

Seattle City Council
Neighborhoods, Arts, & Civil Rights Committee Meeting
Tuesday, 2 PM, July 22, 2003

Words' Worth
The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by Christopher J. Jarmick

Today's Words' Worth poet is **Thomas Hubbard**

Thomas Hubbard was born into a mixed-blood, midwest factory family and used his background in a teaching career focused on at-risk teens. He retired from Tulalip Reservation's Heritage School in 2001. Between teaching positions he built a freelance writing practice, with bylines in both major Dallas newspapers and several magazines. As a participant in Seattle's poetry community, he won the Seattle Grand Slam in 1995 and performs on many poetry stages in Seattle and other cities. KIRO Channel 7 has produced and broadcast two of his poems. He has published two chapbooks of his own in addition to compiling, editing and publishing an anthology about poets' fathers that includes several nationally known poets. Under his Gazoobi Tales imprint he has published *The Five Stages of Quitting Farming*, by John Kulm, and *Nailed to the Sky*, by Seattle poet Anne Sweet (due for release shortly). He currently lives with his favorite guitar aboard a sailboat on Puget Sound.

Sealth Didn't Start This Town

By Thomas Hubbard

His people were here
thousands of years before him
enjoying nature's plenty
but we call the town by his name, enit?

We figured we could take it
so we took it. We've taken it through
some booms and some busts, and
built it up great big, enit?

People moved in here
from almost everywhere
because this was such a
beautiful place, enit?

Now we have lots of people and
they need more jobs. Hey,
some big corporations will come
if we offer them enough, enit?

If we offer tax breaks and
build more roads and pavement and
rooftops and runoff, and allow more pollution,
corporations will bring jobs, enit?

Plenty of jobs will help us
pay for the roads and pavement and
rooftops and runoff and pollution, and
enlarge the tax base, enit?

This growth will attract even more people,
more corporations and jobs, and
developers will get rich by
bulldozing the wetlands, enit?

But what would happen if instead, we
just take care of what we have
like we keep saying we will...
it's about time, enit?

If we clean up the water and
quit making new landfills and
find ways to live without polluting,
the beauty might come back, enit?

Sealth's people were here 10,000 years
without doing any damage, but
we've been here less than 200, and
it's getting a little ragged already, enit?

Of course, to live without the
incredible riches and over-consuming,
to begin actually taking care of the beauty
to stop developing hideous suburbs
to rip up the strip-mall parking lots that cover our streams
to maybe even do a little actual physical labor
on our suffering environment, and
to elect leaders who wont favor
corporations or developers or big money,
that's a primitive, impractical idea, enit?

-- *END* --