

Of Pitchforks, Economists and Guillotines...



WHY WORKERS MATTER

By Joe Hyer

I had an economics professor in college whose motto was, "Beware the Pitchforks." His basic economic theory- mess things up badly, and those at the bottom, with no resources and nothing to eat, will rise up in social revolution. As the rural poor did during

the French Revolution, waving their Pitchforks, as it's the only weapons they had.

Historically, they say the French Revolution was political – egalite, fraternite – ya know, Freedom! We also say this about our American War for Independence. Um, the Boston Tea Party was not about freedom, it was about taxes. And the French Revolution, at its most basic level, was about hunger. They had an economic system that literally worked the poor to death, with no way out. If they had a middle and merchant class, that wasn't based on aristocracy, if there had been any chance of social mobility – the pitchforks may not have come out. The guillotine un-invented. The would be no saying 'Heads will roll.'

You see, 1776 had two important documents produced – the Declaration of Independence, and The Wealth of Nations by Adam Smith (not the congressman). This second treatise is pretty much considered the birth of free

productivity and customer service, all these things are benefits of investing in your labor force.

The best entrepreneurs in the area have one thing in common – you see them working day in and day out alongside their workers.

Kenny Trobman personally makes a lot of Gyros for the Gyro Spot. Adam Adrian is his own prep cook most days at Ramblin' Jacks. When called, their employees will come in early, late, or on days off, going the extra mile because they have bosses who support them.

Labor, our most precious resource. We hope you enjoy our inaugural labor issue – and if you have ideas for next year, please let us know.



Mike the owner of Big Tom's works along side his mostly under 30 crew.

THE LABOR ISSUE:

- MORE INSIDE...**
- Millennials in the work place.
 - Water... It's All The Craze.
 - Food Systems and Potatoes
 - Our Tribute to Happy Hours Continues.
 - Local Business Profiles.
 - Plus Coupons!

Land, Labor, Capital and Entrepreneurs. If any one is missing or lacking – the system cannot succeed.

enterprise and capitalism. In it, Smith asserts that there are for essential elements to 'production' the basis of any economic system. In classes, they teach them as Land, Labor, Capital and Entrepreneurs. If any one is missing or lacking – the system cannot succeed.

This is our 8th Living Local Edition. We've talked endlessly about Entrepreneurs, and had numerous articles on banking local and capitalizing businesses. We've spent two full issues on FOOD – that's the land and natural resources part of the equation. But the last factor of a successful economy is LABOR. Workers.

So this issue is dedicated to our local labor force. Given the increase in the minimum wage last year, Labor has been a hot topic. Issues of globalism causing the migration of jobs, the overall decline in wages while prices increase. These are national and international issues, and our goal is to bring them home locally.

One key part of all this is that actual wages are really only part of the equation. Scheduling is also vital. If you only work 25-30 hours, and not a full 40, you're under-employed. Too many companies keep too many employees here. If you don't have a routine schedule – how do you get a second job to fill in that gap? Predictive scheduling is a real issue for hourly employees, and is keeping countless thousands of workers in poverty.



"Dignity in Labor" monument by John Vanek outside the Olympia Union Labor Temple

What about safety in the workplace? If your employer makes you run a pallet jack, but doesn't provide protective footwear or adequate training, you could crush your toe and be out of work for months. And while industrial insurance is helpful- it still doesn't offset the real costs of getting injured.

As an employer, I've always believed my workers are my most precious resource, and empowering and supporting them is the best long-term investment a company can make. Reduced training costs, increased loyalty, improved

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The Food Summit Returns

This October 20th and 21st, the second South Sound Food Summit will be held in Olympia. For those of you who don't remember, Sustainable South Sound was a catalyst and key driver for the first food Summit in 2011 that launched many programs, including the one putting on a new Food Summit. A two-day event celebrating the local food system with cooking demonstrations, policy discussions, and a cornucopia of information for producers and consumers alike, it will educate, feed, and probably inspire hundreds of South Sound residents.

But that event is only part of the story of the South Sound Food Summit, and it's a smaller part of the story of the South Sound Food System Network – the organization that is planning it. So let's step back and look at where this event came from.

The first South Sound Food Summit was convened by Sustainable South Sound in 2011 and was the brainchild of longtime local food systems advocate, Sustainable South Sound President, and now proud farmer TJ Johnson. The purpose of that summit was to bring together food system stakeholders, so that everybody could learn what each other was doing, find ways to work together, and identify and close critical gaps in the system. The seeds of collaboration were sown, but it would take some time for them to germinate and to create another compelling reason to hold a Summit.

The food system in any city is complex. It's not just a question of planting more crops or preserving more farmland. It's not just a question of feeding more people. The food system encompasses a surprisingly large, diverse, and multifaceted array of stakeholders that cross social position, economic strata, and the political spectrum. Sometimes, the hardest part of making that system work is its constituent parts to work together.

That's the real story of the 2017 Food Summit: that on the first Wednesday of every month in the conference room of the Regional Planning Center in Olympia, a group of people gets together under the gentle, persistent leadership of GrUB Executive Director Katie Raines and Thurston Economic Development Council Community Development Coordinator Aslan Meade to participate in an effort to improve the local food system.

It's a big job. Currently, the focus is on planning the Food Summit and creating a marketing campaign to raise awareness about health, localism, environmental custodianship, and the rich bounty we enjoy here in the South Sound. After that campaign is launched and after October passes and the Food Summit has concluded, the work will go on.

For Katie, Aslan, and most of the other current members of the South Sound Food System Network, the hope is that the work will go on with as many new faces and as many new

stakeholders as possible. The room at the Regional Planning Council is large enough to accommodate a few more bodies, and the attitude of the Network is big enough to accommodate a whole lot of new ideas.

TO GET INVOLVED:

Visit the Website:
www.ssfoodsystemnetwork.org

ATTEND A MEETING:

July 5th / August 2nd / September 6th
 Regional Planning Council
 2424 Heritage Court SW, Suite A
 Olympia WA 98502



July is Smart Irrigation Month!

Are you over watering? Help us cut irrigation water waste this month. Visit olympiawa.gov/waterwise to learn more.

Less is more when **Watering** your lawn

Watering too much leads to:

- ◆ Shallow Roots
- ◆ Weed Growth
- ◆ Disease

Watering Tip: Water long enough to soak the root zone, and don't water again until the soil is dry!

City of Olympia | Water Conservation | olympiawa.gov/waterwise