can and should investor-owned utilities be motivated to pursue clean energy?
- What should the role of natural gas be in our clean energy future?

These three questions will be tackled on November 2 at the Clean and Affordable Energy Conference, which brings together leaders and experts from business, advocacy organizations, government, and academia. Following Coalition tradition, the audience will have a chance to ask questions of the panelists and engage in the conversation.

These are a few of the sessions you can attend:

An equitable transition to a clean energy future

The transition to a clean and affordable energy future may not benefit all segments of society equally. How can we make sure that public policies don't leave behind workers and families that rely on the fossil fuel industry, people with low incomes, communities of color, and communities that are most impacted by climate change?

Motivating investor-owned utilities to pursue clean energy

How can earnings opportunities for investor-owned utilities be modified to assure sufficient revenue to cover costs while also providing necessary

incentives for the adoption of a portfolio of demand-side resources, renewable generation, and equitable access to electricity?

What's the role of natural gas in our clean energy future?

Natural gas utilities and direct users of natural gas see an uncertain future as the region strives to meet climate goals and minimize new fossil fuel infrastructure. What does the low carbon path for direct use of natural gas look like? What are the key policies and strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the wellhead to pipelines to end-use? Bio-gas and hydrogen – how much potential is there? And what are the opportunities for “district energy systems” that help urban centers make the transition to clean and renewable energy?

Innovation in Clean Energy

The conference's keynote address will be given by Spencer Reeder, Director of Climate and Energy at Vulcan. Spencer will address how innovation in clean energy and energy efficiency can enable us to meet our climate goals.

Guests are also invited to attend the annual Clean Energy Awards Gala. The Gala honors exceptional clean energy leaders from throughout the Northwest. The awards include:

The Headwaters Award

Given to those whose recent actions best exemplify or serve to further the goals of the NW Energy Coalition.



The Bob Olsen Memorial Conservation Eagle Award

Given to individuals and organizations that demonstrate leadership in building a clean and affordable energy future.

The Doug Still Memorial Community Organizing Award

Given to individuals or organizations that motivate citizens to advocate for a clean and affordable energy future.

4 Under Forty

Honors Northwest clean energy leaders under the age of 40 who model the passion and expertise we need to achieve a clean and affordable energy future.

For more information, please visit nwenergy.org

Kat Plimpton is the Outreach Associate at the NW Energy Coalition and a member of PSARA.

Social Security Commission Act of 2017 Introduced in House of Representatives

By Steve Kofahl

Maryland Democrat John Delaney introduced H.R. 3423 on July 26, with the bill referred to the Ways & Means and Rules Committees. Original co-sponsors are California Democrat Scott Peters, Oklahoma Republican Tom Cole, and Michigan Republican David Trott. It would create a 13-member commission that would have one year to come up with recommendations and proposed legislation, backed by 9 of the 13 members, that would extend Social Security Trust Funds solvency for 75 years.

Nothing in the bill calls for preserving or expanding benefits, or for “scrapping the cap” on earnings subject to the payroll tax, so an all-cuts plan would be the likely product. President Trump would appoint the Committee Chair; with the Speaker of the House, House Minority Leader, Senate Majority Leader, and Senate Minority Leader each naming 3 members. Speaker Paul Ryan would designate one of his picks as the Committee Co-Chair.

House Committees could choose to take up the bill produced by the

Commission, but would not be allowed to amend it or to strike any provisions before it is brought to the floor for a vote by the full House. There, members would have only 4 hours of debate. If the bill passed the House, the Senate would be permitted just 10 hours of debate before voting.

The good news is that H.R. 3423 has not attracted any additional co-sponsors, there has been no committee action to date, and national Social Security advocates don't expect that it will move this year. Two days after dropping this bill, Delaney announced his intentions to run for President in 2020 and to not run next year for another House term, so the bill's author will not be around to potentially reintroduce it in the next Congress.

The bad news is that the Commission that this bill would create is being compared to the 1983 Greenspan Commission that recommended changes to Congress to extend Social Security solvency, and is being touted as a bi-partisan effort. The 1983 recommendations, however, did not create a fast-track

bill, and the House and Senate instead used the regular order of business to craft and fully debate legislation that amended the Social Security Act.

Delaney and Peters have a history of supporting benefit cuts and sit on the fiscally conservative New Democrat Coalition (NDC) in the House that seeks to “bridge the gap” between the political left and right. Thankfully, they do not represent the Democratic Party or the NDC on the subject of Social Security. But the NDC does have 61 members, including all members of the Washington Congressional delegation except for Pramila Jayapal. We can appreciate their frustration in serving in a polarized Congress that accomplishes little, but we must remind them that Social Security benefit cuts are not negotiable or acceptable and continually press them to expand benefits and “scrap the cap.”

Steve Kofahl is the retired president of AFGE 3937, representing workers at the Social Security Administration, and a member of PSARA's Executive Board.

Forum to Focus on Women, Equity, and Optimal Aging

By Irene Stewart

What do you know about women and aging? Are there differences between men and women when it comes to aging and retirement? How do those differences align with PSARA's goals? Age Friendly Seattle—a new City of Seattle initiative to make Seattle a great place to grow up AND grow old—will hold a forum this fall where you can explore those questions and more.

Here are a few things we already know:

- Older women outnumber older men and are more likely to be widowed and to live alone.
- On average, women earn between 77–83 percent of what men earn for the

same job. This gap affects retirement income and impacts single women, women of color, and LGBTQ women most.

- Caregivers typically experience lost wages, reduced retirement funds, and lower Social Security benefits. Women experience greater reductions in all these areas than men. Low-income women are particularly impacted by caregiving career interruptions.

- A full 25 percent of women age 60 and over in King County live in or near poverty, compared to only 19 percent of men.

We all know how this plays out when it comes to justice, equal rights, and dignity.

It was an obvious choice to invite PSARA to co-sponsor “Engaging Aging,” a forum focused on women and optimal aging, on Monday, November 6, from 3–8 p.m. at Seattle City Hall (600 4th Avenue, Seattle). PSARA Outreach VP Susan Levy serves on the forum planning team. A list of all co-sponsors is available at <http://bit.ly/2hcEWVz>

The forum opens at 3 p.m. with a resource fair. At 4 p.m., the program starts. Forum topics will range from broad concepts such as ageism, racism, and sexism to specific topics related to financial well-being, physical and mental health, personal safety, and

Continued on Page 8



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 you 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.

Women, Equity, and Optimal Aging

Continued from Page 6

caregiving, presented by subject matter experts. Along the way, we'll indicate where the City of Seattle can be involved. City government roles include policies (laws), programs (direct service and/or funding), outreach (increasing access), and advocacy.

The audience will discuss the presentations and indicate those ideas that merit the most attention. Age Friendly Seattle will publish comments and ideas from the forum. We hope the forum will generate specific actions that the City can implement to benefit women and optimal aging.

The event is free to attend but pre-registration is required. Visit www.survey-monkey.com/r/EngagingAging or call 206-386-1521.

For more information about the forum visit www.seattle.gov/agefriendly. Read the About section to learn about "The 8 Domains of Livability"—transportation, housing, outdoor spaces and buildings, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, community and health services, and communication and information. Age Friendly Seattle will propose specific actions in each of those domains in its action plan for 2018–2021.

Questions? Email agefriendly@seattle.gov. For ongoing information about Age Friendly Seattle, send a message to AGEFRIENDLY-subscribe-request@talk2.seattle.gov to join the listserv.

Irene Stewart is Project Manager at Age Friendly Seattle and a PSARA member.



The Threat of Industrial Aquaculture

By Diane Jones

People on the Olympic Peninsula have been attentively watching news of the escape of up to 160,000 non-native Atlantic salmon from an industrial fish farm near Cypress Island. Here is my take on this issue.

In 1972, Congress enacted the Coastal Zone Management Act, (CZMA). Each coastal state was asked to develop a coastal management plan (CMP). One of the features of the Act used to lure states into the program was the federal consistency clause, section 307. It requires federal actions that affect a state's coastal zone to conform to a state's coastal management plan.

In 1984, the Department of Interior proposed a sale of oil and gas leases in the outer continental shelf off California's coast. California protested this sale on grounds that it violated section 307. The US Supreme Court eventually ruled in favor of the Department of Interior. More than a decade later, Congress amended section 307 in response to this Supreme Court ruling, to clarify and affirm coastal states' consistency rights.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has shown interest in the possibility of eventually expanding aquaculture into the offshore, meaning the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), waters 3 – 200 miles off shore. The purpose is to reverse a US seafood trade imbalance, and policy makers are looking to expand aquaculture as a growth industry.

Alaska's strong stance against the international salmon farming industry and the fact that the Alaska Coastal Management Act contains strong wording outlawing the industry, Alaska is likely to use section 307 to ban and oppose any effort of the federal government to open its waters to salmon farming.

Washington State's stance has been weaker. There were three counties that had shoreline management plans that disallowed or made placement of fish farms in their waters problematic. These plans help make up Washington State's coastal management plan. The Washington Department of Ecology, pressured

by federal policy makers, recently made these three counties write new Shoreline Management Plans that allowed locating fish farms in their waters. Jefferson County was one of these counties. People in Jefferson County put up a fight against this pressure with protests and petitions from citizens. And the county commissioners worked with then-Representative Kevin Van De Wege, who sponsored HB 1599 in 2013, to allow counties to ban net pen aquaculture. Then County Commissioner Phil Johnson, a former commercial salmon fisher who has adamantly opposed in-water fish farming, hailed the bill as "a step in the right direction." And I'd like to add: What good is section 307 if the federal government is influencing what our CMP allows or doesn't allow? This bill unfortunately didn't advance beyond a committee hearing.

Last month's netpen collapse has brought the controversy back into the news. The threat from finfish aquaculture is the real possibility of spreading viruses like piscine reovirus, infectious salmon anemia, and hematopoietic necrosis to native fish; spreading sea lice; adverse impacts on herring and other forage fish populations; tons of pollutants from the farms themselves, and escape. Of the two places in the world where fish farms have been located in waters shared with native salmon, Norway and British Columbia, the native salmon populations plunged and commercial fisheries dependent on them collapsed. These fish farms have no place in Washington's marine or river environments. Please let your representatives in Olympia know you oppose them. Land-based facilities with no connection to a river show promise as an alternative.

If we continue in the direction we are headed, and with the federal waters from 3 to 200 miles offshore considered the last great frontier to exploit, I fear for the future.

Diane Jones is a member of PSARA's Executive Board and Chair of PSARA's North Olympic Peninsula Committee.

PSARA Endorses I-940, the De-Escalate Washington Initiative

By Mike Andrew

PSARA endorsed I-940, the De-Escalate Washington Initiative, at our August 17 Executive Board meeting.

The measure is an initiative to the Legislature calling on state lawmakers to enact a law that would:

- Require that police officers receive training for violence de-escalation, mental health, and first aid,
- Require police to render first aid at the scene of shootings,
- Apply a “reasonable officer,” or good faith standard for the use of deadly force, and remove the de facto immunity from prosecution for officers involved in deadly force incidents,
- Require completely independent investigations of deadly force incidents,
- Include Tribal governments in investigations when a Tribal member is injured or killed by an officer,
- Bring community stakeholders to the table to develop standards and training curricula.

As an initiative to the Legislature, I-940 will not go on the ballot in November. Instead, if the Legislature fails to enact the law called for in the petition, it will go before the voters at the next statewide general election in November, 2018.

The Legislature may also adopt an alternative law, in which case both proposals will go on the November, 2018 ballot.

The petitions for the De-Escalate Washington Initiative will be circulated until December 29, with 259,622 valid signatures required to put the measure before the State Legislature.

The De-Escalate Washington Initiative is particularly timely, coming as it does in the wake of a number of police shootings in this state and nationwide. No one wants to blame police officers unjustly, but no one wants to see the cycle of police violence and community distrust spiral out of control either. King County Prosecutor Dan Satterberg

recently said that he can see no scenario where police can be held criminally liable under current state law, which requires prosecutors to prove that an officer acted with “malice” when shooting a suspect.

In addition to PSARA, I-940 has been endorsed by the Washington State Labor Council, the Martin Luther King County Labor Council, Amnesty International, and a number of unions, community and faith leaders and organizations, and five Native Tribes or Nations.

Both King County Sheriff candidates, John Urquhart and Mitzi Johanknecht, have joined the Black Law Enforcement Association of Washington and National Black Police Association in endorsing I-940. Criminal Justice Training Commission Executive Director and former King County Sheriff, Sue Rahr, is also collaborating with campaign leadership to make Washington State a national leader in violence reduction and safety of both police officers and the public.

If you want petitions to circulate, or if you’ve been circulating petitions and



you want to turn them in, contact Sophia Nicholson Keener, Volunteer and Events Coordinator, at 206-399-5294 or sophia@de-escalatewa.org

There are also petitions available at the PSARA office in the Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 1st Ave., Room 262. Please call ahead to be sure petitions are still available, 206-448-9646.

If you want to donate to the campaign, contact Gabe Meyer, Finance Director, at 206-999-4071 or gabe@de-escalatewa.org

PSARA Endorses Jefferson County Proposition 1

By Diane Jones

PSARA’s position on homelessness supports substantially increased investments in low-income housing. As such, PSARA’s executive board has unanimously endorsed Proposition 1 on Jefferson County’s general election ballot for November 7th.

Prop 1 creates the Jefferson County Home Opportunity Fund to provide grants and loans to capable organizations that can create and preserve housing throughout Jefferson County. The goal of these funds is to leverage

matching grants and other funding to significantly increase investments in additional housing for low- and very-low-income households. Two-thirds of the levy would be dedicated to addressing the housing needs of very-low-income households and one-third to affordable housing for low income households.

Diane Jones is a member of PSARA’s Executive Board and Chair of PSARA’s North Olympic Peninsula Committee.

Housing For All: Taking the City to Task on the Homelessness Crisis

By Katie Wilson

On November 2, 2015, Seattle and King County declared a Homelessness State of Emergency. Since then, the number of unsheltered homeless people in King County has risen by nearly 50 percent. Early this year 5,500 people were counted sleeping in tents, in vehicles, and on the streets.

Some of the causes of this crisis are readily apparent: skyrocketing rents due to an influx of well-heeled tech workers, a shortage of housing, and global speculation in real estate.

But the causes of the homelessness crisis go deeper. We're reaping the fruits of decades of federal and state disinvestment in public housing, mental health, and social services. More and more people are left at the mercy of the private housing market, and for many, one missed paycheck or medical emergency could mean eviction and homelessness.

This fall a new coalition, called Housing For All, is pushing for a response to homelessness that meets the scale of the crisis in a way that is both realistic and respectful of homeless people's dignity and rights. Homelessness is a regional and even national crisis, but we're starting with the City of Seattle, where the upcoming elections for Mayor, City Council, and City Attorney give us a special window of opportunity to shape our city's future.

This begins with housing. The answer to homelessness is housing. Whatever contributing factors push people over the edge, it ultimately comes down to not having the money to pay rent. Considering the severe shortage of low-income housing, the homelessness crisis is hardly a mystery. According to the Housing Development Consortium, in Seattle alone the "housing gap" of additional homes needed by 2030 for households at at or below 30 percent of Area Median Income is 27,481. Seattle's HALA plan projects only 6,000 such units in the next 10 years.

Housing For All is calling on the City



Katie Wilson

to recognize this gap and commit to using all the tools and resources at our disposal to fill it: seeking out new progressive revenue such as taxes on speculation and big business; bonding; using public land; and changing regulations to encourage housing types that are easier to build affordably, such as backyard cottages, mother-in-law units, and SROs (single room occupancies).

If the current plans to create low-income housing are so inadequate, how does the City plan to deal with the homelessness crisis? Unfortunately, some of their newest programs and policies are not just inadequate but downright counterproductive.

Take, for example, the new focus on short-term "Rapid Re-Housing" vouchers. The City plans to divert funding from existing shelter and service providers to pay for vouchers that homeless people and families can use to find housing on the private market. After three, six, or nine months, the vouchers expire, and they are expected to pay rent on their own. It doesn't take a lot of imagination to see that this approach is not going to work for most homeless people in a housing market where rents are so damn high. Finding yourself couch-surfing or back on the street, demoralized, and now with an eviction on your record is not a good outcome.

The Housing For All Coalition is urging the City to reconsider the short-

term voucher approach and to commit to funding high-quality and accessible shelter and services at the scale of the crisis. We need more tiny house villages, and more indoor shelters that are not overcrowded or bug-infested – shelter options that a rational person would actually choose over sleeping outside in a tent.

Until we have enough affordable housing and/or shelter options that meet people's needs, we have to accept that there are going to be people sleeping outside in tents, in vehicles, and on the street. The question then arises, how should the city treat these people?

Too often, the City's policies end up criminalizing the performance of basic life-sustaining activities in public spaces. The practice of forcing people in unauthorized encampments to move along, without being able to offer them housing or shelter that works for them, only serves to disrupt whatever sliver of stability and community they've been able to establish. It is harmful, not helpful.

The Housing For All Coalition is urging a harm reduction approach to unsheltered homelessness. If an encampment site is not irremediably unsafe or in conflict with other public uses (No, we're not saying people can camp in parks and playing fields!), services should be offered without threat of removal. For people living in vehicles, the City needs to do better outreach and find alternatives to ticketing and towing that don't result in debt traps.

Taken together, we believe these policies will put the City on the right track and begin to build a bridge to stable and permanent housing for our homeless brothers and sisters. But it's not going to be easy – we need your help to win! You can learn more and get involved in the campaign at HousingForAllSeattle.org

Katie Wilson is General Secretary of the Transit Riders Union and a member of PSARA's Executive Board.

Speech on the 54th Anniversary of the March on Washington, August 28

By Kristen Beifus

I am honored to be here at the 54th anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

To remember the efforts, arrests, organizing, and loss of life leading up to the march and everything that has come since.

I draw from the vision, courage, and hard work of those who made the March on Washington happen. A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin as well as Josephine Baker and Daisy Bates...

As a white person, I also look for examples to white people who lived lives in the struggle, many engaging in everyday actions of simple humanity.

Tens of thousands of them who marched and inspired future white people....

These folks and more than 200,000 African Americans who marched are not named in our history books or on the internet. However, they are this history.

And while I will not be named in any book, I am part of making the history of the future.

Recent events in Charlottesville remind us -- as white people -- we are not neutral, we are not innocent.

Yes, we didn't choose this body we were born into.

However, we have a choice how we use this body, such as James Zwerg being the first off the bus in Birmingham during the Freedom rides.

We choose what we feed our mind, what we cultivate in our hearts, the words we speak and the actions we take -- from the mundane to the monumental.

Racial equity is not a grand gesture or a policy. Instead, it is made up of millions of everyday actions and interactions...

We as white people need to ask ourselves, in this moment, with this word, taking this action, how am I furthering racial equity?

Racial equity will not emerge simply from me coming to a rally.

PSARA is grappling with this -- how as a mostly white organization do we authentically mainstream racial and gender equity in the advocacy we do on climate justice, Social Security and Medicare for All?

Not just as allies -- as that assumes the work is not ours -- but as whole human beings.

And let me clear. We are not doing this for black people or Latinx or Asian Americans or Native Americans or immigrants.

We are doing this for ourselves.

Only when we are all safe, happy, and healthy can any of us be truly free.

I hear white people saying how tiring and relentless it is to engage in anti-racist work. To be "PC" all the time...

I do believe we as white people are needlessly tiring ourselves.

And that has to stop.

We need to stop tiring ourselves by running from the racist reality of our history, both our collective national history and the particular history of our families and ourselves. It is in us, and no matter how far or fast we run it's still there.

We need to stop tiring ourselves with the mental reassuring we undertake everyday to convince ourselves and others we are not "those people," we aren't racists or KKK or neo-nazis, we are good.

We need to lay it down and use all of that energy that we gain from falsely shoring ourselves up every day to resolve, to see, to name, to take action.

Be truly honest with ourselves, our communities, and people of color.

This means at times being uncomfortable, impolite, and disruptive.



Kristen Beifus

The status quo insures racism continues.

In our homes, our workplaces, our schools, our places of worship, and our communities PSARA is committed to racial justice, work that is frequently imperfect and unsure. However, we are also resolved that it is the only way to reclaim our humanity.

Kristen Beifus is an organizer for UFCW 21 and a member of PSARA's Executive Board. Kristen spoke on behalf of PSARA at a commemoration of the 54th anniversary of the March on Washington, August 28, at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park.

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

West Seattle Hot Topics for Seniors & Senior Wannabes: Noon – 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 4, Southwest Library, 9010 35th Ave SW, Seattle, (35th & Henderson). Brown bag lunch.

PSARA Environmental Committee: 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Thursday, October 5, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All welcome.

PSARA Government Relations Committee: 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., Thursday, October 5, Seattle Labor Temple, Room 226, 2800 First Ave. All welcome.

“Making Retirement Security Real for Everyone” Workshop: 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 19, Fidalgo Democrats, Anacortes Public Library, 1220 10th Street, Anacortes WA 98221.

Green Lake Discussion Group: Noon - 1:30 p.m., Thursday, October 12, Green

Lake Branch, Seattle Public Library, 7364 E. Green Lake Dr. N, Seattle. 98115. Brown bag lunch. For further information contact Susan at sjlevy.01@gmail.com

South End PSARA Meeting: Noon – 1:30 p.m., Thursday, October 12, Kent Senior Activity Center, 600 E Smith St., Kent. All welcome as we plan PSARA events in the South End.

“Herstory”: 11 a.m. – noon, Thursday, October 19, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. See the article on Page 3. Co-sponsored by the PSARA Diversity Committee. All are welcome.

PSARA Executive Board Meeting: 12:30 p.m. - 3 p.m., Thursday, October 19, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle. All are welcome.

“Making Retirement Security Real for Everyone” Workshop: 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 19, 46th District Democrats, Seattle Mennonite Church, 3120 NE 125th St., Seattle.

“Making Retirement Security Real for Everyone” Workshop: 6 p.m., Wednesday, October 25, Snohomish Central Labor Council, 2810 Lombard Ave., Everett WA 98201.

“Making Retirement Security Real for Everyone” Workshop: 7 p.m., Wednesday, October 25, 31st District Democrats, East Pierce Fire and Rescue Station, 10105 24th St. E, Edgewood WA 98371.

PSARA Education Committee: 1 p.m., Friday, October 27, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S.

