

Community CONNECTION

THE VOICE AND HEARTBEAT OF OUR COMMUNITY

March - April 2012 | cangress.wordpress.com



Don't Punt Away Our Health, AEG

Community Residents Demand Accountability and Time to Study Potential Impacts of Proposed Football Stadium

WRITTEN BY ERIC ARES
PHOTOS BY LA CAN

On April 9, as AEG moved forward with its aggressive play to build a football stadium at any cost, the Play Fair at Farmer's Field Coalition continued to push for accountability and transparency while demanding that the City of Los Angeles do all it can to ensure true community input and involvement in the stadium process.

On that same day, AEG unveiled its 10,000 page Environmental Impact Report (EIR) as part of a supposed community meeting at the LA Convention Center. According to state law, community residents and the general public have only 45 days to review and respond to the document, which outlines the vast environmental impacts of the proposed Farmers Field stadium project and the ways in which AEG plans to address these impacts in order to protect community health.

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WE WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN

On April Fools' Day, Los Angeles Joined Cities Across the Nation in Calling for the End of Criminalizing Homelessness and Poverty

WRITTEN BY GENERAL DOGON
PHOTOS BY LA CAN

On April 1, 2012, LA CAN members and supporters from around the City held a "Parade of Fools" to bring attention to those responsible for the continued and expanding criminalization of homelessness and poverty in Los Angeles. The event was held simultaneously with 14 other cities, in united actions coordinated by the Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP). Each city planned an April Fools' joke or surprise - calling for an end to criminalization tactics.

These actions were planned in response to the rise in government oppression and attacks that have hit homeless and extremely low-income people the hardest. With economic and social conditions forcing even more displacement and homelessness, WRAP is focused on ensuring that criminalization does not continue as the main response from local governments to these conditions. "WRAP over the past years has led efforts with its west coast grassroots members and allies to take back and reclaim the land. The April Fools Day actions

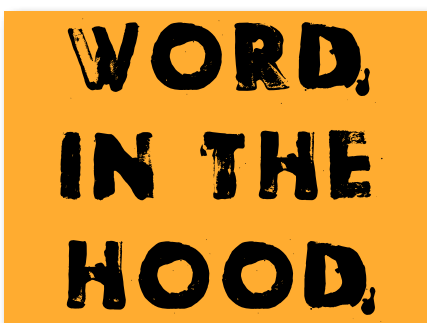
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Community Leaders and Organizations Unite to Stop LAPD Spying

WRITTEN BY HAMID KHAN AND ERIC ARES
PHOTOS BY LA CAN

Dozens rallied outside Los Angeles Police Department Headquarters in Downtown Los Angeles on the morning of April 10 to put an end to LAPD spying through Special Order 1. Speaking before community members as well as members of the media, Mariella Saba of Dream Team LA and the Coalition to Rescind Special Order 1 asked the crowd, "How many of you all like taking pictures? How many of you take notes? How many of you have ever held a sign in front of city hall? Well, then, all of you are suspicious individuals under Special Order 1."

Special Order 1 is a policy directive that authorizes LAPD to gather unlimited amounts of data on Angelenos who engage in such non-criminal behavior like taking pictures, using video cameras, taking notes, using binoculars and many other innocent daily activities. Since 2008 LAPD has used Special Order 1, which was issued in January 2012 as a revised version of 2008's Special Order 11, to file Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) and opening secret files on thousands of LA residents. These reports are then made available to be shared with other local and federal law enforcement agencies across the country.

"The simple fact is this, friends, when repression comes to any country it doesn't tend to descend on it in one fell swoop, it tends to creep in incrementally and that's why we're on the slippery slope to a police state in this country today," said Jim Lafferty of the National Lawyers Guild. "Well, the Stop LAPD Spying Coalition and the National Lawyers Guild are not going to go to sleep.

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HOUSING

HOUSING WATCH

Ensuring that we have the information and power to keep our homes and community intact

Baltimore and King Edward Hotels

For the last couple of months rumors have been floating around the community that the Baltimore and King Edward hotels have been sold to a new owner. Recently, Izek Shomof, the current owner of the Bristol Hotel and Hayward Hotel, purchased the King Edward, Baltimore Hotel, and Leland Hotels.

These properties were bought during an auction that occurred after the former owner declared bankruptcy. As reported in the previous editions of the Community Connection, when a new owner takes over a building downtown they often attempt to change management rules in an illegal manner, such as changing the when someone's rent is due. Lucky for residents of these three buildings, units in the King Edward, Baltimore, and Leland are protected under the City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance, which offers tenants numerous protections. For example, under RSO, tenants' rents cannot be raised more than five percent on a yearly basis and the date rent is paid cannot be changed. In addition, tenants can not be evicted because a new owner has taken control of their building.

You cannot be evicted because your new owners

want to rehabilitate your building and rent the unit at a higher rate. Recently, LA CAN held a meeting and presentation on tenant rights for tenants in these hotels. Many residents left energized and ready to organize for better living conditions and fair management practices under the new ownership.

If you think any of your tenant rights are being violated, file a complaint with the city at LA CAN.

Pueblo Del Rio Update

Since the end of last year, tenants of the Pueblo Del Rio Public Housing Development have been organizing other neighbors to advocate against increases in trash and maintenance fees. On February 8th, 2012, Sanford Riggs of the Housing Authority came to speak on these issues and informed residents that the Housing Authority had begun to process the over 500 utility allowance requests that were submitted by tenants, meaning rents will go down.

This occurred after hundreds of petitions and letters were sent to HACLA demanding these allowances. As it currently stands the federal government allows for a tenant to receive a utility allowance for having to pay trash, electrical and gas fees. The government does this to ensure that tenants only pay 30% percent of their income in rent. At the end of March a lawsuit was filed on behalf of tenants by the Western Center on Law and Poverty. The lawsuit is asking for a retroactive rent credit for tenants and the end of tenants

having to pay for trash fees.

Huntington Hotel

As previously reported in the Community Connection, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles and Step-toe & Johnson filed a lawsuit against the owners of the Huntington Hotel in December 2011. This lawsuit was filed on behalf of displaced tenants and LA CAN. In February 2012 a primary injunction hearing occurred during which the court was asked to decide whether or not some 60 units, which are required by law to be rented at lower rents, could be rented at higher rents.

The reason why this was being contested was because building had been placed in the city's Rent Escrow Account Program (REAP) due to the owner not correcting inhabitable living conditions. Under this program, once a building comes out of REAP it must rent units in the building at the same rates it was renting when they went into the program. The Judge ruled that the displaced tenants and LA CAN had enough evidence to require that 53 units be preserved at their pre-REAP rents. These rents vary between as low as 180 dollars a month with a monthly average of about 450 dollars. At the time of print legal proceedings were still occurring in this case.

For more information, or to become more involved, come to the LA CAN Housing Committee meeting, held every Monday at 11am at 530 S. Main St., 90013

La Autoridad de la Vivienda designa un nuevo director ejecutivo

ESCRITO POR STEVE DIAZ

La Autoridad de la Vivienda de la ciudad de Los Angeles (HACLA) recientemente condujo una serie de actividades como parte del proceso para seleccionar un director ejecutivo. Esto incluyó un foro de candidatos el 2 de marzo durante el cual los inquilinos de la vivienda pública y de la sección 8 podían someter preguntas a ser respondidas por ambos candidatos potenciales. Los dos candidatos que llegaron a la consideración final fueron Doug Guthrie, el actual administrador del Departamento de la Vivienda y Preston Prince, el Oficial Ejecutivo Corporativo (CEO) de la Autoridad de la Vivienda de Fresno. El foro se llevó a cabo en la iglesia de Santa Ana, localizada en el area de Rampart en Los Angeles. HACLA proporcionó Inquilinos de todos los 14 proyectos de vivienda pública con transportación al foro y regreso. Además de responder a preguntas de los inquilinos, se dió oportunidad a ambos candidatos de dar un recuento de sus cualidades e historial.

El candidato Guthrie habló de su experiencia con la Autoridad de la Vivienda en Chicago, durante la cual el número de propiedades habitables se demolieron y convirtieron en viviendas de ingreso mixto. La conversión ocurrió después de que la Autoridad de la Vivienda de Chicago solicitó convertirse en lo que se llama 'Ciudad moviéndose para trabajar.' Haciendo eso, la Autoridad de la Vivienda pudo optar el salir del "costoso" negocio de la vivienda de bajos ingresos. El candidato Prince habló de su trabajo actual en Fresno, y como ha sido capaz de mantener su agencia viable en momentos en los que los recursos federales están reduciéndose. Además de responder a preguntas antes sometidas, los candidatos también respondieron a preguntas de la concurrencia. Cuando la junta estaba por terminar, se anunció por el director incumbente de la Comisión de HACLA que habría una sesión especial cerrada de la comisión para tomar una decisión definitiva.

El 6 de marzo del 2012, la Autoridad de la Vivienda dió a conocer un parte de prensa con el siguiente título, "La junta vota para introducir negociaciones para nombrar a Doug Guthrie como Presidente y OEC (CEO)." Se citó al alcalde Antonio Villaraigosa diciendo que, "Al seleccionar a Doug Guthrie como OEC permanente, la junta de comisionados de HACLA ha escogido un lider reconocido nacionalmente en el campo de la vivienda pública."

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The LA Housing Authority Appoints a New Executive Director

WRITTEN BY STEVE DIAZ

The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) recently conducted a series of activities as part of the process to select an Executive Director. This included a March 2 Candidate Forum during which public housing and Section 8 tenants could submit questions to be answered by both potential candidates. The two candidates that made it to final consideration were Doug Guthrie, the General Manager of the Los Angeles Housing Department, and Preston Price, the current CEO of the Fresno Housing Authority. The forum took place at St. Anne's church, which is located in the Rampart area of Los Angeles. Tenants from all fourteen public housing developments were provided with transportation to and from the forum by HACLA. In addition to answering tenant questions, both candidates were given the opportunity to give an overview of their qualifications and history.

Candidate Guthrie spoke about his involvement with the Chicago Housing Authority during which the city's public housing stock was demolished and converted into mixed-income housing. The conversion occurred after the Chicago Housing Authority applied to become what is called a Moving to Work city. By doing so, the Housing Authority was able to opt out of the, according to them, "costly" low-income housing business. Candidate Prince spoke about his current job in Fresno and how he has been able to keep his agency on track in a time in which federal resources are running short. In addition answering pre-submitted questions, the candidates also fielded questions from those present. When the meeting was coming to an end it was announced by the chair of the HACLA Commission that there was going to be a special closed session of the commission to make a final decision.

On March 6, 2012 the Housing Authority issued a press release with the following title: "Board Votes to Enter into Contract Negotiations to Appoint Doug Guthrie as President and CEO. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa was quoted as saying that, "In selecting Doug Guthrie as permanent CEO, HACLA's Board of Commissioners has chosen a nationally recognized leader in the public housing field." He went on to add, "Doug provided strong leadership at the LA Housing Department and has already undertaken the serious work of instituting reforms as Interim CEO of HACLA. I am confident Doug is the best person to continue

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CIVIL RIGHTS

Occupy Main St.

WRITTEN BY LINDSAY CRISTOFANI

The history of Occupy LA (OLA) is tarnished with stories of homeless occupiers suffering antagonism from the OLA encampment. The ostracizing by some in the OLA encampment of Skid Row residents led to the formation of Occupy the Hood (OTH) as well as the Skid Row-themed General Assembly. Then, beginning in January, Occupy the Hood invited OLA to commence one month of Friday Night Occupations on Skid Row. Here in late March, the Friday Night Occupations are still going strong. The dynamic between those who live in Skid Row and those allies who come for Friday Night Occupations is delicate and entangled, but this coalition has great potential.

At 6:00AM every morning, a privatized police force known as "the shirts" (because of their ludicrous color-coded uniforms) who lack any authority of the LAPD, wake and harass the people peacefully sleeping in their tents. The Skid Row Occupations are an effort to disrupt and discomfit this pattern of abuse. When faced with larger number of tents and people, ranging from yuppie looking young people to veterans



Members of Occupy the Hood/Skid Row on Main St.

of "the row," "the shirts" as well as LAPD officers are held more accountable.

While occupiers are no stranger to tent living, Skid Row is already occupied, home to many people living there full time. There is a significant possibility that OLA may be perceived as thoughtlessly parachuting into Skid Row and holding Friday night parties without effectively addressing issues. However, an alliance between OLA and OTH is a force of people power not to be underestimated.

According to Occupier Vanessa Carlisle,

"The tents are lined up in front of a parking lot on that is frequented by well-dressed hipsters. We chatted about occupy until they hit a wall of guilty ambivalence--faced with the facts about the police tactics on Skid Row and a tangible action they could do to resist the victimization of SR residents, they crawled back into their nice car.

They don't really want a revolution, we said to ourselves sadly. Five minutes later, we were spray-painting our tents with Guy Fawkes's face and discussing the politics of selling drugs on 4th Street. It's a mixed up, brilliant, important experience."

Know Your Rights

The Right to Get Drunk: When You're on Main Street It's Progress, But When We're On Main Street It's Criminal

WRITTEN BY JOHN RAPHLING, ATTORNEY AT LAW

Skid Row is possibly the most over-policed area in California, if not in the entire country. Each day LAPD and private security forces are out on the streets using and abusing their authority to make life difficult for poor people living in our community. LA CAN has long raised the policing of alcohol as an indicator of discriminatory policing in a gentrifying community. Dozens of new bars and restaurants serving alcohol – often on the public sidewalk – have been touted as progress in the "new downtown." Yet drinking alcohol to the east of Main Street is often criminalized.

Drunk in Public

One common tool that police are using to detain, arrest, search and prosecute the people of Skid Row is the so-called law against being "drunk in public." Police arrest people on the streets who show some sign of having been drinking alcohol. The arrest allows them to search their pockets and bags and/or to take them to the station to pursue criminal charges, often leading to time in jail or on probation.

But can the police arrest us for being "drunk in public"?

The Law

The answer is: it depends. In fact, we are free to drink alcohol and get drunk and be out in public. It is not a good idea, since it hurts our health, breaks down our minds, leads us to do stupid and sometimes dangerous things. But it is legal to get drunk – rich and poor; housed and homeless.

What is illegal is being drunk and being disorderly. Penal Code Section 647(f), "disorderly conduct," defines the crime "drunk in public" as "being under the influence of intoxicating liquor, any drug ... or any combination" and being "in a condition that he or she is unable to exercise care for his or her own safety or the

safety of others." In other words, it is only a crime to be drunk in public if you are out of control so that you may harm yourself or someone else. You also cannot block the street or sidewalk if you are drunk.

In order to justify detaining or arresting a person for being drunk, the police have to be able to show the disorderly conduct or threat of danger. (People v. Rich (1977) 72 Cal.App.3d 115, 122.) Such threat of danger can include getting behind the wheel of a car (People v. Lively (1992) 10 Cal.App.4th 1364, 1369), or walking out into traffic, or other similar actions. A person sitting in a park or walking peacefully on the sidewalk may do so intoxicated and not be arrested lawfully.

Open Containers/Narcotics Influence are Different

We should remember, however, that it is illegal to actually drink alcohol in a public place (L.A.M.C. section 41.27c) – unless of course your "new downtown" bar got a special permit so you could sit on the public sidewalk and drink. So don't be out with open containers or the police can arrest you. Also, they can arrest you if you are under the influence of narcotics like heroin, cocaine or methamphetamine, and they do not have to show any disorderly conduct. (Health & Safety Code section 11550.) Having signs of narcotics intoxication alone is enough to allow police to arrest.

The Right to Be Drunk

Police may not arrest us simply because we are drunk. As long as we mind our own business, do not block others' way, and do not act in a way that endangers ourselves or others, we have the right to go about our business free from police interference.

Disclaimer: This column provides a very general and incomplete explanation of basic legal principles, and may not apply to the specific facts of your case. Please consult an attorney concerning your particular situation. This discussion applies only to California law. Other states may have different rules. This column is not intended in any way to encourage anyone to consume alcohol.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Free Nutritious Food, Bring Your EBT

WRITTEN BY JOSE VANDERBURG

I believe the key to a long life is eating right and properly avoiding representing the pig or swine in our behaviors governing our eating habits and choices. Instead we should dignify ourselves by nourishing our minds, bodies and souls. We, low-income or without income citizens, have a battle that constantly erupts when we are trying to make decisions that affect our subsistence. Almost always our minds and morality have to compromise with capitalistic oppression. The cheaper way always comes with a discount on our lives. We must value food as much as life and realize the importance of spend-

ing scarce resources for food in the most beneficial way. In other words, we need to know how make our benefits benefit us holistically.

By using your EBT card to purchase healthy vegetables, you will be on the path of saving a lot of money and time -- at the doctor or without energy. Purchasing healthy vegetables can help eliminate chronic diseases from your family. Buying fresh fruits and vegetables is a step toward showing yourself and the world you value your life. A lot of the time we are told we ain't shit or we are nothing, and the sad part is sometimes we believe this stuff. But eating right is the way to show others the value of your life and how much you matter. It gives you a high that lasts beyond instant gratification; it's the high of nourishment and of feeling good and whole.

Good News! Community Services Unlimited (CSU) has partnered up with Hunger Action LA to release a new benefit recipient incentive for low-income people that will allow us to purchase fresh natural produce.

The program, which is expected to launch April 14th at the CSU Earth Day rally, will financially assist EBT card holders with the weekly purchase of a 10-pound bag of produce. Classes and demonstrations will be offered to help us learn how to use the fresh vegetables with and without a stove. Please come to the LA CAN office and express your interest in receiving a bag of produce or even just scheduling a day where you come and get a couple apples. Come check in to get a list of the local farmers markets that accept EBT cards and for field trips to the CSU farm!

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Play Fair AEG

At a press conference held immediately before the public meeting, representatives from LA CAN, Physicians for Social Responsibility Los Angeles, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Community Health Councils, Hunger Action LA, and Union de Vecinos all spoke to various community concerns about the project, such as the lack of community participation and potential housing displacement that might occur if the project goes through. Yet the one message they all shared was that 45 days clearly is not enough time to review 10,000 pages of analysis and provide meaningful input to aid in the protection of the environment and health of those who would be most impacted by the stadium - residents who live in the communities surrounding the stadium. Frank Tamborello of Hunger Action LA pointed out that, "someone would have to read 9 pages per hour, 24 hours per day in order to finish the document in the 45 day period."

Instead, community groups demand that the EIR Review Period be expanded to 90 days and the City's Planning Department has the authority to grant this extension. This would allow local residents and the general public more time to engage in the EIR review process, which is one of the primary tools that local communities can use to protect their health from the impacts of major developments, such as the proposed football stadium.

AEG often claims that they go above and beyond when it comes to involving the public, citing their many community meetings. However, these types of meetings, while advertised as public, have generally been gatherings of AEG, city officials, representatives from government agencies, and other parties that are already very familiar with the project. The EIR public meeting was no different - where most, if not all, local community residents present were part of the Play Fair at Farmer's Field group.

Another reason why an expanded 90-day EIR review process is so critical is that the coalition is currently working on a Health

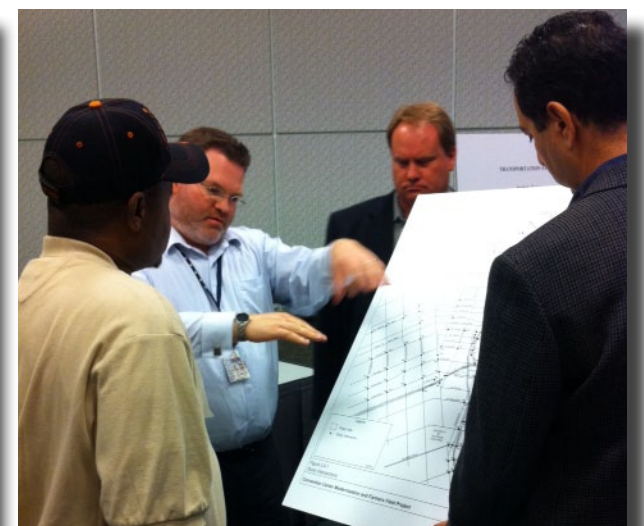


Impact Assessment (HIA) that will measure how the stadium project would potentially impact housing stability and access to public space. This is especially important because AEG simply refuses to acknowledge that their projects have ever affected housing or gentrification.

Speaking to ABC7 News, a representative of AEG, Martha Saucedo, went on record as saying "Since Staples Center opened, and with the opening of LA LIVE, there hasn't been any evidence of gentrification in the surrounding community." Yet, there is evidence of more than 750 affordable housing units being impacted since the development of LA Live, due to demolitions to make way for parking lots, illegal evictions for planned conversions of buildings, and rapidly rising rents. Also, Staples Center sits exactly on the site of affordable housing demolished prior to construction of the arena.

Initial readings of the EIR indicate that AEG is asserting that the proposed project "would not have the potential to cause significant impacts related to.....Population/Housing." Residents know this is not true, and they need an expanded 90-day period in order to complete an HIA that would discuss the impact that the stadium would definitely have on the issue of housing displacement.

An expanded EIR review process would have to be granted by the head of the City's Planning Department, and Play Fair at Farmer's Field is currently working to get such an extension while continuing to work on other strategies to ensure that, if



Left: LAFLA Attorney Zahirah W. Mann and other members of the Play Fair Farmers Field Coalition demand a 90-day EIR Review Period. Right: LA CAN Member Wesley Walker participates in AEG's EIR Community Meeting.

the stadium is built, it benefits, rather than sacrifices and dismisses, the livelihoods and public health of low-income community residents.

THE BENEFITS OF COCONUT

WRITTEN BY SONI ABDEL

Pure coconut is an all-around heart-healthy food with various therapeutic qualities and multiple health benefits. It is rich in antioxidants and vitamins (especially E), and its saturated fats can also be converted into energy.

Pure coconut oil has a light flavor and is solid at room temperature. You can substitute coconut oil for vegetable shortening or lard as a healthier alternative.

You can also get the benefits of coconut oil in massage oils, hair products, and topically applied medications.

Coconut flour is a healthier alternative to wheat and soy flours and is the better choice for diabetics and those with celiac disease. Coconut flour is lower in carbohydrates than soy flour, is gluten-free, is a good source of protein, and has 61% fiber content.

WOMEN'S ISSUES

Downtown Women's Action Coalition Raises Funds and Consciousness with *The Vagina Monologues*

WRITTEN BY SONI ABDEL

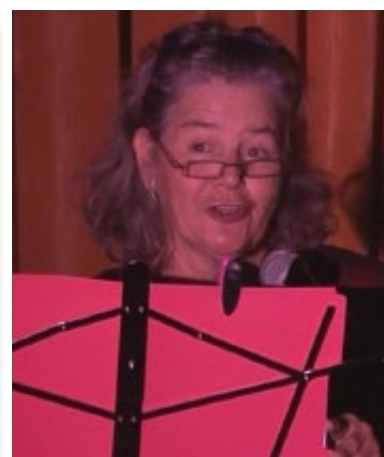
This year's Downtown Women's Action Coalition's (DWAC) annual fundraiser, a performance of *The Vagina Monologues*, was a huge success that raised money for critical work, entertained and educated performers and attendees alike, and inspired dozens of people of all nationalities and genders in attendance. The production was not the first time DWAC has performed *The Vagina Monologues*, but it was perhaps the coalition's most ambitious. Held at the beautiful Belasco Theatre in Downtown Los Angeles on February 23 and 24, the production combined the talents, passion, and hard work of over 25 women who live and work in the heart of Skid Row.

The monologues themselves are based off true stories and interviews that author Eve Ensler conducted with hundreds of women and girls of all races and ages (6 and up) from around the world. Her interviews sparked an idea to create a forum where these incredible stories could be heard by everyone. The monologues are now performed by women across the globe. The beauty and power of the *Vagina Monologues* can be seen in its effect on all those who participate in the production and its ability to entertain while educating women and men.

When asked if the performance changed his view on women's issues, Karl Scott replied, "Watching this play dispels the myth about women being the weaker sex. I felt so much power from listening to stories that were told so vividly, and I became more educated on how verbal and physical abuse affects women." Asked if he would ever attend another performance of *The Vagina Monologues*, Scott offered an enthusiastic, "Yes!"

Steve Diaz shared in the enthusiasm to see a future production. "The performance captivated me," said Diaz. "It was funny and sad at the same time. Normally, I would feel uncomfortable listening to a woman speak about such painful experiences, but because the performance was so expressive, so theatrical, it was a safe environment."

Ensler's worldwide organization, V-Day, asks for at least ten percent of funds raised through local performances to support V-Day's work to end violence against girls and women. The rest of the money raised at this year's performance goes to support DWAC's annual Women's Day in the Park, an event held every May for the women of Skid Row. This year's event will be on Friday, May 18th in Elysian Park.



Clockwise from Top: Deborah Burton, Tracy Kennedy, Tabia Salimu, Tanisha Pope, and Emily Wing collaborate on a monologue; Madeline Dawn-Warner shares a laugh with the audience as she performs her piece, entitled "The Vagina Workshop"; Jennifer Campbell captivates the crowd with her version of "The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy"; Carmen Vega performs "The Flood."

Skid Row Resident, DWAC Member, and 2012 Vagina Monologues performer Tracy Kennedy reflects on what performing in the Vagina Monologues meant to her



I would like to extend my gratitude to Eve Ensler, the Downtown Women's Action Coalition, LA CAN and everyone else from the cast, production crew, the Belasco Theatre and, most importantly, all of those who turned out to support this very powerful movement to stop violence against women and girls!

The *Vagina Monologues* not only gave me the opportunity to tune up my acting skills, but it also allowed me to become educated about "The Vagina." When I sat

and read the script, I began comprehending all of the many moods, feelings and complications that are caused just by that female body part.

Some women are demoralized and circumcised and have no say so at all in the matter. Some women praise their "Vagina" whereas some women don't even like to think about "down there." The stories go on and on.

Ever since I've been reading this script, now when I see women I'm unconsciously wondering where they fit in the "Vagina Monologues." I really began to re-evaluate my system of measuring a woman's worth!

I thought that what I got daily as a woman was mentally and physically demanding, but I guess this is just the tip of the iceberg compared to a biological female.

I encourage anyone not familiar with *The Vagina Monologues* to Google it and become enlightened by the power and strength of each and every woman you see daily, from newborn to 100+.

Once again thank you all for allowing me to be a force in this remarkable stage production and the movement to stop violence against all women.

FEATURE



WE WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN

On April Fools Day, Los Angeles Joined Cities Across the Nation in Calling for the End of Criminalizing Homelessness and Poverty

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expressed the fight back spirit of homeless and low-income residents and clearly identified those responsible for the oppressive conditions faced on a daily basis," said Bilal Ali, one of the LA CAN members who organized the Los Angeles action.

The Parade of Fools in Downtown Los Angeles was designed to pull the blinders off and expose who our oppressors are in the war against the poor, and policing tactics such as the Safer Cities Initiative. Participants called attention to and denounced the oppressors by dressing up and imitating that character throughout the day. Skid Row residents and other participants were dressed as Mayor Villaraigosa, Jan Perry, LAPD officers including Senior Lead Officer Deon Joseph, BID security guards, Presidents Clinton and Obama, and many more.

Everyone met at LA CAN at noon, all fired up with their costumes and props raising interest along Main Street. The parade started with a short rally in front of the LA CAN office, where Pete White gave a thundering speech about gentrification in Los Angeles and throughout the country, the escalating use of police and criminalization to drive poor and Black people out of their communities, and linked these coordinated efforts to the recent shooting of Travon Martin and other murders of black men including Dale Garrett who was shot and killed by LAPD in Skid Row last year. The participants in the rally showed how people are fed-up with being victims of unjust criminalization, and the roar of field drums busted through the air.

The energized crowd took off chanting and marching down Main Street, around on 5th Street, to San Julian Park. The group took center stage in the park and did an

April Fools Day skit presenting proponents of criminalization such as the Mayor and Estela Lopez of the Central City East Association with false awards. Just as they were presented with the accolades that they usually receive, such as housing champion or community savior, the group shouted "April Fools!" and they were presented with the awards they really deserve, such as biggest sellout.

The field drums fired up again and the group headed to Gladys Park, where another skit was presented and a know your rights session was held focused on residents' rights when interacting with the Red Shirts or other private security. The skit highlighted how people can and should fight back against attempted civil rights violations by security guards. The message was clear: "we ain't goin' nowhere!" The last stop in Skid Row was at Central Division police station, labeled the "pig pen" on this day. Here, LA CAN's theatre of the oppressed group performed guerrilla theatre on the steps that portrayed a silly, clumsy cop out of touch with reality who caters only to the cries of latte drinking yuppies and the man he calls boss, the Mayor, while blatantly harassing and moving homeless residents off Main Street.

The Parade of Fools utilized theatre throughout as a means of communicating the different ways criminalization is used against our community, to highlight those responsible for it, and to call on the whole community to take action against it. As Deacon Alexander said, "At first I had reservations about it, but it was absolutely entertaining and we got the message across. I liked the way General Dogon clowned Joseph - people needed to see that."

The parade concluded at Pershing Square, in solidarity with the Campaign for a Healthy California, which was marching

the same day to call for accountability in health care and health policy reforms. Numerous speakers made the links between the failing health care and housing systems, between homelessness, class and poor health care, and other calls for social justice and reform.

The Parade of Fools did not happen in isolation. Politicians and institutions who are supposed to promote equality and justice have sold us out. Millions of Americans have lost their homes and/or their jobs, have been left with little social and economic support, and then are criminalized for their current conditions. The government is fighting a war on the poor! These and other reasons are why WRAP and its members, including LA CAN, are fighting back, reclaiming our rights, and joining our voices throughout the West Coast and further into the nation.

One parade or action won't make change - but hopefully it will inspire others to join the long term fight. "I loved the action because we had a large turnout, but at the same time we talked to new residents and taught them their rights when dealing with the police and security. So we really couldn't have asked for more," reflected JoJo, a longtime Skid Row resident.

The time has come to escalate education to engagement, engagement to organized resistance, and resistance to unwavering demands for change. The only way we'll ever get over being sick and tired and fooled is to rise up and fight back. Join LA CAN members in fighting back on a daily basis. ALL POWER 2 THE PEOPLE.

If you would like to learn more or become involved in the fight for civil and human rights in Skid Row, attend the next LA CAN Civil Rights/SCI Committee meeting, which takes place every Monday at 1pm at 5:30 S. Main St.

FEATURE

National Perspective: A Report on April 1st Action from Across the Country

WRITTEN BY WRAP
PHOTOS COURTESY OF WRAP

For years local organizing groups have been documenting, witness to and subjected to the criminalization that is massively impacting a growing number of people in a growing number of cities across the U.S. While this has been a front burner issue locally, on the national level there has been no focused effort to develop a cross cultural, cross economic, cross gendered kick ass street level accountable organizing campaign to fight back. That is, until now.

Members from the Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) and USA-Canada Alliance of Inhabitants (USACAI) came together on April 1, 2012 in recognition of the fact that real national (and bi-national) organizing is best served from the local to the national and not the other way around. So in 16 American cities (and one Canadian) a joint call went out for all of us to come together and as a united front, "Fight for our Right to Exist!"

In Los Angeles it was a "Parade of Fools",



Left: Residents of New Orleans rally to demand a stop to New Orleans Police Department involved shootings of young black kids; Right: Folks gather in San Francisco for some street theater.



in Portland it was Street Theatre in a Business Improvement District area, in Springfield a housing march, in New Orleans a rally to demand the cops stop shooting young black kids, in San Francisco it mixed street theatre with homeless OccupySF members taking over an empty building, in Regina Canada it was a rally while the very last affordable housing apartment building was bulldozed and in Fresno a demo and pick up baseball game in front of a new minor league baseball stadium that represented a much greater priority than housing for poor people and led to massive sweeps of homeless encampments.

These are not separate issues because all of it leads to a devaluation of the human

worth of human beings and therefore all of it is part of the bigger process of communities uniting into a strong, inclusive and powerful we!

Over the next several weeks you will be hearing more about this campaign as we develop and grow our strength. April 1st was not the end goal of what we sought to achieve, it was the beginning of a renewed and committed rise up of the Social Justice movement we need so badly to finally ensure that housing, education, a livable income and healthcare are human rights for all and not profit margins for a few.

When you really think about it: what government shouldn't want a healthy, educated and well housed populace? We can make it happen!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Community Leaders and Organizations Unite to Stop LAPD Spying

We're not going to wait until it's too late - until that repression is complete. We're taking a stand now, and we will continue to stand until Special Order 11 and Special Order 1 and neighbors spying on neighbors is ended. End it now, end it now. That's our message today to this city and this police department."

After the rally and press conference, which was organized to call out Special Order 1 as an unjust policy that infringes on privacy and civil liberties, promotes racial profiling and legitimizes spying by law enforcement, the crowd entered police headquarters and demanded that the LAPD Police Commission immediately rescind the special order.

Momentum continues to grow rapidly for the campaign, which was launched at a March 3 community town hall where a diverse group of over 200 people, including youth, artists, immigrants, formerly incarcerated people, academics, lawyers, faith based and community-based organizations shared stories on the abuse experienced at the hands of local law enforcement and the infringement on privacy by various government agencies. These groups include the Community Labor Strategy Center, Dream Team LA, IDEPSCA, ENLACE, LA CAN, Occupy the Hood, Youth Jus-

tice Coalition, National Lawyers Guild, La Chamba, ACLU and many others.

During the community dialogue at the town hall, a unanimous sentiment of distrust in the LAPD was very present as speaker after speaker declared that they simply do not feel comfortable or positive about local law enforcement having the capability to probe even deeper than they already do into innocent people's lives. Other common discussion themes highlighted the idea that the fundamental intent of these special orders is to criminalize poor communities and communities of color and to enforce social control. In addition, more than a few speakers emphasized the need to understand the history of abuse and spying of such agencies like the LAPD - from "red squads" to McCarthyism to special orders.

However, the most common sentiment shared at both the town hall and the April 12 rally was an urgent desire and need for community members and LA residents themselves to stand up, take action, and demand that Special Order 1 be rescinded.



Clockwise from top right: A protester holds a sign that reads "STOP LAPD SPYING! RESCIND SO1"; Organizer Hamid Khan addresses the media at April 10's press conference and action; Community members and residents from throughout Los Angeles at the March 3 Community Town Hall on Special Order 1.

OPINION

KONY 2012 and the Power of Propaganda

WRITTEN BY BILAL ALI

“Oh, I say and I say it again, ya’ll been had! Ya’ll been took! Ya’ll been hoodwinked! Bamboozled! Led astray! Run amok!” - Malcolm X

This warning from Malcolm X was not a hollow one. We see this example with the Kony 2012 video. Kony 2012, the Invisible Children YouTube video tells us, is a bad guy in Uganda. He’s a lawless warlord leading something called the Lord’s Resistance Army, which kidnaps, enslaves and murders innocent children by the tens of thousands. Yet many see Kony 2012 as a corporate-style PR and military psy-ops campaign, a cynical hoax engineered to justify U.S. and Western military intervention to control the incredibly lucrative oil, mineral, water and strategic resources of

the heart of Africa. The video, which has been viewed by millions around the world, was the most viral video in the history of the internet with more than 100 million views in its first six days.

The truth is that Joseph Kony “looks like a kindergarten student compared to the crimes” of the man he has been fighting for decades, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, said Kambale Musavuli, of Friends of the Congo. President Museveni has been a U.S. ally and client since seizing power in 1986 with a guerilla force largely comprised of child soldiers. “Rather than holding the American government accountable for supporting a dictator who has committed more crimes than Kony and is still committing crimes as we speak, they are calling for military support for Museveni’s army and sending U.S. troops there,” said Musavuli. Nothing new about the “official” spin being used to demonize Joseph Kony -- we’ve seen it before with Saddam Hussein, Osama Bin Laden, Manuel Noriega, etc.

Yes, these are very bad people, but they were allowed by the U.S. government to

commit atrocities with impunity prior to being targeted by the U.S. because of changing interests.

These interests usually involve resources and geo-political considerations for the U.S. and its imperialist allies. When both corporate parties, the entire corporate media universe, a constellation of celebrities and movie stars, all the right wing and much of the establishment liberal church along with the whole bag of bipartisan foreign policy experts agree on the need for decisive U.S. military action, you can bet the course of wisdom and truth is just about always in the opposite direction. Republicans and Democrats voted to send troops to Vietnam, and only a single congresswoman voted against war in Afghanistan.

People should raise questions about the perspective and legitimacy of Invisible Children and its PR campaign that is aimed at furthering U.S. military interventions across the globe. One video alone does not provide education – instead it raises questions and concerns that we all should investigate.

WORD, IN THE HOOD,

It has been almost a year since Dale Garrett was murdered by LAPD officers on 5th and Spring, and there is still no information about or outcome of the investigation.

How should we view this in light of the recent killings of Trayvon Martin in Florida and Kendrec McDade in Pasadena?

Do you see connections or parallels between these killings?



Linda

Trayvon Martin didn’t have to die, but his death won’t be in vain because something big is happening. They’re not gonna keep killing black men and sending young Latinos to prison. People won’t stand for this much longer.



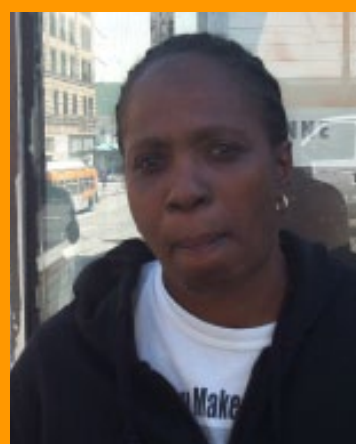
Frank

Yes, they’re all connected. Police have the attitude that they ARE the law and, therefore, above it. Racism is entrenched in all police departments.



“Voice for the People”

Law has got out of hand. Action and reactions are put forth before they think. So when they do wrong they just say “Oh, well.” They feel they are above the law with no penalties for their actions.



Speedy

The murder of Trayvon Martin should have opened up every black person’s eyes. There will be no justice in any of these cases or something would have already been done.

I Ain't No Broken Window

WRITTEN BY PAUL BODEN

James Q. Wilson, the person credited with coining the theory of broken-windows policing, died last month and people are starting to ask what "Broken Windows" is all about. Those of us who have been identified as no more than a broken window are sick of it.

The broken-windows theory holds that one poor person in a neighborhood (or, using Wilson's words, "a single drunk or a single vagrant") is like a first unrepaired broken window. If the window is not immediately fixed, if the vagrant is not immediately removed, it is a signal that no one cares, disorder will flourish, and the community will go to hell in a handbasket.

For this theory to make sense, you first have to step far far away from thinking of people, or at least poor people, as human beings. You need to objectify them. You need to see them as dusty broken windows in a vacant building.

Wilson himself admits that his reasoning here seems unjust on the individual level, but goes on to argue that not dealing with a single drunk or vagrant who hasn't even harmed anybody may lead to "a score of drunks or a hundred vagrants" who could destroy an entire community or downtown business district. That is why we now have Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) with police enforcement to keep that neighborhood flourishing and poor unsightly people out of it.

There are now over 1500 BIDs worldwide and their number is growing.



And we are right back to Jim Crow Laws, Sundown Laws, Ugly Laws and Anti-Okie Laws, local laws that profess to "uphold the locally accepted obligations of civility." Such laws have always been used by people in power against those on the outside. In other words, today's Business Improvement Districts and broken-windows policing are, at their core, a reincarnation of various phases of American history none of us is proud of.

Central to the argument is the need to adhere to "locally accepted obligations of civility." But who is setting these "locally accepted obligations of civility?" Where is our "human civility?"

We have gone from the days where people could be told "you can't sit at this lunch counter" to "you can't sit on this sidewalk," from "don't let the sun set on you here" to "this public park closes at dusk" and from "you're on the wrong side of the tracks" to "it is illegal to hang out" on this street or corner.

with less money. It is the ugly truth that a lot of us are suffering, but only a few of us are taking action to get out. Do we honestly think only a few slaves wanted and worked to end slavery of the old? Of course not!

We must learn how to control these powers that exist in our world to change our current situation. We created the mathematics system and some force turned it into a business, so why are we afraid of money? Why is okay to look like you have money but not actually possess any? How come the very fact that a whole bunch of us are out here suffering doesn't give rise to a whole bunch of us trying to alleviate this suffering and trying to get rid of this pain? Instead all of us have to depend on an inadequate system to help us alleviate the suffering. Let's quickly examine these relationships.

The power relationships include those who are supposed to be helping us to alleviate our problems. These outside organizations and governmental agencies are all circulating and building control through money. These groups feed us, house us, wash us and even raise our children. They also rehabilitate us, counsel us and give us the insurance that as long as we turn in their

Of course a tired shopper can sit on the sidewalk to rest between stores and the people that lined up for two days waiting to get the new iPod can camp out and none of them will ever be ticketed, moved on, or arrested. These are the civilized people; they are consumers. They are "us."

The people these laws are enforced against are not us. They are "them." And their mere presence makes "us" uncomfortable, so therefore they are not civil and need to be replaced with someone more like those who set the locally accepted obligations of civility.

Jim Crow Laws, Sundown Laws, Ugly Laws, Anti-Okie Laws, and Broken Windows Laws, its all the same old wine -- just in a new bottle.

I guess history really does repeat itself and that's sad.

Paul Boden is the Executive Director of the Western Regional Advocacy Project.

Beyond the Wall

WRITTEN BY JOSE VANDERBURG

This article is for the black brothers and sisters, the black girls and boys that like me live well, but well below the poverty line. We are seeking to break past. We all know that there seems to be social barriers that are preventing us from rising up again. Local discrimination in job hiring in our area and the oppression from the "felony" label has our community greatly unemployed, underfed and in a position of desperation and dependency. What are we going to do about it? How can we get money into our community without Mexican drug cartels or corporate snakes as the sources?

In order to make change you have to have some amount of control. The war is won by those who have control and those who have control can produce change. Control is synonymous with power and in our generation power manifests itself in the tangible forms of currency and money.

I'm asserting that to produce change you must have control, and that control is exercised generally by people with money or sometimes very large groups of people

forms, report to their meetings, participate in their worships, and perform their activities that we can alleviate some of our problems. This is an example of control being used to create change, none of which we embody. We can no longer be afraid of money!

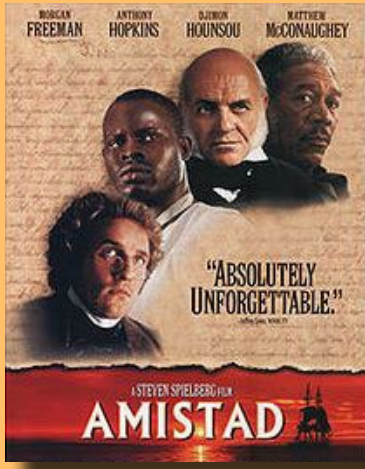
How can we obtain money? We are felons, displaced workers, unemployed, uneducated and have no obvious means of procuring wealth. So now we can only dream of control through money. They have systems in place and status quos to maintain and if we rise above the level of dependency and valueless efforts, their control would diminish. So the war must be fought by us with numbers. We must learn to control the power of numbers and utilize it as a dominant force over the control of money.

We must at the same time learn the science of business and the methods of money together. Let us write our own grants and fund our own businesses. Together we have numbers to save money collectively. Multiplication produces a product. When we multiply our numbers the product is a higher level of control. We invented mathematics. We are mathematics. Cash Rules Everything Around Me: CREAM.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Films for the People

Local resident and film buff Esther Alejandro shares some of her favorite films while placing their meaning and messages within the context of Skid Row



AMISTAD

Starring: Djimon Hounsou, Morgan Freeman, Anthony Hopkins, Matthew McConaughey
 Director: Steven Spielberg

In this film, a group of slaves in a Spanish ship by the name of "La Amistad" (ironically meaning Friendship in Spanish) massacre many of the ship's crew. Their goal is to return to Africa rather than be taken to be sold in another country. Six weeks later, not knowing they have arrived in the United States, they are detained and imprisoned. At the time Martin Van Buren, the 8th President of the United States, was campaigning for re-election. Two local newspapers covering the news of the capture offered diverse views of the capture: the New Haven Register claimed that the massacre was a crime, while the Emancipator postulated it was "freedom at sea."

The film goes on to explore what happens after the arrival in the U.S. John Quincy Adams, son of former U.S. President John Adams, was called upon to weigh on the matter, since both he and his father were abolitionists. Additionally, a leading abolitionist, Jolson, and an attorney, Baldwin, were on the lookout for evidence. It was important to them to establish that the slaves had not been brought from Cuba, but that they were illegally taken from West Africa.

The initial judge in the matter seemed to be favorable toward freeing the slaves, but Van Buren, in a political maneuver, had the judge replaced. Jolson and Baldwin faced language barriers in communicating with those they wanted to see free, and so they began learning the Mendé language. They wanted and needed find out who the slaves were, the circumstances under which they found themselves, and what the catalytic event was that provoked the massacre.

Eventually, a young man was found who was fluent in both Mendé and English. Through his understanding of both, he was able to reconstruct a story of unbelievable abuse and torture that included women and even children. They had been taken from the Trombozo fortress in a ship called Tecora, which was registered as Portuguese. Since England considered Portugal an illegal trader of slaves, those slaves who survived their voyage in the Tecora were transferred into "La Amistad," because the Spanish government was providing slaves for the American colonies. Cinque, who was the African spokesperson for the slaves, narrated how they were brutally beaten up, and since there seemed not to be enough food for everyone, they chose at random who they would feed, and who would they withhold food from. Before the stolen people were transferred to "La Amistad," they chained a group of slaves, mostly women and children, even babies, and threw them in the ocean to drown them. With these circumstances unveiled, Quincy Adams agreed to speak for the liberation of the slaves, which the judge appointed by Van Buren approved.

For our reality in Skid Row, we need to identify more people within AND outside of our community who can see our plight and fight for justice. Certainly, we cannot count on the police, but past struggles show there are people out there who are likely willing to risk what's necessary to see to it that we get the justice we are demanding. In addition, as with "Amistad," this is an election year. What we can rustle up is the fact that when Obama visited Los Angeles, he got a copy of the complaint directed to DOJ over the police misconduct toward the Skid Row community, and nothing has come of it so far. I believe that this, along with the fact that there are communities of friends of Skid Row, can bring about a turning point. We do not need to feel that others' inaction means there is no hope in any matter.

II-I-LXXXII

by Ellery Bailey

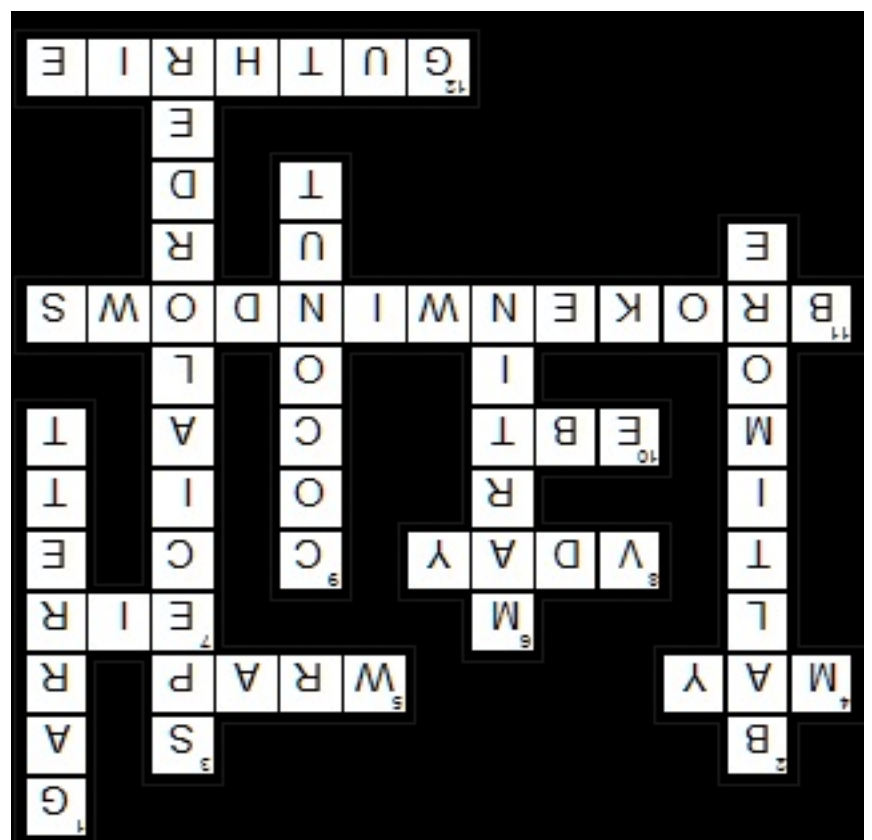
Children of all ages being molested from their teachers - others target through clergy, I'm talking Preachers. Can't you see the wicked writing on the walls? This American System isn't diminishing it's already taken a great fall. No more mass manufacturing of visible, useable products because of the mass sellout, America showeing their natural buttocks, Electing to take advantage of the greatest natural production sees grinding down the backbones of the country causing many to bleed, And consider the many mothers, fathers, and families - their pain and their tears. The paradigm shift, all the bankruptcy causing many fears. I hope I need not paint this picture this way any more.

Yet if so, much more will be revealed and this is not just a lore.

BLESSED BLISS

WRITTEN BY BILLY SHAW

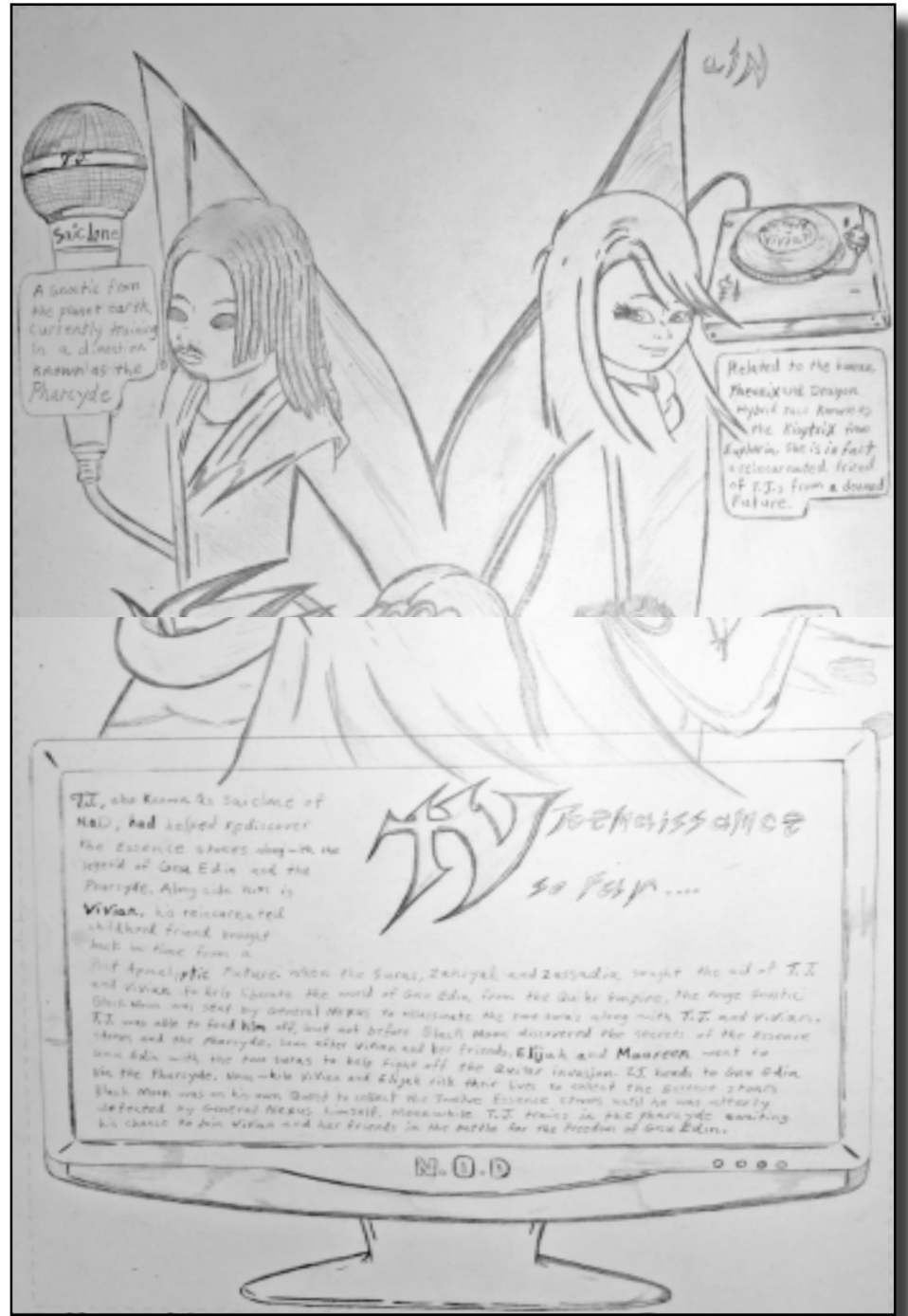
STANDING ON THE EDGE OF TIME ON THE
 HORIZON OF IMAGINATION I SAW THE
 UNIMAGINABLE, I WITNESS THE OCEAN OF IT ALL, IT
 SPANNED THE SPACE OF ETERNITY, ITS
 POWER WAS AWESOME, I WAS PETRIFIED
 WITH FEAR, I DON'T KNOW WHY, AND AT THE
 SAME TIME I WAS IN AWE, OF ITS
 MAGNIFICANCE, CAPTIVATED BY THE
 SPECTOR OF ITS EMINANCE I COULD ONLY
 LOOK UPON IT FOR SO LONG, AS THE FEAR
 TOOK OVER MY SENSES AND I STEPPED BACK,
 AND SLOWLY TURNED AWAY FROM THE SIGHT
 BEFORE ME, AS I FELT ITS POWERFUL FORCE
 PULLING ME DRAWING ME INTO ITS DEEP
 WATERS, I SAW A CHURCH A WAYS OFF, AND I
 WALKED TOWARD IT, AND I ENTERED IT, AND I
 FOUND SOLACE, AND SANCTUARY IN THE
 CHURCH, BUT I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT WHAT I
 HAD JUST WITNESSED WOULD FIND ME AGAIN
 SOMEDAY, AND THE NEXT TIME, I WILL BE
 WILLING, AND I WILL SUBMERGE MYSELF IN
 BLESSED BLISS FOR ETERNITY



ARTS AND CULTURE

The first installment of
TV Renaissance G.E.D

STORY AND ARTWORK BY T.J. GLEASON



VIENE DE LA PÁGINA 2

La Autoridad de la Vivienda designa un nuevo director ejecutivo

Añadió que, "Doug proveyó un liderato fuerte a HACLA, y ya ha comenzado el serio trabajo de instituir reformas como OEC interino de HACLA. Estoy confiado de que Doug es la mejor persona para continuar haciendo cambios positivos en la agencia, lo cual beneficiará a los angelinos que dependen de sus servicios y éxitos.

Guthrie había sido nombrado Presidente y OEC interino de HACLA en diciembre del 2011 después de la salida controversial de la pasada OEC, Ruby Montel, y numerosas historias públicas documentando el derroche de fondos públicos por la Comisión.

Otro parte de prensa enviado a fines de marzo anunció que la Comisión había aprobado un contrato con el Sr. Guthrie que le pagaría un salario de \$260, 000, y beneficios adicionales de empleo. En un comentario escrito, Doug Guthrie respondió diciendo, "Quiero darles las gracias por tener fe de que yo soy la persona correcta para conducir esta agencia en el futuro. No podría estar más excitado. Esta es una gran organización, haciendo un trabajo excelente, y la historia no siempre se da a conocer como debe ser. Estoy a la espera de poder compenetrarme más con el personal con el que he estado trabajando, y con los residentes."

La conversión potencial del caudal de vivienda pública es un asunto con el que los inquilinos de la vivienda pública que son parte del Colectivo del Derecho Humano a la Vivienda han estado trabajando, en vigilancia por varios años. Falta por ver cuales son los planes del Sr. Guthrie para HACLA. Sin embargo, como se indicó anteriormente, ya se sabe muy bien que que el comisionado Guthrie supervisó la conversión masiva de vivnedas públicas a viviendas de ingresos mixtos en Chicago.

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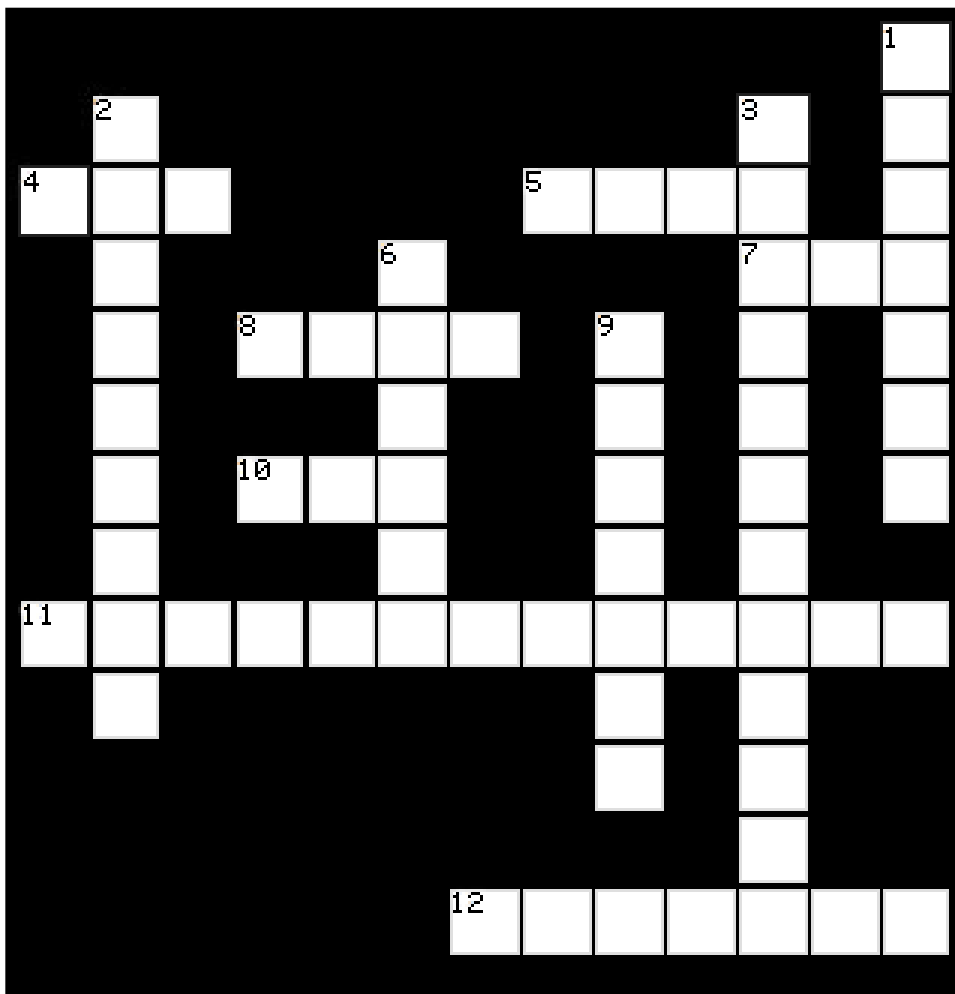
The LA Housing Authority Appoints a New Commissioner

making positive changes at the agency, which will benefit the Angelenos who depend on its services and success." Guthrie had been appointed Interim President and CEO of HACLA in December 2011 after the controversial departure of former CEO Rudy Montiel and numerous public stories documenting the misuse of public funds by the commission.

Another press release sent out at the end of March announced that the commission had approved a contract with Mr. Guthrie that would pay him a base salary of \$260,000 plus employment benefits. In a written comment, Doug Guthrie responded to his hiring by saying, "I'd like to thank you for having faith that I'm the right person to lead this agency in the future. I couldn't be more excited. This is a great organization doing excellent work and the story does not always get out like it should be. I look forward to getting more engaged with the staff here that I have been working with and the residents."

The potential conversion of L.A.'s public housing stock is an issue that public housing tenants who are part of the LA Human Right to Housing Collective have been organiznig around and monitoring for the past few years. It remains to be seen what Mr. Guthrie's future plans for HACLA are, but, as stated earlier, it is already well known that Guthrie oversaw the mass conversion of public housing into mixed-income housing in Chicago.

COMMUNITY CROSSWORD



Across

- 4. On the 18th of this month the Downtown Women’s Action Coalition will be holding its annual Women’s Day in the Park.
- 5. The west coast coalition that coordinated a national day of action on April 1st to demand an end to the criminalization of homelessness and poverty across the country.
- 7. The 10,000 page document that AEG recently unveiled that outlines the vast impacts of the proposed football stadium project, which residents only have 45 days to review and respond to.
- 8. The international organization that benefits from performances of the Vagina Monlogues and that works to end violence against girls and women around the world.
- 10. The card that low-income residents increasingly use to purchase fresh produce at farmer’s markets.
- 11. The theory of policing created by the recently deceased James Q. Wilson that serves as the basis for the Safer Cities Initiative and that has led to the criminalization of homelessness in Skid Row.
- 12. The newly appointed Executive Director of the LA Housing Authority who made his name by overseeing the conversion of Chicago’s public housing stock into mixed-income housing - a similar approach to addressing the need for public housing reform that L.A. housing project tenants have been fighting for years.

Down

- 1. The last name of the black downtown resident who was shot and killed by undercover LAPD officers almost a year ago on the corner of Spring St. and 5th St., which led to an investigation that has yet to hold the officers involved accountable.
- 2. Along with the King Edwards and Leland, this hotel was recently purchased by Izek Shomof, who has stated publicly his intent to “clean them up” and “make them attractive to young artistic types”, according to the LA Times.
- 3. _____ 1, the policy directive that currently authorizes LAPD to spy on Angelenos who engage in such non-criminal behaviors like taking pictures, using video cameras, taking notes, and many other innocent daily activities.
- 6. Trayvon _____, the innocent black teenager who was murdered by George Zimmerman in Florida in March of 2012 - a killing that caused national uproar and led to Zimmerman being charged with second degree murder.
- 9. In its oil form, this is a natural and healthier alternative to vegetable shortening and lard.

HINT: Many of the words in this month’s Community Crossword can be found in the articles of this edition of the Community Connection.

CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY LOCATED AT THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 10

Community Calendar

- April 20** 6pm Resident Organizing Committee (ROC) Meeting at LA CAN, 530 S. Main St. All Skid Row residents are encouraged to attend and get involved.
- April 21** The Public Housing Tenants Convention at 9am at Legacy LA, 1350 N. San Pablo, L.A. 90033. Tenants will be meeting to discuss current challenges facing the future of Public Housing.
- May 4** 6pm ROC Meeting at LA CAN.
- May 16** Public Hearing on Draft Environmental Impact Report for proposed L.A. Football Stadium. 4pm at the L.A. Convention Center West Hall, Room 501.
- May 18** The Downtown Women’s Action Coalition presents Women’s Day in the Park Elysian Park.
- May 18** 6pm ROC Meeting at LA CAN.

If you would like any more information on the events listed above, call 213.228.0024 or stop by the LA CAN offices at 530 S. Main St., 90013

March/April 2012 Community Connection Team

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
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| Bilal Ali | Steve Diaz | JoJo Smith |
| Eric Ares | General Dogon | T.J. |
| Ellery Bailey | Walter Fears | Lydia Trejo |
| Paul Boden | Hamid Khan | Jose Vanderburg |
| Deborah Burton | James Porter | Pete White |

Interested in writing or contributing to the Community Connection? Have a response to an article or piece you’d like to share? Know of a pressing community issue we should be covering?

Contact us at 213.228.0024 or drop by the LA CAN offices, located at 530 S. Main St.

To contact LA CAN or find out more about our work and how to support us, write or visit us online:

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Editorial Policy:

The Community Connection is a street newspaper and a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers. The Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN) is a membership organization comprised of low-income, homeless and formerly homeless residents living in Downtown and South Los Angeles, and surrounding communities. LA CAN’s staff and core members write many articles that appear in the Community Connection. These generally appear without a byline, attributed to LA CAN as a collective.

Articles by contributors who are not LA CAN core members and/or personal opinion/experience articles receive a byline. These articles do not necessarily represent the views, opinions and perspectives of the Los Angeles Community Action Network.

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