

Peace Garden to Honor Jane Addams



**Unveiling
will
take
place
on
April 6**

See story on page 3



Photo by Linda Richmond

APRIL 2006

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

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The Community Alliance is an independent voice for workers and progressive groups in the Central San Joaquin Valley. The goal of this monthly newspaper is to build a powerful progressive movement that will support social, environmental, & economic justice; immigrant rights; and a living wage for all working people. We seek to expose social and political injustices and to link the diverse network of activists working in our community.

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The Community Alliance newspaper reserves the right to edit all articles for space and clarity.

What do you think will improve the schools in Fresno?

The question was asked at Fresno High.



Clyde Auston: "The school district should provide more money for the school, so the schools don't need to take out grants. The school district should do away with standardized tests because they do not actually measure what is taught in schools."



Tamara West: "There is too much emphasis on getting a good grade, over actually learning."



Chris Houston: "Get rid of No Child Left Behind, and get rid of the Exit Exam. Increase pay to attract more qualified people to the field of education."



Victoria Guerrero: "The teaching methods are based on standardized testing, so the schools get money. However this money only goes to prepping students for more standardized tests."



Heather Polfir: "There should not be so much importance on grades. The goal should be to make sure the students understand what is being taught, not good test-taking skills."



Sam Self: "Teachers are forced to teach the standards. Students and teachers lose interest in this curriculum, because it makes neither student nor teacher happy and in most cases no learning is accomplished. This is not because of bad teaching; the school district needs to rethink their policies!"

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By Simone Whalen-Rhodes

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Believing What We See: On Jane Addams, Public Art, Women, & Women's Work

By Janet Slagter

"The cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy." Though these words are credited to Al Smith or to John Dewey, they are actually Jane Addams's. Claudia Nolan, Fresno resident and sculptor of the new Jane Addams memorial at CSU-Fresno asked in a recent interview, "Why am I, an art student, uncovering this reality? Why does the society work so hard to bury the memorable words and actions of women?" In her lifetime, (1860–1935), Jane Addams was variously named the most useful woman, the most famous woman, and the most dangerous woman in America—yet most of us know little of her life and prodigious accomplishments. The necessity to counter the erasure of Addams's and other women's work is one of the reasons Claudia Nolan entered the competition to design the life-sized bronze sculpture of Addams. The Peace Garden at CSU-Fresno will officially become a gender-integrated zone on April 6, as that sculpture, the first memorial to a woman, is unveiled. A fundraising reception and dinner, from 6 to 9 PM, will mark the event.

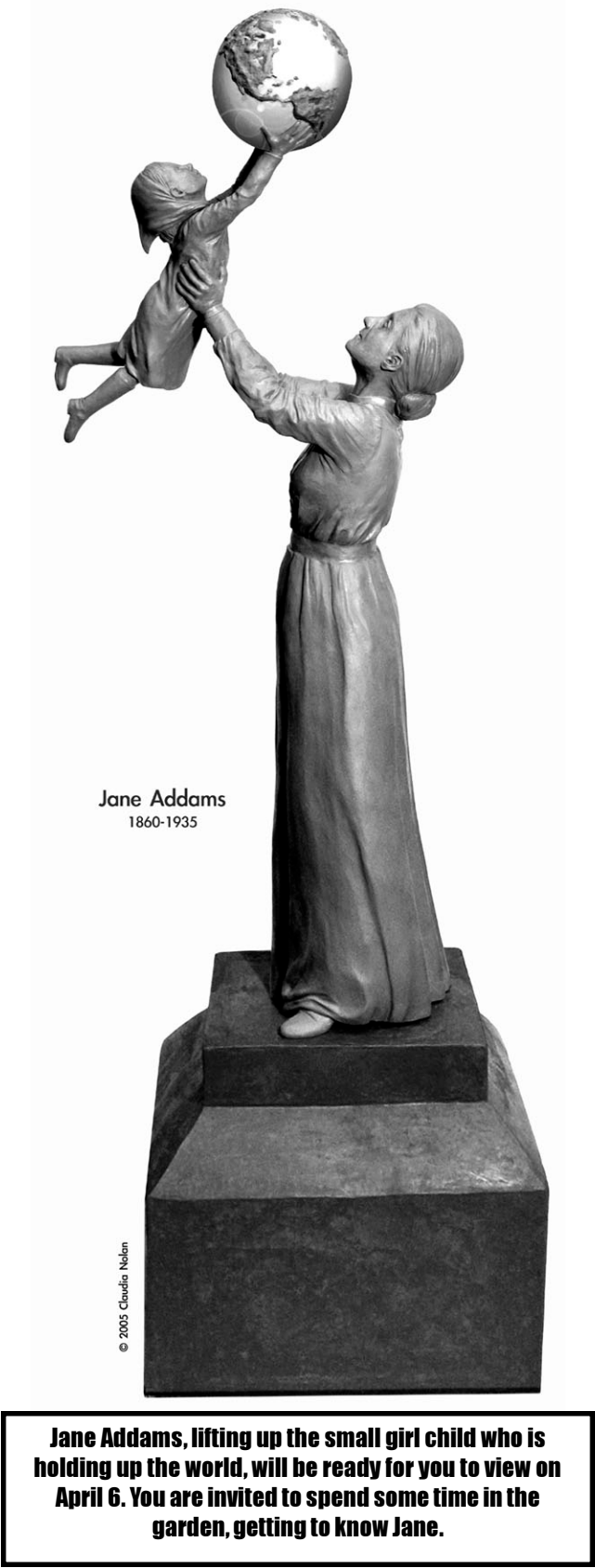
Nolan remarked that she found the memorials of undeniably great and admirable men in the Peace Garden "inspiring—but not welcoming, in that sense that being in a place which has excluded women feels unwelcoming to a woman." The exclusion, even if accidental, "is felt," is visual evidence that contradicts "what we say we believe—that men and women are equal."

Nolan undertook the Jane Addams memorial, and to portray Jane as she was at fifty-five, because of who Jane was and to challenge today's media-reinforced imposition of iconic images of women as perfectible bodies. Nolan's eloquence is not limited to the physical materials she shapes but resounds as well in the words she chooses to describe her vision: "We're only allowed to be noticed in certain forms, and when they fail us or we deny them, we're just told to shut up. No one says that's the violent act. Yet it is." For Nolan, recreating the presence of Jane Addams, who lived her life outside prescribed forms, affirms not only that this female hero walked the earth, but also that her glory lay in rejecting well-worn paths. "How much harder to knock me down if I have Jane Addams in my background."

She saw in Jane Addams a mentor. Addams said, "Civilization is a method of living, an attitude of equal respect for all people." For Nolan, most important was that Addams walked that talk; she "took action at the level of her goal." Addams bought the old Hull mansion, moved in, and opened its doors to the neighborhood. As Nolan says, "She entered herself in the reality of the world and invited everybody in." For Addams, civilization meant the inculcation of democracy, into the lives of people beaten down by unrelenting crises of poverty, low wages, long work days or unemployment, poor housing, lack of sanitation, and little access to health care, city services, and other resources. Addams's spirit was expansive. She found admirable aspects to everyone she met and, in Nolan's words, "positioned herself in connectedness," and worked for understanding and community among diverse cultures, always acting out of profound respect and kindness.

Jane Addams: some highlights of her life and work Jane Addams was all of the following: pioneering social worker and founder of the US Settlement House movement and of Hull House; feminist; peace activist; advocate for immigrants', laborers', and children's rights; and author of ten books, two thousand articles, and hundreds of speeches.

Addams, born into a prosperous small-town, Illinois Quaker family, completed a college education, and decided to devote her life to bettering the living and working conditions of the poor in gritty industrializing Chicago. Inspired by England's settlement houses, in 1889 she purchased Hull House, a decaying mansion in an immigrant neighborhood, moved in, and with other educated, privileged



women, researched the needs and developed resources to provide services to support the community. Twelve more buildings were added: first, an art museum and studio, then a public kitchen, coffee house, library, book bindery, gymnasium, swimming pool, labor museum, and cooperative residence for women workers. As many as two thousand people a week used Hull House facilities. Services offered included day care, kindergarten, literacy and citizenship classes at night, rooms for union meetings and voter registration, concerts, lectures, and evenings celebrating the cultures of the various newly arrived European (and later Mexican and African American) residents of the neighborhood. Hull House established the first Little Theater in the country.

Addams and her coworkers conducted early statistical surveys of their neighborhood, to document the languages residents spoke, their employment and unemployment patterns, their income, experiences of illnesses, and their specific needs for housing, sanitation, and schools. They were the originators of sociological field research, but the male academic structure erased and appropriated their work, marginalizing the women as social workers, not sociologists. The work of Addams and the other women of Hull House (Julia Lathrop, Ellen Gates Starr, and Florence Kelley, among others) resulted in laws providing factory inspectors and sanitary improvements in the sweatshops, and restricting exploitation of child laborers (Illinois Factory Act 1893), and in the first juvenile courts in the nation in 1899. Hull House launched the Immigrants' Protective League, and the Juvenile Protective Association. They successfully lobbied the state legislature for compulsory education, were instrumental in the creation of the Federal Children's Bureau in 1912 and passage of a federal child labor law in 1916. Addams served on the Chicago School

Board, as a labor arbitrator, and even as a sanitation inspector. She was vice president of the Women's Trade Union League, fought for worker's compensation benefits, and supported workers in the wake of the Haymarket uprising. Outraged at racist horrors, in 1909 she was a founder and member of the executive committee of the NAACP. That same year, she was elected the first woman president of the organization that became the National Conference on Social Work.

A committed feminist, in 1911 she was elected vice president of the National American Women's Suffrage Association, and chair of the Women's Peace Party in 1915. She journeyed to The Hague that year and presided at the International Congress of Women, which met with officials of warring countries to try to end World War I. She was a founder and first president, from 1919-1929, of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Troubled by the roundup of revolutionaries and the abridgements of free speech and assembly, she was a founder, in 1920, of the ACLU. In her late sixties, she chaired the 1928 Pan-Pacific Women's Conference in Hawaii. In 1931, she was the first American woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The scope of Jane Addams's work and her accomplishments are astounding by any measure. Jane Addams's civic interests were all-encompassing. She was the first woman to be awarded an honorary doctorate from Yale, and continued to live at Hull House until her death to cancer in 1935. Hull House operated for more than twenty years after her death, and some of the projects spawned there continue.

Claudia Nolan: Public Art, Women, and Democracy Claudia Nolan is an accomplished painter and computer artist who is devoting her graduate art study to sculpture for its tactility, a reminder "that life is more rooted in the earth than in cyberspace." Claudia is drawn to commemorative art: "It's a way of visualizing... the human attributes we most admire. It's visual evidence that the contributions of our greatest souls don't go unnoticed." And the artist shares Addams's commitments. She believes "the ability of human beings to discover ways to live together in plural societies based on mutual tolerance and respect" is today's critical issue.

Although today there are more women in publicly recognized positions than in the past, the population has grown too. Michelle Bachelet, new socialist president of Chile, certainly must be applauded for creating gender parity in all government ministries and key political posts. Yet botoxed and implanted cultural icons still immobilize women by a fear that ties us to a femininity that truncates our being, distract us from our aspirations to *do* the work of the world.

Public art has an important role to play: to remember women, to respect them for their humanitarian deeds, to "recognize their nobility and the greatness of their souls." As Nolan says, everyone who views art brings with them all their experience—of power, of loss, of personal accomplishments and personal failures. All that we see, we interpret through our own lives' experiences. Art is a mirror that reflects your experience back to you. We need works that show us that women's greatness is not about the package but the content of her life. To this end, commemorative images of women of all ages and sizes and ethnicities should be presented for our reflection. As creatures who believe what we see, we need to see the truth. Art is more the truth and more powerful than words on paper, more powerful than moralizing and blaming, more complete in its communication.

The following two paragraphs are Claudia Nolan's:

A monument does not just guard our memories: it also advocates and warns. It challenges. This monument is not just about the accomplishments of Jane Addams' lifetime; it is also about what she continues to accomplish, by challenging us to do our best, by remind-

Continued on page 4



Ellen Gruenbaum in period costume and Claudia Nolan (the sculptor) on the day of the announcement of the artist selection. Photo by Roy Bell

ing us that life can be lived in this way—that each of us can contribute to the well-being of the world, each of us can live a life of honor, each of us can walk her talk one day at a time, one conversation at a time, one encounter at a time. This monument reminds us to enter that stream where flows the hope of a better future in which we all live in fellowship. And fellowship is the means to our future. Fellowship, not pride; kindness, not arrogance; generosity, not wealth. The power of the soul is not in power, it is in humility. It's in remembering that each of us has something wonderful to give this world. It is my hope that this monument to Jane Addams will be a constant reminder.

And, more than that, I hope in my lifetime to see the visual manifestations of respect for real women, like Jane Addams, flourish and bloom, so that soon in any public park, or courthouse foyer, or government office building, or school lobby memorials to women will stand alongside memorials to men in equal numbers, so that no child will ever think of his or her gender as a limitation.

A short history of the project

The Addams memorial is the fruit of several years' work by many people, including Sudarshan Kapoor, founder of the Peace Garden; Ellie Bluestein, local WILPF founder and peace and social justice advocate; and many CSU Fresno administrators and faculty, notably Dr. Jeannine Raymond and Dr. Ellen Gruenbaum. Student government has contributed generously, and so have the members of local WILPF.

Much of the work was completed by my feminist activism students in the women's studies program, who lobbied for a woman in the garden, researched more than twenty-five



Claudia Nolan and Linda Richmond working on the Jane Addams sculptor. Richmond, a lecturer in the CSUF art department, and studio assistant for the Jane Addams project, contributes her tenacity and talent to the many hours of sculpting the full-sized clay model. Photo by Nancy Youdelman

The scope of Jane Addams' work and her accomplishments are astounding by any measure.

possible candidates, solicited students' nominations, conducted informational campaigns on campus, created posters highlighting nominees' works, and served on university committees that organized the campaign and selected Jane Addams. Women's studies students are currently engaged in projects to raise funds for the memorial. Women students' work must be acknowledged or it, too, will disappear from the history of this memorial.

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Janet Slagter, a member of the Alliance editorial board, is a long-time feminist activist and assistant professor of women's studies at CSU Fresno. She can be contacted at janetsl@csufresno.edu.

The sculptor, Claudia Nolan can be contacted at nolan@csufresno.edu.



Claudia Nolan at podium during the press conference announcing artist selection. At the press conference Claudia said "We are now on the verge of re-inventing the Peace Garden as a place where both men and women are honored. In this way we bring our visual messages more into alignment with our beliefs—that men and women are equal." Photo by Roy Bell

Jane Addams Memorial events:

Student preview April 6th 1:30 PM in the Peace Garden.
Unveiling: April 6th
Fund-Raising Dinner: \$110/person

Includes:
Reception: 5:30 to 6:30 in the Residence Dining Facility
Dinner, Remarks by prominent guests, and Unveiling:
will take place in the Peace Garden 6:30 - 9:00

Short presentations by:
Dr. John Welty, Welcome and recognition of artist and contributors
Dr. Jeannine Raymond, Chair of Peace Garden Committee
Regina Birchem, International President of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom,
Paul Pribbenow, President of Rockford College, Jane Addams' alma mater
Performance of music composed in honor of Jane Addams
Short dramatic reading of Jane Addams' work

For further information, to purchase tickets and inquire about reserving tables, call: 278-7137

The bronze, glass, and granite memorial is entirely financed by donations. To donate:

Jane Addams Memorial
Office of University Development
CSU-Fresno
5244 N. Jackson Avenue
M/S KC 45
Fresno, CA 93740-8023

Please mark the memo line of your check "credit to Women's Studies" in order that the many years' work of Women's Studies students and faculty is commemorated on the pedestal. WILPF has already reached the contribution quota for this recognition.

Grassroots Profile

By Richard Stone

Vickie Fouts arrives for our interview, a striking "lady in red" who, as president of the Fresno chapter of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and a leader in several other organizations, has become a visible outspoken public presence.

Who would guess that just a few years ago Vickie was a faithful employee of a major corporation, a Republican-voting conservative dutifully following the political lead of her family? What happened?

"It began," Vickie relates, "when I felt pushed to the edge by my job and I looked for solace in reading, mostly books on women's spirituality." This opened a desire to know more, and to take classes at CSUF. "You can blame Jan Slagter. I took her course on 'Women of Other Cultures.' We were exposed to women's perspectives on the US role in Central America, and I was shocked. I'd been raised thinking that disagreement with a "business solution" meant you were a Communist. I suddenly felt like I'd been lied to all my life."

Further classes—especially those taught by Bob Fischer and Marilyn Shelton—led to a changed Vickie. She began listening to KFCF (88.1 FM), and joined WILPF. She became painfully aware of ongoing class and racial injustice throughout US history...and was not about to be quiet about it. In short order, she retired from her corporate inferno and became, as she says, "a full-time social justice activist." The list of her involvements lengthened in a hurry: The Fresno Center for Nonviolence, the Community Alliance, the Blue Triangle Network, and more. She's supervised interns, she's written newspaper columns, she's organized vigils and demonstrations. Wherever there has been action, there was Vickie.

And then she took a deep breath. "I finally realized I can't do it all. I'm pulling in my horns a little, and focusing on what moves me the most—the racial and class divisions that distort our daily lives."

Vickie's "reduced activities" are still pretty impressive. She continues as president of Fresno's WILPF chapter, and sits on their national "Building Beloved Community Issues Committee." She is a member of the CSUF National Coalition-Building Institute, which organizes prejudice-reduction workshops. She is circulation and advertising director for the Community Alliance. She is the Madera County Chair for the Peace & Freedom Party ("They're the only party I see that actually has racial and social balance in its leadership.")

As her focus has changed, her understanding of how to work has changed, too. "It's tempting to want outcomes without sustained effort. To gain trust across boundaries of division, you have to be willing to go into other people's territory and become known, become a reliable ally." And so Vickie regularly attends meetings and functions at places like the Islamic Cultural Center and the Pan-Valley Institute.

"I've also had to deal with my own impatience and inexperience. Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication is a model I'm still learning from. I still go back to my

mentors—Jan, Bob, and Marilyn—for advice. I was very influenced by Jan's class on organizing across class and gender lines."

A project that is bringing many of her goals into play is a newly forming Racial Justice Book Club, supported by a grant from National WILPF. "There are already 50 people signed up, half from WILPF and half from local communities of color. We'll read the book Uprooting Racism over several months, and when we meet we'll be in small discussion groups with professional facilitators. But the real intention is to use what we learn together to formulate an action plan."

Vickie's example is a challenge to us all to step outside our conditioned presumptions, to move beyond our comfort zone and interact with people with different backgrounds and beliefs. "There are a lot organized ways to do this," she reminds us. "Join the Multi-Faith Exchange; go to Friday programs at the Islamic Cultural Center; attend Juneteenth celebrations in West Fresno." There's an unknown world out there...and a new world we can build together.



IDENTITY BOX

Cultural Identity: White ("We need to acknowledge, and then challenge, our 'white privilege'")
Political affiliation: Peace and Freedom Party
Religious affiliation: Native American/ Goddess spirituality
Most frequented part of Fresno: The Tower
Inspirations: Gandhi, King, and Chavez...and Jan, Marilyn, and Bob
Motto: Gandhi's "Be the change you wish to see."
Nonpolitical pastime: Yard work
Unlikely pleasure: Watching my creek
Contact: socialjustice@sti.net
(559) 658-8260

Put the Bunny Back in the Box

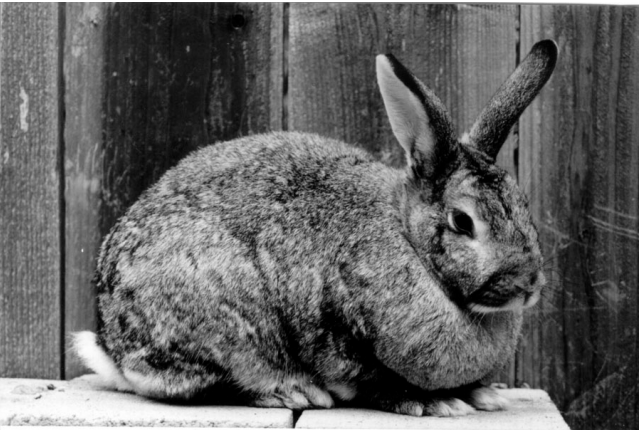
by Thomas Gangale

“Make a move and the bunny gets it!”

That’s one of John Malkovich’s lines in the 1997 film *Con Air*—and it’s good for a laugh. After all, it’s not a real bunny he’s holding a gun to, it’s only a toy that Nicholas Cage is bringing home to his daughter.

But every year, tens of thousands of real bunnies get it. They aren’t toys, but they are treated as playthings.

As a holiday, Easter is one of those strange amalgams of Christianity and pagan ritual. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, but this is grafted onto the even older rites of spring that celebrate the resurrection of the land following the dead of winter. Regarding the latter, there could hardly be a more fitting exemplar of the generative life force than rabbits. And, they’re so cute and cuddly, so naturally, every child loves to get one at Easter time.



ter time. And naturally, there is an industry to serve this demand. It’s so American.

Right now there are hundreds of thousands of bunnies being born that will be sold a month from now and given to children who will have no idea how to care for them. But we all know what short attention spans children have. This summer, the children will lose interest in their rabbits. Also, what were cute little bunnies will now be exhibiting the difficult behaviors common to adolescence in any species. At some point, a family decision will be made. No one wants to clean out the rabbit’s cage anymore, and the parents are pretty steamed about the carpets, furniture, and baseboards that the rabbit chewed up any time it was allowed free reign of the house. So, the rabbit will get carted off to the humane society for the “final solution.” That’s the throwaway society. It’s so American.

My wife and I used to operate a private rabbit rescue shelter out of our home and out of our own pocket. During the 1990s, we placed about 500 abandoned rabbits for adoption. Some of these were former laboratory rabbits. In some cases, researchers were breeding rabbits to manifest a specific genetic defect; they couldn’t use the healthy rabbits, but they didn’t want to kill them either, so a quiet deal was struck to spring them out of the joint. For the most part, however, our rabbit rescues were ex-Easter bunnies that everyday, picket-fence, American families just didn’t want anymore.

Then there are the idiots who buy a male and a female and allow themselves to be overrun, in apparent ignorance of rabbits’ legendary fecundity. Rabbits become sexually mature at three months; they’re ready to rock, and they will rock you. After a one-month gestation, a female will produce an average litter of six, depending on the breed. Meanwhile, mama rabbit can be impregnated a few hours after giving birth. Not that any of this is healthy, of course, but it’s the worst case scenario of letting them breed out of control.



nario of letting them breed out of control.

A holiday that supposedly celebrates resurrection and life has been perverted by a consumer culture that has duped the American family into perpetrating an annual slaughter of the innocents just to momentarily amuse its children. What family values are these? What Christian lessons does this teach our progeny?

What would Jesus do?

I can’t say, but I think Nicholas Cage’s character would say to consumers and commercial breeders, “Put the bunny back in the box.”

Thomas Gangale is an aerospace engineer and a former Air Force officer. He is currently the executive director at OPS-Alaska, a think tank based in Petaluma, California, and an international relations scholar at San Francisco State University.



Get on the Bus Program Brings Children to Visit Incarcerated Moms for Mother’s Day

A coalition of prison ministries will bring children to see their moms for a special Mother’s Day treat to be held on Friday, May 12, 2006, at both Chowchilla prisons: Central California Women’s Facility (CCWF) and Valley State Prison for Women (VSPW).

This will be the 7th annual event, and the largest so far. The program began in 1998 with one bus containing 17 children from nine families at VSPW. More than half the women in prison are mothers, and most do not get to see their kids during their entire period of incarceration, because the children often live at a distance, and caregivers often cannot afford to make the journey.

This year’s event is expected to have as many as 30 buses with several hundred children—the exact numbers

will not be determined until the cutoff date of April 24. Each child or family group must be chaperoned by an adult—either a family member or, if none is available, a volunteer.

The costs of putting on such a program are astronomical. Buses, fuel, driver salaries, breakfasts and dinners for the children during the bus rides, goodie bags, souvenir photos, T-shirts for each child—and the list goes on. And that’s just for the needs outside the prison.

Inside the prisons, funds are needed to provide lunch for children, moms, and chaperones, as well as souvenir photos to be given to each mother and each child. We are in need of tax-deductible monetary donations from groups and individuals. In addition, we welcome

new or very gently used soft-cover (paperback) children’s books and new or almost-new stuffed animals. Each child will be given a book that Mom can read to him or her, and then the child can take the book home, along with a stuffed animal to cuddle.

None of these treats are paid for with taxpayer money. The Department of Corrections generously allows this and similar programs to take place inside their institutions, but everything must be funded by donations.

Donors may make checks payable to “Get on the Bus,” and mail to Get on the Bus, c/o Detention Ministry, 1550 N Fresno St, Fresno, CA 93703. For additional information contact Maria Telesco at 255-9492 or maria.telesco@att.net.



High School Students in Fresno Walkout in Support of Immigrant Rights



Over 500 high school students walked out of class, jumped the fences, and marched to Fresno City Hall on March 27, 2006. These students were protesting HR 4377, a bill in Congress they say would be unfair to immigrants and their families. See related story on page 7. Photos by Mike Rhodes

Air America Host Stephanie Miller Comes to Fresno



Real and wickedly funny, Stephanie Miller is bringing her morning radio show to Fresno on Friday, April 21. Her live show will be broadcast nationwide from the CSU Fresno Satellite Student Union, 6-9 AM. Air America, the new progressive talk network, is heard locally on KEPT 790 AM.

Stephanie is no stranger to humor and political talk: her late father, William E. Miller, was Barry Goldwater's running mate in the Republicans' failed 1964 bid for the presidency. How strangely fitting that 40 years after her father accepted

the GOP nomination, his daughter is helping to balance out the "right wing wackos" on talk radio by joining the ranks of the "left-wing wackos."

Since its September 2004 debut, *The Stephanie Miller Show* is one of the fastest growing radio shows, running on major stations in Seattle, Los Angeles, Boston, Detroit, and Washington, DC... and now in Fresno!

The path to Miller's career began in Buffalo, New York, where she was born and raised and landed her first job in radio. Growing up, she never listened to the radio; she wanted to be Carol Burnett. When she was about 27, Miller was on the air on "Hot 97" in her hometown, then moved to Rochester, New York, Chicago, and New York City, and ended up in Los Angeles, home base for *The Stephanie Miller Show*.

Miller's fresh voice and political satire have been cultivated over years of experience as a media personality and comedienne. Most recently, she was a host for *I've Got a Secret* on cable's Oxygen network and a celebrity game show panelist on the PAX Network's *Balderdash*.

For more information, see <www.790kft.com>.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Margarita Rocha, executive director of Centro La Familia Advocacy Services, assigned an internal coordinator, Amy Lee, to oversee the project by making sure everything is in place for the tax season and is the direct link to IRS.

Centro has five certified staff members to prepare taxes for the 2006 filing season. One focus of Centro La Familia Advocacy Services is to help low-income families access the million of dollars in the earned-income tax credit that is unclaimed every year. The agency conducts outreach and information on eligibility for the EITC throughout Fresno County.

In 2005, Centro La Familia Advocacy Services was able to assist over 300 families with earned-income tax credit with refunds totaling in excess of \$400,000. This is money that is reinvested in our community. Currently, there are about 124 families served with a total of over \$240,000 refunded. That number is expected to increase by the end of the filing season. What this means for the Central Valley is economic stability for many of these families who currently may be unemployed due to the agricultural slow season, and who depend on this money to help them pay debts, buy clothes for their children, make a down payment on a home, and use it for other life-sustaining necessities.

Many families don't know what EITC is and how to get it. The families are in awe and their face brightens when we tell them how much they are eligible for, and explain to them that it comes from the federal EITC program. One taxpayer who is a single mother with four children will be receiving \$4,400 in EITC this year. She had an enormous smile on her face when one of the staff told her what she was receiving. She said now she can finally fix her car and get some clothes for her children for school. Annually we have returning families and they refer other families and friends. The staff members at Centro comment that the families look at us as if we created a miracle; the families are very thankful and it does give the staff a good feeling about adding something positive in a family's life.

- To qualify for EITC, you must be a citizen, have a valid social security number, no foreign income, investment income of less than \$2,700, and cannot be a qualifying child of another person.
- If you have a qualifying child, the child must meet the relationship, age, and residency requirement.

A child cannot be used by more than one person to claim Earn Income Tax Credit.

- If you do not have a qualifying child you must be at least age 25, but under age 65 to claim EITC.
- The income limit if you are single with no children is \$11,750; for married filing jointly with no children, \$13,750.
- If you are single with one child, the limit is \$31,030; for married filing jointly with one child, \$33,030.
- If you are single with more than one child, the limit is \$35,263; for married filing jointly with more than one child, \$37,263.

If this sounds confusing, please call Centro La Familia Advocacy Services.


Centro La Familia Advocacy Services offers this service Monday through Friday, from 9 AM to 3 PM by appointment. We also extend this service in the rural communities of Mendota, Huron, and Firebaugh. Centro's certified staff is in Mendota every Tuesday, Huron every Wednesday, and Firebaugh every Thursday, all from 1 PM to 4 PM. There are many families in these areas that qualify for EITC and do not have transportation to Fresno or would have to pay up to \$50 for a ride to access the free services we offer. Our services are provided in English, Spanish, and Hmong.

The last day Centro La Familia Advocacy Services will be providing this service are April 7 for Centro La Familia Advocacy, April 4 for Mendota, April 5 for Huron, and April 6 for Firebaugh. For more information or any questions, please call Centro La Familia Advocacy Services at (559) 237-2961 or (877) 294-3772.

Note: We do have a list of other organizations that provide similar services.

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Margarita Rocha has been the Executive Director of Centro La Familia Advocacy since 1993. Contact information is (559) 237-2961 email: mrocha@centrolafamilia.org

Presented by:

The San Joaquin Valley Democratic Club

AM 790 KEPT
 FRESNO'S PROGRESSIVE TALK

"Take Back America"

— an Evening LIVE with **Stephanie Miller**

"As talk radio has more and more become a sea of right-wing wackos, I think the audience has finally realized the need to balance that with some good left-wing wackos, and I'm thrilled to be able to fill that need!" --
Stephanie Miller

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La Ryan Event Center
4277 N. West Ave
(at Ashlan), Fresno

Stephanie Miller is the daughter of the late Republican Bill Miller - most famous for having run for Vice-President on the Goldwater ticket. Her years as a media personality and comedienne have resulted in Stephanie's unique take on the political follies of our time. Real and wickedly funny, "The Stephanie Miller Show" is one of the fastest growing shows in progressive talk.

***Seating is limited, call for reservations. \$30 per person, to be paid at the door (includes membership in SJVDC). Please make checks payable to SJVDC. To reserve your tickets call San Joaquin Valley Democratic Club at 599-438-1806, or email kurtgrip@comcast.net**

Earned-Income Tax Credit

By Margarita Rocha

In mid-January the phones start ringing nonstop at Centro La Familia Advocacy Services, from people who want to schedule appointments for taxes. In mid-March the appointment book was already filled until April. Families are excited about the earned-income tax credit (EITC). The staff members at Centro La Familia Advocacy Services are like busy bees starting in January,

preparing and training for the tax season.

Centro La Familia Advocacy Services is a community-based nonprofit organization with over 30 years history of serving low-income families throughout Fresno County. It was founded in 1972 to provide direct advocacy and intervention services to low-income residents. Centro's mission is "to empower low-income people to access life-sustaining resources."

Centro La Familia Advocacy Services has been able to provide this service for low-income families for many years through various funding sources. The Centro staff receives their training and materials through the IRS

Spreading like a Pandemic... ...without the birds

The Valley's Home for Air America Radio



Stephanie Miller
6am-9am



Al Franken
9am-12pm



Ed Schultz
12pm-3pm



Randi Rhodes
3pm-7pm

Largest Demonstration in California History

By Bill Hackwell

On Saturday, March 25 over 1 million people demonstrated in downtown Los Angeles in support of immigrant rights. This was the largest demonstration in the history of California. Univision and other Spanish-language television reported that up to 2 million people marched. The Los Angeles Times, reflecting police estimates, gave the march 500,000 - police estimates have been trying to minimize pro-immigrant rights demonstration for the last few weeks.

The demonstration was the largest of many immigrant rights demonstrations that took place in March. It is an uprising from the people against the reactionary Sensenbrenner Bill that passed in the House of Representatives. The bill criminalizes immigrants and those who support them. The demonstrations began with 50,000 in Washington DC on March 7, 500,000 in Chicago on March 10 (the largest demonstration ever in Chicago history), and tens of thousands more in Milwaukee, Phoenix, Atlanta, Santa Rosa and other cities. In the build up for the Los Angeles demonstration, thou-

sands of high school students walked out of class on the Friday before and marched in Los Angeles. In Georgia, tens of thousands of immigrant workers refused to show up at their jobs in a work stoppage protesting regressive legislation passed by the Georgia State Legislature. These demonstrations reflect a tremendous upsurge in the immigrant community.

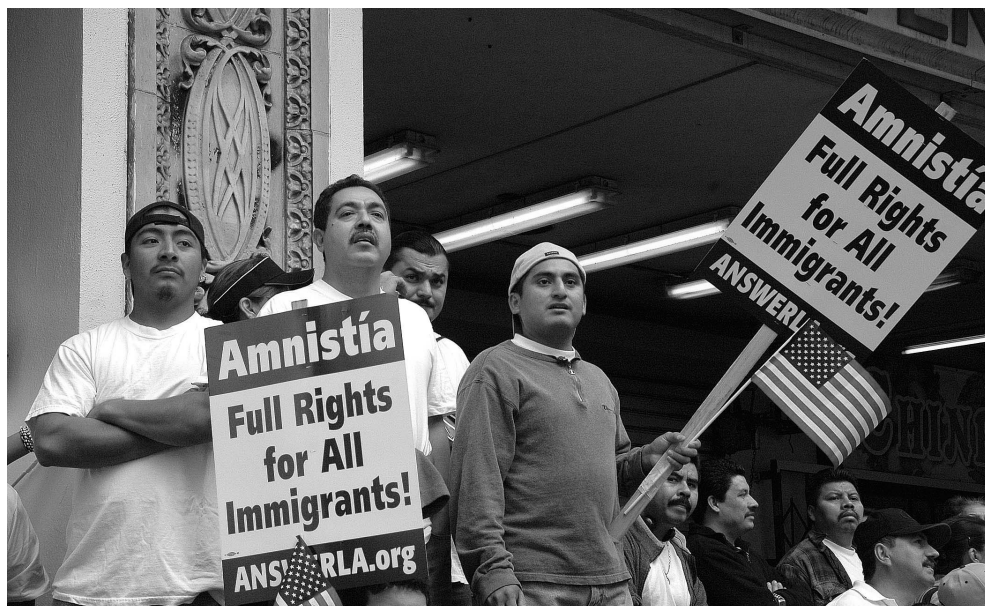
The LA rally was co-chaired by Juan José Gutiérrez, Director of Latino Movement USA, a member of the A.N.S.W.E.R. LA Steering Committee; Javier Rodríguez, a noted immigrant rights activist; and Jesse Díaz, a UC-Riverside professor who helped initiate the march. Speakers included Raúl Murillo and Gloria Saucedo of Hermandad Mexicana Nacional; Arturo Rodríguez, President of the United Farm Workers; Korean and Haitian community leaders; and Gloria La Riva and Preston Wood of the A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition.

At the rally, Juan José Gutiérrez, Director of Latino Movement USA, said, "We are people of dignity and we demand respect. This is the beginning of a movement that is going to call for a national work stoppage."

Gloria La Riva of the A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition said, "The racist politicians thought they could step on us with their racist legislation but they have awakened the immigrant giant and they will feel our strength when we stop work."

Preston Wood of A.N.S.W.E.R. LA said, "U.S. corporations are robbing Mexico of its resources and forcing people to come as immigrants for their survival. U.S. Out of Iraq! Justice for all workers!"

Critical to the turnout was the mobilization night and day for over a week of famous Latino radio announcers from every Spanish-language station, including Piolín el Cucuy. The organizers announced a national meeting on April 8 in Dallas, Texas of all the Latino immigrant rights leaders in the country to strategize for a national work stoppage in late May under the banner "A Day Without An Immigrant."



Over 1 million filled the streets of Los Angeles on March 25 as waves of demonstrations take place in major cities across the U.S. Photo by Bill Hackwell



Attacks on immigrants have awakened a sleeping giant. Photo by Bill Hackwell

Loan Shark of the Year!

By Mike Rhodes

Money Mart was given the “Loan Shark of the Year” award for their predatory loan practices in the Fresno area. A brief ceremony was held at the company’s Manchester Mall facility as members from ACORN, a local community group, handed the manager a certificate and miniature shark to symbolize Money Mart’s ruthless business practices.

In a press release, ACORN said they would present Money Mart with a “Loan Shark of the Year” Award for “gouging customers through predatory payday lending, criminal check-cashing fees, and rip-off refund loans.”

“This company’s entire business is based on gouging people in need,” said ACORN member Jamie Wilson, “and we aren’t going to take it anymore.”

The ACORN press release continues: “The interest rates on Money Mart’s payday loans range from 266% to 912%. While Money Mart says payday loans help people in a one-time emergency, ACORN charges that payday loans get people deeper in debt and that Money Mart’s profits come from customers who can’t pay the loans back and so are forced to repeatedly renew the loans and pay additional interest.

“A \$300 payday loan from Money Mart costs \$352.50. If after two weeks the customer can’t pay the full amount, they pay the \$52.50 finance charge and Money Mart rolls the loan over for two more weeks. If, as in many cases, this continues for three months, the customer will have paid Money Mart \$341 in interest and still owe the entire \$352.50 loan amount.

“Money Mart is the second largest payday lender in the country, behind Advance America, and the second largest check casher, behind ACE Cash Express.”

After the Loan Shark of the Year presentation, Manchester Mall security descended upon the scene and Director of Security William Steproe told this *Community Alliance* reporter that they had a policy against anyone taking photos in the mall. About the same time, an angry Money Mart manager demanded that the photos be deleted or she would file a lawsuit. When Steproe was asked to provide a copy of the mall’s policy on free speech and access to the mall by the media, he said there was not a written policy. “The policy is just given verbally,” Steproe said. The members of ACORN and this reporter were not intimidated.



Money Mart has the dubious honor of being the “Loan Shark of the Year” in Fresno.



ACORN activists delivered the “Loan Shark of the Year” award to Money Mart, located inside the Manchester Center mall. Photos by Mike Rhodes.

The Fresno action was one of 30 held across the United States and Canada. For more information about ACORN and their attack on predatory lending practices, see <www.acorn.org>.

For more information about Fresno ACORN:

ACORN
3636 N First #139
Fresno CA 93726
Ph (559) 222-9013
Fax (559) 222-9159
caacornfro@acorn.org

Now - April 15

Free Tax Service Centers aka: VITA (VOLUNTARY INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE) Sites so individuals may file their taxes and claim their EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit)

Fresno ACORN will be operating these sites at their office from January 25-April 15, 2006

Specifically on Mon, Wed & Fri from 4-8pm. And on Sat 2 - 6 pm.

Fresno Acorn
3636 N. First Street Suite 139 • Fresno, CA 93726
T:(559) 222-9013 • F: (559) 221-0704
www.acorn.org



QUEER EYE

By Dan Waterhouse

This year’s legislature session features three bills of interest to the state’s queer community, especially queer youth. Two of the bills focus on school safety and the third attempts to address bias in the justice system.

Centrist political observers opine that the proposals (particularly the school safety bills) are feel-good measures that won’t accomplish much in the long term. And, in a way, I can’t argue with them.

Queer youth and straight youth allies visited the state capitol on March 6 to lobby legislators to pass the two school bills.

Assembly Bill 606 (the Safe Place to Learn Act) is the major school safety bill of the two. AB 606 is an attempt to implement several recommendations that the AB 537 (California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act) task force made in 2001. The task force recommended that clear written policies be adopted and enforced; all school staff be informed and trained on the law’s requirements; guidance be provided to students about their rights and responsibilities; and anti-bias education programs be developed for students.

AB 606 as originally introduced would have required school districts to establish and publicize a policy that prohibits discrimination and harassment; update all publications relating to school safety, bullying, tolerance, bias-motivated behavior, and hate-related violence; provide mandatory training to school staff; and maintain documentation of all complaints of discrimination and harassment.

The bill also proposed that the Superintendent of Instruction be allowed to use all legal means to “effect compliance” with the law, “including but not limited to the withholding of all or part of relevant state fiscal support of the school district.”

The California Teachers Association announced on January 10 (the day before the bill was due to be heard in committee) that the union would actively work against the bill if mandatory training sessions for teachers remained a part of the legislation. That language was stripped from the bill before it was approved by the Assembly and sent to the state senate where it awaits action.

AB 606 provoked a telephone campaign by right-wing groups intent upon its defeat.

The other school bill, Senate Bill 1437 (the Bias-Free Curriculum Act) would prohibit instruction or activities that “reflects adversely upon persons because of their race or ethnicity, gender, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, or religion.” The bill has yet to be heard in committee.

The criminal justice bill was introduced following what was regarded as an extremely lenient sentence in a Fresno County murder case. The killer of Joel Robles, a transgendered Fresnan, was sentenced to the minimum term (for manslaughter) of four years in prison after his attorney introduced the “transgender panic” defense into the case.

The original intent of AB 1160 was to bar the use of “panic defenses” in criminal cases and to ensure that juries be instructed not to allow personal bias to influence their verdict. The criminal defense bar objected, saying that defendants must be allowed to explain their state of mind—which goes to evidence of intent. The objectionable language was stripped out, leaving a watered-down bill with little if any teeth.

All three bills are waiting for further action in the legislature. Assembly Bills 606 and 1160 may be heard in Senate committees after March 25, and SB1437

Cities Strip Away “Safe and Affordable Access” for Medical Marijuana Patients in the Central Valley

By Nick Osborne

In 1996 California voters passed Proposition 215 (also known as the Compassionate Use Act), which gave patients the right to legally use marijuana medically. Health & Safety Code 1362.5(c) specifically “encourages the Federal and State governments to implement a plan to provide for the safe and affordable distribution of marijuana to all patients in medical need of marijuana.” Looking around the Valley, one might wonder if anyone has actually read H&S Section 11362.5(c). Some cities in the Valley have, or are considering, bans on medical marijuana dispensaries.

Cities such as Fresno have prevented dispensaries from opening. Attorney Bill McPike, along with Americans for Safe Access (ASA), a grassroots patients’ rights organization, is currently suing the city of Fresno due to the ban on dispensaries.

Fresno is not the only city to implement such bans on dispensaries. Recently, Clovis, Modesto, Turlock, and Merced have all followed suit with similar ordinances. With most of the medical marijuana dispensaries located near the Bay Area, some patients are hard-pressed to get their needed medicine.

Cities placing bans on dispensaries in the Valley are stripping away patients’ “safe and affordable access” to marijuana.

What does this mean for patients? The situation looks grim, as more dispensaries are raided and shut down by the Feds (note the recent sweep of dispensaries in Southern and Northern California).



California Central Valley Journey for Justice 2006

By Gloria M. Sandoval

In the spirit of Martin Luther King’s historic March on Washington DC in the 1960’s and the 1966 Cesar Chavez’ United Farm Workers March from Delano to Sacramento, the California Central Valley Journey for Justice seeks to shine a moral spotlight on community issues and poverty.

The Journey for Justice will consist of a chain of events from Visalia to Sacramento from April 13 through April 20, 2006. There will be presentations, music, cultural and educational exchanges for the whole family.

The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina has shown that if people do not band together and take action to protect themselves, no one else will do it for them. We believe in a world with health care for all, education for all, sustenance for the poor, human rights for all, and an end to abuses in the criminal justice system.

Co-sponsoring organizations for this event are seeking endorsements. Participate and Join Us!
Merced Labor Party - (209) 631-6461
California National Action Network - (559) 264-0097
Community Homeless Alliance Ministry - (408) 294-5563
California Poor Peoples’ Economic Human Rights Campaign/WEAP - (510) 451-7379

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services...” Article 25, United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, December 10, 1948



Fresno has prevented medical marijuana dispensaries from opening, yet the plant is being grown here. Photographer would like to remain anonymous.

One thing is certain: there are thousands of patients nationwide who use medical marijuana. At least eleven states have already passed laws in support of medical marijuana, and more states are continuing to look closer at this issue. Eventually the nation might see a head-to-head battle between the states and the federal government.

While patients wait, they may be wondering, Where then can they get their medicine?

There are still a few ways to get those needed meds. One way is to go to any the following Web sites to get information about and locations of dispensaries, collectives, and caregivers in your area:
Compassionate Coalition <<http://info@compassionatecoalition.org/>>
CANORML <<http://www.canorml.org/>>
ASA <<http://www.safeaccessnow.org/>>

Another way to get those needed meds would be to take a drive to Stanislaus County. I recently visited a

dispensary on the outskirts of Modesto called “The Healthy Choice,” located at 4213 McHenry; the cross street is Pelendale.

It remains uncertain what cities and counties will stand up for patient’s rights, and protect the Americans who are some of their most needy citizens. A good way to start is to begin honest open dialog. With all the knowledge and technology available in the world today, we should be able to find a way to regulate medicinal marijuana.

Until this very ambiguous legal situation is resolved between state and federal jurisdiction, medical marijuana patients will live in a state of uncertainty, in a country known as “The Land of the Free.”

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Nick Osborne is a certified anger management facilitator, and president of the Merced County Patients Coalition. You can reach Nick at Nick@MercCountyPC.com.

Poetry Corner

We have received two poems based on a deep consciousness of the natural order that underlies all our endeavoring. We present them both.

SENTRY, by “Kalypso”

This rock has lain for centuries
and hugs its mother, Earth,
listening for the footsteps
of those who tread its turf.

It has witnessed countless battles,
many won and many lost:
I wonder if it measures
the grieving and the cost.

The bones that lie beneath it
are a testament to man,
and his recurrent struggle
that long ago began.

The rock has never ventured,
it must be moved by force;
perhaps this too is wisdom
from yet another source.

MAY LEAVES, by Steve Malm

May leaves rustle,
Fall to spring,
Then a seedling,
Under way.
Soon barked,
Needled,
Pine.

In time,
Measured line,
Upset climb;
Quivers of Arrows
Pointed Spires
Still rising,
To groundless height.

An unbent thicket given up to the sky,
Scattered light through the red forest,
Displaced darkness on damp, flor-steppes,
And an uneasy mist ran down the incline,
Passed the wood’s edged refrain,
And settled at the base of the mountain.

Bending arms of oak outstretch,
And press the firmament,
Where a winded whisper resounded,
From a lofty branch rebounded,
Another leaf let down.



FLEMING
A ASSOCIATES
ARTIST REPRESENTATIVE AGENCY

Garnet Rogers

Photo Courtesy of George DeLuca
www.musicofboston.com
Copley Media © 2000

FFS Concert News

By Pat Wolk

Fresno Folklore Society keeps bringing you breathtaking performances by exceptional artists at affordable prices in the exquisite, intimate Bonner Auditorium. Top-notch traveling musicians have heard of our museum and Fresno receptions and want to perform here.

We're fortunate. However, attendance tends to drop in the springtime—we hope to overcome that tendency and encourage a good turnout for the April and May concerts.

GARNET ROGERS
Friday, April 7, at 7:30 PM.
\$15 & \$20
<www.garnetrogers.com>

We heard **Garnet Rogers** at the Kate Wolf festival last year where he was a featured performer and were so impressed with his musicianship, his deep baritone voice, his powerful but gentle stage presence (he's close to six and half feet tall), his poetic lyrics, we wanted to share our enthusiasm with the Fresno community. First time in Fresno.

“A brilliant songwriter. One of the major talents of our time.”
—*Boston Globe*

“The greatest interpreter and vocalist performing in the contemporary folk scene.” —*Sing Out!*

“I have found strength and comfort in his songs. This is good and rich and big music. Welcome one and all. Come on in. Get down.”
--*Greg Brown*

Tickets: \$15 advance; \$20 at door

Available at The Movies, Patrick's Music, National Hardware, Fresno Art Museum Gift Shoppe or phone Pat, 431-3653

Fresno Residents Demand Clean Air

By Mike Rhodes

Children, their parents, and community allies are rallying for clean air in Fresno. Standing on McKinley just West of highway 99, on a street already congested with heavy traffic, the group called on Fresno City officials to rezone the area so Rosenbalm Rockery, a Clovis concrete and soils processing facility, can't relocate to a lot directly across the street from the school.

This coalition is concerned that the new facility will compound existing health problems that children attending Addams elementary school already have, and are angry that the City issued a permit for the new facility without conducting an environmental review and without notifying the school or nearby residents. They are demanding that the City of Fresno revoke the conditional use permit issued to Rosenbalm Rockery and rezone the Addams neighborhood to ban future industrial development in the area.

“We are already suffering from the large number of polluting facilities located in our community,” says Tony Diaz, coordinator of the Addams Neighborhood Resource Center. “We are bombarded with diesel exhaust and other air pollution from the 99, the railroad, and two large distribution centers, including the UPS. The last thing we need is another polluting industry

next to our school. It is time for Fresno to put public health before private profit.”

According to the American Lung Association (ALA), numerous studies have linked diesel exhaust to cancer, the exacerbation of asthma, and other respiratory diseases. ALA also found that truck and traffic intensity, and exhaust measured in schools, were significantly associated with chronic respiratory symptoms. A recent study of the FUSD “Yellow Card Data” found that Addams Elementary had the third highest asthma rates in the district.

Rey León, senior policy analyst for the Latino Issues Forum notes, “The concrete company will increase diesel traffic in a low-income, underserved area already compromised by air pollution and extremely high rates of pediatric asthma. That the City did not notify residents to inform them of the proposed relocation and that they issued a conditional-use permit without conducting a full environmental review speaks to their disregard for the health of Fresno's communities and their lack of commitment to enforcing the California Environmental Quality Act and other critical laws intended to protect the health and well being of all California communities.”

Diaz said the students, parents, and community allies will gather on the corner of McKinley and Hughes across from Addams Elementary (near Highway 99) at 3:15 PM each Wednesday to express their outrage at the City's actions and demand that immediate action be taken to protect community health.



Parents, students, and community allies are calling on the City of Fresno to rezone the area so Rosenbalm Rockery, a Clovis concrete and soils processing facility, can't relocate to a lot directly across the street from the school. All photos by Mike Rhodes.

A Political Earthquake—Elections 2006

By Mike Rhodes

[Editor's Note: This is the first of a series of articles that the *Community Alliance* will print about the 2006 elections. Future articles will include more details about incumbent voting records, the positions of candidates running for local office, and how progressives can win political power in this area.]

Who gets elected has a life-or-death impact on our lives. Elected officials will decide whether we go to war, whether air quality will be improved in the Central Valley, and whether home healthcare workers are paid a living wage. Do you want to elect another county sheriff that spies on peace activists and students at CSUF? City council members that are opposed to police accountability? Congress members that support the Bush administration's war in Iraq?

The upcoming June and November 2006 elections are being looked at by many progressives as the way to turn the tide against the conservative juggernaut that has taken over this country and local politics.

Lydia Flores, chair of the Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee (CVPPAC), says, "We need to unite around a strategy that will empower poor and working people in this community." The CVPPAC would like to see a broad coalition built that would bring together progressive community groups, organized labor, and individuals to elect local candidates.

Cynthia Gonzalez, who is running against Republican Judy Case in the Board of Supervisors race in District 4 (see map), describes herself as a progressive Democrat. Flores says people are really getting excited about this race because "it would change the balance of power on the Board of Supervisors."

Lloyd Carter, a local progressive and expert on water issues, said he has met with Gonzalez and is really excited about her campaign. "I have talked with her about water issues and I was tremendously impressed," Carter said. Some political analysts have suggested that this is the race to watch in the June primary, because a win here would have a huge impact on Fresno County politics.

There are two Democrats running for Congress, who are challenging Republican incumbents. T. J. Cox is running against George Radanovich in the 19th congressional district. Steve Haze is running in the 21st congressional district against Devin Nunes. John Miller, a Green Party candidate, is also running in the 21st district race. One issue of critical interest to progressive voters in this area is where these candidates stand on the war in Iraq. The incumbents, Nunes and Radanovich, are both staunch supporters of the Bush administration's war in Iraq, which more than 80% of Americans oppose.

Haze, who is running against Nunes, said, "I believed that we had made a grave error to pre-emptively engage in a war with Iraq because Saddam Hussein was contained with the no-fly zones, there were no verifiable weapons of mass destruction, Iraq was under a UN mandated Oil for Food and Medicine Program, and billions of dollars did not have to be diverted from domestic programs." Haze claims that the resolution passed in Congress to authorize the war in Iraq is illegal and thus null and void. He said "There is a very good book called *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu in which the greatest premise for achieving victory and the most ideal strategy is the

following: 'To win without fighting is best.' We are now in a senseless and brutal situation—which requires leadership on how to resolve this conflict without any further loss of innocent lives."

The Green Party candidate in the 21st congressional district, John Miller, said, "I support a phased pull-out of US troops from Iraq, but we must try to correct some of the damage we have caused, perhaps by use of United Nations or other truly multinational forces. Those responsible for this war and the atrocities that have occurred should be held accountable." Miller said "this war was not just about WMD or democracy and freedom or whatever other line Bush wished to use on the American people, it was also about the power of the military-industrial complex and our desire to control Middle Eastern oil. If we were using solar energy and other alternatives to petroleum, perhaps this whole mess could have been avoided."

T. J. Cox, who is running against Radanovich in the 19th district said, "The war in Iraq was an appalling way to enter the 21st century. The war is a sinkhole of lives, money, and morality. The current situation must end now—our troops need to get out of the business of nation-building."

The Peace and Freedom Party, which is committed to socialism, democracy, ecology, feminism and racial equality, has a local candidate in the 29th California Assembly district. John Crockford says he is "running to offer a choice for voters to elect a pro-labor candidate with specific goals of promoting and supporting legislation that provides for a better life for the many of us who live by our labor. As a legislator in the State Assembly, I will work toward a California where cooperation replaces competition, where all people are well fed, clothed, and housed; where all women and men have equal status; and where all individuals may freely endeavor to fulfill their own talents and desires."

Because City Council member Tom Boyajian, who represents District 1, is termed out, there is a lot of interest in that race. All five candidates have been invited to a candidate forum, which will be held on April 8, where they will be asked about their positions on issues that are important to the progressive community. See sidebar for details. Cynthia Sterling is running for re-election in City Council District 3. Widely viewed as a friend of the progressive community, Sterling has been a strong supporter of the Independent Police Auditor proposal. She is being challenged by Ignacio Garibay and Manuel Toledo. City council members Mike Dages and Henry T. Perea are running unopposed.

Lydia Flores, chair of the CVPPAC, says, "The best you can expect in the Fresno City Council races is to maintain the status quo. In other words, none of the really conservative members on the council are up for election. The best we can hope for is to maintain the current balance of power and not allow the conservatives to gain influence."

Pete Mehas, superintendent of the Fresno County Office of Education (FCOE), is retiring and this will lead to a contested election in June. Mehas, a conservative Republican, is supporting Larry Powell. Larry Wilder, who teaches at Fresno Pacific University, is generally perceived as the more acceptable candidate to the progressive community in this race. The Fresno Unified School

Local Candidate Forums to Be Held in Fresno

Saturday, April 8
10 AM-2 PM

Central Valley Progressive PAC to Hold Local Candidates' Forum

The Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee (CVPPAC) will be holding a candidates' forum at the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Fresno, 4144 N. Millbrook Ave, (1/2 block south of Ashlan). This is a great opportunity to personally see and question the candidates make a difference in the June 6, 2006, primary election. Some races will likely be decided without a run-off vote in the November general election.

Candidates for the following nonpartisan races are being invited to participate:

Fresno City Council Districts 1, 3, 5, and 7
Fresno County Board of Supervisors District 1 and 4

Fresno County Assessor-Recorder, Auditor-Controller/Treasurer, County Clerk, District Attorney, Public Administrator/Coroner, Sheriff, and Superintendent of County Schools.

The forum is co-sponsored by the UUCF's Social Justice Committee and is open to the general public free of charge. This forum is presented as an educational opportunity to help voters learn more about the candidates and their positions on important issues. No endorsement vote will be taken at this forum. The candidates will be allowed a short opening statement and participate in a question and answer period. Child care and light refreshments will be provided. While there will be no charge to attend the forum, donations will be accepted to help defray expenses. Forum details will be posted later this month at <www.cvppac.org>.

Saturday, April 29
2-4 PM

The League of Women Voters, Preschool California, and Fresno Pacific University are co-sponsoring a dual forum. The two candidates for Fresno County Superintendent of Schools will speak, and an official from Preschool California will present a nonpartisan analysis of Proposition 82, the Preschool for All initiative. This event will be held at Ashley Hall, which is in McDonald Hall (the main building) at Fresno Pacific. No charge.

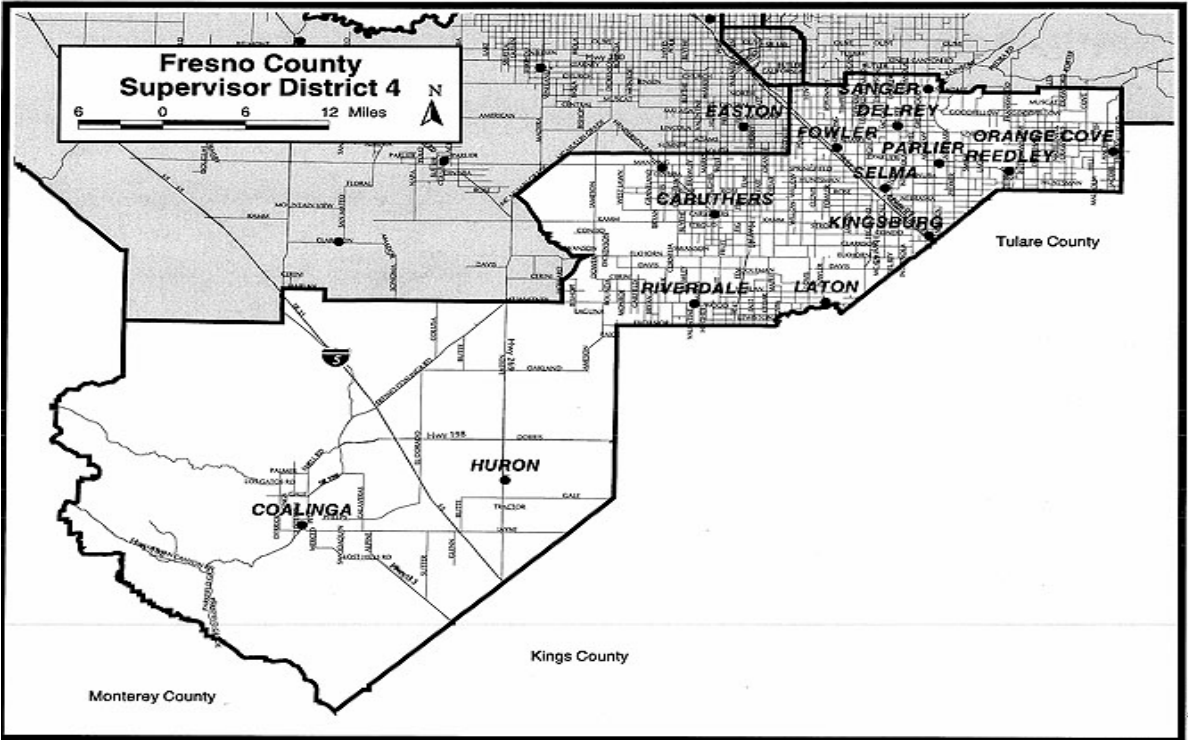
District (FUSD) elections will be held in November.

There will be many other races and initiatives on the ballot in June and November.

Future issues of the *Community Alliance* will go into more detail about local and statewide races. We will tell you what the candidates' positions on the issues are, who is being endorsed by progressive organizations, and how you can become involved in standing up for democracy and restoring progressive values in the political arena.



Cynthia Gonzalez is running for the District 4 Board of Supervisors seat.



Map data compiled by Fresno County Clerk

September 27, 2001

2006 Elections in Colombia COMMUNITIES SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS

"Vote? What for? Politicians use the government as if it were their own private enterprise!"—A Bogota taxi driver

By Eduardo Stanley
SPECIAL FOR COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

BOGOTA, Colombia— On Sunday, March 12, the sun was shining and the weather was good, so many Colombians started marching to the polls by the thousands—some observers expected the traditional voter absenteeism to be overcome by a good turnout. But in the late afternoon, Bogota's skies darkened.

spread around the country, well armed and several thousand strong. Associated with narcotrafficking, it was accused by several international human rights organizations with torture and crimes against people—mostly against civil and labor rights activists.

These elements—FTA and how to deal with social violence— divides Colombia's society.

"The FTA is a free enterprise project that will make us more dependent on the United States," said Borja Diaz, an opinion shared by several analysts representing different political tendencies. All are in agreement that the economic model proposed by the FTA will not help in resolving a very difficult situation reflecting ample social fragmentation—such as what occurred in Mexico when that country signed a 1994 free-trade agreement with Canada and the United States. In Colombia, according to Borja Diaz, 12 percent of the population

is unemployed; 40 percent are underemployed; 50 percent are without access to health care; and more than are 60 percent in living in poverty.

ond-class citizens, we are stereotyped and we are victims of discrimination and ethnic violence." As an example, Gomez Baos cites that during the Holocaust tens of thousands of Gypsies were killed by the Nazis.

Gomez Baos considers her candidacy as a starting point for her community and allies. Her agenda includes creation of jobs and affordable housing, and respect for ethnic and indigenous communities. "This would be part of an all-inclusive development plan to generate a better distribution of wealth."

"We need far-reaching tax reform to face up to the growing gaps in society," says Orsinia Polanco Jusayu, a Wayuu indigenous activist. "Uribe's government invests more in the war, but we need greater investment in social issues." In Colombia there are 12 million indigenous people belonging to 84 communities. Protecting their identities is an issue that brought some of these communities to support Gomez Baos.

Within this context of political alliances, the case of the Raizales is particularly interesting. This indigenous group lives on San Andres and Providence (islands in the Colombian Caribbean). They owe their existence to English settlers who brought the Baptist religion to the community, as well as to the African slaves and the indigenous Mosquito people who lived there. At present, the Raizales fear the very real threat of expropriation of their lands for the benefit of the international tourist industry.

"Back in time, there was no poverty in the islands," comments Charlene Williams, a Raizal who now lives in Bogota. "The Colombian military took over the islands, and there are now 11 military bases there."

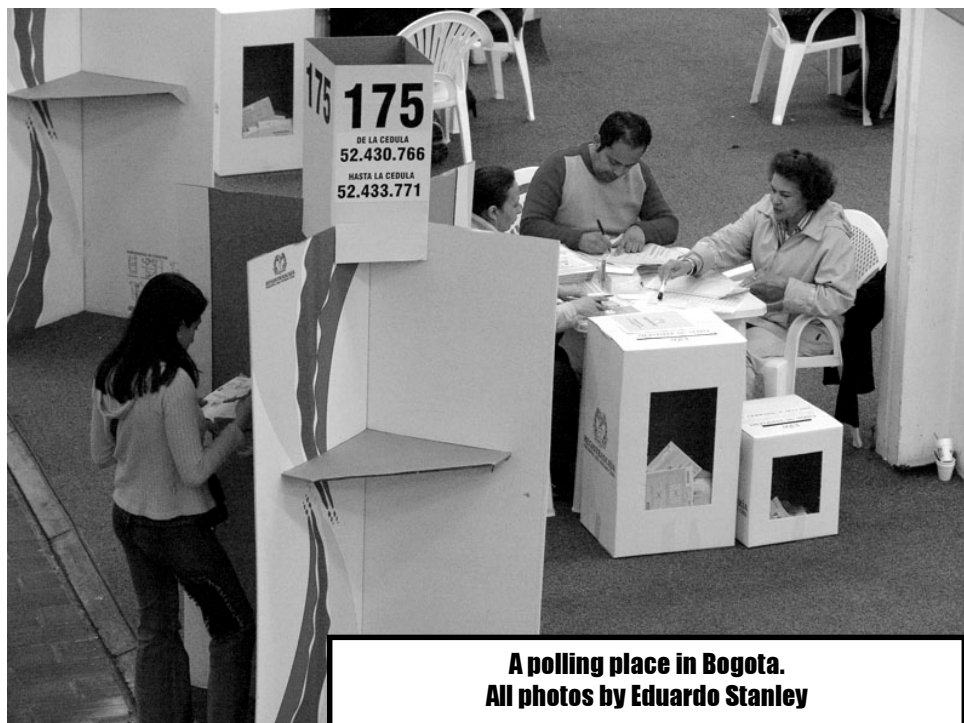
Lack of development, coupled with scarcity of economic opportunities, has led members of the Raizal community to immigrate to other parts of the country. They also seek autonomy to promote and guarantee equal development, as well as education and training for employment.

"The main goal of our alliance has produced results, creating a broader base for participation among women, blacks, ethnic groups, and other sectors of society who have traditionally held back from participating," said Karmen Ramirez Boscan, an indigenous Wayuu leader.

Numerous groups and organizations are participating in this effort at raising consciousness. "I believe that Gomez Baos's candidacy has broken through the patriarchal structure of politics, just as she did within her own community," commented Irma Luz Pinzon, an activist who, in the face of the always-present specter of war, champions a culture of peace in Colombia.

"Personally, her candidacy attracted me because it exposed society to aspects of the Gypsy culture that people are not aware of," added Pinzon. She explains that the Gypsy culture is libertarian, "because it is not tied to the land—ownership and exploitation of the land lead to wars."

"I believe that we are building something more than intercultural alliances," said Gomez Baos with a smile, her colorful long skirt covering the chair and soft hand gestures exposing her rings. "This is what our society is supposed to be, and I feel optimistic."



A polling place in Bogota.
All photos by Eduardo Stanley

After all, absenteeism was about 57 percent, and the predictable winners started to show their smiles on camera. The Congressional elections were considered a referendum on President Alvaro Uribe and his plans to get Colombia in line with US trade policy, to get tough on the guerrilla movement, and to implement an internal agenda that looks and sounds very much like Bush's—including privatizing almost every state-owned corporation, privatizing health care, and giving the religious sector more influence in education.

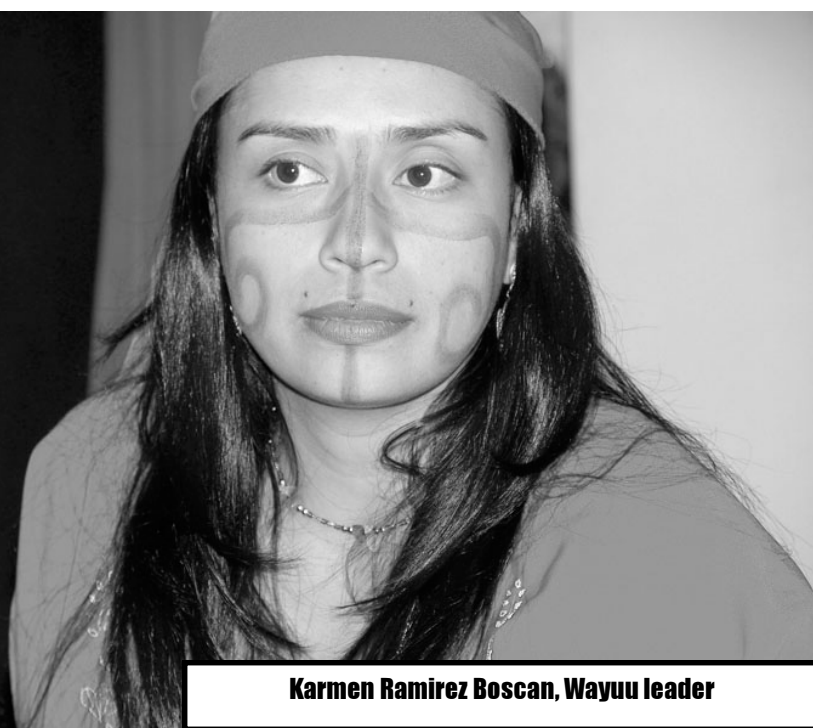
Six political parties supported this agenda, including the traditional Conservative party, which took second place in this election. The president himself created his own organization, called Partido de la "U" (after Uribe), which ended up as the front runner. In third place, was the other traditional party (considered the big loser), the Liberal Party. In fifth place, the left was represented by Polo Democratico.

The outcome of the elections couldn't be any better for those in power. The "Uribistas" (supporters of president Uribe) obtained the majority in both chambers. In the Senate, 61 Uribistas will hold sway over the 39 in the opposition. Among representatives, the proportion is about the same.

This good news for President Uribe and the White House came at a time when Colombia's Congress still needs to approve the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States and just two months before presidential elections in which Uribe will run for reelection—a move that required a Constitutional change strongly criticized by the opposition.

Uribe's triumph was certainly celebrated in Washington as its own. Soon Congress will discuss the renewal of Plan Colombia—a multi-million-dollar intelligence and military involvement in that country, with the pretext of controlling drug trafficking.

"The real issue here is to control the guerrillas and any other social movement," said Wilson Borja Diaz, a Polo Democratico representative who successfully ran for reelection. While Uribe strongly supports US involvement, the opposition calls for a more precise and aggressive peace dialogue with the guerrillas. But Colombia's social violence has other components—such as the powerful "Paramilitares," a counter-guerrilla movement created by the establishment and trained by the military about two decades ago. This movement became a monster with several heads— it quickly



Karmen Ramirez Boscan, Wayuu leader

"The FTA was approved from above, with no public consultation," says Dalila Gomez Baos, a Gypsy who ran unsuccessfully for Senate. "Its implementation will increase marginalization in our communities."

Somewhat fragile in appearance, this Gypsy woman, a single mother who is "a little older than 30," speaks enthusiastically in both Spanish and Roma (the Gypsy language) about the ethnic communities that supported her candidacy, ranging from Afro-Colombians and women to members of indigenous groups.

Colombian Gypsies number scarcely around 5,000. Their presence on the national scene is nearly invisible, in part due to their permanent itinerant state. Gomez Baos is, perhaps, the first woman of Gypsy descent in Colombia to have completed a university degree, having graduated in engineering. "We are still treated like sec-



Former candidate and Gypsy activist, Dalila Gomez Baos

Local Think Tank Begins Series of Articles in the Community Alliance

Some of our region’s best analysts are fellows of the Central California Institute, our local progressive think tank. To provide a forum for the work of our fellows and kindred spirits, we have contracted with the *Alliance* for an initial series of five articles on subjects of local importance. The continuation of the Institute depends on the interest and support of the community. To utilize the expertise of the fellows, to comment on the work of the Institute, and/or to provide financial underwriting, contact CCI c/o FCNV, 1584 N. Van Ness, Fresno 93728 or call Ray Ensher at 439-8140.

NAFTA: Who Wins (and who loses)

James M. Cypher

More than 11 years after it went into effect, the sting of NAFTA is still being felt on both sides of the border. Rarely has an international investment and trade agreement stirred such controversy and lasting animosity.

Yet, the sitting presidents of both Mexico and the United States laud supposed positive effects of the pact that was pushed into existence by the promises of the economic elites of the two countries. For the United States, 200,000 new jobs were to be created. Later, prices would fall from cheaper Mexican produced goods, and further down the road the dynamic effects of the pact would induce even more, and even better-paying jobs. The promises were steeper in Mexico: Mexico would cease (soon) to be a struggling, developing nation. Living standards would start to approximate those of the United States, via some sort of convergence process.

Mexico would do more of what it did best (cheap labor production) and the United States would do more of what it did best (high-tech agriculture, technology-intensive activities). Trade would balance and (after some initial shuffling of specializations) both nations would be better off.

Presidents Vicente Fox and George Bush still hold to this fantasy, ignoring the mountains of evidence that demonstrate that NAFTA has been a device to partially restructure the US economy and subordinate the Mexican economy to the US economic agenda.

One thing that the advocates of NAFTA predicted has come to pass—exports to Mexico have gone up in real terms by 114% (1994-2004), but imports have gone up

by 274%. In other words, trade did not balance, and the US trade deficit was \$40.6 billion in 2003. In net terms, the United States has lost about 1 million jobs (124,000 in California) as Mexican production has displaced US production in autos, auto parts, consumer electronics, computers and peripherals, textile and apparel, and other areas. Ford, Chrysler, and GM stood behind NAFTA, backed by auto parts giants such as Delphi. The big push for NAFTA came above all from Detroit, where the auto giants were unable to confront the insurgency of the Japanese producers. Getting to Mexico meant dropping production workers’ wages by as much as 50-70% in autos, and as much as 90% in textiles. (Textile workers in some plants in Northern Mexico were making \$90 US per month in late 2005—or 53 cents per hour).

It all makes a lot of sense. US companies wanted to move to Mexico to cut wages and increase profits. In the maquiladora border plants from 1993 to 2001 about 1 million jobs were created, with virtually all the maquila output (your TV, your refrigerator, your stove, your washing machine) being shipped to the United States. The million US jobs lost were just about countered by 1 million jobs created in the maquilas—but several hundred thousand jobs were also created in the non-maquilas (the vast auto plants, etc.).

But, because the influx of US goods drove out many small producers, overall manufacturing employment increased by only about 300,000 jobs between 1993 and 2003. Mexico needs to find over 1 million jobs a year just to keep unemployment levels constant. Two consequences have flowed from all of this: First, wages in

manufacturing are 15% below what they were in 1980! Second, NAFTA’s failure to create adequate jobs in Mexico has meant that immigration to the United State has soared—to 437,000 per year, 2002-2004.

Meanwhile, the influx of cheap (subsidized) US agricultural products has wreaked havoc on the countryside, with an estimated 1.3 million small producers driven from their land, now adding to the millions of casual workers and street vendors (or the migrant outflow).

The winners are, of course, the very people who said NAFTA would be good for us all: The auto sector, the electronics firms such as Hewlett-Packard and GE, and the giant food processors such as ADM, Cargill, and Ralston. Citigroup has taken control of Banamex, and Bank of America now partially owns Banco Serafin. In Mexico the force behind the NAFTA agreement was Mexican big business, which sought unlimited access to the US market in their commodities-based specialties. Niche marketers like Cemex (cement), Alfa and IMSA (steel products), Modelo (beer), and Peñoles (mining) have followed a strategy of retaining their monopolized specialties, while leaving the high-tech, capital-intensive manufacturing to (mostly) US firms.

Is the NAFTA debacle coming to a close? Disaffection with NAFTA is widespread in Mexico: The presidential election of 2006 should lead to a new national development strategy if the top candidate (Andrés López Obrador) can triumph.

World Social Forum 2006, Karachi

By Dan Yaseen and Camille Russell

Fifteen thousand people filled the KMC Sports Complex stadium for the opening plenary of the World Social Forum 2006 in Karachi. A stage with an impressive world map backdrop displayed the theme “Another World is Possible” in both English and Urdu. The program started with a release of doves. It was followed by Pakistani regional folk singing and dancing by nationally known artists who brought the audience to their feet clapping and dancing. The speakers included Pakistani-born, internationally acclaimed author Tariq Ali, Pakistani human rights activist Asma Jehangir, Palestinian Jamal Juma, and speakers from Brazil, Ecuador, France, and India. Classical dancer Sheema Kirmani danced with her troupe, inspired

by a poem of revolutionary Pakistani poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz. The opening plenary ended with a spectacular fireworks display.

Our Peace Fresno T-shirts and signs attracted photographers from the media and free lancers. We were frequently photographed. One of the pictures appeared in the leading Pakistani English newspaper Dawn.

The primary venue for WSF2006 Karachi was the KMC Sports Complex – an area of about 3 city blocks. Its athletic courts and playing fields had been transformed for the six-day event by tents of varying sizes with the largest seating up to 300.

One of the surprises for us was the coverage of WSF2006 Karachi by the mainstream media of Pakistan — both television and press. All the TV networks have been reporting on the forum every day and all newspapers, English and Urdu, have continued to provide extensive coverage.

An event like WSF2006 couldn’t have happened in Karachi without the full support of the City District Government

of Karachi. It was apparent that the City was eager to change the image of Karachi by welcoming people from over 58 countries in the world.

Issues covered included: humanism and peace, terrorism and sectarian violence, local disputes, small arms and light weapons proliferation, education, health care, freedom of expression and speech. These issues were presented in workshops mostly by groups from Pakistan and other countries in the region.

The organizers of WSF2006 were able to recruit hundreds of youths from high schools, colleges, and universities in Karachi to volunteer. The students did a wonderful job of preparing the venue and helped at the registration and information booths. We had the opportunity to meet and talk with several of these students. They were articulate, enthusiastic, and friendly. Some students are interested in starting peace groups on their campuses.

The topic of one of the workshops we attended was “Political Islam: Challenges and Responses.” Panelists included Tariq Ali, Farooq Sulehria, and Jamal Juma. Jamal Juma talked about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. He described the horrendous situation of the Palestinians under Israeli occupation. Tariq Ali and Farooq Sulehria talked in detail about the political situation in Pakistan. They both lamented the fact that the secular parties have no voice in Pakistani politics. Religious parties that had never been popular with the people have gained prominence.

Another program we attended was on violence against women. It was presented by Vimochana, a woman’s group from Bangalore, India. One of the speakers was an Iraqi woman. She provides medical services to Iraqis under siege by the U.S. occupation forces. Both times when Fallujah was attacked by U.S. forces she was there to offer relief. She called on U.S. citizens to stop paying their taxes because that’s what is financing the U.S. military adventures in the Middle East. She pointed out that the Iraqis are fighting for a cause – their land and their independence. She said the U.S. soldiers are also the victims of the big corporations who are the real beneficiaries of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

We attended a Women in Black candlelight vigil. The protest theme was “Women Against War and Wars Against Women.”

There was a large representation of people from all four provinces of Pakistan. There were very few North Americans. We were frequently stopped by people asking us where we were from, and they were eager to engage us in conversation. We found people young and old, men and women, friendly and curious. People felt reassured to hear that there is opposition in the U.S., to the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.



You Can't Be All You Can Be If You Are Dead

By Merrily Davies

In 2001, a 670-page reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act was passed and soon became known as "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB). In it was included a relatively short and, at the time, little noted passage which requires that school districts give military recruiters personal details about all high school aged students including name, address, and phone number for the purpose of recruiting young adults into the military. Federal funding may be withdrawn from districts that do not comply. Moreover, there is a separate data base collection, currently being contested as illegal, of information on 16-25 year olds such as cell phone numbers, height, weight, birthdays, birthplaces, free lunch information, major course of study, e-addresses, school attendance, ethnicity, awards, exit scores, etc.

RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ISSUES

With this go-ahead by Congress, recruiters have easy access to a vast data bank of student information. Moreover, students can be contacted at home by recruiters and pressured to join the military. As a result many parents and educators are becoming increasingly concerned about the likelihood that their children's rights and privacy are being violated.

NCLB requires that school districts notify parents of their right to "opt-out" by requesting that the district not release student information to military recruiters. However, there are no federal guidelines as to how parents should be notified of their right to restrict personal information given to recruitment databases. Public awareness of the opt-out option is low, and often the only notification parents get is when it is slipped into student handbooks or newsletters where very few will see it. Some districts have their own "opt-out" forms which are designed to help families protect students from persistent military recruiters. Parents or students need to ask the district or school for this form, get one off the Internet www.militaryfreeschools.org, or photocopy the example given in the appendices of this article. However, even a handwritten note is legal.

The completion and return of this form or letter to the district office serves as the parent and/or student request to withhold private information from the military. Students even have the right to opt themselves out, according to the text of NCLB. However, even if an opt out form is signed, personal information can be obtained by military officers from many other sources: the SAT test, other students, student yearbooks, the phone book, etc. The students have a right to report any abuses to the commanding officer or school.

A few districts are dealing with the law by putting an opt-out section on the mandatory student Emergency Cards. Other responses by districts include sending letters home to parents and requiring a response from students (opt-in/opt-out). An opt-in policy sometimes used by districts may state that student contact information is not released without parent consent, but this kind of policy puts student records at risk because it does not conform to NCLB which explicitly requires an opt-out policy. Although student information is usually given to the military in the early spring, the sooner district offices receive these forms, the better.

ARMED SERVICES VOCATIONAL APTITUDE BATTERY (ASVAB) "The ASVAB is an aptitude test that will help reveal your natural strengths.(it is) designed to help school counselors and students discover where a student's skills and talents lay." National Guard Brochure

The ASVAB is a voluntary test given by the military to two-thirds of all American high schools at no charge, and the results, by default, are turned over to the military for grading. Recruiters are then able to tailor their sales pitch to the individual characteristics of each student. The ASVAB supercedes the opt-out form of NCLB, and over 12,000 US schools administer the ASVAB and

submit the results to the Pentagon data base. A school can give the ASVAB test without having scores released to local military recruiters, but usually school officials are not made aware of this option or simply exercise their personal discretion to submit the results. The high school principal needs to take proactive steps to protect student privacy. The school should tell the military **BEFORE THE TEST IS GIVEN** that it is choosing "ASVAB Option 8". If a school chooses this option, students who want their scores to go to the military can still permit them to go to recruiters on an individual basis. The military provides a special permission form for such requests. However, if a school does not choose ASVAB Option 8 the results will be automatically handed over for all students. However, since there is little control by families over which options are used, the safest course of action is for the student simply to refuse

to take this voluntary test.

DELAYED ENTRY PROGRAM

"It's called the Marine Corps Delayed Entry Program. Here's your chance to join a group of motivated young individuals who are not only looking for a way to distinguish themselves, but a way to be one step ahead." Marine Brochure

Today, nearly all recruiting is done through the "Delayed Entry Program" or DEP. Instead of committing to immediate entry into the military, the recruit promises to report within a year on a specific date in the future. Within that time frame, students receive special mentoring physically and/or academically, which motivates allegiance to the military. This can include tutoring to help them graduate from high school or running with them to prepare them physically. Active service begins at the end of the delayed entry period. The advantage to this strategy, from the recruiter's perspective, is that a year in the future seems like an eternity to a typical teenager. In the mean time the new recruit can enjoy the enhanced status of being committed to the military without experiencing the downside of this decision.

Many recruits in the DEP program change their minds, for various reasons, but are led to believe, that they cannot back out of the decision. This is not true. What is not well known (and what recruiters will not tell you, and will probably deny) is that the provisions of the DEP program make it quite easy to request "separation" from the program. For the entire history of the program, 100% of all separation requests have been granted.

Since the military is falling short of recruitment goals, however, recruitment is becoming ever more aggressive. Sometimes recruits are illegally harassed, misled, and even lied to outright. For example, one student whose parents had legally emigrated from China, entered the DEP program two weeks before graduation. When he told the recruiter he had changed his mind, the student was lied to and told that his parents would be deported.

A DEP recruit who decides not to enlist should write a letter addressed to the "Commanding Officer" at the recruiting station where recruitment originally took place. It should address all of the following points:

- It should state that he or she wants to be separated from the DEP program.
- It should give one or more reasons. The list of acceptable reasons for not going includes: conscientious objection, opportunity for continued education, a job opportunity, erroneous enlistment, failure to graduate from high school, "family issues," homosexual conduct, medical or psychological issues, personal problems, failure to report for active duty, and "other." (The military does not have the right to reject your reasons. Simply list them.)
- It should be signed and dated.

It should be sent to the Commanding Officer at the recruiting station where the recruitment occurred by certified mail, return receipt requested.

Another option is to simply NOT SHOW UP on the enlistment date. (Note that "failure to report for active duty" is listed as one of the "reasons" acceptable for separation from the DEP program. If the enlistment date is too near to send a certified letter, this would be the fall-back option.)

Recruits are sometimes told by their recruiters, "Just go ahead and go to boot camp, and the request will be processed during that time." This is patently untrue. Recruits need to realize that while they are in the DEP program they are still governed by civilian law. Once they actually enlist they come under military law. Once enlisted, it is difficult or impossible, to get out of 8 years of military service.

Additionally, it is important to stay away from recruiters once the decision has been made. Recruiters have a record of using high pressure sales tactics and providing misleading information. Dropping out of the DEP program has no negative effects in terms of future em-



Counter recruiting activists handed out fliers, talked to students, and were threatened with arrest at this job fair at Fresno City College



Military recruiters will promise you almost anything. Read this article to find out what they won't tell you.

ployment. A recruit who fails to show up for enlistment has never really enlisted, so there is no discharge.

STOP LOSS

It's tough enough to sell an 8 year military indenture to young people. But it would be even more difficult if the "stop-loss" policy, sometimes called the "back-door draft," were mentioned. Recruits are very seldom informed of the military's right to keep them or recall them to duty even after their eight-year obligation has been fulfilled. In the case of Emiliano Santiago, he had already completed his eight years in the Oregon National Guard and was terminated. He was reactivated under the Army's stop-loss policy and was told that his new termination date would be in 2031. He will be in his fifties when he finally gets out of the military.

"War is a racket. It always has been. It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only one international in scope. It is the only one in which the profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives.

A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of people. Only a small "inside" group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few, at the expense of the very many. Out of war a few people make huge fortunes."

— Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler, US Marines. Twice awarded Congressional Medal of Honor (book and post card available, see back cover)

THE POVERTY DRAFT

"You must continue to cultivate your mind. The Marine Corps can help you do that by providing discipline, opportunity, and the financial means to continue your formal education." Marine Corps brochure

The vast majority of those who enlist see it as a way to go to college and to get job training for later civilian employment. Much of the sales pitch from recruiters focuses on these very things. Recruitment targeting economic concerns has such a coercive effect on young people raised in poverty that it has been labeled "the Poverty Draft." The US military is taking advantage of an economy that increasingly squeezes out those without a college degree, while college costs are becoming prohibitively expensive. By targeting children of poverty, the burdens of war fall disproportionately on the poor, and thereby also on people of color.

The United States Department of Defense spends at least \$16,000 in promotional costs for every soldier signed up. That's almost \$4 billion a year targeting low income youth with commercials, video games, personal visits, enlistment bonuses, free T-shirts, etc. At recruiting fairs, often on the campuses of public schools, kids scale climbing walls, sit in sexy Humvees, and watch soldiers rappel out of hovering helicopters. Glossy recruitment brochures promise adventure, money for college, job training, travel, and benefits such as insurance, medical care, recreation centers, and sports facilities. Words such as "pride," "camaraderie," "discipline," "teamwork," "leadership," and "people skills" are bandied about. Recruiters seek to be invited into classrooms to talk about history or science or other subjects, but their very presence in uniform is tantamount to a sales pitch. Depending on the teacher, the sales pitch can become explicit. Today's critics of on-campus recruiting say that young people shouldn't be subjected to "hard sell" tactics from the military, especially on public school campuses.

Seldom mentioned by recruiters is the possibility (probability in these times) of going to war, or being injured physically or psychologically, of killing or being killed. The reasons are obvious, from a sales perspective, but from the perspective of someone counseling children making life-altering decisions about their future, omitting any discussion of the possible negative effects of their decisions on the rest of their lives is highly unethical.

"We are concerned our students are being targeted and are enlisting without getting accurate and complete information on military service and alternatives," says Arlene Anouye, speech therapist in the Los Angeles School District and coordinator of the Coalition Against Militarism in our Schools. Clara Villegas, a parent, worries, "They're kids, and they're under 18. And if they're enticing them with ideas of money, money for college, or promises of seeing the world, it's fraud."

MONTGOMERY GI BILL

"Get started now. Pursue your degree while you serve. Or complete your education later. As an enlisted sailor, you can earn up to \$50,000 toward your college degree." Navy brochure

"If you serve full time, you could be eligible for the Mont-

gomery GI Bill and the Army College Fundworth up to \$50,000. You may also qualify for a \$20,000 cash enlistment bonus. If you're college bound, this could be your ticket to a great education-one that comes with a built in \$20,000 nest egg to cover those things a scholarship doesn't." Army brochure

In impoverished communities, probably the most appealing draw of the military is the GI Bill and the promise of an education. But the Montgomery GI Bill is in no way comparable to the GI Bill that followed World War II, a college education for any veteran. Today, to qualify for GI Bill benefits, recruits must first make a non-refundable contribution of \$1200. Collectively, service members have actually paid out more in these contributions than they received in return in benefits. The reason is that although 71% of recruits have enrolled in the plan, only 35% have obtained funding.

By itself, the Montgomery GI Bill won't put a veteran through school. Recruiting ads that promise "up to \$50,000" for college are deceptive. That level of benefits is not available for all. Only a select few, mostly those who take the less desirable combat-related positions, are eligible for the maximum figure. The maximum benefit available to most veterans for four years of college is only about half of that often-cited \$50,000 figure. Commuter students at a two-year community college with an annual tuition under \$6,000 may find that the



Last month, the Rally in the Valley organized by Peace Fresno and the Campus Peace and Civil Liberties Coalition brought 100's of people together in opposition to the war in Iraq.

in the army is over." Army brochure

"Corporate America is looking for people who have Army experience, because the skills you learn will transfer directly to the workplace." Army brochure

"Jump Start Your Future" invites the cover of an army brochure. The implication is that in joining the military, the recruit will soon outflank his/her peers in the job earnings market. But military recruiters never mention that very few job skills actually transfer from military to civilian life. Even highly technical jobs in the military tend to be very specialized, and hence don't transfer well to civilian occupations. A study has found that only 12% of male veterans and 6% of female veterans made any use of the skills they learned in the military.

A Navy brochure announces "no experience necessary" followed by a list of training possibilities including computer programming, engineering, journalism, linguistics, and more.

However, often those who joined the military to learn a trade don't ever get what they believe they were promised. Many of the kids who are promised training in computers or other high-tech fields learn too late that the military is in no way obligated to put them in that job-or to keep them there for the duration of their service. The kind of job a recruit gets depends on what positions the

military needs to fill. Any enlistment promise can be broken by the military and any job can be switched arbitrarily. GET IT IN WRITING: although there are no guarantees, a written statement from the military may offer the recruit some protection if promises of the military are not met. However, the enlistment agreement is more binding on the recruit than on the military.

Perhaps one to the best measures of the economic impact of joining the military is the analysis of whether a person who enters the military, on average, earns more or less than a comparable non-veteran. In a comprehensive review of 14 studies which analyzed this question Steven Barley of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University found that the average post-Vietnam-era veteran will earn between 11% (Crane and Wise 1987) and 19% (Rosen and Taubman, 1982), less than non-veterans from comparable socioeconomic backgrounds. In another study the average veteran will earn 85 cents less per hour (about \$1700 less per year) than non-veteran peers. Army Times reports that over 50,000 unemployed veterans are on the waiting list for the military's "retraining" program. The Veteran's Administration estimates that 1/3 of the homeless people are vets.

Steven Barley of the School of industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University concludes, "The evidence on rates of return to training and the probability of finding a job in one's chosen occupation, strongly suggests that, all else being equal, young people should look to sources of training other than the military if they wish to optimize their careers."

Local counter-recruitment information:

Central Valley Counter-Recruitment Coalition
P. O. Box 5115
Fresno, CA 93755
559-487-2515 www.peacefresno.org

benefits cover their college tuition costs, but this is far less than the advertised \$50,000. Resident four-year college and university students are likely to find the benefit is only a fraction of the annual cost. Two-thirds of all recruits never receive any college funding from the military. Only 15% graduate with a four year degree.

Many recruitment brochures extol the possibilities of going to college while serving in the military. However, many GIs report that military life leaves them too busy and too exhausted-and doesn't really make time for them to go to class.

NOT A JOBS PROGRAM
"The reason to have a military is to be prepared to fight and win wars. That's our basic fundamental mission. The military is not a social welfare agency, it's not a jobs program." Vice President Dick Cheney

"You'll get training and on-the-job experience that's on the cutting edge of advancing technology. There's no doubt that this experience will give you a leg up in the job market when your time



State Assembly Peace and Freedom Party candidate John Crockford talks to students at Fresno City College who are being recruited by the military. All photos on page 14 and 15 by Mike Rhodes

Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno Passes Antiwar Resolution



With 99% of voters supporting the resolution, the UU Church of Fresno took a major step in putting its words into action regarding the war in Iraq. Social Justice chair Stephen Sacks stated that, “We have 7 principals in our religion that we affirm and promote—among them are “the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice equity and compassion in human relations and the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. We state every week that “Love is the doctrine of this church.” “It is obvious that this war in Iraq violates all these principals.”

The stimulus for the church’s resolution was a Statement of Witness paper passed by the Unitarian Universalist Association 2004 National Convention calling for withdrawal from Iraq by the end of 2005. While this did not happen, there has been mounting pressure on the government to develop an exit strategy as public opinion has shifted dramatically from support to realization that the United States is in a no-win situation.

Unitarian Universalist churches are democratically run by the members of their congregations. At the Fresno church, a series of four meetings with interested members of the congregation led to input, which was later incorporated into the resolution. A task force of Stephen Sacks, Anidelle Flint, and Connie Young crafted the final version, which was passed by the UU Church of Fresno 2/12/06 as follows:

IRAQ: SOVEREIGNTY, THE UNITED NATIONS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

WHEREAS Unitarian Universalists have long supported human rights, the United Nations, and international law; and

WHEREAS the Unitarian Universalist Association has worked within interfaith groups to urge the United States government not to invade Iraq without the concurrence of the Security Council of the United Nations; and

WHEREAS the invasion and ongoing occupation of Iraq have resulted in continuing physical and mental injuries and loss of life, the diversion of resources, and the fueling of terrorism; and

WHEREAS human rights abuses at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere violate the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and legalistic rationalizations of torture by the United States government are morally unacceptable; and

WHEREAS the pursuit of homeland security including unauthorized domestic spying has led to the erosion of civil liberties in the United States;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno supports the United Nations process and holds the United States government accountable for its commitments under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1546 and 1637 to transition from occupation to the complete restoration of Iraqi sovereignty. This includes (a) respecting the end date for a multinational force in Iraq of no later than December 31, 2006, and (b) terminating that mandate earlier if requested by Iraqi authorities. In addition, we urge the replacement of current multinational forces with United Nations peacekeeping forces, and the relinquishment of all United States military bases in Iraq.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno

Supports a sovereign Iraq in control of its own economy, including its oil reserves and revenue;

Calls for the reconstruction of Iraq and humanitarian assistance with help from the United States and the international community;

Urges the United States to comply fully with the Geneva Conventions and all conventions mandating humane treatment of prisoners of war, enemy combatants, and detainees;

Demands that Congress make public all documents and processes involved in the initiation and continuation of the Iraq war, including torture decisions, and hold accountable government officials at all levels;

Joins with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee’s campaign against torture to educate our congregation and community about the urgency of abolishing torture; and

Calls for United States cooperation with tribunals held according to international law to establish accountability for war crimes in Iraq.

This resolution or a summary statement thereof shall be publicized to government officials, local media, and religious and community organizations as deemed appropriate by the Social Justice Coordinating Committee.

The action plan is evolving but as of right now our goals are to:

- * Talk to other churches and encourage them to pass similar resolutions;
- * Collect signatures at events such as the Rally in the Valley March 18 to present to local government officials to support our resolution;
- * Talk to local newspapers about reporting coverage on the resolution
- * Get 1,000 names on a petition in support of the above resolution and take them to the Fresno City Council. You can help gather signatures by getting a copy of the petition from Stephen Sacks < johnsonsacks@comcast.net > or by downloading a copy of the petition in English or Spanish from: <http://www.uufresno.org/PetitionEng.pdf> <http://www.uufresno.org/PetitionEsp.pdf>

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Stephen Sacks is the chairperson of the Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Coordinating Committee and a speech therapist for FUSD.

Continued from page 15

JUNIOR RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS (JROTC) “Fortunately for the Army, the government policy, the government policy of pushing the Indians farther west then wiping them out was carried out successfully.” Army JROTC, LET 3, Page 185

“Among the traits of a good follower, loyalty is at the top of the list. This means loyalty to those above us in the chain of command, whether or not we agree with them.” Navy JROTC1, page 22

There has long been an accepted military presence on American high school campuses. Under the standard JROTC contract, the Department of Defense provides students in this program with books, uniforms and special equipment. The school district must provide insurance, building facilities and maintenance and must assume responsibility for paying teacher’s salaries, employment taxes and benefits. JROTC has also had a place in many American high schools since 1916, and programs have recently been established in many middle schools. Supporters of JROTC say that the military offers a valuable career and education choice for high school students.

Critics of the program point out that JROTC is military training, and, therefore, does not belong in our educational system. They claim that our schools should uphold democratic values and the principle of civilian rule. Instead of teaching these values and critical thinking skills, JROTC emphasizes military values and teaches students to give and obey orders unquestioningly. They say moreover that JROTC teaches the wrong lessons about how to solve conflict. They emphasize that with today’s problems of gangs and teen violence, our schools should be teaching students how to solve conflicts non-violently. They point out that JROTC conditions students to accept violent solutions and, in many schools, teaches them how to use guns.

The Department of Defense claims that JROTC is not a recruiting tool, yet 40 to 50% of all participants enlist after graduation. Most JROTC programs occur in schools in working class or impoverished communities. More often than not those schools are also predominately populated by youth of color.

ADVENTURE AND TRAVEL

“There’s nothing wrong with reading about far-off places. But it’s better to write home about them. With more than 100 ports of call around the world your opportunities for adventure are endless.” Navy brochure

Travel and adventure will often consist of months of boredom at sea. The “adventure” in the commercials is often a code word for war. Recruiters rarely discuss the dehumanizing process of basic training, the psychological costs of killing, or the horrors of war. The mission of the military is to use violence on people in other countries to assert US foreign policy objectives, often related to corporate profits and not freedom and justice.

DISCIPLINE

“A marine is a highly disciplined individual, capable of accomplishing almost any task. From the moment you step off the bus at boot camp, you will begin exercising self discipline.” Marine Corps brochure

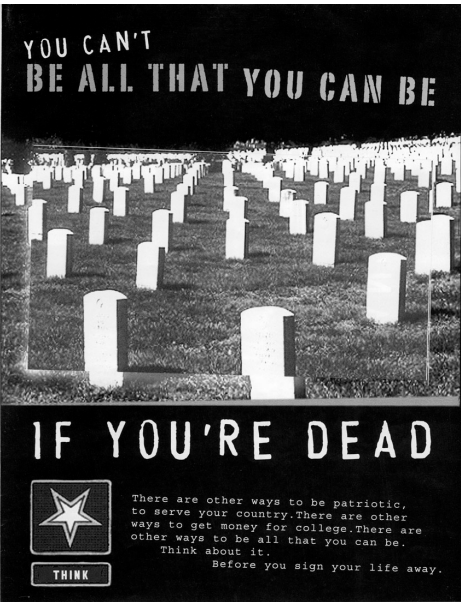
The brochures often refer to a skill that a recruit is supposed to learn in the military: discipline. But, what kind of discipline is learned? In school, discipline often equates with study skills-striving for excellence. In adult life discipline often means the ability to focus on a task, to delay gratification, and to work until a goal is accomplished. But in the military, “discipline” is often a code word for unthinking obedience to orders. The military takes care of every detail, telling a soldier where, when, and how to do everything. This discipline is the antithesis of the mature self discipline of a good student or a successful professional or business person.

FRAUDING

“A common way to swindle recruits out of promised jobs is the “Moment of Truth” exercise in boot camp. New recruits are taken to a room where their drill instructor (DI) tells them to “really think about it” and see if they’ve lied while enlisting or filling out their application about things like ever having smoked grass, or maybe how many times they’ve smoked, and ask them to raise their hand if they’ve lied any time in the recruiting process. When the hands go up, the DI looks at them and says, “Listen. This is what’s gonna happen now. You lied to us. You can either quit in disgrace now or since you signed a contract to be a Marine, you can stay in, but we’re not going to let you have the job you asked for.” Jimmy Massey

Jimmy Massey has made up a word for what he commonly used to do as a former Marine recruiting officer- “frauding.” He says that lots of kids aren’t eligible for the military because of past drug use or medical conditions, but recruiters sign them up anyway. He confesses that out of 75 people he brought into the military, he encouraged 70 to lie on military entrance forms. He admits that recruiters are encouraged to coach kids to lie on military entrance forms, although Marine Corps commanders deny that this practice is widespread. If a recruit lies on recruitment forms it is possible that he/she could get a dishonorable discharge or even jail, depending on what the lie is. Prospective recruits should be cautioned that they are personally responsible for the information on recruiting forms and they should not lie, even if pressured.

Not to inform youth about the law, current practices, and legal consequences of their actions and decisions in matters that may directly affect 8 years of their lives, and may have consequences for the rest of their lives, is unethical and immoral. Clara Villegas put it this way from a parent’s point of view, “I don’t think it’s an issue of whether I’m a Republican or Democrat. I think it’s an issue of parenting.”



Fresno Center for Nonviolence



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SIMPLICITY ~ JUSTICE ~ INCLUSIVENESS ~ NON-INJURY**

THE WELCH REPORT

By Jack H. Welch, M.D.



ON THE BRINK IN IRAQ

The failure of the Bush administration's policy is revealed now with clarity: Iraq may or may not fall into the abyss in the next few weeks, but what is no longer in doubt is that "if Iraq is engulfed in civil war then Americans, Iraqis, and the international community must hold President Bush and Vice President Cheney responsible for the destruction of that country.

"The CIA, the State Department, members of Congress, and countless Middle East experts warned Bush and Cheney—to no avail—that toppling Saddam could unleash the demons of civil war," and each time the warnings were dismissed. The US has succeeded in pitting itself now against two major "resistance" groups in Iraq. The first is the Sunni-led, mostly Baathist and military resistance, which has battled US forces in Baghdad and the so-called Sunni triangle. The second are Shiite religious forces, who have begun routinely to denounce the US for its opposition to their plans to create a Shiite-dominated, Iranian-allied Islamic Republic of Iraq. Even the oracle-like Ayatollah Ali Sistani, "whose supposedly nonpolitical stance looks more and more like a cover for shrewd and calculating political ambition" has overtly threatened to order the unleashing of Shiite militias in a civil war mode.

But the escalating political rhetoric is built on a foundation of increasing inter-communal violence with ethnic cleansing proceeding apace. The bombing of the Golden Dome in Samarra ought to be seen as a symptom of that incipient war. Perhaps thousands of Iraqis on all sides have died, "scores and perhaps hundreds of mosques attacked, execution-style slayings proliferated, and ordinary Iraqis driven into hiding or exile."

The attack on the mosque may trigger a war, but it won't be the cause which is "embedded in the chaos and bitterness that followed the US invasion of Iraq and America's deliberate efforts to stress sectarian differences in creating the Iraqi Governing Council and subsequent government institutions. If the current crisis doesn't spark a civil war... the next one will!" (Source: Robert Dreyfuss, contributing editor at *The Nation*, and writer at Mother Jones, February 24, 2006, TomPaine.com)

PAYING THE IRAQ BILL

Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel laureate in economics, and Linda Bilmes, budget expert at Harvard, have made conservative to moderate estimates of cost of the Iraq war ranging from slightly less than \$1 trillion to more than \$2 trillion.

The Bush administration has been trying to hide the huge number of veterans who are severely wounded—16,000 so far, 20% of whom have serious brain and head injuries, incurring health care costs the government will have to pay for years to come. The military's recruiting and retention problems are resulting in large reenlistment bonuses, improved benefits, and higher recruiting costs, up 20% from 2003 to 2005. Payments for individuals who are killed amount to \$500,000, far less than standard estimates of the lifetime cost of a death (\$6.1 to \$6.5 million).

The Bush administration once claimed that the Iraq war would be good for the US economy. In fact, "The oil companies are the big winners, while the American and global economies are losers." At the same time, money spent on the war could have been spent far more wisely elsewhere. The above estimates do not include any of the costs implied by the enormous loss of life and property in Iraq itself.

Deaths and injuries would have been reduced greatly had better body armor been provided to troops earlier in the conflict.

"One cannot help but wonder: Were there not alternative ways of spending a fraction of the war's \$1 to \$2 trillion in costs that would have better strengthened security, boosted prosperity and promoted democracy?" (Source: Joseph E. Stiglitz, Feb. 6, 2006, TomPaine.com) **This report reflects personal opinion but is consistent with the agenda of the FCNV. It is based upon mail from peace and justice centers around California, and at times upon other print sources.**

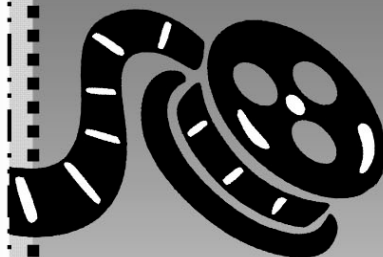
WANTED: Swap Meet Items

We've arranged for the group of London-bound FCC students to take our "stuff" to the Sunnyside swap meet to sell and share the proceeds. If you have good quality goods you can spare, please bring them to the Center during business hours (11 a.m. - 3 p.m.) the week of April 17-21.

Stir It Up with FCNV on FM 88.1

3 p.m., Wednesday, April 12th for an entertaining and informative show featuring Camille Russell and Dan Yaseen who will discuss their trip to the World Social Forum in Pakistan and reaffirm the belief that "another world IS possible."

Second Wednesday Video Series:



Independent, original documentaries.
Learn what you're missing from mainstream media.

April 12th:

The Fourth World War

From the frontlines of conflicts in Mexico, Argentina, South Africa, Palestine, Korea, 'the North' from Seattle to Genova, and the 'War on Terror' in New York, Afghanistan, and Iraq. It is the story of men and women around the world who resist being annihilated by this war.

While our airwaves are crowded with talk of a new world war, narrated by generals and filmed from the noses of bombs, the human story of this global conflict remains untold. "The Fourth World War" brings together the images and voices of the war on the ground. It is a story of a war without end and those who resist. (75 Minutes)

12 Noon – FCNV

7:30 p.m. – ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTER

2111 E. Nees (Nees & Maple)

(Discussion will follow evening showing)



A DOZEN ROSES FOR PEACE

Initial response to our new fundraising program has been most encouraging. We now have four of our twelve roses. March (Gerry Bill), April (Unitarian Universalist Church Congregation), May (Ray Ensher), and September (Ellen Bush.) Two people have volunteered to be Rosebuds (\$70) and are looking for eight more "buds." Call Angela at 435-6383 if interested.



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WILPF Fresno, PO Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755
Vickie Fouts, Editor, (559) 658-8260 or socialjustice@sti.net

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

WILPF DATES:

Wednesday, April 5, Noon: Women in Black
Fresno County Courthouse Breezeway

Thursday, April 6, 6-9 PM: Jane Addams Peace Garden Statue Unveiling—With Fundraising Reception and Dinner (see below and page 3 for details).

Friday, April 7: International WILPF President, Regina Birchem—Brown Bag Lunch at CSUF sponsored by the Women's Studies Department

Friday, April 7, 6 PM: A potluck will be held at the home of Sandra Iyall to meet and talk with Regina Birchem, International WILPF President

Thursday, April 13, 7 PM: WILPF Business Meeting 1584 N Van Ness

Monday, April 17: Tax Day Leafleting—See below

Wednesday, April 26, 3 PM: WILPF Stir It Up on KFCF 88.1 FM

July 20-23, 2006: Save the Date—WILPF-WEST Gathering—Portland, OR

A Single Woman: We wish to thank all those who helped make the performance of the play *A Single Woman* such a success. First we wish to give a heartfelt thanks to the husband and wife team of Jeanmarie Simpson and Cameron Crain, of the Nevada Shakespeare Company in Reno, for their wonderful performance and for donating their time and talent. A special thanks to Lance Canales for his beautiful Native American flute music. Thanks to Ellie Bluestein for hosting Jeanmarie and Cameron. Thanks to Amanda Woods for designing and printing the attractive tickets and programs. Thanks to Kris of Hume Printing for the beautiful design of the posters. Thanks to Carol Bequette, The Movies, the students and professors for selling tickets. Thanks to Marilyn Byrne for getting together all the props, to Carlos Haeussler and Dennis Byrne for helping us get to props to CSUF and back again and to all that loaned us the props. Thanks to Laura Fultz for the publicity. Thanks to the organizations who tabled. Thanks to all the volunteers, especially Jan Slagter's Feminist Activist class, who helped the night of the performance with set-up, take-down, and so much more. A special thanks to Jan Slagter for being our contact on campus and all she did including getting us the venue, the student participation, and keeping me sane. Thanks to all the WILPF and community members who attended.

After the event several of us took Jeanmarie and Cameron out to dinner. A great time was had by all. See the below pictures.

Jane Addams Statue Unveiling: On Thursday, April 6, the statue of WILPF's first International President, Jane Addams, will be unveiled in the CSUF Peace Garden. For the occasion the current International WILPF President, Regina Birchem, will be in attendance and will be speaking at the event. (See page 3 for more information.) WILPF will also be having a potluck on Friday, April 7, at the home of Sandra Iyall so members can meet and talk with Regina, as well as a brown bag lunch at CSUF that afternoon.

Raging Grannies Update—By Marilyn Byrne: The Raging Grannies March 14 performance at CSUF for the student organization Women's Alliance was cancelled due to rain. It has been rescheduled as part of the women's studies SAGA Festival to be held Monday March 27 from 5:00 PM until 9:00 PM. The students in the women's studies program have been integral in re-

search and development of the new Jane Addams statue that will shortly be placed in the Peace Garden. During my involvement in the program we presented to the college community various women who would be excellent candidates for the Peace Garden and took part in the final process of determining the candidate who would ultimately have a statue made and be the first woman in the Peace Garden. To qualify for a plaque granting recognition they must come up with \$2,000. The purpose of this festival is to raise this needed money. I hope you will be able to come out and support these hard-working students in gaining them the recognition their program deserves. It will be held in the Peace Garden, free speech area of CSUF. We, the Raging Grannies, are also performing April 22 at Earth Day. Hope to see you all there.

Tax Day: This year tax day is on Monday, April 17. Once again WILPF will be leafleting the Caldwell Post Office on Griffith Way west of Blackstone with a flyer from the National Priorities Project that is based on taxes paid in Fresno. We are not sure what hours we will be there until we have a list of volunteers. If you wish to take a shift to help out please contact Kris Smith at 301-6110.

WILPF & National Action Network: Vickie Fouts spoke at the open house of the California National Action Network (NAN) office, founded by Al Sharpton on February 25. Vickie spoke about how the mission statements of National WILPF and WILPF's Building Beloved Community Issues Committee have much in common with NAN's mission statement, and how WILPF hopes to continue working with NAN around social and racial justice issues. The program consisted of speeches from community and religious leaders, gospel singing, spoken word, rap, and more. The event was well attended and seemed to be enjoyed by all.

Membership: As of our January National WILPF membership report, we had 21 members behind on their dues and 33 members dropped. Letters were sent out to them and checks are starting to come in. If you received a letter please respond as soon as you can. We want to make Fresno WILPF as strong as we can, and we need your help to do so. Also I would like to mention recent new members. We wish to welcome two new members who joined at our crafts faire—Carolyn Phillips and Carolyn Phillips and welcome to Kathleen Fuller who rejoined. At the play, *A Single Woman*, Elizabeth Swearingen, a women's studies professor at CSUF joined WILPF. Welcome Elizabeth. We hope to send you a quarterly update for the membership directory the first of April. Make sure to note any changes to your directory.

Women Challenge US Policy: Building Peace on Justice in the Middle East (WCUSP) Campaign Update: We are thrilled to announce three initiatives we will be focusing on this year:

- **Human Rights at Home and Abroad**—The connection between the USA Patriot Act, discrimination against Arabs and Muslims in the US, and the dehumanizing and torture of Arabs and Muslims in the Middle East.
- **Dual Occupation**—The connection between the US occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and the Israeli occupation of Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. We hope to work closely with our sister WILPFers who are already engaged in anti-Iraq war vigils and actions.



Joan Poss, Vickie Fouts, Dennis Byrne, Loretta Kensinger, Jeanmarie Simpson, Cameron Crain, Jan Slagter, Carlos Haeussler & front Kris Smith and Marilyn Byrne at the "A Single Woman" performance.

- **Stop CAT**—As a member organization of the US Campaign to End the Occupation, we will increase our members' awareness and activity in the ongoing Stop Caterpillar Campaign, working to end the sale of Caterpillar bulldozers to Israel, which are used to raze people, houses, and communities in Palestine.

Norway and Women: Norway requires that women comprise 40% of the board members of the nation's large publicly traded private companies. Could that be the reason that they recently divested their oil fund from nuclear weapons producing companies as stated below? What could we do in the US if women composed 40% of the board members of our corporations?

On January 5, 2006, the Norwegian Minister of Finance, Kristin Halvorsen, declared that the new Norwegian government will divest its Norwegian Oil Fund from all companies connected to nuclear weapons production. The Fund, which is owned by the people of Norway, has an ethics panel that oversees its investments. Due to this decision, Norway sold shares in US giants Boeing and Honeywell, as well as France's Safran SA, Italy's Finmeccanica SPA, the United Kingdom's BAE Systems PLC, and the United States's Northrop Grumman Corp. and United Technologies Corp. According to Halvorsen, \$500 million dollars was divested from the companies in what she termed "an ongoing process" that "does not exclude the possibility that there are more companies" from which Norway will divest. Norway is the third largest oil exporter, and the fund is worth about \$230 billion.

WILPF Loses—By Ellie Bluestein: With regret we note the death in February of Ginny Colver. She was a longtime community activist and WILPF member, had volunteered on the WILPF telephone tree for many years and also brought her son Chris's beautiful pottery to several of our holiday peace fairs.

Also no longer with us, Teja Dillon, who in past years enjoyed taking part in meetings and discussions and often attended demonstrations and of course the Holiday Peace Fair.

We miss them both and are pleased to have had them as friends and coworkers in the struggle for peace and justice.

Quote of the Month:

"Nothing could be worse than the fear that one had given up too soon, and left one unexpended effort that might have saved the world."—Jane Addams



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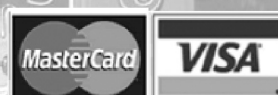
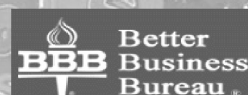
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Fresno State Fights Child Abuse

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. Unfortunately, there is little public awareness of this epidemic. True, the news sensationalizes many instances of abuse deemed newsworthy; however, there is little attention paid to the epidemic proportions of this problem. According to < <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/> > there are more than 104 new cases of child abuse every hour, and more than 4 children a day die from child abuse or related injuries.

CSU Fresno's feminist activism class, recognizing that not only is child abuse a problem in itself, but that it is a contributing factor in many other problems faced by our society today, is organizing a series of free community events, the last week of April.

The first event will be a panel discussion titled "Effects & Long-term Consequences of Child Abuse" on Monday, April 24. Wednesday, April 26, there will be another panel: "Legal Issues & Concerns of Child Abuse." There will be a Clothes-line Project Workshop on Friday, April 28, for creating T-shirts to be displayed at the main event. Finally, on Saturday, April 29, there will be an Information Faire, a Speakers' Platform featuring Alison Arngrim, and Breaking the Silence (survivors' open microphone) at CSUF Maple Mall.

More information about these events, forms to donate (using PayPal or by check), sign-ups for tabling at the main event, and much more are available at < <http://childabuse.dragonpack.com/> >. This Web site will be updated daily as speakers, locations, and times of events are solidified.

There has already been a wonderful response from the community, and our growing list of co-participants/backers includes USP (United Student Pride), CSUF Women's Studies, POWER (People Organized for Women's Empowerment and Representation), PROTECT (National Organization to Protect Children), BACA (Bikers Against Child Abuse), FCCAP (Fresno Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention), Keepers Korner (<http://www.keeperskorner.com>), and WILPF (Women's International League for Peace & Freedom).

Grandma's All Natural Vegetable Market & Herb Nursery

Visit Fresno's largest selection of organically grown herbs, veggie starts & natives. We also carry locally grown organic produce as well as other natural products. Our goal is to provide folks with healthy lifestyle alternatives while building a stronger community.

403 W. Olive Ave.

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On Wednesday, March 1, 2006, in Annapolis at a hearing on the proposed Constitutional Amendment to prohibit gay marriage, Jamie Raskin, professor of law at AU, was requested to testify.

At the end of his testimony, Republican Senator Nancy Jacobs said: "Mr. Raskin, my Bible says marriage is only between a man and a woman. What do you have to say about that?"

Raskin replied: "Senator, when you took your oath of office, you placed your hand on the Bible and swore to uphold the Constitution. You did not place your hand on the Constitution and swear to uphold the Bible."

The room erupted with applause.

PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE Calendar of Events

Saturday, April 1 10 AM

Cesar Chavez Celebration
The Co-Ce-Cha committee for Cesar Chavez will hold a march starting at St. John's Cathedral in downtown Fresno. The march will end at Grant Street and Thesta with the event celebration beginning at 12 Noon. For more information call 559 498-6033 or email laguilar78@hotmail.com

Saturday, April 1 • 2 PM

IN MEMORY OF HEINZ KUSEL
To honor the life and work of the artist, and much-appreciated teacher of artists, the College of Arts and Humanities of CSUF will host an afternoon event and reception from 2-5 p.m.

A DVD chronicling Kusel's career of creativity will be shown at 2:00 and 3:30 p.m.. at the Art Bldg. Auditorium (Conley 101). There will also be an exhibit of his work at the President's Gallery in the Thomas Administration Bldg.

The event is co-sponsored by the Fresno Center for Non-violence, whose mission was close to the heart of Heinz Kusel.

Thursday, April 6

Jane Addams Peace Garden Statue Unveiling at CSUF. See page 3 for details.

Friday, April 7 • 7:30 PM

The Fresno Folklore Society presents Garnet Rogers. \$15 advance; \$20 at door at the Fresno Art Museum. For more information about FFS Concerts: www.fresnofolklore.org 559-431-3653.

Saturday, April 8 • 10 AM - 2 PM

Central Valley Progressive Pac to Hold Local Candidates Forum. See page 11 for details.

Saturday, April 8 • 7 PM

KFCF 88.1 FM presents Aaron Glantz as he returns to Fresno to benefit the KFCF Transmitter Fund. Aaron is on the book tour of the paperback edition of *How America Lost Iraq*. The event will take place at the Unitarian Church, 4144 N. Millbrook Avenue. Tickets are available at the Movies Video Shop, 1435 N. Van Ness/233-8346 in Fresno's Tower District. Tickets are sliding scale \$5 to \$7. Refreshments will be available.

Wednesday, April 12 - Wednesday, April 19

California Central Valley Journey for Justice. See page 9 for more information.

Wednesday, April 12 • 12 Noon & 7:30 PM

Second Wednesday of each month free Video Program "The Fourth World War." From the frontlines of conflicts in Mexico, Argentina, South Africa, Korea, "The North" from Seattle to Genova, and the "War on Terror" in New York, Afghanistan, and Iraq, it is the story of men and women around the world who resist being annihilated in this war. Free event. 75 minutes. 12 Noon showing at the Center, 1584 N. Van Ness (SE corner Van Ness and McKinley) 7:30 PM showing, Islamic Cultural Center, 2111 E. Nees (Nees and Maple) A discussion will follow this showing only.

Wednesday, April 12 • 3 - 3:30 PM

Radio Show, "Stir It Up" — Second Wednesday of each month, 3 to 3:30 PM, Station KFCF, 88.1 on the FM Dial. Camille Russell and Dan Yaseen will speak on their recent trip to Pakistan where they attended the World Social Forum and reaffirmed their belief that "another world IS possible."

Wednesday, April 12 • 5 - 7:30

The Reedley Peace Center presents Speakers: Jerry and Sis Levin. Jerry is a full time Christian Peacemaker Team member in Hebron, West Bank and Sis is founding director of Bethlehem based The Children of Abraham Interfaith Education for Peace Project. Topic: The Piece Process

Continues!! The Struggle Against Myths, Propaganda and Annexation in Palestine and Israel.

Friday, April 14 • 5 PM and 8 PM

Fresno Filmworks presents "Caché (Hidden)" at the Tower Theatre. An unsettling thriller with a powerful political subtext, the film stars Daniel Auteuil and Juliette Binoche. In French, with English subtitles. Tickets can be purchased at the Tower Theatre Box Office, 815 E. Olive Ave., The Movies, 1435 N. Van Ness Ave., the Fig Garden Bookstore in Fig Garden Village, and at the door, for \$10; \$8, for students and seniors. For more information call the FFW info line, 221-0755, or go to www.fresnofilmworks.org

Saturday, April 15

Deadline for articles and calendar items to the May, 2006 Community Alliance newspaper. Send information to AllianceEditor@Comcast.net

Thursday April 20 • 8 PM

Full Circle Brewing Co. Presents "Inner Ear Poetry Jam" \$3.-cover 620 F St Historic Chinatown Fresno California 559-264-6323 www.fullcirclebrewing.com

Friday, April 21 • 6 - 9 AM

Air America host Stephanie Miller will produce her show live in Fresno at the CSUF Satellite Union. More details coming soon at www.790kfpt.com

Friday, April 21 • 6:30 PM

The San Joaquin Valley Democratic Club (SJVDC) is working in conjunction with KPFT-AM 790, to host talk show personality Stephanie Miller in Fresno. Stephanie will be speaking at an event that evening sponsored by the SJVDC. The event will be at La Ryan Event Center, 4277 N. West Ave (West and Ashland) beginning at 6:30 pm (doors open at 6). There will be a no host bar and heavy Hors D'oeuvres. Cost of the evening is \$30, which includes membership in the SJVDC. Tickets are available by contacting Gary Alford, at 559/ 224-8430 or gary@fresnoteachers.org

Friday, April 21 • 6:30 - 8:30 PM

The Reedley Peace Center presents speaker Ron Schmidt, Professor of Political Science, CSULong Beach. Topic: Immigrant Settlement: Lessons from Canada. Canada's proactive approach in assisting immigrants to establish themselves economically, socially, culturally, and politically, compared to the US approach.

Light potluck at 6:30. Program begins at 7 pm. This event is sponsored by the Reedley Peace Center and will be held at the Fellowship Hall of First Mennonite Church, on 'L' street between 12th and 13th streets in Reedley. Admission is free. Contact Don Friesen by email at dfriesen@telis.org

Saturday, April 22

9:30 AM - Registration

10:00 AM - Forum Commences

Democratic Party Candidates Forum. WHERE: 2141 Tuolumne Street #104C Downtown Fresno – Tuolumne & "L" Street

Saturday, April 22 • 3:30 - 5 PM

Central Valley Progressive PAC meeting will be held at the Center for Non-violence, 1584 N. Van Ness at McKinley. An agenda will be sent out prior to the meeting. Information: www.cvppac.org or 559-435-7360

Saturday, April 29

PeaceFire 2006 - A Celebration for Peace
The South Valley Peace Center and American Friends Service Committee - Proyecto Campesino are pleased to announce the second annual PEACEFIRE - A Celebration for Peace. The event, which will be held in Visalia will feature speakers, music, tabling, and vendors at a Visalia location to be announced soon. This was a not-to-be missed event last year. For more information see: <http://www.svpc.info/>

Saturday, April 29 • 2 - 4 PM

The League of Women Voters, Preschool California and Fresno Pacific Univ. are co-sponsoring a dual forum. The two candidates for Fresno County Supt. of Schools will speak, and an official from Preschool California will be here to present a non-partisan analysis of Prop 82, the Preschool for All initiative. This event will be held at Ashley Hall which is in McDonald Hall (main bldg) at Fresno Pacific. No charge.

Monday, May 1 • 7 PM

International Workers Day. The Community Alliance newspaper will show the movie THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEVISED at the Full Circle Brewery, 620 F St. in Downtown Fresno. For more information about this event call 559 978-4502. For more information about the movie, see: http://www.chavezthefilm.com/index_ex.htm

ONGOING WEEKLY ACTIVITIES/ PROGRAMS

Every Sunday • 4 PM

Sunday Food Not Bombs serves free food at Courthouse Park to anyone who is hungry. They start cooking at 1 PM and serve the food at 4 PM (meet at the Tulare side of the park). If anyone would like to donate or help cook, they should contact Becky Asami at 304-3409, or email her at Littlejap@csufresno.edu

Every Monday and Tuesday • 7–9:30 PM

The St. Benedict Catholic Worker serves a meal to the homeless, working poor, and visitors and released inmates in front of Fresno County Jail (corner of Fresno and M streets). Volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve the meals. For more information contact Liza Apper at (559) 229-6410 or liza.apper@sbcw.org ; or visit their Web site: < www.sbcw.org >.

Every Tuesday • 7 PM

Peace Fresno meets at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 1584 N Van Ness, south of McKinley. If you want to help stop Bush's endless war against the world, come to this meeting! For an up-to-the-minute listing of all peace actions in the Fresno area, call the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at (559) 23PEACE (237-3223). For more information about Peace Fresno, call 487-2515 or visit their Web site at www.peacefresno.org.

Every Friday • 7 PM

Reedley Peace Center holds it weekly peace meeting at the Fellowship Hall at Reedley's First Mennonite Church, 1208 L Street, Reedley. Programs vary, but the focus is always on peace issues: local, state, national, international. The contact is Carol Krehbiel: (559) 637-9098 or krehbiel@cvip.net. The meeting is free, open to the public, and accessible to the handicapped.

Every Saturday • 1–2 PM

Food Not Bombs feeds the hungry near the Olive Ave entrance to Roeding Park. The location for cooking on Saturday is at the Wesley United Methodist Church, 1343 E Barstow, between First and Cedar, starting at 9 AM. They are always in need of servers at the park. For more information call Dallas: 452-0277, or e-mail fresnofnb@yahoo.com. Visit the Food Not Bombs Web site at <www.fresnoalliance.com/FNB/>.

Every Saturday • 1 PM until the last patient is served

Medical clinic for the homeless, actively injecting drug users, and prostitutes. You can find them near the Olive Ave entrance to Roeding Park. Staffed by Dr. Marc Lasher and volunteers. Accepting financial donations. Contact: 266-0444.

Every Saturday • 1–3 PM

Fresno Free Bicycle Repair Clinic. Most Saturdays. Donations of bicycle parts, inner tubes, and blinky lights welcome. Volunteers needed to help with minor repairs. The bicycle clinic is near the Olive Ave entrance to Roeding Park, beside Food Not Bombs. For more info and to arrange donations, e-mail fresnofreebikeclinic@yahoo.com.



Fresno Famous April Calendar

THE BOYS NEXT DOOR

Starts: Feb 23 2006 - 8:00pm

Ends: Apr 15 2006 - 10:32pm

Location: Good Company Players 2nd Space Theatre, 928 East Olive, Fresno

Cost: \$14-\$15

Event details: Plays Thursday through Sunday every week through April 15 at Good Company Players 2nd Space Theatre. Times and prices vary with day of the week. Call 266-0660 for reservations and information.

Event website: www.gcplayers.com

Photographic Patterns: Gary W. Vann

Starts: Mar 17 2006 - 12:00pm

Ends: Apr 16 2006 - 6:00pm

Location: Spectrum Art Gallery, 1306 N Wishon Avenue, Fresno
free!

Event details: With a background in landscape and underwater photography, Gary Vann employs a 4x5-format camera in his work, allowing him to make large scale vertical prints. Marked by the artist's evolution from scenic images to a more subject-oriented approach, the images display repetitive patterns and textures with strongly contrasting detail in natural light. This interest in pattern and form is the unifying theme of this exhibition.

Event website:

<http://www.spectrumphotogallery.org>

Epic Theatre presents "The Shape of Things"

Starts: Mar 18 2006 - 8:00pm

Ends: Apr 9 2006 - 2:00pm

Location: Fresno Art Museum, 2233 N. First Street, Fresno

Cost: \$15 general, \$10 students/seniors/Epic Theatre members - tickets available by phone.

Event details: About the play: Neil Labute's The Shape Of Things is an intense and disturbing study not only of the uses of power within human relationships, but also of the ethics involved in the relationship of art and life. To what extent is an artist licensed to shape and change her medium or to alter the work of another artist? What is acceptable artistic material? At what point does creation become manipulation, and at what point does creation destroy? The Shape of Things challenges society's most deeply entrenched ideas about art, manipulation, and love.

Event website: <http://www.fresnoartmuseum.org/>

Yoga "Back To Basics" 6 week series

Starts: Mar 27 2006 - 7:30pm

Ends: May 1 2006 - 7:30pm

Location: Perfect Balance Yoga, 5091 N Fresno Street, Fresno

Cost: \$39 for 6 week series

Event details: Sign-up for this six week course to learn the fundamentals of a yoga practice, or as a refresher of the basics. We will study breathing techniques to build your lung capacity, help deal with the stresses in your life and how to use these techniques to build a stronger yoga & meditation practice. You will learn the building block pos-

tures to develop a stronger, leaner more resilient and flexible body. Learn how to relax while you exercise and challenge yourself. 6 Monday nights, 7:30pm-8:45pm.

Event website: <http://www.pbyoga.com>

Fresno Poets' Association: Ed Ochester

Starts: Apr 6 2006 - 7:30pm

Location: Fresno Art Museum, 2233 N. First, Fresno

Cost: \$4-\$5

Event details: Ed Ochester a respected author and poetry editor whose books include Dancing on the Edges of Knives, Miracle Mile, Changing the Name to Ochester, Snow White Horses: Selected Poems, 1973-1988, and, most recently, Land of Cockaigne. He has also published eight books in limited editions. For many years he has edited the Pitt Poetry Series, and he is also the general editor of the Drue Heinz Literature Prize for short fiction, both of which are published by the University of Pittsburgh Press. He is a member of the core faculty of the MFA writing seminars at Bennington College, and for nearly twenty years was director of the Writing Program at the University of Pittsburgh.

Event website: <http://www.fresnopoets.org>

Fresno Art Museum Spring Opening Reception

Starts: Apr 7 2006 - 5:00pm

Ends: Apr 7 2006 - 7:00pm

Location: Fresno Art Museum, 2233 N. First Street, Fresno

Cost: Free- FAM members \$6 Non-members

Event details: Celebrate the new spring exhibitions at the Fresno Art Museum. Featuring artists Arshile Gorky, Ann Weber, Robert McChesney, Robert Setrakian & Selections from the Permanent Collection. Meet the artists and enjoy the wine and hors d'oeuvres reception.

Event website: www.fresnoartmuseum.org

G. Love and Special Sauce

Starts: Apr 7 2006 - 7:30pm

Location: The Tower Theatre of the Performing Arts, 815 East Olive Avenue, Fresno

Event details: G. Love and Special Sauce will be playing April 7th @ The Tower Theatre of the Performing Arts. Doors open @ 7:30—Please check www.philadelphonic.com for more updated tour information.

Event website: www.philadelphonic.com

Art Under the Stars at the Fresno Art Museum

Starts: Apr 14 2006 - 7:30pm

Ends: Apr 14 2006 - 11:00pm

Location: Fresno Art Museum, 2233 N. First Street, Fresno

Cost: Free- FAM members \$10 Non-members

Event details: The hottest cultural event in town! Sip on cocktails in the sculpture garden while listening to the sounds of DJ Frank D. Meet new people and enjoy an array of activities that will tantalize your senses!

Event website: www.fresnoartmuseum.org

Great Valley Books Writers Conference

Starts: Apr 15 2006 - 8:00am

Location: Merced Multicultural Arts Center,

645 W Main St, Merced

Cost: \$50 per workshop; speakers free

Event details: Join us for a stimulating, interactive literary gathering that aims to cultivate audiences of writers and readers in this rapidly changing, dynamic part of California. For writers who usually write in isolation, the simple act of getting together, especially for those in rural areas, to network and share information and experiences can have a catalytic effect. Take your writing to a new level, explore new genres, and learn about the rich literary resources to be found in the Central Valley while you forge relationships that will help to challenge and sustain your creative work.

Outstanding valley writers such as Gerald Haslam, Juan Felipe Herrera, Lawson Fusao Inada, Tim Z. Hernandez, Mark Arax, and (not so surprise guest, David Mas Masumoto) will be teaching or speaking at the conference.

Event website: <http://heydaybooks.com/gvbconference/>

Yoshi NOW! Bizarre Bazaar Flea Market

Starts: Apr 15 2006 - 10:00am

Ends: Apr 15 2006 - 4:00pm

Location: Yoshi NOW!, 648 Broadway, Fresno
free!

Event details: Yoshi NOW! BIZARRE BAZAAR a Beautiful Lovely Downtown Fresno Flea Market

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Event website: <http://www.myspace.com/yoshinow>

Aquarius Aquarium Institute's 4th Annual Earth Day Run For The Reef

Starts: Apr 22 2006 - 6:00am

Ends: Apr 22 2006 - 9:00am

Location: Edwards Cinemas, 7750 North Blackstone Avenue, Fresno

Cost: Pre-registered: Adults - \$15.00 Children - \$7.00 Race Day: Adults - \$18.00 Children - \$10.00

Event details: Aquarius Aquarium Institute's 4th Annual Earth Day Run For The Reef

Family Run/Walk

Saturday, April 22, 2006

Race Director Ken Takeuchi

Run: 7:00 AM Walk: 7:30 AM

Behind River Park's Edwards Cinemas up the Sugar Pine Trail & back

Original color T-Shirt artwork provided to The Institute for the 3rd year by Deen Garcia, Oahu, Hawaii

Downloadable Run/Walk form and more detailed information is available on the website @

www.aquariusaquarium.org (click on "calendar") or call 559-490-3474

Event website: www.aquariusaquarium.org

For more local events, visit

www.fresnofamous.com

Independent Police Auditor Proposal Rejected

By Mike Rhodes

Alan Autry, the Republican mayor of Fresno, brought two proposals for an Independent Police Auditor (IPA) before the Fresno City Council on March 7. Telling the council that he is “tough on crime” and detailing his total support for the Fresno Police Department, Mayor Autry made a strong push for his IPA proposals. The mayor’s IPA proposals, which didn’t receive much support from community groups, police associations, or the public, would have led to the IPA issue being put before city voters in the June primary election.

The mayor’s first proposal was for a Charter amendment to city voters relating to the Office of Independent Police Auditor. Fresno COPWATCH, whose members have been active on the IPA issue, issued a statement on this proposal: “The mayor by proposing this resolution is unable to comprehend the need for a truly Independent Police Auditor. The proposal of having the IPA report to the City Manager’s office (who also has the police chief under his office) is an offer of false hope to the community. He is attempting to undermine the work of the Central California Criminal Justice Committee (CCCJC), who have struggled for over six years to bring independent police accountability to Fresno.” This proposal was rejected by the city council.

Fresno COPWATCH was also critical of the second resolution by the mayor’s office. That resolution would have submitted an advisory measure to city voters relating to the Office of Independent Police Auditor. Fresno COPWATCH’s statement said they were concerned that “the misspending of taxpayers money by putting this

issue on the ballot without prior information being provided to the public is flawed from the inception. Fresno COPWATCH recommends that the city council set up “town hall” meetings in each district to discuss this item prior to submitting it to the ballot box. The community has a right to understand the pros and cons of having an Independent Police Auditor in the City of Fresno prior to being asked to vote whether we need one or not.” Their statement concluded, “Let’s not waste taxpayers’ money without taking into account the need to inform the city’s residents.”

Sheila Chandler, a spokesperson for the Fresno Police Officers Association (FPOA), gave an impassioned plea for why Fresno does not need an IPA. Chandler said, “We already have an Independent Police Auditor—it is the City Council, the mayor, the FBI, and the District Attorney.” Chandler said that an IPA who reported to the City Manager would not be independent. There was a representative from the Fresno County Deputy Sheriffs Association and another representative from the FPOA, who spoke against the very concept of having an independent auditor to hold the police accountable. Chuck Riojas, who is a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 100 and a candidate for Fresno City Council (District 1), said he too was against having an IPA.

Gloria Torres spoke in favor of the IPA, although it was not clear she was supporting the mayor’s proposal. She said the city must do something about “racial profiling and police brutality.” Torres said that the police are targeting minorities, impounding their cars, taking

their licenses, and charging them money to get these items back. The Reverend Floyd Harris, who is a member of Fresno COPWATCH and CCCJC, supported the concept of having an IPA and called on the city council to pass a proposal based on the San Jose model.

Councilmember Cynthia Sterling made numerous attempts to pass a motion in support of the proposal to put the issue before the voters. Finally, Councilmember Tom Boyajian seconded a proposal to put the issue on the June ballot. Both Sterling and Boyajian made a strong argument for allowing the voters to decide the issue. Larry Westerlund, the newest member on the city council, said that the voters in his district had elected him to make these hard decisions and he felt it would be wrong for him not to do his job. Westerlund argued that not only should the city council once again reject this proposal, but the residents of his district should not have an opportunity to vote on the issue. Westerlund’s logic persuaded a 5-2 majority to reject the IPA proposal and prevent the issue from going before the voters. Sterling and Boyajian voted for the proposal to put it before the voters. Perea, Westerlund, Dages, Duncan, and Calhoun voted against the IPA proposal.

What’s next? See <<http://cccjc.org/home/>> or go to the next regularly scheduled CCCJC meeting:

3rd Thursday of every month 6:30 PM Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1564 North Van Ness (southeast corner of McKinley and Van Ness).

The Fox Guarding The Hen House

By the Reverend Floyd Harris

Today was one of the saddest days in my life. Today I witnessed two Fresno City Council members step up to the plate and Vote YES on having an Independent Police Auditor for the city of Fresno, Cynthia Sterling and Tom Boyajian. However, Henry Perea, Jerry Duncan, Brian Calhoun, Larry Westerlund and Mike Dages Voted NO on the IPA. The IPA would have been an independent office that would investigate police misconduct. The type of Police system we have in Fresno is Police investigating Police in other words the Fox Watching the Hen House.

Mike Dages said that he would support the IPA if the people would elect him, but when Mike Dages won his seat he turned against the people who put him in office by not supporting the IPA. To Mr. Mike Dages and the other city council member the lives of people of color have no value.

The IPA is more than just an administrative position. The IPA is a lifesaver and a tool of trust for the police department and the community. The five members of the Fresno City Council who voted no to the IPA represent the coldest group of people I have ever seen in my life. The vote not to support the IPA is not about what is best for the community. It is about what is best for the political careers of each one of those Fresno City Council members. The Fresno City Council members who voted no on the IPA have the blood of Fresno on their hands. The Central California Justice Committee for over seven years has taken the statistics from the City Of Fresno Attorney’s Office, the “Fresno Bee,” Fresno Police Department. They have brought in experts from San Jose, Riverside, Oakland and other cities and held Town Hall Meetings to show why we need an IPA. CCCJC even went a step further to build alliances with Church, Business, School and community organizations.

What surprised me were the Fresno Police Union organizing people to speak against the IPA. What does the Sheriff’s Department have to do with an IPA for the Fresno Police Department? What we have in Fresno is organized political racism. Nothing has changed since black people were brought to America to be slaves. Black and Brown people have always been looked on as second-class citizens in this country and more specifically in Fresno. How can our local government celebrate black history every year and claim to understand the struggle of people of color? The Black Community now understands the phony stance of white people who pretend to be our friend and want us to believe that they care about us. You show you care by actions, not



Reverend Floyd Harris supports police accountability and an Independent Police Auditor.
Photo by Mike Rhodes

by words. We still live in a segregated city, that is the tale of two cities; the have and the have-nots.

There are several reasons that the FPOA doesn’t support an IPA:

1. They don’t want corruption in the police department to be discovered because it will reveal past and present police officers that will be exposed.
2. The amount of money that is generated by law enforcement in Fresno by arresting people of color and towing cars is unaccounted for and they don’t want their piggy bank tapped into. I believe that we have white supremacy ruling our government and our police force.
3. What happened to the money, dope and guns that were stolen from the Fresno Police Department? Do you think people from the community walk in and check these items out? No! Should we question whether these items were stolen by officers and possibly planted on people in my community?

The city council made it clear that they don’t care about people of color by voting down the IPA. Westerlund

said that the people in his district told him they don’t want an IPA. I find that hard to believe because people who are my friends that live in his district told me they called his office and told him to vote yes on the IPA.

We will never go away until we get an IPA for our community. We will not settle for less. If anyone has to go it will be the blood sucking, spineless city council. It’s time for some action, and if we have to go block-by-block, house-by-house, neighbor-to-neighbor, we will do whatever it takes. We must look back in history and study how our forebears fought and use the same methods they did. “We want justice by any means necessary” (Malcolm X, 1925-1965)

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Rev. Floyd D. Harris Jr 1131 F. Street Fresno, Calf 93706



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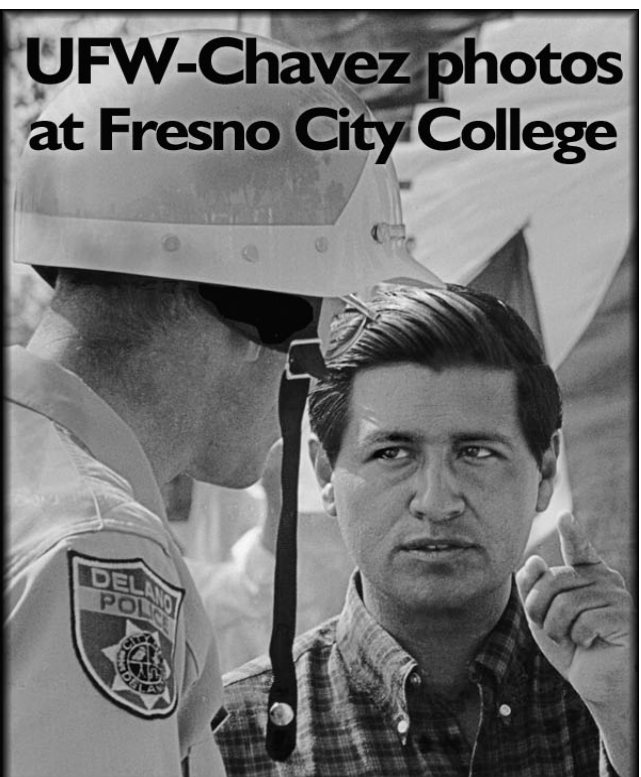
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Our Impending Health Care Crisis

By Robert Valett

We are facing a major health crisis. Over 46 million Americans lack any form of health insurance, including 6 million children. Many others face the loss of their limited insurance as companies reduce benefits due to skyrocketing costs. A recent study by the Pew Research Center reported that 64% of Americans would be in favor of guaranteeing universal health care for everyone, even if it meant raising taxes.

What is needed is holistic health care for all that will efficiently cover physical, mental, dental and other essential public health needs. In California, spending for health care costs of state government employees has risen 17% each year since 2000 forcing us to face the same problems that are bedeviling private companies and governments across the country: how best to cover rising health care costs of all kinds?

Yet, with passage of the California Mental Health Services Act, millions of dollars are now available to counties with plans to serve some unmet needs. Fresno County Supervisor Henry Perea has insisted that we must first decide on fiscally sound priorities and "what we really want mental health services to look like in Fresno County."

Public Concerns: Having served on several Mental Health Service Act planning committees this past year, I think that there was widespread agreement that proven cost-effective intervention and prevention programs should be given priority. These would include best-practice early treatment, parent education, peer and family support groups and cooperative programs with other agencies, schools, community organizations, police, jail and rehabilitation authorities.

From personal professional experience, and as a former member of the Fresno County Juvenile Court Institutional Council, I can attest to the cost-effectiveness of holistic health programs in juvenile hall and support-

ive services. For instance, I will never forget being involved in an evaluation of several teen-age murderers being held in a special unit. It was shocking to discover that some of these youths had repeatedly been in and out of juvenile hall since elementary school. But during each incarceration, proper recommendations had been made for followup physical and mental health care involving child welfare, family, school and community support to prevent further criminal behavior.

Unfortunately, in numerous cases, most recommendations had not been implemented due to lack of inter-agency communication and budgetary problems. This continued neglect eventually resulted in such tragic events as family dysfunction, serious substance abuse and increasing criminal activity culminating in murder! Of course, our jails, prisons, probation, education and preventative public health services are now increasingly overwhelmed at great public expense. Yet, we continue to ignore the cost-effectiveness and social benefits of early prevention and intervention holistic health programs.

The comprehensive health care solution: Most experts now agree that a cost-effective National health insurance program, with State supplementation, is a necessity if we are to adequately compete with other rapidly developing countries. Time magazine has suggested that President Bush should now introduce some version of several mandatory universal health insurance plans which have been under consideration. But it is unrealistic to expect any comprehensive national health care plan to be realized at this time. That is why State governments should enact their own plans in the near future. Eighteen of the United States are also now considering some form of comprehensive universal health care coverage.

The Public Policy Institute of California shows that 59% of Californians would support a universal health insurance program in which everyone is covered under a program like Medicare that is run by the government and taxpayers. California has become one of the leaders with Senator Sheila Kuehl's Senate Bill 840 (The California Health Insurance Reliability Act) which will provide fiscally sound, affordable health insurance, including mental health, to all Californians with the

right to choose their own physicians and control health cost inflation. According to intensive studies by Boston University, the Lewin Group reports an estimated savings of more than \$20 billion dollars in reduced administrative costs in the first year alone!

SB 840 has already been supported by more than 300 organizations including Health Care for All, The California League of Women Voters, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and several county Boards of Supervisors. Whatever we do, we must recognize that Fresno County cannot adequately finance holistic health care by itself. But we can all begin by supporting SB840, and other national legislation, that will finally provide comprehensive universal health care coverage for all citizens. Contact your legislative representatives now!

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Robert Valett is a psychologist and CSUF professor emeritus of special education who has authored several books, including one on holistic health. He is also a long time member of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. His email address is roberto@csufresno.edu.

Health Care for All - Central California meetings are held at the SEIU office at 1279 N. Wishon, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on a weeknight.

For more information, see: http://www.healthcareforall.org/central_valley.html

**or contact:
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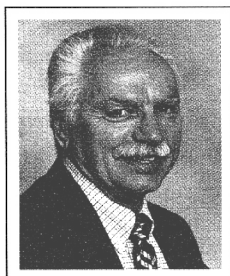


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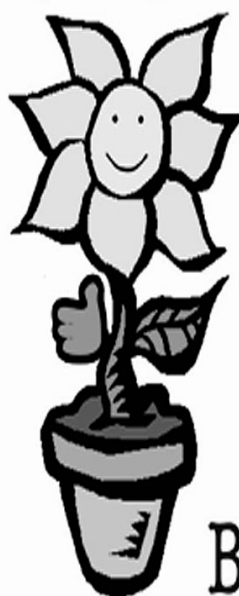
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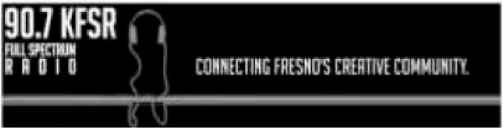
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Wake Up, California

By Boston Woodard

I've always believed that California is a pretty good state. Sure, the weather can be outrageous and taxes are astronomical, but California has long been a progressive bastion for free thought, concerned citizens, and idealism turned into successive realities.



When Californians encounter problems, they promote fair, equitable, long-term, and enlightened solutions, right? Wrong. I'm very sad to say that I have had the misfortune of learning otherwise.

California has joined the ranks of denial-ridden, short-sighted, retributive, petty demagogueries, where voracity, envy, and prejudice run rampant in the streets. There is no better example of this than in our criminal justice system supported by ratings-gathering media.

We can judge a society by the treatment of its people. This includes all people. There are elected, appointed, and hired officials who appear to have forgotten this. There is no decency where the actions of each government official are not able to be exposed to the light or held to standards of truth and honesty. This is more apparent in our criminal justice system than anywhere else in society.

Are we really civilized and humane, or have we conjured up delusions to make ourselves feel better?

During the past couple decades, more than a dozen California counties have appropriated funding to build increasingly larger prisons. This has not been done in an effort to accommodate a supposedly increasing California crime rate. (In fact, according to all statistics, the crime rate per 100,000 people has declined during the past twenty years.) This is for profit. Plain and simple, money is the root. Not so, you say? Here are just a couple of examples.

California has built prisons, and continues to add prison cells/beds to some of the state's thirty-three state penitentiaries, by admission, as part of an economic development plan in an effort to save a sagging local economy. Good people of California, the next time you want to spend more than \$200 million, try building a college, or opening a cooperative plant or a technology-based manufacturing facility.

Where do you suppose those hundreds of prisoners are going to settle once you have released them from prison? Try keeping in mind that you haven't spent adequate funds to clothe, feed, house, and educate them. But of course, you've now kept your prison system in business for years to come. Once you release all those individuals without providing opportunity for them to live crime-free lives, you can arrest them again, and the cycle starts all over again

Tell me, who is going to pay the cost for those potential future crimes? You? Your children? Your grandchildren? Well, it's your neighborhood. Unfortunately, the rest of California will have to contribute to the cost of your police department, your court system, and your insurance claims.

Let's face it. As long as there are laws, there are going to be people to break them.

I just wonder what would happen if you took the amount spent on each prisoner annually, and hired one individual to do nothing but supervise one prisoner. God forbid, you might actually produce a productive, law-abiding citizen. And in the interim you'd also take about 30,000 single parents off the welfare roles in this state. Could you imagine?

By my calculations, you've just provided college educations and jobs upon graduation for more than 4,500 people per year. You might have to close down a prison facility, or two or three. Of course eventually you might have to close down most of the prisons in this country. We wouldn't want that, would we?

The Price of Punishment

In just the past twenty years, approximately twenty-three new prisons have been built in California, costing far above the national average. The inexcusable failure of our politicians and prison officials to exercise

intelligence—by supporting farcical laws such as Three Strikes—will further fuel the growth of the present system.

With little outside control, California has developed a multibillion-dollar prison construction industry that stretches from Wall Street bankers to construction personnel who build the Bastilles of cement, steel, and razor wire.

The industry is expected to grow on a larger scale as tens of thousands of felons are sentenced to state prison under new laws in this state.

The Department of Corrections, carrying out the tough-on-crime policies of the past twenty years or so, has added over 50,000 new prison cells and dormitory beds by constructing new prison facilities in this state and renovating existing ones.

The corrections department has spent well over \$5 billion on planning, engineering, and construction of new prisons, and created a bond debt that will double that amount with interest payments.

That money has bought the nation's biggest, most expensive prisons: each houses approximately 4,000 prisoners and costs hundreds of millions of dollars to build. Each has 8-1/2 miles of razor wire, an arsenal of 337 guns, and a \$2 million computerized alarm system.

With high-technology security, a guard can scan a console in a control booth and unlock 200 cell doors by pushing a button.

While the defense industry shrinks in California, officials and contractors who design and build prisons are readying themselves for yet another expensive surge necessitated by the new laws and perpetuated by an ultra-right-wing agenda, which piles new laws on top of stringent ones already on the books.

As a result, state corrections officials estimate that the population behind bars will surpass 200,000 by 2012 about 35,000 more prisoners than today's total. There will be a need for another eight to ten prisons to accommodate the new numbers

During the past twenty-five years, the prisons' budget grew from less than \$730 million to nearly \$6 billion.

Wake up, California!

Peace • Justice • Big Mama

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KFCF 88.1 FM Seeks Community Support

It is said that lightening does not strike twice in the same place, but this adage has proven untrue in our case. Once again the KFCF transmitter was damaged in a thunderstorm. This underlines the fact that KFCF is still in serious need of a backup transmitter to ensure that the station can continue to broadcast when our existing transmitter needs repair.

In early March, a storm at the transmitter site again caused a power surge that burned essential parts. While repairs are taking place, we have been forced to broadcast at reduced power, making it very difficult for listeners in some areas or in buildings to receive the signal.

One of those bereft KFCF friends is Berry Nishkian of North Fork. Berry is a great station supporter and volunteer pastry chef for our events. One morning he called the station despairing the loss of Democracy Now! and other favorites, and announced he wanted to donate \$1000 to the transmitter fund and wanted to challenge others to match it. Are you up to that challenge? With your help we can finish the job.

KFCF has been on the air for over 30 years, and in these politically frightening times, it is more important than ever that there be an outlet for voices that can't be heard in the mainstream media. We are also looking at the fact that the FCC is considering replacing the current analog signal available to stations with FM and AM licenses with digital broadcasting that will require radio stations to replace or upgrade equipment. Our current transmitter is not compatible with digital broadcasting. With these serious issues in mind, the foundation's Board of Directors has decided to purchase a back-up transmitter that can be converted to digital if and when needed. We need to accomplish this now so that we are not forced to go off the air when natural disaster or corporate lobbying threatens our current operation.

Last year we began a campaign to raise funds for a new transmitter, over and above our regular operating costs. So far we have raised \$7000 from your generous donations. We would like to reach a goal of \$20,000 to get a state-of-the-art broadcast transmitter and upgrade our current equipment. This would provide KFCF with a full backup capacity to continue broadcasting at full power in case of future emergencies. Please consider a generous contribution for this purpose. Your contribution is tax deductible and all funds earmarked for a new transmitter will be used for that purpose. This is our station! Please join Berry Nishkian in helping to keep it alive and well!

Contributions can be sent to:
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THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEVISED



Venezuela President Hugo Chavez. Photo by Mike Rhodes

Monday, May 1 • 7:30 PM
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The Community Alliance newspaper presents the movie: The Revolution Will Not Be Televised. The movie gives the inside story about the U.S. backed coup against Hugo Chavez in Venezuela which took place in 2002. This is the first Fresno showing of the film and it is a fund raiser for the alternative/independent Community Alliance newspaper. The event will be held at the Full Circle Brewery, 620 F St. in Downtown Fresno. Tickets are \$10 For more information about this event call 559 978-4502. For more information about the movie, see: http://www.chavezthefilm.com/index_ex.htm

Lucky break for two Irish documentary-makers in Venezuela led to a superb piece of TV by Declan Lynch (The Sunday Independent)

If Chavez; - Inside the Coup had been a drama, a work of fiction based on real events, you might criticize some of the Latin American stereotypes, the all-too obvious chasm between the good guys and the bad guys, and how in the end the good guys win just when it seem certain that they’ve lost. In a country like Venezuela, which has vast quantities of oil and still the majority live in squalor? I’m afraid any script suggesting victory for the good guys in a country like Venezuela would be binned on ground of hopeless romanticism and general immaturity.

If it had been a TV drama, you’d say it was tightly scripted and action packed and full of uplifting statements about the human condition and you could nearly imagine it as a musical of the old- fashioned kind that puts you in good humour for about a week.

But of course you would know it was fiction, an idealized vision which is tragically at odds with the actual Situations in a festering hell-hole like Venezuela.

Well “Chavez; Inside the Coup” wasn’t a play or a novel or a film, it was a documentary in RTE’s True Lives series, which rose out of a visit to Venezuela by film-makers Kim Bartley and Donnacha O’Brian to make a program about charismatic President Hugo Chavez, and which led to them being trapped in the presidential

palace in the middle of an attempted coup. As such, it is probably one of the best documentaries I have ever seen on television, and undoubtedly one of the finest pieces of journalism within living memory.

But I don’t want to damn I with faint praise. When, with one lucky shot, it exposed the lies of the evil oil barons about the shooting which stared all the trouble, you felt you were witnessing some sort of miracle.

The plot was classically simple: Chavez gets democratically elected to the chagrin of the evil oil-barons and their good buddies in the Bush administration, who express “extreme concern” that Chavez “doesn’t have America’s interest at heart”. Chavez gets ousted by these malign forces, spirited away amid scenes of chaos orchestrated by them. But Santa Maria!, his palace guards remain loyal, and amid scenes of total consternation, Chavez is brought back, the coup is declared null and void by the good guys on state television, and the evil oil-barons flee to Miami having duly emptied the safe in the palace.

Meanwhile, some Irish film-makers are in the thick of it recording it all and wondering perhaps in the quieter moments if they will have to build a large shed to house all the awards which are undoubtedly coming their way.

And if they will live to receive them. We actually saw the empty safe after the evil oil-barons had fled. Now again, if this was a TV drama, you’d be accused of constructing a black-and-white world, some undergraduate fantasy in which all the best- looking women are fighting for democracy, with wise words of encouragement from Gabriel Garcia Marquez type, your standard-issue Latin American intellectual and mystic.

There they all were, in the flesh, the women, the intellectual and the good soldiers defying the evil oil-barons on behalf of the people, battling all the time with the sights and sounds and smells of life in a banana republic, where misery abounds but it’s always lovely weath-er for a coup.

Of course this story is not over yet. As we speak, the guys who fled to Miami in helicopters are probably briefing some “conservative think-tank” which is formulating anti-Chavez policies for the Bush administration based on the need for “stability” in the region. Debriefed, the same guys will later be seen leaving a Miami night club with a hooker on each arm, flecks of cocaine on their perfectly manicured moustaches, bottles of expensive rum clinking in the pockets of their puke-stained white linen jackets. And if you ask the right people who those guys are, you’ll be told they are the Venezuelan government-in-exile.

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