

A COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

FREE!

The Voice of the Progressive Movement since 1996

**THE WAR IS
OVER
END THE
OCCUPATION**



Photo by: Jeff Patterson

Cindy Sheehan Comes to Fresno

By Sue Kern

If you haven't read a newspaper or listened to the news on radio or TV for more than a year, then you've probably never heard of Cindy Sheehan, a California mother whose son Casey was killed in action in Sadr City, Baghdad, on April 4th 2004. But the rest of you know her as the woman who camped out in front of George Bush's home in Crawford, Texas in August of 2005, insisting that he meet with her to explain what "noble cause" her son died for.

That single act galvanized hundreds of people, including veterans and many others with loved ones in the military, to join her at "Camp Casey" to demand that the Commander-in-Chief answer to the people he's paid to serve. Millions around the country and internationally followed daily reports of the protest going on in Bush's front yard, and she didn't stop there. In the course of her protest, Sheehan founded Gold Star Families for Peace, an organization of Americans who have had loved ones killed in wars that in recent years have been for increasingly questionable objectives.

Cindy has since authored or co-authored several books, including "Dear President Bush," "Not One More Mother's Child," "10 Excellent Reasons Not to Join the Military," and her latest, scheduled for release on September 19th, "Peace Mom, A Mother's Journey through Heartache to Activism." She exemplifies the principle that one should never

doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world, because it's the only thing that ever has.

As part of her untiring effort to insure that her son's death was not in vain, Cindy has been touring the US and abroad telling her story and urging everyone she talks with to take their citizenship seriously and speak out against this illegal war and those who are profiting from it.

She is coming to Fresno on October 25th, 2006 to speak at Fresno State's Satellite Union, sponsored by several local organizations and individuals including Fresno Center For Non-Violence, Peace Fresno, WILPF, Central Valley Counter-Recruitment Coalition, Fresno Free College Foundation/KFCF (88.1fm), KFPT (790 am), Patience Milrod, Steven Haze, candidate for the 21st Congressional District, and more to be announced. The Fresno State event is free and will begin at 7 p.m.

There will also be a reception where those wishing to make a contribution of \$25 or more to Gold Star Families for Peace can "meet and greet" Cindy and purchase a signed copy of her latest book. For more information, or for tickets to the reception (the details of which will be confirmed soon), please call the Fresno Center for Non-Violence at (559) 237-3223.

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OCTOBER 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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FROM THE EDITOR

OCTOBER 2006

What have we learned by publishing the Community Alliance newspaper for 10 years? The first edition, of what was then called the Labor/Community Alliance, was printed on September 20, 1996.

The six page photocopied publication was the project of the Labor Party, which was an attempt to build an alliance between organized labor and the progressive movement in Fresno. The Labor Party's call to action was "The bosses have two parties - we should have at least one." The paper was distributed through the offices of many unions and community groups. The need for such a publication immediately resinated with readers - there was no other paper in town that included information from a wide range of groups working for peace, social, and economic justice. We found that the calendar was particularly well liked and important - it linked organizations that were doing similar work and helped avoid scheduling conflicts.



As the Labor/Community Alliance grew in size and circulation, it experienced growing pains as the extensive coverage of peace and social justice issues was not in sync with the Central Labor Council (CLC) in Fresno. The CLC decided to put their efforts into publishing *The Valley Labor Citizen*, which focused more exclusively on economic issues related to labor unions. The result was two publications.

The Community Alliance experienced a surge of support, through both an increase in advertising and subscriptions, during this transition period. The articles and photos in the publication covered stories missed by the local corporate media and community activists were empowered and their work validated by the recognition they received in these pages. The progressive movement grew and expanded.

In June of 2001 we made a major change in the format of the paper. Elfie and Maia Ballis became the designers of the publication and we became the Community Alliance magazine. The creative energy they put into the magazine electrified the progressive community,

making the work everyone was doing look spectacular. It was at this time when we won our first award for an in-depth article. The story was written by Scott Moore and entitled "2,000 Sheep and a

Continued on page 25

Letters to the Editor

The "old boys club" is mired in its own creation.

Remember Pete Seeger's song?

*We were waist deep in the big muddy
And the big fool said to push on.*

The destructiveness of war does not remain "over there;" it returns to harm the nation and its families. We don't have to be big fools. Assert your rights as citizens, who are paying for the Iraq war in so many ways, to get out of the mire.

Diane Marks

The articles by Sara Jane Olson and Jane Dorotik, prisoners serving their time in the Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) in Chowchilla, were great to read. It sounds to me that the deplorable conditions, the disrespect and the punitive measures dished out to female prisoners runs concomitant with what is going on in every male prison facility in the state.

Sara and Jane have a lot of courage putting themselves on front-street to define their surroundings in such a manner. In the past, I have been pushed around, disrespected, had all my personal property confiscated and thrown in an isolation cell for doing what must be done; write about what goes on behind these thick prison walls.

These women should be commended for getting the truth out about what goes on behind the curtain of deceit put up by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to distort the facts.

If not for publications like the Community Alliance, we prisoners would have a very hard time alerting the public about what goes on inside their (tax dollars paid for) prison system.

Thank you Sara and Jane. Please keep up the great work.

Boston Woodard
Prisoner/Journalist

Congress shares responsibility with President Bush for our current national nosedive. We have an opportunity on November 7 to elect a new Congress - one that will get us out of Iraq, respect human rights and the environment, and end astronomical military expenditures and corporate welfare. It won't be easy because the incumbents have all the advantages, but it can be done.

We need to support the challengers. In District 19 TJ Cox (Democrat) is challenging incumbent George Radanovich. In District 21 Steve Haze (Democrat) and John Miller (Green) are challenging incumbent Devin Nunes. Jim Costa (Democrat) is running unopposed in the 20th District. Fresno is divided among the three districts.

We all need to work for and contribute to these campaigns. Jim Costa's constituents can participate in the campaigns of 19th and 21st District candidates. It's not too late to support these good candidates running for Congress. They need our time and money now.

A very good place to get information about candidates is Project Vote Smart www.vote-smart.org. That web site gives biographical information, voting records, issue positions, public statements, interest group ratings, and campaign finance statements. If you don't know the number of your congressional district, go to www.vote-smart.org or call your local library. The Fresno County Library number is 488-3195.

We cannot afford to treat our democracy as a spectator sport. Just showing up at the polls on Election Day is not enough. Call your favorite candidate and ask how you can help get him elected.

Camille Russell

We could, I believe, save the trees of an entire national forest if we were to stop using up megatons of paper,

discussing, debating, and analyzing the war in Iraq, Afghanistan, terrorism and all other armed conflicts around the globe. The futility of it all is manifest in the number of needless, violent deaths of innocent, clueless civilians and soldiers around the world. Terrorism must be cultivated like a fungus (mushrooms) in the dark, because dying for GOD AND FATHERLAND is no longer in vogue. Preventing terrorism would be killing off the the goose that lays the golden eggs (profit, profit and profit again.)

We could, I believe, put the tragedy of an armed to the teeth world into the three words with which President (General) Eisenhower warned the citizens of America and the denizens of all the nations. "MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX." In most languages it is armament industry. And there are plenty, all intertwined in the global economy, taunted by the Bushes and their ilk.

Even the neutral (neutral my foot) nations are raking in profits for stockholders with the manufacture and sale of arms. I remember a news item during the Gulf War, of Austrian guns are being being used because of greater reliability and range.

"..... and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Isaiah 2:4

And that should be the socio-political priority of the so-called Christian Nations;

e.g.: Neutral, 90+ Catholic Austria, and the self-declared CHRISTIAN NATION U.S.A.

Isabell Lawson

Last months story about Food Not Bombs omitted the fact that in addition to Saturdays meal, Food Not Bombs shares food on Sundays and Mondays. Sundays meal is at Fresno's Courthouse Park at 4pm. Mondays meal is in the heart of Chinatown on Tulare st. between 'E' st. 'F' st. at 6pm.

Dallas Blanchard

THE IRAQ WAR IS OVER

We defeated the Iraqi army, captured Saddam Hussein and helped the Iraqi people hold democratic elections and form a new government.

NOW IT'S TIME TO END THE OCCUPATION

- ⊗ The continued presence of our troops in Iraq is fueling terrorism and civil war.
- ⊗ We have committed FOUR HUNDRED BILLION DOLLARS to this war, with no end in sight.
- ⊗ An overwhelming majority of Iraqis oppose our presence in their country.
- ⊗ Over 2,600 Americans and tens of thousands of Iraqis have been killed.
- ⊗ Over 1,300 Valley residents have signed a petition circulated by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno, calling for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ⊗ Make 3 phone calls: Tell your Representative and Senators to end the occupation and bring our troops home now.

U.S. Congress

Jim Costa 495-1620 ⊗ Devin Nunes 323-5235, Clovis, or 733-3861, Visalia
George Radanovich 449-2490

U.S. Senate

Barbara Boxer 497-5109 ⊗ Dianne Feinstein 485-7430

- ⊗ Write a letter to the editor: letters@fresnobee.com

For more information contact:

Central Valley Counter Recruitment Coalition 487-2515

Central Valley Progressive PAC 435-7360

Food Not Bombs 438-4088

Fresno Center for Nonviolence 237-3223

Mennonite Peacemakers 618-0218

Peace Fresno 487-2515

Peace and Justice Committee of College Community Congregational Church
(United Church of Christ) 435-2690

Reedley Peace Center dfriesen0@gmail.com

Sleeping Bag Project 226-1356

South Valley Peace Center 733-9670

Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno 227-6146

Wheelchair Project 251-3814

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom 439-0280

WE MUST SPEAK OUT

If we don't agree with what
is being done in our name

The Future of Public Access TV in the Fresno Area

By Mike Rhodes

Public, Education, and Government (PEG) access TV is one step closer to becoming a reality in the Fresno area. AB 2987 passed both the State Assembly and Senate last month, setting the stage for legislation that establishes a statewide franchise that will regulate cable and other video service providers, such as Verison and AT&T. The statewide franchise will provide funding for PEG access in communities like Fresno and Clovis who have been unsuccessful in their attempts to renegotiate an agreement with their local cable provider.

While Comcast and the County of Fresno did reach an agreement earlier this year, that franchise only affects about 13,000 subscribers. The vast majority of cable subscribers in this area (about 90,000) have been operating under an extension of the old franchise agreement that leaves this area without a Public Access channel or Community Media Center. That is about to change.

The legislation that passed in Sacramento designates 1 - 3% of gross revenue to be used for PEG purposes. Fresno and Clovis will receive about \$650,000 a year. This money will be used for equipment, staff, and a Community Media Center to operate a PEG facility. Comcast, our current video service provider, will provide at least one channel each for Public, Education, and Government programing. The Community Media Center will provide training in video production techniques and will make the equipment (video cameras, digital editing equipment, studios, etc) available for all interested community members and organizations. Programs can be pre-recorded or produced live. The Education channel will be used by area schools and the Government channel will be used to broadcast the Board of Supervisor’s, City Council, and other important government meetings.

The cities of Fresno and Clovis are still working with Comcast in an attempt to implement a new franchise agreement before the January 1, 2008 date, when the State franchise would begin. Local media democracy activists, who have been working on this issue for the last five years, would like to start PEG in this area as soon as possible. Randy VanDalsen, vice president of the Buske group, said “Fresno may be able to reach a settlement with Comcast during franchise renewal negotiations regarding noncompliance issues that could yield a one-time lump sum payment, a portion of which could be for initial PEG support.” The Buske Group is working as a consultant for the cities of Fresno and Clovis in the negotiations with Comcast.

Sue Buske, president of the Buske Group, told me that negotiations with cable providers has been very difficult ever since the legislation started moving through

the Assembly and Senate in Sacramento. Buske said that before the legislation passed the cable companies didn’t seem very motivated to negotiate. They wanted to find out what was going to happen in Sacramento before making a deal. But, the cable operators were not idle observers as the legislation was being discussed. Comcast, for example, during April, May and June of this year spent over \$3 million to lobby this legislation. AT&T and their affiliates spent \$17,977,977 lobbying on AB 2987.

The San Francisco Chronicle reported that “the California Cable & Telecommunications Association spent \$196,080 in the same three-month period for a range of lobbying activities that included meals with lawmakers. Dennis Mangers, president of the association, said he has had to resort to using the help of contract lobbyists for the first time in his 25 years of representing the cable industry in Sacramento. ‘I don’t ever recall this kind of money being spent, this much drama, this much public interest,’ he said.”

Randy Reed, chairperson of the recently formed non-profit Community Media Access Collaborative (CMAC)



in Fresno, is working hard to get that organization recognized as the group that will oversee PEG in this area. Reed expects the CMAC to coordinate programing on the PEG channels and run the Community Media Center (CMC). The CMC will probably be located at CSUF and be affiliated with the Mass Communications department. Comcast has already agreed to link CSUF with the fiber optic connection needed to originate programing from that location. This was agreed to in the Fresno County/Comcast franchise agreement.

The speed and the pace at which PEG access channels come to Fresno will depend on negotiations between Comcast and the City of Fresno. If a breakthrough occurs, we could be watching locally originated PEG channels in 6 - 12 months. If Fresno, as Randy VanDalsen suggests, is aggressive and pushes hard for a good deal,

including compensation for several areas where Comcast is in noncompliance of the current contract, this community could have a well funded CMC and PEG access project. If the city does not vigorously negotiate this agreement, we could be looking at January of 2008 before the money from the State franchise agreement starts to fund PEG locally.

One community that recently came to an agreement with Comcast is Marin County. According to an August 15, 2006 article on Indymedia < see: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/08/15/18297703.php> > it took them six years to negotiate a franchise agreement that included the following:

* \$3 million: For the construction, remodeling, equipment, and transitional start-up needs for an independently run, non-profit Marin Community Media Center (MCMC or MC2) to operate three PEG channels. The new MCMC will administer all PEG programs, store, maintain and allocate use of equipment, train personnel for all channels, schedule programming and operate the channels.

* Three PEG Channels: One channel each for Public, Education and Government use. Currently, Marin has just one public access channel (CH26), which only offers 5 hours per day of public content, and is run (poorly) by Comcast, not the public. Currently, Marin has no Education nor Government channels. The option for three more PEG channels will be triggered when Comcast moves from analog to digital transmission, and certain PEG milestones are reached.

* \$1 million: For a high-speed fiber-optic Institutional Network or “I-Net” that will interconnect 31 Marin public agencies, schools and libraries capable of TV broadcasts of city council meetings and emergency alerts.

An argument could be made that Fresno/Clovis, which has more than 100,000 Comcast cable subscribers, should be able to negotiate a deal at least as good as Marin, which has only 62,000 subscribers.

For more information about the Marin agreement, see: <http://www.mediaactionmarin.org/> .

For more information about AB 2987, see: http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/bill/asm/ab_2951-3000/ab_2987_bill_20060828_amended_sen.pdf .

For information about The Buske Group, see: www.BuskeGroup.com .

For more background on the work to bring PEG access to this community, see: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/home/peg2006.htm>

The Central California Peace Council

By Richard Stone

The Central California Peace Council is an idea in preliminary stages of development. 13 people, representing several organizations, responded to the first call for a meeting and convened on August 13th to speak about their particular interests and to look for commonality.

Two possible orientations emerged. One is to continue meeting quarterly, with the intent of informing each other about various projects that attendees’ groups are working on, then selecting one or two that everyone pledges to support in some fashion in the next months.

The second is to stage open forums in different parts of the Valley to hear concerns of local residents.

These two are not mutually exclusive goals, and the idea of having some meetings outside of Fresno was unanimously embraced in and of itself.

That said, since no out-of-town organization has presented itself as a

host, it was agreed that the next meeting will be held again at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness (just south of McKinley, across from Fresno City College). Date: Sunday, October 8 at 3 PM.

All organizations with a peace and justice agenda are welcome to send representatives, and interested individuals are also invited. The contact person pro tem is Richard Stone, 266-2559, or richard2662559@yahoo.com

FFCF Board Nomination 2006

This November, Fresno Free College Foundation members will elect three members to our board of directors. The foundation owns and operates KFCF radio. We are now looking for candidates to stand for election to our board of directors. A candidate must be a foundation member or KFCF subscriber in good standing. The period of time to become a candidate extends from September 20th until Friday October 20th. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact us. Information and applications are available at our office, or by visiting www.kfcf.org. If you have questions feel free to call 559-233-2221.

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Must purchase by October 31st.

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NW corner Fresno & Shaw
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compromise and collaboration, we agreed, and the new policy document was quickly developed. It is one page long, and it simply allows that protestors can be on public spaces without restriction unless they interfere with pedestrian or vehicle traffic.

Pretty easy, huh?

One would think so. But in the three days before we went before the court to settle the entire matter, the whole deal went south. I urged the protestors to put out a press release and they did. It said the police lied. The television stations were each given copies of the press release, Teresa's videotape, and the police reports. One television personality called me to ask "Where's the rest of the tape?" because what he was seeing on video was not what was written in the report. He refused to believe me when I said the tape is the tape, there is no more.

Apparently one of the television people, deferential to Dyer (access is all), got to Dyer and I got a call from the City Attorney about the press release. "The chief is unhappy with this." I said too bad, I had approved the press release and I thought it was honest, and my clients weren't going to retract their press release under pressure from Dyer in a case that was about free speech. Two days later, the City pulled out of the deal because Teresa, Shawn, Stephen, and Ruben refused to pull the press release. When we went to court,

the District Attorney surprised us all by dismissing the case, stating that after viewing the tape, they did not believe they could prove their case beyond a reasonable doubt.

There's law that restrains us from hurting one another and it's called the Penal Code, and it's up to the police to make sure the Penal Code is enforced. There's law that restrains the police from hurting people and it's called the Constitution, and it's up to the rest of us to make sure the Constitution is enforced. Because Police Chief Jerry Dyer doesn't seem to understand this, in the end, the City got nothing except the civil rights lawsuit that we filed on September 7th.

###

Catherine Campbell is an appellate and civil rights attorney in Fresno.

It's not really a good idea, this rent-a-cop business. The flaw is in the money. People tend to work for people who pay them, and police officers are supposed to work for all of us, all the time, no matter whose payroll they're on. It's a pretty bald conflict of interest, frankly, but police officers undoubtedly love it and no one else knows about it.



FRESNO FOLK CONCERTS

by Pat Wolk

Check us out. We have a new concert dedicated website www.fresnofolkconcerts.com where you can find out about our monthly concerts and even purchase tickets online. However, you can still read about and contact our local musicians and find out what else we're up to (dancing, jamming, partying) at the www.fresnofolklore.org website hosted by Carl Johnsen, our Flyer news editor.

Our October Concert: LAURIE LEWIS & TOM ROZUM—October 13, Friday. Fresno Art Museum 7:30pm. \$18 advance; \$20 at the door. Fiddle champion, "one hellacious singer"—Utah Phillips, award winning singer/songwriter.

You can't measure Laurie Lewis's 30-year career with the usual commercial yardsticks. She has won a Grammy ("True Life Blues: The Songs of Bill Monroe," 1997), and twice been named Female Vocalist of the Year by the IBMA (International Bluegrass Music Association). The Sacramento News called her "as fine a singer as anyone on the acoustic music circuit, anywhere in the world." Billboard praised her ability to "successfully walk the high wire above esoteric country, combining elements of bluegrass and pure country to form her own seamless mix." Or as American folk icon **Utah Phillips** put it, "Whatever country music is supposed to be, she's at the center of it." Her songs have traveled as widely as she has, but it is revealing to see who has recorded them: Kathy Mattea, Patsy Montana, Jeannie Kendall, Prudence Johnson - all revered as supreme stylists and song-finders.

Lewis's performing companion is ace mandolinist-singer Tom Rozum. Their 1996 CD, "The Oak and the Laurel," was nominated for a Grammy. "I love to have a partner to sing with, crave it deep down inside," Lewis says. "And Tom's the same way. He's a very conversational mandolin player, always responding to what's going on at the moment."

Lewis's stage shows are renowned for their musical virtuosity and front-porch friendliness. Coming of age in such a convivial music scene, she has a keen gift for inviting audiences into her music. As with everything she plays, the point is sharing, not strutting.

What else is new with FFS this Fall?

We've initiated a \$100 Season Ticket for reserved seating for five concerts:

October 13, Friday

LAURIE LEWIS & Tom Rozum. —Bluegrass, Folk, Country. Fresno Art Museum. 7:30pm

November 17, Friday

THE ANCIENT TONES: Kathy Kallick (guitar & vocals); Bill Evans (banjo & vocals); Tom Bekany (mandolin & vocals); Cindy Browne (acoustic bass). Bluegrass & more. Fresno Art Museum. 7:30pm

December 2, Saturday

UTAH PHILLIPS. That first class rascallion and rabble-rouser, folksinger, humorist, and storyteller. Fresno Art Museum 7:30pm. Frank Moschella will open.

January 18, Thursday

JOHN McCUTCHEON returns. If you've missed his sold out performances, now's your chance. We've booked him into the CSUFresno Concert Hall.

March 16, Friday

ROBIN & LINDA WILLIAMS & Their Fine Group. Regulars on The Prairie Home Companion Radio Show—you saw and heard them in the film. Now's your chance to see them for real.

That's five top performances for \$100. Phone Pat at 559-431-3653. Or you may purchase individual tickets at our favorite independently owned stores: The Movies Video Store; Patrick's Music, National Hardware or online at www.fresnofolkconcerts.com. The Museum Gift Shoppe carries tickets for the concerts at the Fresno Art Museum. Or send a check made out to FFS and send with an enclosed SASE to Pat Wolk, 6661 N. Forkner, Fresno, 93711.



House of Sand (Casa de Areia) - October 13, 2006

Áurea's saga starts in 1910, when, in pursuing a dream she never shared, she arrives in a caravan at a labyrinth of sand in Maranhão, northern Brazil. Her husband, Vasco, believes this land to be prosperous and she is condemned to a life in this barren place, her only female company being her mother, Dona Maria. Pregnant and dissatisfied with her destiny, she tries everything to find a way out.

Friday, October 13, 2006 - 5 & 8 pm

Tickets on sale at Tower Box office, The Movies and Fig Garden Books

at Fresno's historic Tower Theatre

Tickets are on sale now at The Tower Theatre Box Office, at the Movies, 1435 N. Van Ness Ave., and at The Fig Garden Bookstore. Tickets: General Admission \$10.00 \$8.00 for Students & Seniors

3rd Annual Fresno Film Festival, coming April 13, 14, & 15, 2007



www.fresnofilmworks.org

Israel: Bright Moments Amid the Guns Foreign Policy In Focus

By Conn Hallinan



The images most Americans have of the recent war in Lebanon are of shattered cities, dead civilians, and terrified people bunkered down in basements or picking their way through blasted streets. The carnage of modern war draws the media as ancient battles called forth the Valkyries.

But there are other images—and voices—that most of us do not see or hear on the six o’clock news or read in our newspapers.

Like the following:

Yonaton Shapiro, a former Blackhawk pilot and co-founder of Combatants for Peace, telling the Aug. 6 Observer that in his conversations with Israeli Air Force F-16 pilots: “Some told me they have shot at the side of targets because they are afraid people will be there, and they don’t trust any more those who give them the coordinates and the targets.” He said he urged the pilots to refuse to fly, “in order to save our country from self-destruction.”

Uri Avnery, founder of Gush Shalom (Peace Bloc) addressing 5,000 people packed into Magen David Square Aug. 5: “We are the few facing the masses that thirst for war, but next month, or next year, every one of us will proudly proclaim: I was here! I called for a stop to this accursed war. And thousands who are cursing us now, next month, next year, will claim that they, too, were here.”

Yana Knopova, a Ukrainian immigrant, and Khulood Badawi, an Israeli Arab, at an Aug. 11 rally in Tel Aviv leading anti-war chants in three languages, Arabic, Russian and Hebrew: “Salaam Na’ami! Kharb La! (Peace ye, war no) Voine Nyet! (No war)”

The 34-day war did more than smash up infrastructure, it blew up a lot of assumptions and accepted truths as well: the invincibility of the Israeli Army; the illusion that wars can be controlled—Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah now admits he would never have captured the two soldiers if he had known how Israel would respond.

It has also reinvigorated the Israeli peace movement with some very new elements.

Inside/Out - Helping Prisoners this Holiday Season

By Maria Telesco

About 4,000 women are confined, most for nonviolent crimes, in Central California Women’s Facility (CCWF), Chowchilla, the world’s largest women’s prison. Many have few relatives or friends, or those relatives/friends may live too far away to visit, or can’t afford to make the trip. The women are crammed, eight to a small room, in bunk beds. So, while the women are lonely and miss their loved ones, the overcrowding means a severe loss of privacy and limitations on personal freedom, conditions that are hard to bear.

The CCWF Family Council, in conjunction with several Prison Ministries and church groups has undertaken a project which will result in the delivery to each

The names “Konpova” and “Badawi” are a case in point.

Yana Knopova, age 25, left the Ukraine in 1995 as a young Zionist. She is currently a psychology major at Haifa University and the coordinator of the Coalition of Women for Peace. Badawi, age 30, is the former chair of the Association of Arab University Students in Israel, who now works for a civil rights group.

In an interview with Lily Galili in the Aug. 10 Ha’aretz, the two talked about what motivates them to try to stop the war, and how feminism influences their views. “The police see Khulood as a natural enemy,” says Konpova, “while in the exact same situation, the police refuse to see me as an enemy. They also live with the stereotype that there are no Russians in the left. Khulood is always dangerous, I am never dangerous; Khulood is a demographic time bomb, I am a demographic hope. This is an approach that regards the wombs of us both in the service of the state, and we will not give them this pleasure.”

According to Galili the traditional peace movement was dominated by Ashkenazi men [Central and Eastern European Jews], but that the current anti-war protests are largely being led by women.

“All the elements of this war bring the issues together,” says Knopova, “feminism, social justice, class distinc-

Conn Hallinan will be the featured speaker at the Community Alliance 10 year anniversary celebration on Sunday, October 15, 6 PM at Full Circle Brewery, 620 F street in Downtown Fresno.

tions, the environment and the occupation. Women make this connection”

And as the chants suggest, more and more Russian immigrants—normally associated with the hard right—are involved in the peace movement. What is also different is that Arab citizens of Israel have shown up in Tel Aviv in large numbers. Badawi sees this participation as a way of healing the deep wound of October 2000, when Israeli police opened fire on peaceful Arab demonstrators and killed 13 of them. After the massacre, Arab-Israelis stayed away from peace protests in Tel Aviv.

“The age is over when we would accept Jewish partnership at any price,” she says. “Today the connection is genuine, with Jewish activists paying the price of their participation by demonstrations against the wall in Bil’in, refusal to serve in the military, and activism at checkpoints. We have a common fate, but it is different than in the past. These demonstrations can help us out of the severed relations of October 2000. Now the Arab-Jewish partnership is egalitarian.” Badawi told Ha’aretz, “When we speak from the stage—Yana in Russian, I in Arabic—that in itself is a political message. It also conveys to the Arab world that the claims by Israel and the U.S. that Jews and Arabs cannot live together is a false message.”

There is also a growing movement among soldiers—particularly reservists—who refuse to serve in the oc-

cupied territories or take part in the invasion of Lebanon. The oldest of these organizations is Yesh Gvul, formed in 1982 during the first Lebanon invasion. But it has now been joined by a number of new organizations, like Combatants for Peace, all tied together by the Refuser Solidarity Network. Their slogan is “You can’t have a war if the soldiers stay home.”

Yesh Gvel organizers say they have been contacted by dozens of officers and solders who say they will refuse service in Lebanon. Among them is Reserve Captain Amir Paster, sentenced to 28 days for refusing to serve in Lebanon, and Staff Sargent Itzik Shabbat, who refused to serve in the occupied territories because it would free up regular solders to fight in Lebanon.

You can respond to these needs in two ways:

you can donate a couple hours of time, once a month, befriending and visiting a specific inmate.

The gift of friendship can be arranged by Nancy Turk in Visalia at 627-1088. donations to the gift bags can be given to Maria Telesco at 255-9492.

The women may receive only authorized items. Toiletry items must be small sample/travel sizes:

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body Wash / Bath Gel

cupied territories or take part in the invasion of Lebanon. The oldest of these organizations is Yesh Gvul, formed in 1982 during the first Lebanon invasion. But it has now been joined by a number of new organizations, like Combatants for Peace, all tied together by the Refuser Solidarity Network. Their slogan is “You can’t have a war if the soldiers stay home.”

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While new groups are springing up, Gush Shalom is still the activist backbone of the Israeli peace movement. Formed in 1993, it calls for returning all the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, a right of return for Palestinians “without undermining the foundations of Israel,” and mutual security between Israel and Palestine.

The organization has no paid staff and no funding to speak of, and an “in your face” street theater edge to it. It rebuilds houses destroyed by Israeli occupation forces, fills in trenches dug by the army to isolate Arab villages, break through closure barriers, and harvests olives for Palestinians barred from their land by the army or settlers.

Gush Shalom was the principle organizer of the Megan David Square rally that also drew the Coalition of Women for Peace, Ta’ayush (an organization that fights to release the more than 10,000 Palestinian detainees), Yesh Gvul, the Israeli-Palestinian Forum of Bereaved Families, Anarchists Against Walls, plus political parties like Hadash, Balad, and the United Arab List.

Conspicuously missing was any formal representation from the leftist Meretz Party, which splintered over support for the war. However, many Meretz members marched, including former Knesset members Naomi Hazen and Ya’el Dayan. And while 5,000 seems small, a comparable demonstration in the U.S. would number 200,000.

In his closing remarks, Avnery talked about the bright potential that smashing “accepted truths” can create: “When this madness is finally over, we shall struggle together—Israelis and Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese, Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel—so that we can live a normal life, each in his free state, side by side, in peace.”

www.refusersolidarity.net
<http://coalitionofwomen.org>
www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org
www.peacenow.org
www.taayush.org
www.yeshgvul.org

###

Conn Hallinan is a regular columnist for Foreign Policy in Focus and the Daily Planet. He is also a free lance medical writer. cmhallinan@comcast.net

- Hotel Size Bar Soap
- Hand Lotion
- Toothpaste
- Tooth Brush

Authorized food items should be in individual packets and not have foil wrapping:

- Coffee
- Tea Bags
- Hot Chocolate
- Individually wrapped hard candies
- Miniature chocolate bars

Also: Picture post cards (no stamps)
Stationery
Envelopes

Monetary donations are also needed and welcome. Checks may be made payable to FCNV Prison Ministry, and sent to Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness, Fresno, 93728. The deadline for donations is November 1st. Items for gift bags can be delivered to Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness, Fresno 93728 during open hours M-F 11-3 or by appointment. If pick-up is needed, call Maria Telesco at 255-9492.

Justice in the Middle East

By Don Friesen

On Thursday, August 3, I sat as part of a Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) delegation, beside staff members of a congressman from Ohio, at a luncheon hosted by Farhan Alqam, Mayor of the Municipality of Beit Ummar, West Bank, Palestine. Throughout the morning he spoke about many of the problems of his municipality, of the heavy taxation imposed upon his townspeople, of the financial difficulties because of American and Israeli sanctions on the Palestinian Authority, and of the closing of the municipality's marketplace by the Israelis.

Alqam also said, "We believe that all mankind must be brothers. We do not need a race to produce weapons of demolition and mass destruction. Money must be invested in the needs of humanity. Too many people are using power to make a few rich at the expense of making many people poorer." This is a politician I would vote for.

On Thursday, August 24 at 2 AM, six jeep loads of Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) surrounded the home of Mayor Alqam, aroused him and his wife, and took the mayor into custody. Mayor Alqam is a 42 year old computer scientist. He and his wife Miriam are the parents of four young children.

This is Alqam's third arrest. Each time he has been placed in administrative detention, i.e. held without

any charges being filed. During his previous detention he was imprisoned for seven months.

The reason for his arrest is likely because Mayor Alqam belongs to Hamas. He is hardly a terrorist. He perceives Hamas as a humanitarian organization that resists the illegal occupation of Palestine.

Alqam joins over 9000 Palestinians who have been abducted in similar manner, most also held without charge. One of the ironies of his abduction is its similarity to the abduction of two Israeli soldiers by Palestinians that has led to the Israeli's nearly continuous incursions into Gaza strip during the last two months. The main difference between the abductions is that the abducted Palestinians are all civilians. According to Birzeit University Professor Ghassan Andoni, between 15 and 30 Palestinians are abducted every night from their homes in the West Bank and Gaza.

That evening, several from our CPT delegation were guests at the home of a grape farmer in the Beqa'a Valley, near Hebron in the West Bank. His vineyards are beautifully tended and the grapes from this region are prized in the Middle East. During our meal we coaxed him to tell his story.

He farms land that has been handed down from several generations. He is now living in his third home in this valley. His first two homes were demolished by IDF because he was unable to obtain a permit to build his home from the Israeli military authorities. It costs several thousand dollars to apply for a permit and the authorities very seldom grant building permits to Palestinians.

An Israeli settlement, Givat Ha Harsina, is being built toward his home from the opposite side of the valley. A few years ago, the Israeli's built a security fence between the encroaching settlement and his vineyards—that is they built the fence through his vineyards in a way that denies him access to a substantial portion of his vineyard. He had earlier befriended a Russian resident of the settlement, who agreed now to help him tend and harvest these inaccessible grapes. Settlement leaders told the Russian that he was not to associate with Palestinians. Israelis then built a second fence parallel to the first, tearing out more of the farmers



Atta Jabber is a farmer in the Beqa'a Valley. He has had two homes destroyed by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and now the Israelis are taking parts of his grape vineyards. Photo by Don Friesen.

vineyard in the process.

In 1994, Israel built a highway down the middle of the valley, and then a gas station was constructed near the highway. All of this was done on land confiscated from the farmer. The sole benefit that he might have gained from this construction—the use of this highway—has been denied him because the IDF has placed roadblocks at each of three different access points he has to the highway.

Unfortunately, none of the actions taken against this farmer is an isolated action. 12,000 homes have been demolished by the IDF since 1967 and over 10,000 more demolition orders have been imposed. Fewer than 5% are connected to terrorism. Road blocks are common in the West Bank. Over 25% of Palestinian land in the West Bank has been confiscated by Israel. There are over 200 Israeli settlements, all built on Palestinian land.

This is not the way most Americans see the Israel/Palestinian conflict portrayed. In the eyes of most, Palestinians are the cause of the problem and Israel is only defending itself. This is far from the reality. Certainly Israel has a right to a secure land, but this must not be attained at the expense of the rights and dignity of their Palestinian neighbors.

###

Don Friesen is a mathematics teacher at Reedley High School. He recently participated in a Christian Peacemaker Team delegation to West Bank, Palestine.



Why was mayor Farhan Alqam of Beit Ummar arrested by Israeli Defense Forces (IDF)? Photo by Don Friesen.



This photo shows teh highway through the vineyards and one of the roadblocks referred to in the article. Photo by John McCarthy



Photo by Chris Schneider

The Crime of Pushing a Shopping Cart

By Mike Rhodes

The City of Fresno adopted an ordinance last month (September) that would make it a crime to be in the possession of a shopping cart. The ordinance is part of an ongoing attack against this communities homeless population. These attacks have included the bulldozing of homeless encampments, destruction of homeless persons personal possessions, an ordinance against aggressive panhandling, and the building of fences to prevent the homeless from accessing vacant state owned land. For background information about these attacks see:

<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/08/26/18301032.php>
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/08/05/18294991.php>
<http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/06/22/18281976.php>

Under this new ordinance, the man in the photo, could be arrested, fined \$1,000, and spend up to a year in jail. It would not matter if the man was returning an abandoned shopping cart to a grocery store or removing it from a busy intersection. The ordinance says that if you are in possession of a shopping cart, away from the business that owns it, you could be arrested, fined, and jailed.

"Anybody who is walking down the street with a Save Mart cart, whether it is homeless or it's somebody that has a mansion that they live in, that does not have the permission of the owner to take that, it's a crime."

*Larry Westerlund
Fresno City Council member*

The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread.

*- Anatole France
1894
Chapter 7, The Red Lily*

Grassroots Profile

By Richard Stone

Mary Savala is a one-organization woman. While many of us divide our energies among several groups, Mary has faithfully — and tirelessly — worked with the League of Women Voters for forty years. This apparently mainline, innocuous-sounding organization has taken on, head-on, some of the most intractable issues in town, doing battle with some of the strongest power blocs around.

Mary was raised with the principles of democracy and citizen responsibility. She grew up believing in the obligation we all share to use our talents for the public good and in the necessity for nonvested interests to have an important say in public affairs. As a young newlywed living in Berkeley, she was introduced to the local League chapter. . .and the League has been as lasting a tie as her marriage (to workers’ comp lawyer Rudy Savala). “I was attracted by their rational approach to change, and I saw them as a vehicle for personal effectiveness.”

After completing their education, the Savalas moved back to hometown Fresno with the express intention of coming where they’d be needed. Mary looked up the local chapter of the League, and the rest is history.

Mary currently serves as the League board member in charge of natural resources policy. Her domain includes land use and preservation, water and air quality, and transportation, or, as she puts it, the creation of sustainable community.

In the face of the forces conspiring to overrun the natural basis of healthy living, the job of conservation is anything but conservative. The approach of the League to highly controversial issues has been deliberative: to base positions on thorough research and understanding of alternatives; to gain political influence by face-to-face education and by earning trust through real listening; to democratize and broaden the base of political input.

Working from a background in science and biology, Mary entered the public realm impeded by lack of time, as she raised her family, and inexperience. She mentions several people who helped her gain skills as a

lobbyist but cites two as especially important: Harold Tokmakian and George Kroeber. Tokmakian is the former Fresno County planning director and former chair of land use and urban design education at CSUF. “He was my elegant mentor and taskmaster. I really wanted to earn an ‘A’ from him.” Working with Mary on the River Parkway project, he taught her the importance of confronting all the detailed problems and mastering the technicalities.

Kroeber was the planning director for the City of Fresno who presciently recognized the importance of the Parkway. He demonstrated the art of building consensus, bringing together supervisors from Fresno and Madera to look at their common interests and to deal with potential problems of jurisdiction and resource impact.

As for current allies, Mary speaks not only of the many groups and individuals whose interests have come together in her work on Measure C, but, perhaps surprisingly, of the powers that be as represented in the Council of Governments. “Many of those on this Council, especially rural representatives, have truly opened themselves to new information and perspectives involving land use and air quality.” As for the official staff, she has little but praise. “They are typically eager to have their knowledge and expertise put to use. I don’t see them as an obstacle, but as a resource.” One thing Mary says that staff members have taught her well is the importance of speaking directly to constituencies you want to involve, especially by traveling out to the rural areas. “Few people in the outlying areas are involved at all in the political process. They are a great potential resource for citizen activism.”

The League’s policy interests are select but broad. The League is deeply involved in the preservation of open space and agricultural

land (“build up, not out”); in improvement of air quality and the necessity for controlling growth; in the need for voluntary universal preschool (though it opposed the recent proposition because of the funding mechanism); and in the plan to build 10,000 “truly affordable” housing units by 2010, dispersed throughout the city and county.

But at the top of the agenda right now is the passage of Measure C (see Mary’s article on page 11). Mary is especially proud of the work in crafting Measure C because it moves beyond the vision of the politically powerful and seeks to address previously unmet needs. “No one is totally happy with the outcome, but it was developed out of acknowledgment of the need for a total transportation plan. It was the most democratic, open process I’ve ever been part of.”

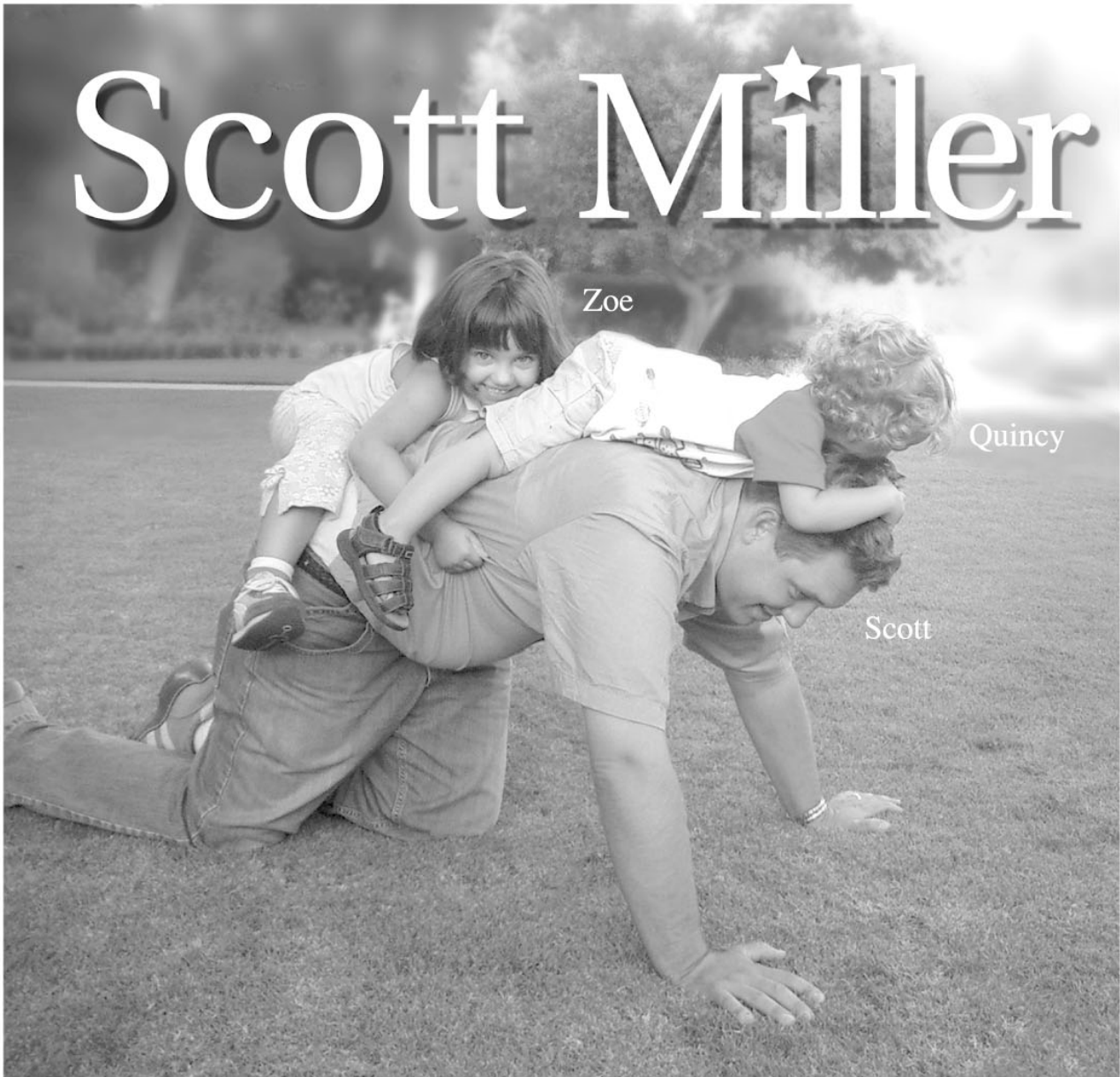
The proposed Measure C goes far beyond highway expansion to address such issues as meeting the needs of the disabled, providing trails for pedestrians and bikers, using environmentally sound school buses (“they’re really part of mass transit”), subsidizing alternatives to car use by addressing density and access required for successful mass transit; and providing for road and highway repair. Mary adds, “We need to realize that Measure C is meant only to supplement other funding sources. If the County demonstrates its willingness to partner, we become first in line for federal monies.”

So—last words—“Yes on Measure C”. [To contact the League of Women Voters, call 266-VOTE]



IDENTITY BOX

Name: Mary Savala
Birthplace: Salem, Oregon
Ethnic identity: “Vanilla bland”
Religious affiliation: Roman Catholic
Political affiliation: Democrat
Inspiration: parents and husband
Places frequented: downtown, Pinedale
Nonpolitical interest: grandchildren
Unexpected pleasure: British murder mysteries



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sunmt.org/aug30chron06.html

Fresno police chief has "ego problem" with protester truth

5 years at PeaceCorner. Horny crescendo agrees Bush did 9-11

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QUEER EYE

Cali Christianists Scream

"Fascist"

by Dan Waterhouse

Although there was disappointment when Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed the text book bill (Senate Bill 1437), he signed what some considered to be probably the most important anti-discrimination bill in years into law on August 28th.

Republican legislator Ray Haynes then accused Schwarzenegger of being a "fascist." Haynes says anyone who doesn't support "religious freedom"—which evidently includes the 'right' to discriminate using state funds—is nothing but a "fascist."

SB 1441 added "sexual orientation" and "gender" to the list of characteristics on which discrimination may not be based in the conduct or operation of state or state-funded programs or activities. Prior law prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, ethnic group identification, religion, age, sex, color, or disability. The bill brought this part of anti-discrimination law into line with provisions of the state Fair Housing & Employment Act and the Unruh Civil Rights Act.

Some of the programs affected by the change, according to the Senate bill analysis, are: Medi-Cal, the CALWORKS program, unemployment and disability insurance, workman's compensation, financial aid programs, child support services programs, services for veterans, legal services programs, home loan assistance programs, licensing of businesses, government contracting and procurement activities, and voter registration.

The Republican fringe immediately began screaming bloody murder. They bellowed that their "religious freedom" was being violated. Karen England of the Capitol Research Institute shrieked: "(the bill) adds sexual orientation (actual or perceived) and gender identity (actual or perceived) to the list of protected classes under California law prohibiting discrimination. According to the State Senate's legislative analysis, 'This clarification would greatly expand the effect this bill would have on programs and services provided or paid for by the state or a state agency'. To enforce these new protections, the state may withhold funding from any organization that 'discriminates' against homosexuals, transgenders, bisexuals, or anyone's gender (actual or perceived). Now, under California law, simply living out your faith is considered discriminatory."

England failed to note that the new law also prohibits discrimination against heterosexuals. She claims, "as applied, this legislation would prevent parochial schools, private schools, Christian, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, and many other religious universities, from receiving student financial assistance if they also maintain a student code of conduct preventing behavior deemed immoral by their religious beliefs. In order to receive a Cal Grant for your child's education, you may no longer send your child to a religious school. This will put an unbelievable strain on California families as they will be forced to choose between their deeply-held religious beliefs and affording a college education for their children."

Truth is, SB 1441 doesn't violate anyone's religious freedom. They're still free to worship as they see fit. They're still free to speak out. They're still free to discriminate—on their own dime. As the state Supreme Court pointed out in the Boy Scouts versus City of Berkeley case earlier this year, the Scouts were free to do whatever they wished, but there's no obligation for government to finance it.

A Bakersfield California columnist writes, "conservative Republicans are angry, but not especially surprised by Schwarzenegger's actions of late, though many had harbored the slim hope the governor would stay true to his conservative base. Not going to happen, said Stephen Frank, a political consultant and conservative activist who believes Schwarzenegger's support of SB 1441 and other bills is 'the cold shower that social conservatives have been fearing'."

SWEET SIXTEEN

The Americans with Disabilities Act

By: Jose Luis Barraza

On Tuesday August 22, 2006 the Fresno County Board of Supervisors approved the development of Fresno County ADA Advisory Committee. This is the first step forward and one step closer towards a long awaited process for a partnership between Fresno County and the Disabled Community. Sixteen years have past since President George H. W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26, 1990. Three years since the disabled community requested for an oversight committee.

In the course of our request we’ve learned a great deal about human dignity in the face of opposition towards you when asking that they comply with the mandates of the ADA. No one likes to be told what to do and we agree with those sentiments and encourage administrators and proprietors that haven’t developed partnerships with the disabled community to please do so. The disabled community encourages public entities to develop ADA oversight committees, committees that reflect a diversity of people with disabilities to assist them in meeting the mandates of this federal law. There are public entities in the central valley region that are still non-compliant with the mandates of the ADA. As allowed by law under the public information act the cities and counties must disclose their self-evaluations, transition plans, timeframes, and annual accomplished goals and a process to file complaints such as an ADA

Coordinator or oversight committee. This should be the first inquiry to determine if your city is in compliance with the mandates of ADA. Perhaps Fresno County Administrators dragged their feet on our request for an advisory committee because they needed to get a transitional plan in order, something we requested from the start.

This Civil Rights law guaranteed the equal rights of people with disabilities to live independently in their respective communities without discrimination and allowed access to all facilities, programs and services in both private and public sectors. In today’s society we see countless people with disabilities living in their communities and enjoying life equally to their neighbors. Much of what they are able to do on a daily basis have a great deal to do with collaborative *partnerships*, partnerships between private and public entities with the disabled community. Through those partnerships there are today many accessible features that have made it possible for people with disabilities to live independently in the community. Major changes have occurred in our cities, towns, and neighborhoods throughout the United States. Yet there is still much more that needs to be accomplished.

This progress hasn’t come easily because of the mandates of the ADA have no teeth to enforce them. There are only three ways one can ensure that the mandates of the law can be upheld; and those are filing a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice, litigation, and/or partnerships. The latter is the wisest choice because it is proactive and not reactive. It is good business practice and cost effective, as people with disabilities are consumers of goods and services. Choosing a reactive approach to an ADA situation rather than a

partnership is not good business practice. The disabled community can offer insight on how to improve community accessibility and accommodations which benefit the community in general.

Local governments have been subject to this requirement for many years under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Structural modifications are required only when there is no alternative available for providing program access. However, the public accommodation is not relieved from the duty to furnish an alternative that would not result in a fundamental alteration or undue burden.” Both state and federal funds allow set aside provisions for ADA compliance. It leaves very little room for excuses by public servants to say they don’t have the funds in a stringent budget year.

The ADA has existed for sixteen years, and it is still in its formative years but the ADA like our youth on their sixteenth birthday, is sensitive in their struggle to realize their dreams, passionate about change and frustrated with society’s refusal to make that change. It is an aggravating situation for such a young age. Incorporated into ADA legislation are time frames in which to accomplish what was mandated in 1990. So in reality we are really into adulthood, yet still denied the privileges and rights that come with it. “Happy Sweet Sixteenth Birthday- Americans with Disabilities Act!”

###

Jose Luis Barraza is the Systems Change Advocate for the Center for Independent Living-Fresno. He currently serves on several collaborative committees at the local and state level on issues related to housing, transportation and access.

Vote YES on Measure C

By Mary Savala

Measure C is the ½ cent Fresno County sales tax, enacted in 1986, which has provided funding for freeway, highway and road construction in Fresno County for the last 20 years. Some minimal funds have been allocated for bike lanes and public transit, but those modes of transportation have been neglected by local funding for a long time. A proposal to extend the tax for 30 years was defeated at the polls in 2002. Following that, community interests representing environmental, social justice, business, health and government sat down, put their heads together, and developed a new idea for a 20 year extension of the sales tax.

The steering committee which worked for over 18 months on a new extension proposal listened carefully to voter and community surveys to ascertain what the voters wanted to spend their tax money on. The steering committee meetings were accessible to the public at various times of day and locations throughout the county, and the public did participate. The result of listening carefully and seriously to public interests for more and better transportation options, congestion relief, a vibrant economy, and better air quality has resulted in a spending plan that moves in a new direction for Fresno County transportation.

The Measure C Extension proposes to raise \$1.7 Billion over 20 years and allocates approximately 1/3 of the funds for planning and implementing an improved public transit system for Fresno County, 1/3 of the funds for the 15 cities and Fresno County for their local transportation needs, and 1/3 of the funds for expanding the capacity of regional roads and highways in the County.

The public transit funds will be used to complete a major transit study and develop a seamless, reliable, regional transit district, offer free transit fares to seniors over 65, improve existing transit services in Clovis, Fresno, and the rural County district, and expand van pool services for commuters and farm workers.

50% of the funds to local government must be spent for repairs and maintenance, 0.5 % or \$9.2 million must be spent for ADA compliance in those cities that do not yet provide enough curb cuts and pedestrian safety provisions for the disabled, 3.11% or \$53.3 million must be spent on pedestrian trails throughout the County, and 0.9% or \$15 million allocated to bicycle facilities.

There is 6.0% or \$102.5 million of the total \$1.7Billion proposed to be spent on rail consolidation in the City of Fresno, 2.3% or \$39.9 million for new clean fuel school buses with seat belts, 1.0% or \$17 million to improve the airports in the County, 1.2 % or \$19.9 million for incentives that provide denser development and bet-

ter access to transit stations, and 21% or \$36.3 million in reserve to research and develop new transportation technologies for our transportation future.

The proposal requires an independent Citizen Advisory Committee be appointed to see that Measure C Extension funds are spent as promised to the voters, and tighter new procedures are mandated for amended the spending plan. Details of the projects and programs in the spending plan can be seen at the Fresno County Council’s web site www.fresnocog.org.

No one in the planning process got everything wanted by their constituents, but everyone walked away with their concerns reflected in the proposal. It’s important to remember that local funding for transportation is only a part of the transportation funding that Fresno County receives from state and federal transportation funds, but a demonstrated willingness for Fresno County to help itself will attract additional state and federal dollars to Fresno County’s transportation system. And... to quote one of the County Supervisors, “Image what we will lose if Measure C is not passed this November”.

###

Mary Savala is the Natural Resources Director on the Board of the League of Women Voters of Fresno. She can be reached at rudy Savala@comcast.net



Steve and Stephanie Updike with council Woman Cynthia Sterling welcoming them to Fresno.

Steve and Stephanie have retired here from Southern California. They have a daughter in college and Stephanie Volunteers to help feed the poor in Fresno. They are members of Peace Fresno and hope that we all can be free and live in peace. They would like to hear from others who want religious freedom and peace. You can e-mail them at oa2j3b@hotmail.com.

The Democratic Page

The content of his page is provided by the Fresno County Democratic Party Secretary with funding provided by local Democratic Clubs and James Williams

The Fresno County Democratic Party Recommends the following positions on ballot measures for the November 7, 2006 Election:

- Yes - 1A** - Transportation Investment Fund
- Yes – 1B** - Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality, Port Security Bond Act of 2006
- Yes – 1C** - Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund Act of 2006
- Yes – 1D** - Education Facilities: Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2006
- Yes – 1E** - Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Bond Act of 2006
- Yes – 83** - Sex Offenders, Sexually Violent Predators, Punishment, Residence Restrictions, and Monitoring
- Yes – 84** - Water Quality, Safety and Supply, Flood Control, Natural Resources Protection, Park Improvements
- No – 85** - Waiting period and parental notification before termination of a minor's pregnancy
- Yes – 86** - Tax on Cigarettes, Tobacco Tax Act of for Hospital, Emergency Services, Tobacco Education
- Yes – 87** - Alternative Energy, Research, Production, Incentives, Tax on California Oil
- No – 88** - Education Funding, Real Property Parcel Tax
- Yes – 89** -Political Campaigns, Public Financing, Corporate Tax Increase, Campaign Contribution, and Expenditure Limits
- No – 90** - Government Acquisition, Regulation of Private Property
- Yes – C** - Extension of the sales tax to fund Fresno County transportation needs



Actually, it is now less than 100 days if you are reading this.



Jason Carns of the Fresno Young Democrats volunteered to set up and take down the booth.



Magaret Mims is the FCDCC endorsed Democrat for Sheriff. Her opponent is a Republican.



Water is the lifblood of the Central Valley and its degradation by the large corporate farms use of pesticides impacts the lives of the workers.

This year's Democratic Booth at the Firebaugh Canteloupe Roundup Festival was the first endeavor of the Fresno County Democratic Central Committee, the official arm of the Democratic Party in the county, to do organizational outreach outside of the cities of Fresno and Clovis. Barbara Pyle, Chair of the FCDCC Organizational Development Committee, spearheaded this effort.

The small farmworker based communities are vastly underrepresented in terms of voter registration where the Central Valleys legislative agenda is controlled by a handful of conspicuously wealthy landowning Republican families.

Democratic Candidates for the November 7th General Election

Governor - Phil Angelides

Lt. Governor - John Garamendi

Secretary of State - Debra Bowen

Controller - John Chiang

Treasurer - Bill Lockyer

Attorney General - Jerry Brown

Insurance Commissioner - Cruz Bustamante

Board of Equalization 2 - Tim Raboy

U.S. Senate - Diane Feinstein

U.S. House of Representatives

Dist. 19 - T. J. Cox

Dist. 20 - Jim Costa

Dist. 21 - Steve Haze

State Senate 14th Dist. - Wesley Firch

State Senate 16th Dist. - Dean Florez

Assembly 30th Dist. - Nicole Parra

Assembly 31st Dist. - Juan Arambula

Fresno County Sheriff – (Non-Partisan) Margaret Mims

Information Directory of Central San Joaquin Valley Democratic Clubs & Organizations

<p>Clovis Democratic Club</p> <p>Meets at: Denny's Restaurant</p> <p>710 West Shaw</p> <p>(at Willow), Clovis</p> <p>Time: 6:30pm - Third Thursdays</p>	<p>Democrats In Action Office</p> <p>255 N. Fulton Ave. #104</p> <p>(559) 486-5422</p> <p>Time: M-F 11:00am - 3:00pm</p> <p>office@fresnodemocrats.com</p> <p>www.fresnodemocrats.org</p>
<p>Fresno County Democratic Women's Club</p> <p>Meets on the fourth Monday's of the month</p> <p>Call Janet Sangster for more information</p> <p>(559) 439-3176</p>	<p>Fresno Stonewall Democrats</p> <p>Democrats in Action - 255 N. Fulton Ave., #104, Fresno, CA 93701</p> <p>Time: 3:00 p.m. on First Sunday</p> <p>www.mangen.com/stonewall</p> <p>Chuck Krugman (559) 226-3717</p>
<p>San Joaquin Valley Democratic Club</p> <p>Meets at Denny's Restaurant</p> <p>1110 E. Shaw, Fresno</p> <p>Dinner at 6:00 p.m., Meeting at 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Third Wednesday of each month</p> <p>Kurt Gripenstraw (559) 438-1806</p>	<p>Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin</p> <p>Meets at Denny's 141 N. Abby</p> <p>Time: 9 a.m.</p> <p>First Saturday of the month</p> <p>Ray Ensher (559) 439-8140</p>
<p>West Fresno Democratic Club</p> <p>Contact Floyd Harris</p> <p>for meeting times and locations</p> <p>(559) 803-0286</p>	<p>Hmong Democratic Club</p> <p>For meeting times and places contact</p> <p>Mai Summer Vue</p> <p>(559) 221-1845</p>

The Fresno County Democratic Central Committee

Meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the State Building, 2550 Mariposa Mall

www.democraticpartyfresnocounty.org

P.O. Box 1121, Clovis, CA 93613

If you would like to see this page continue your financial support will be needed. Make your check out to FCDCC in the amount you can afford and mail it to the above address and designate that it be used for the Alliance Democratic Ad Fund. Thank you for everything you can do to support our democratic ideas and values.

Volunteer postions may still be open to help staff the **Democratic Party Booth at the Big Fresno Fair**. The fair runs from Wed., October 4th, thru Sunday, October 15th. Call Regina Uribes to voluntter at (559) 696-9232. It includes free admission to the fair and some limited free parking may be available. Help register voters and enjoy the fair at the same time.

Contact James Williams if you would like to be a **precinct volunteer** at (559) 225-0916

For a good time come to our **Demo-Dance Party Fundraiser** at the Los Amigos Restaurant , 1752 W. Shaw (NE corner at West), on Sunday, October 1st at 8 p.m. Call Mai Summer Vue to make your reservations for tickets (\$25 and up) at (559) 579-0040. Food, drinks (no host bar), live entertainment and dancing.

In Memoriam - Fresno Activist Larry E Trullinger

By Ray Ensher

The progressive community lost a champion of social justice August 30th. The passing was shocking to many in the community not knowing how ill the life-long Democrat Larry Trullinger was.

Mr. Trullinger was a retired business executive whose career included contact with the highest levels of Congress and the Department of Defense. His areas of expertise was the negative impact of globalization on labor, the environment and international relations. While a resident of Orange County, prior to moving, Mr. Trullinger was instrumental in establishing many Democratic clubs and a chapter of Interfaith Alliance. He worked to unseat Congressman Dornan in favor of Loretta Sanchez and was supportive in the election of her sister, Linda Sanchez. He was for many years treasurer and an active participant in the California Democratic Council (started by former Senator Alan Cranston) and a close personal friend of State Senator Joe Dunn.

Locally, Mr. Trullinger served on Fresno County's water advisory board and donated constant hours to Health Care for All - Central California, the Community Alliance for a Fair Economy (Living Wage issue), Fresno Metro Ministry, and the Central California Criminal Justice Committee. Upon his passing he was a member of the Fresno County Democratic Central Committee and an active member of the many Democratic clubs in the area.

He was most proud of being a labor supporter and a Teamster member and worked closely with the Central Labor Council.

Mr. Trullinger received a B.A. degree from Lewis and Clark College, Portland and a master's from the University of Oregon, Eugene. He was involved with the American Management Association and the American Marketing Association of New York.

As a Fellow with the liberal think tank of the Central California Institute (CCI) Mr. Trullinger stated, "Actions of WTO and the resulting 'corporate colonialism' have contributed significantly to the attitude of alienation toward the United States in developing countries throughout the world."

Kennedy Club member Victor Kral remembers that Larry was a role model for community involvement and social justice programs and a tireless leader. "He was on many occasions stating 'need some clarification' on issues before him."

Metro Ministry staff member Edie Jessup was shocked at the passing of Mr. Trullinger and acknowledged his support for better nutrition and health care for those in need.

Chairperson Frances Sivak of the local Living Wage campaign commented, "Larry had a keen sense of economic justice. He never met an injustice that he wouldn't work to eliminate. He helped to start the Community Alliance for a Fair Economy group. He was always there for the Home Care workers in their struggle for union recognition. After that, he was the one who promoted the C.A.F.E. group to work for a living wage ordinance as another way to 'combat poverty.' It's been almost two years of struggle with that one and one more piece of the unfinished business that has to continue as part of Larry's legacy."

On many occasions while traveling with Larry to various Democratic club meetings and conferences, we always had interesting discussions on the issues of the day. These conversations will be missed. Larry was truly a man of the people and for the people during his entire life.

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Ray Ensher is the executive secretary for the Central California Institute.



Carla Jo Dakin

On Friday September 8 Fresno lost a valued and respected community member in the fight for social and environmental justice, and many Fresnoans lost a beloved friend and family member. Carla Jo Dakin, age 58, lost her ten year long battle against breast cancer and died peacefully at home, in hospice care, surrounded by loving friends and family including her 6 week old grandson Miles. Carla Jo was born on September 21, 1947, in Olympia, Washington, to a Navy family, and raised in Alexandria, Va. Her father, William Edward Dakin, was born in Randall, Kansas and her mother, Doris Franson, was born in Rupert, Idaho. Carla Jo graduated from the Robert E. Lee High School in Fairfax County and then went on to graduate from Oberlin College with a degree in Govern-



ment Studies, with a minor in French, and having learned how to play the flute like an angel.

She participated in activism against the Vietnam War and gave her father headaches, since he worked for the Pentagon in the Department of Defense. Her brother Bill, a Marine Lieutenant who was wounded in Vietnam, took her side when they had spirited discussions with her father about the validity of the war.

From 1969 to 1972 Carla Jo taught English (in French!) in Ghana, West Africa, and had a wonderful culturally opening experience, learning what it was like to be a minority for the first time. She then returned to the USA and enrolled in Law School at the University of Davis in California, graduating in 1977.

Carla began working with the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board in 1977 as a Hearing Examiner in Sacramento, CA, reviewing farm-labor elections. In 1978 she transferred to the Fresno Regional Office as a trial attorney, representing the State in prosecuting violations of the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, the state law that gave California Farmworkers the right to organize and form unions to represent them in collective bargaining activities. It was during this time that she met her future husband, Ed Perez, who was the Fresno Regional Director of the ALRB. They worked together as a team conducting elections and investigating and prosecuting violations of the ALRA throughout California until 1981, when they married and started a family.

In 1981, Carla Jo became the prosecuting attorney for the Fresno Branch of the California Labor Commissioner's Office. In this position, she, again, represented the State in protecting workers' rights under the Fair Labor and Standards Act. She prosecuted companies and farm labor contractors who violated the rights of California workers.

In 1986, Carla Jo became an Administrative Law Judge for the California Unemployment Appeals Board. She

POETRY CORNER

For those who were not able to attend the bon voyage dinner for Vincent Lavery, here is part of his farewell speech, a poem written for the occasion.

"To my Fresno friends, through a rearview mirror"

O Fresno! you are America
you are what is magnificent and what is sad
about America
you are not just Fresnoans, you are not just Americans,
you are a microcosm of the human race.
I see in Fresno the negative and the affirmative
I see New Orleans, New England, Kalispell and Tupelo
And above all I see the peace sign with two fingers
and its opposite with one.
Your water tower is your king's palace, your Eiffel Tower, your Taj Mahal
O! Fresno!
you are Spanish in meaning but you are Hmong
and
Armenian,
and dare I say Russian, Chinese, Korean and Iranian.
Your past is history—you can hear it daily on AM radio 580
and your present is confusing and heartbreaking
but it is your future that lies in your hands.
You can do nothing about the past
you can only react to the present
but you can, and you must, help change the future.
It lies in the scarred hands of the farmworker
in the soft hands of the grandmother inmate in Chowchilla
and in the questioning hands of the student.
As Oscar Wilde once said,
"We are all in the gutter
but some of us look at the stars."
My Fresno friends, you have always looked for the stars
and I know one day, because you do,
the river will run free and the Original Americans
will then sleep in the sleep of peace.
Let each of you move your grain of discontent
and one day that mountain of hate will crumble
because enough of you Fresnoans cared.
Regards, Vincent Lavery, Ireland



held hearings for workers who were denied unemployment or disability benefits, here, her fluency in Spanish and the Latino culture, and the ensuing trust with workers she cultivated, allowed her to conduct thorough hearings in issues dealing with denials of benefits to Spanish-speaking claimants. She loved redressing bureaucratic mistakes in denying benefits to claimants.

Carla Jo was a former member of the State Board of Directors of the California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA), a former member of the Fresno Metro Ministry Board of Directors. Carla Jo was a member of the Fresno Unitarian Universalist Church as well as Wesley United Methodist Church, with a spiritual home at Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre, CA.

She and her husband Ed were honored in 2004 by Fresno Metro Ministry as an outstanding couple in the fight for social justice.

Throughout her life, Carla Jo was dedicated to her family, friends and to the protection of workers' rights under the law. She was an avid hiker and loved nature, traveling and spiritual inquiry. She was a true activist citizen of the country she loved; she will be missed by all who knew her.

Bulldozers, Barbed Wire, and Harassment for Fresno's Homeless

By Mike Rhodes

Barbed wire fences went up on August 26, 2006 in downtown Fresno to keep the homeless off a strip of land owned by Caltrans. The homeless were told to move to the Poverello House, which is a homeless center nearby. Assistant Fresno City manager Bruce Rudd said “we met with the Poverello House yesterday and they said they could take in anyone who needed a place to stay.” Several homeless people I talked to scoffed at this assertion and said the Poverello House doesn’t have the facilities to take in the hundreds of people who had just been displaced. Dee, one of the homeless women in the area, told me that the Poverello House closed at 12:30 PM on the day of this eviction. “There is no way they are going to let us all in there,” Dee said.

I went to the Poverello House and asked for the person in charge. I talked to Paul Stack who said he was in charge for the day. I asked him if I could see the facilities where the hundreds of homeless people were going to sleep that night. Stack looked like a deer caught in the headlights of a car and said that he would have to call his boss and have him call me. He confirmed what Dee had said - they start getting people out of the Poverello House at about 12:30 PM and everyone is gone by 2 PM on Saturday. Nobody from the Poverello House ever called me back.

Before leaving the Poverello House I ran into the director of the Naomi House, which is located on the grounds of the Poverello House. Naomi House, provides women with a place to sleep. They have room for 25 women and they use a lottery system to determine who gets to stay the night. When I told her about the “clean up” on E street and that the city spokesperson was saying all of the homeless could come to the Poverello House, she just rolled her eyes. She said, “we don’t have enough room as it is, how are we going to take more people in?” In addition to Naomi House, which is the only homeless shelter for women in Fresno, the Poverello House runs a “Village of Hope.” The Village of Hope grew out of a tent city they established a couple of years ago. The tents were replaced with Tool Sheds that house about 50 people. Many of the homeless complain about the Village of Hope because of the rules (there are lots of them), because you can’t come in until the evening, you have to leave early, and the members vote you in or out. Pam, a homeless woman in the area, said it was “like the TV reality show Survivor - which homeless person will get voted out of the shelter this week?” Another homeless person described it as a Nazi concentration camp.

The only other shelter in the area is run by the Fresno Rescue Mission. The Rescue Mission has about 150 dormitory style beds, but they are only for men. Pam says they don’t even let women use the restrooms. The Rescue Mission requires those who want to spend the night to attend prayer services first.

With about a thousand homeless people in the downtown area, and inadequate shelter space available, what is the city going to do with people who are homeless? I



The clean up on August 26, 2006 spread over a large area of downtown Fresno. The man in the foreground is working to remove his tent before it is thrown away by a Rescue Mission crew.

asked that question to the Assistant City Manager Bruce Rudd. Rudd said “we are going to encourage people to avail themselves of the facilities available.” I asked if they would arrest people for camping on the street. Rudd said “I hope it doesn’t come to that.”

Right after my conversation with Paul Stack from the Poverello House and interview with Bruce Rudd, things started getting exciting on the Caltrans strip of land on E street. Lisa Apper, with the Saint Benedict Catholic Worker, had put herself in front of the garbage truck that was being filled with the homeless peoples tents, clothing, and other possessions. Apper refused to move saying “we have got to take a stand for justice.” Several Fresno Police Department officers arrived and an animated conversation took place (see photo on this page). Apper refused to move.

About that same time, several activists from the Fresno C.A.F.E. /Food not Bombs collective, were starting to position themselves in front of some of the homeless peoples possessions. Fresno Police Department officer Rey Wallace pushed them toward the street. They managed to out maneuver him and ended up in front of the bulldozer (see photo below).

The police and city clean up crew gave up on the strategy of trying to talk those engaged in civil disobedience out of the act and removed both the bulldozer and garbage truck. This turned out to only be a brief tactical retreat. Most of the homeless and their allies moved down to the other end of the strip of land where there was an African American man in a wheelchair who was refusing to leave his tent. As everyone went to the other end of the strip of land, the city brought in a crew to start building a fence around the property.

Walter, the guy who was refusing to move, demanded a permanent place for him and his dog. The police negotiated with him for several hours before finally working something out that was acceptable.

As Walter was being led away, I heard City Manager Andy Souza telling the channel 47 (CBS) reporter about how all these people could go to the Poverello House and they would be given a place to sleep for the night. After the interview I told him that what he said was a nice story for the TV audience and that it would probably make people feel better knowing that the homeless had a place to stay, but that he and I both knew it was not true. We talked about the lack of shelter beds and I asked him what the city’s short and long term plans are for eliminating homelessness.

Souza did not have a lot of answers to the question about the city’s plan for eliminating homelessness, but we did have a conversation about what short and long term solution might exist. He seemed to think that the crisis precipitated by the events on that day might motivate the city to work toward developing a plan to end homelessness. We agreed that pushing people out of one area to another was not a solution. It just displaces the problem. He listened as I told him the homeless in this area need a safe place to stay, trash service, running water, and portable toilets. These services would be less expensive than the constant attacks being carried out and would actually help rather than hurt the homeless.

Police Captain Greg Garner and Bruce Rudd joined us. Souza said that living conditions like this would never be tolerated if it was up in North Fresno by River Park. Garner said that the solution was not always something the City of Fresno could come up with. He asked “why don’t the churches and other community groups get together to help?” There was agreement that most people in North Fresno don’t know that conditions like this exist in this community.

While we talked, the bulldozer and clean up crew was busy filling the garbage truck with the possessions of the homeless. When they were done on E street, they turned and headed East on Santa Clara.

In the weeks following this attack on the homeless, the situation deteriorated. There have been sporadic raids on the homeless living in the area. Cynthia, one of the homeless women that used to live on E street, told me that she was sitting with some of her friends near Ventura and E when she was approached by police officers. “They gave us five minutes to get the hell out,” Cynthia said. “As we started to pick up our stuff these other guys (from the city sanitation department) pushed us aside and threw everything we owned away.” Cynthia said the City Sanitation Crew started throwing their possessions away less than one minute after they were warned (and given 5 minutes) by the police.

There have also been numerous physical attacks on the homeless who have moved under an overpass near San Benito and H street. Pam and Dee described being shot at by both bullets and paint balls. Other homeless residents in the area also report being attacked by skinheads and hit by paint balls.

Shortly after the clearing of the homeless from E street the Fresno City Council gave their support to an ordinance that will make it illegal to be in possession of any shopping cart that has been removed from a business. Most of us have seen homeless people pushing shopping carts filled with their possessions or perhaps recyclable material. Homeless people caught with a shopping cart, after this ordinance passes, can be fined \$1,000 and spend up to a year in jail.

The FPD and City Sanitation department has already been taking shopping carts from the homeless for some time now. See <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/06/22/18281976.php>. This new ordinance will give them a fig leaf of protection as they take the homeless peoples property. But, some legal observers believe city employees have been overstepping their authority in the recent clean up efforts. Food Not Bombs activist and paralegal Paul Jackson says he thinks the city has illegally confiscated and destroyed people’s personal property without due process. Jackson has met with several of the homeless people in the area and filed several tort claims for damages in County Court.

While Jackson was working on tort claims, other legal groups were looking at the city’s actions against the homeless and wondering if something could be done to stop



Beds, tents, food, everything was thrown away. One person told me that in the last “clean up” the City of Fresno work crew threw away one of their family members who had been cremated and was in an urn. Another homeless residents told me the only picture she had of her mother had been destroyed. An African American man told me his diabetic medicine had been thrown out and others said they had lost their ID.



The City of Fresno was finally able to completely destroy Cynthia's home. This is a picture of a piece of the tarp from her home in the grip of the bulldozer.



Liza Apper, a Member of the Saint Benedict Catholic Worker, stood in front of the garbage truck and refused to move. She was threatened with arrest.



A photo of Cynthia standing in front of her home

the attacks. A coalition of public interest law groups, private attorneys, and paralegals, have come together looking at the possibility of getting a temporary restraining order or an injunction against further city action.

There is a ruling in Los Angeles from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals which states that criminalizing the homeless who sleep in public right of way constituted "cruel and unusual punishment." The homeless are being punished for something they have no control over. There are not enough shelters in this community and the homeless have to sleep somewhere. To harass and punish them because they are poor is to criminalize poverty.

The City of Fresno has pushed the homeless from one



City spokespersons said the homeless, who had been displaced by today's raid, could stay at the Poverello House. This is a picture of the front gate of the Poverello House at 2 PM on Saturday. The Poverello House was closed and they were not prepared for the hundreds of homeless that needed a place to stay. All photos by Mike Rhodes.

location to another, confiscating and destroying their personal possessions, they have passed laws against their activities, and made their lives more difficult than they already are. Some of the attorneys, who believe the poor should be treated with dignity and respect, believe the city has gone too far in their campaign to harass the homeless. Will this result in legal action to defend their interests? This story will be continued in the November Community Alliance newspaper.



Walter was the last person to be removed from the strip of land on E street. He would not move because he and his dog did not have any place to go. One homeless person asked me why mayor Autry could find 400 beds for victims of Hurricane Katrina, but could not help the homeless right here in Fresno. Why, she asked, does the mental health department put people they release in a taxi, give them \$1 and have them dropped off on this street? What is Fresno's 10 year plan to end homelessness?



Following Liza's refusal to move, these three women positioned themselves in front of a bulldozer. Here they are being pushed away by officer Rey Wallace of the Fresno Police Department.



After evading officer Wallace these two women reposition themselves in front of the bulldozer.



After the fence was up, the clean up crew arrives to finish the job.

Fresno is, as Mayor Alan Autry says, "A Tale of Two Cities."



The police gave up trying to threaten and push people out of the way. Instead, they brought in a crew to build a wire fence with barbed wire on the top. The fence surrounded the area and gave them control of the strip of land.



Groups that are working in support of treating the Homeless with dignity and respect:

Food Not Bombs (Saturday)
fresnofnb@yahoo.com
<http://home.comcast.net/~fresnofnb/>

Food Not Bombs (Sunday)
<http://home.comcast.net/~fresnofnb/>

St. Benedict Catholic Worker
4022 N Cheryl • Fresno, CA 93705
Ph. (559) 229-6410 • Cell. 977-3648
Lizaosb@aol.com • www.sbcw.org

School Board Bloc Fails to Serve

Fresno Unified Students Need Effective Representatives, Not Rubber Stamps

By Larry Moore

The first round of absentee ballots for the fall election will arrive any day now. Unfortunately, when it comes to deciding on candidates for the Fresno Unified School District Board of Trustees, most voters will be unaware of just how high the stakes truly are.

They'll be ignorant of the people who behind the scenes are grasping for control of the state's fourth largest school district. They will not have heard of the neo-con money lined up behind seemingly progressive candidates.

Well-intentioned, responsible citizens are at risk of voting for people who have abandoned the interests of our community's working families. These unsuspecting voters will have been led by people and organizations they trust into support for a hidden agenda of union-busting, privatization and profit.

Missing from the hidden interest agenda are the most important items of all: our children, their education and their future.

Pushed away from the table of decision-making are the people most central to the lives and education of Fresno children: their parents and teachers, plus librarians, nurses, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, office clerks, school secretaries and more.

Majority Bloc

The hijacking of local public education began more than four years ago when local conservatives led by Fresno Mayor Alan Autry formed a coalition with "business Dems" led by then-County Supervisor Juan Arambula, now serving in the state assembly. They formed the political action committee "4 Voices for Education." For 2006 the Autry-Arambula effort has been renamed "Voices for Excellence in Education."

But whose voices do they truly represent? Unfortunately, all too often in politics nothing talks louder than money. The group raised more than \$250,000 from a mix of local and out-of-state backers in 2002 (see *Bizarre Bedfellows*).

Of their slate, three were victorious: Richard Johanson (Sunnyside High), Luisa Medina (Edison High) and Tony Vang (McLane High). While their fourth candidate Joseph Penbera lost to Pat Barr (Bullard High), once on the board Barr quickly joined their ranks. Johanson retired less than two years into his four-year term and the open seat was won by non-slate candidate Valerie Davis in 2004. Rounding out the board are Carol Mills (Fresno High), Manuel Nunes (Roosevelt High) and the Autry-backed Janet Ryan (Hoover High).

A ruling majority has emerged on the school board, led by Autry slate candidate Medina, now in her second year as board president. She is backed by Ryan, Nunes and Barr. Fellow slate candidate Vang broke away early in his term when he refused to support cuts to music, libraries and nurses. It appears he is the primary target for removal in 2006 by Autry and Arambula.

Barr, meanwhile, proudly touted Mayor Autry's support for her when she announced her reelection bid this July. "Those people who put people up against me are now with me," she told The Bee (July 23). Of course they are. Barr was school board president in 2004 and led the way on needless cuts to elementary school music programs, libraries and school nurses, and she hasn't stepped out of line once.

The split in the board became very apparent last year when Mills sought to become president for 2006-07. Having served as board clerk the preceding year, according to the board's past practice Mills was in line to become president.

But Mills is an independent thinker critical of top-heavy administration, placing her firmly out of sync with the ruling bloc mentality. The majority kept Medina in control. Valerie Davis, who nominated Mills for board president, has now been targeted for removal, too.

The ruling bloc's first major action was to remove former

superintendent Santiago Wood. They did so quite generously with a \$500,000+ buyout of his contract, plus lifetime health benefits. They next hired Michael Hanson, a 39-year-old assistant superintendent from Elk Grove, Calif., with no experience at the head of a school district. His starting salary and benefits top \$280,000 annually.

The mindset of the board majority appears to be one of blind faith in all of Hanson's actions. They apparently see their success as tied to his. The result is a staff-driven process in which board members are expected by their backers to rubber-stamp his decisions.

This is a very undemocratic approach for any elected body to take, and it poses a direct threat to the quality of education offered to Fresno Unified's nearly 80,000 students.

Bureaucratic Excess

Despite volumes of positive press from local media, the truth is that Fresno Unified has embarked on an all too familiar "solution" to over-crowded classrooms, aging facilities and precipitous dropout rates — they're hiring more administrators.

For this school year alone Hanson, the latest in a long line of would-be district saviors, has increased the administrative budget by 16%, a record-setting one-year increase.

Schools throughout the district are seeing additional vice principals and program managers. Meanwhile, students and teachers continue to jam into over-crowded rooms. Special education programs continue to be undercut by mismanagement and lack of instructional aides.

The ranks of non-teaching staff have been further inflated through the creation of dozens of math and reading "coach" positions throughout the district; these are teachers who monitor other teachers rather than working directly with children. A true coaching program can be beneficial; however, teacher-coaches from throughout the district report they are being required to perform administrative functions.

Rather than seeking to implement much-needed reform of the failure of the district to effectively reach out to parents and teachers through the site council process, Hanson seeks to cut them out of the process entirely. The Fresno Teachers Association has filed a "uniform complaint" with the State Department of Education in an effort to force Hanson and the school board to follow the law.

Duck and Cover

And where has the school board's controlling majority been through all of this? Perhaps the most accurate image is that of a Cold War duck-and-cover drill — hiding beneath their desks, or in this case behind the dais.

Those board members who dare to break ranks and challenge any action of Superintendent Hanson are bullied by fellow board members, political backers and The Fresno Bee. For example, voters can anticipate receiving an anti-Vang mailer featuring a recent Fresno Bee editorial criticizing Vang's lone vote against the hiring of Kurt Madden as chief technology officer (*Trustee Votes Wrong Way*, Sept. 15, 2006).

Vang dared to object to Hanson's failure to follow the board's directive regarding applicants' need to be highly qualified, which Madden clearly is not. Ironically, the Bee immediately slapped Vang as supporting a return to "mediocrity." The paper's editorial writer chose to overlook the fact that Vang was striving for a higher standard.

Vote for Change

There are thousands of people in Fresno Unified who work directly with students as teachers or who support them as librarians, nurses, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, office clerks, school secretaries and more. They are the voices the Autry-Arambula board members seek to silence and strive to ignore, regarded as mere front-line workers.

But the elected member-leaders have met and interviewed all of the candidates running for school board. These workers represent the real voices of Fresno. Their children attend the schools in which they work. They know firsthand what's

not working in the district and have myriad suggestions for improvement. Their quality of life is largely determined by the people who sit on the school board.

So, which of the Autry-Arambula "voices" have the support of the front line workers at Fresno Unified?

None.

From the Fresno Teachers Association and Service Employees International Union, to the California School Employees Association and the Central Labor Council,

not one of the Autry-Arambula slate has been endorsed by a single union — not Medina, not Barr, not newcomers Hornbeck or Parker.

The candidates who have been endorsed by the working families of Fresno are Michelle Arax-Asadoorian, Valerie Davis, Cal Johnson and Tony Vang.

(Editor's note: Fresno Unified trustees are elected on at-large basis. While they must live in the area they represent, everyone living in the entire district casts votes for all of the races.)

Computer science teacher Larry Moore is president of the Fresno Teachers Association.

Bizarre Bedfellows

By Larry Moore

A look at the campaign contribution records of the mayor's 2002 "4 Voices for Education" school board slate reveals some very ugly money. Major local contributors include the usual dominant forces of land, developer and building interests. For example, the so-called Citizens for Housing Opportunities is a Fresno-based building industry political action committee that in recent years has backed right wing politicians such as Phil Larson, Nathan Magsig and Ken Steitz.

Vote For Change



Cal Johnson
Edison High, District 1



Valerie Davis
Sunnyside High, District 3



Dr. Tony Vang
McLane High, District 4



Michelle Arax-Asadoorian
Bullard High, District 7

Teachers, Librarians and Nurses Support Candidates



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WILPF Fresno, PO Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755
October's Editor: Catherine Garoupa • cgaroupa@csufresno.edu

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

October 1st-7th

Stop the Hate Week at California State University, Fresno

For more information, contact Raul at 278-5750, Su Kapoor at 435-2212, or Josh at 278-2741.

Monday, October 2nd

M. K. Gandhi's Birthday

Take a moment today to remember his legacy of peace, social justice, and nonviolence.

Thursday, October 19th

Noon to 1: Women in Black

@ California State University, Fresno in the Free Speech Area

Wednesday, October 25th

3 PM: WILPF Stir-It-Up!

on KFCF 88.1 FM

WELCOME TO OUR NEW INTERN!

Hi, my name is Witney Grandi and I am the new intern from California State University, Fresno. I am currently in my first semester of the Master's program for Social Work (MSW). At this time there is a new program starting up at the Women's Resource Center on campus that is called the Violence Prevention Program. In October 2005 the University received a grant to start an awareness program about domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking for the students on this campus. <http://studentaffairs.csufresno.edu/wrc/violence_prevention_project1.dwt> For more information you can call 278-5696 or 278-4435. I am really interested in this program and am currently talking to the organizer to see what can be done. I look forward to meeting with all of you and keeping you updated on all that I am involved in. Thank you for the opportunity to intern with your organization! - Witney Grandi

Witney has her Bachelor's degree in Social Work from California State University, Fresno and currently works at University Student Outreach promoting higher education. We are excited to welcome her aboard for the 2006-2007 school year!

FORMER INTERN WANDERS INTO DESERT

Greetings! Catherine Garoupa, former MSW intern, here. As many of you know, I was recently hired by the Central Valley Air Quality (CVAQ) Coalition and the Madera Coalition for Community Justice (MCCJ). You can check out CVAQ's website at <www.calcleanair.org>. I am excited to work in air quality and on issues of environmental justice! It has been a busy time as I settle in, but I'm happy to be the newsletter's editor this month.

A week after starting my new job, I took a vacation that turned out to be a journey into another realm. I went to the Burning Man Project <www.burningman.com> in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada. It's a beautiful area, and in winter the area known as "the playa," where everyone camps and displays artwork, is actually a lake. At the end of summer, it's a dusty, dry, hot environment.

Where there were no people one week, the next week Black Rock City becomes Nevada's 3rd largest, with upwards of 30,000 people camping out under the desert sky. The motto is "Pack it in; pack it out" so all campers are expected to pick up after themselves and dispose of their own trash. No money is exchanged the entire week, except to purchase bags of ice or cups of coffee. People host theme camps of many different varieties and often invite passerby in for snacks, drinks, conversation, games, you name it! There are bike rides, yoga sessions, workshops, presentations, music.

Society truly is reinvented as everyone shares and is friendly and neighborly with one another. In addition to wearing costumes, some people decorate their bikes (which they use to make their way around the 5 square miles of the city). Among the coolest I spotted were a pink elephant, a giraffe, and a unicorn! People also created "mutant vehicles" which ranged from a huge

golden dragon to a German U Boat! They gave people rides around the Playa and usually played good music as well! The artwork on display is also some of the most original and magnificent I've ever seen. People allow their imaginations to run wild. Huge structures of various shapes and sizes were erected, some abstract, some comical, come avant garde. There were also several touching monuments, including displays commemorating the deaths of more than 2,500 soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The environment of Burning Man was very open, accepting, and relaxed. Like any society, it was not perfect, but it did feel like a change from the day-to-day life around Fresno. It was refreshing to experience such friendliness, hospitality, reciprocity, and originality. I love Fresno, but I wish we could have a touch more of these elements in our community.

TIDBITS:

You can email the wilpf listserve directly at <fresnowilpf@lists.riseup.net>.

Submit information for the November newsletter to <geneb@csufresno.edu> by October 15th.

ANNUAL CRAFT'S FAIRE

The Peace Community Craft Faire being is being held Saturday December 2nd between 10:00AM and 4:00PM at the First Congregational Church, 2131 N. Van Ness Blvd. in Fresno.

The Craft's Faire Committee has begun meeting regularly to organize our most fun and successful event of the year! We as members need to begin thinking about what soup, bread or dessert we would like to bring. We could use volunteers to help pass out flyers. If many people each pass out a few in their neighborhood we could get the information out to the community reaching every corner. There is also a need for items for the white elephant sale, the silent auction and raffle prizes.

WILPF members have always rallied to make this event a great fundraiser. Start thinking about how you can help! Joan last year could have used more bodies to help with the set up and clean up. Recruit your family members to come out to help for an hour before and/or an hour after the event closes. Each individual contribution makes the work lighter and more enjoyable for the entire group. Contact Ellie at 229-9807 and let her know what you can do.

RAGING GRANNIES GIVE SUPPORT TO LAVERY'S SEND OFF

On August 28th the Raging Grannies were represented in full force at the event for Vince Lavery. The stage at the Unitarian Universal Church was filled to capacity. They came to show their support for the work Vince has contributed to the progressive community for so many years, and give their best wishes for a healthy, happy, and prosperous return to Ireland. They sang four of their favorite songs, ending with their rendition of *Danny Boy* that was specially chosen to honor this Irish native, who will be sorely missed.

The Grannies would like the reader to know we are always looking for more voices. We do not require great musical talent or singing experience, just great heart. We meet every other Monday, mostly at Ellie Bluestein's home. For more information contact Marilyn Byrne at <skippy41@csufresno.edu> or call her at 438-1336.

Thanks to Marilyn Byrne for contributing the Crafts Faire and Raging Granny updates!

MEMBERSHIP

We know how hard it is to keep track of dues and when



they are due, but please contact us if your WILPF membership has lapsed and you would like to renew it (or if you would like to find out if your membership has lapsed!). Vickie Fouts has agreed to work on membership this year. She can be contacted at <socialjustice@sti.net>. Thank you Vickie!

WOMEN IN BLACK BEGINS AT FRESNO STATE!

There will be a new Women in Black silent vigil every 3rd Thursday of the month, to complement the 1st Wednesday noon vigils at the Courthouse downtown. The 3rd Thursday vigils will be held on the speakers' platform in the Free Speech Area at Fresno State. Initially started in 1988 by Israeli women in response to the Israel-Palestine conflict, Women In Black vigils have spread throughout the world. Women stand in silent vigil to protest war, rape as a tool of war, ethnic cleansing and human rights abuses all over the world. Please wear black & bring a sign! Co-sponsored by Fresno WILPF and Campus Peace & Civil Liberties. Please contact Meta Schettler for more information: 278-4593.

INTER/NATIONAL WILPF

October 1st to 8th is "Keep Space for Peace" week, co-sponsored by WILPF & Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space. On October 7th, there will be a protest at Vandenburg Airforce Base from 1 to 3 PM. More information as well as fliers and contact information can be found at: <<http://disarm.wilpf.org/May%20June/KSFP2006.htm>>

NEXT MONTH'S NEWSLETTER

Ellie Bluestein will be our newsletter editor for next month, and any photos or WILPF related information that you want in the newsletter must be submitted to her by October 15th. Ellie can be contacted at <geneb@csufresno.edu>.

Words to Live By:

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."

- M. K. Gandhi

"The work of the nonprofit sector includes food banks, services to senior citizens, addressing health disparities, public radio, public TV, youth sports leagues, environmental clean up, art museums, free clinics, health research, education, and everything in-between that enhances the quality of life in our communities. Nonprofits have in common a mission to somehow improve that quality. They cannot do it if they are thwarted by outdated systems, hierarchal leadership, isolationist working models, and piecemeal accountability. The sector needs renewal on many levels if it is to survive, thrive, and continue fulfilling its important mission in the 21st Century!"

- California Association of Nonprofits/Alert Jan-Feb 2000

Fresno Center for Nonviolence



1584 N. Van Ness Ave., 93728 - www.centerfornonviolence.org - email: info@centerfornonviolence.org

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THE WELCH REPORT

By Jack H. Welch, M.D.



THE RULE OF LAW

"After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 senior officials in the Bush administration crafted a strategy for containing the grave threat posed by Al Qaeda. At the heart of this doctrine was the conviction that the US is fighting 'a global war against terror' that must be fought outside the constraints of existing law." Accordingly, the administration argued, adherence to the Geneva Conventions and other applicable laws is a luxury, not a necessity. "Therefore, detainees in Iraq, Afghanistan, or at Guantanamo Bay have been detained and interrogated in what some have called 'law-free zones'."

In late June 2006 the US Supreme Court rejected the concept of "law-free zones", and demanded a clear legal framework for those in US custody. In Hamdan vs. Rumsfeld the court struck down military commissions at Guantanamo, and more broadly it held that Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, requiring humane treatment and other basic rights, applies to those in US custody. A review of Defense Department rules and practices was then conducted.

The decision to conduct this review indicates the willingness of some senior administration officials to reexamine existing practices and bring them into conformity with the Supreme Court's decision. Other senior officials, however, including the acting assistant attorney general, continue to resist any change in the administration's approach.

TESTING CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION

Within recent weeks Congress and the administration are beginning to decide how to address detention and interrogation policies going forward. The following are some essential elements that will allow a testing of their resolve. First, the memo ordering the above review applied only to the military, not to US intelligence agencies. The CIA and other intelligence agencies continue to operate secret detention facilities in Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world (as President Bush just now is acknowledging publicly). Detainees in these facilities have no access to the International Committee of the Red Cross, and there is no acknowledgment of their location or status. A clear indication of US compliance would be for it to provide access to the Red Cross to visit anyone in US custody.

Second, we should watch to see if the administration will comply with another of Common Article 3's requirements—the humane treatment of all detainees. Some members of the administration continue to resist full compliance with this requirement, which was reinforced last year by the McCain Amendment. A concrete indication of compliance in this area will be the publication of a new Field Manual on Interrogation clearly barring all forms of cruel and degrading treatment for any in military or intelligence agency custody.

Finally, the Supreme Court's Hamdan decision requires that detainees tried by the US for war crimes must be afforded judicial guarantees in accordance with the laws of war and, in particular, Common Article 3. It requires those guarantees "recognized as indispensable by civilized people".

The test of compliance will be whether our government arrives at a system that closely resembles that of courts-martial under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

"If the administration and Congress act on these three fronts, we will move from law-free zones to the rule of law, and take a giant step to restore America's standing in the world." (Source: Michael Posner, President of Human Rights First, The Boston Globe July 18, 2006)

Stir it Up

Wednesday, October 11 at 3 p.m. KFCF 88.1:

Host Angela Price will have as guests Fran Saunders and Berry Nishkian who will discuss their recent trip to the International Peace Bureau Conference in Helsinki, as well as their attendance at a few sessions of the IPPNW (International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War) conference.

BOOKSALE

for the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

BOOKS - CD's - DVD's

Location:

SW Corner of Olive & Van Ness

Date & Time:

October 7th: 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Donations still being accepted at:

FCNV: 1584 N. Van Ness
(Mon – Fri 11 – 3 pm) 237-3223

The FCNV is a Host Organization

to many non-profit groups in the Fresno community. We provide a safe meeting place and media resources to the groups using our facility, including:

- Youth Link
- Rondalla
- Project: Male
- Central California Institute
- CVPPAC
- Peace Fresno
- WILPF
- FACTS
- Prison Moratorium Project
- CCCJC
- Community Alliance

FRESNO PREMIERE OF

IRAQ FOR SALE: THE WAR PROFITEERS

Wednesday, October 11, 2006

12 noon – Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness
7 p.m. (doors open 6:30) at
Woodward Park Regional Library, Fresno (944 E. Perrin)

This is the story of what happens to everyday Americans when corporations go to war.

Acclaimed director Robert Greenwald (Wal-Mart, The High Cost of Low Price, Outfoxed and Uncovered) takes you inside the lives of soldiers, truck drivers, widows and children who have been changed forever as a result of profiteering in the reconstruction of Iraq. *Iraq for Sale* uncovers the connections between private corporations making a killing in Iraq and the decision makers who allow them to do so.

Brave New Films are both funded and distributed completely outside corporate America. Over 3000 people donated to make this documentary and the Center for Nonviolence is very happy to sponsor a screening in the Fresno community.

For the evening showing, there will be light refreshments at 6:30 p.m. and a discussion following the film. Film is 75 minutes long. For more information and directions, call the Center at 237-3223 Mon-Fri 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.



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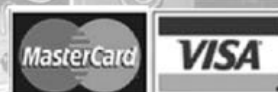
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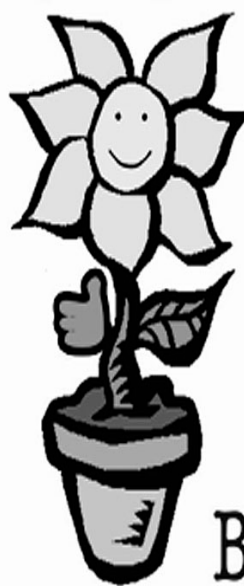
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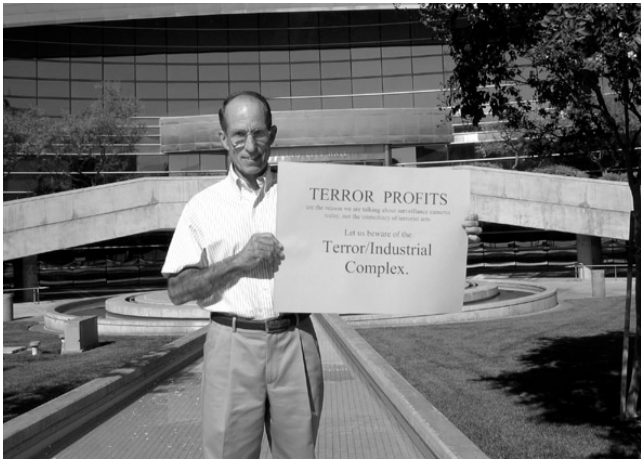
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OPINION AND ANALYSIS FROM THE GRASSROOTS



TERROR/INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

By Phil Erro

In August the Fresno City Council voted to use surveillance cameras in our public spaces to “monitor political demonstrations” and “track people around town”, giving the Fresno police chief wide latitude to spy on innocent citizens.

The surveillance cameras bought to fight crime today could become an apparatus to control political thought. If a Fresno police chief in the future wants to please a U.S. Attorney General who directs police departments across the county to identify anyone who looks or acts like s/he is in contact with terrorists, he could use City of Fresno surveillance cameras to monitor Quaker, League of Women Voters, and Peace Fresno participants of non-violent peace actions. An ambitious police chief could compile lists of “terrorist sympathizers”, compile dossiers on dissidents, and incriminate by association local opponents of the U.S. President using selected video clips. Innocent people could be blacklisted to prevent them from getting state and federal jobs. By inference and innuendo outspoken citizens, school board members, and local public officials could be blackmailed for voicing errant views. As more and more people would be jailed and harassed by police, increasingly people would decide the situation in Fresno was too risky to express their views. As surveillance and police control tighten, total thought control could become possible. What starts as a means of videotaping criminals committing robberies and other crimes could become a tool of repression. Meanwhile by fingering various free thinkers, Muslims, and people of color, the police chief could win favor with the current administration as a “crusader against terrorism” and obtain a high-ranking position in the Department of Homeland Security.

In World War II over 400,000 Americans died fighting totalitarianism, the total control of citizens by the government. From 1961 to 1989, tens of thousands of Eastern Europeans risked their lives to escape Stalinist oppression trying to get through the Berlin Wall. Now only 17 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, we are adopting the very means the Communist used to stifle dissent— spying on the citizenry. Neither the “Fresno Bee” nor local TV channels bothered to inform us about the perils of having our city police tracking us with surveillance cameras. How can we so blithely profane the sacrifice of nearly half a million American patriots who died fighting fascism and Communism in World War II and the Korean War? Why are we embracing the use of surveillance cameras to monitor political demonstrations when this very activity could place us under continual house arrest?

We need to examine why Fresno City Council members believe there is a need for these cameras. In our present atmosphere of fear and terror, video camera makers have discovered how easy it is to sell their technology to nervous local politicians who want to appear to be “tough on crime” and to be “taking action against terrorism”. Surveillance camera manufacturers will surely reward these politicians with healthy campaign contributions and, presto, the TERROR/INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX comes to light. We are buying video cameras not because of the immediacy of terrorist acts but because of the hundreds of billions of dollars their makers stand to gain under the guise of protection. Let us beware of TERROR PROFITS. We need to explain to our friends the impending horror of the TERROR/INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX.

###

Phil Erro is a Central California Institute writer. His email address is philperro@sbcglobal.net

Broke Back Mountain and the DL

Gary Dennis

I’m sure by now we have all seen *Broke Back Mountain* at the movies and watched the DVD over and over again. Well, just when you thought you had enough, it is now going to be coming out on HBO. So if you didn’t have your fill, well here comes another chance to enjoy this movie. It is for this reason that I felt inspired to write this article and to express what this film has portrayed to me. Now being in the AIDS Awareness business, I can’t look at a movie without wondering about the safe sex aspects (basically, where is the condoms and lube question). But seriously, this movie touches upon a subject that I’m surprised has not really been addressed in either social or educational circles; and that is the “DL” also known as the down low.

In most cases when we refer to the down low, its usually in regards to the African American community but this film has shown that this “down low” phenomena can happen in any racial group, including Caucasians. Yet interesting enough, no one would have said that the characters in this film were on the DL. They would have just stated it as being “in the closet” or that they were bisexual. So why then when it comes to African American men, is it called the down low? Why can’t Black men who exhibit this type of behavior be considered “in the closet” or bisexual. In all honesty, until the book *Down Low* came out, that is what it has been called. Now why the African American community needed to come up with all this extra labeling to express this is beyond me. But yet it does show a reluctance to address this issue by using terms that almost seem avoidant of the real problems at hand.

If African Americans can’t accept and use terms such as Gay and bisexual, how then can they address issues surrounding HIV/AIDS. In a recent article by Julian Bond called “Black America must confront AIDS”, Mr. Bond boldly stated this problem by saying, “Our inability to talk about sex, and more specifically homosexuality, is the single greatest barrier to the prevention of HIV transmission in our community.” While Mr. Bond may have been stating that as an issue for the African American community, I would argue that this statement holds truer for men in Fresno County. Males make up 85% of the AIDS cases in Fresno County with 65% that being MSM (men who have sex with men) according to Fresno County Surveillance data. Also you have to take into account that African Americans represent less than 10% of Fresno County according to census data.

Which brings me to my final point; with National Coming Out Day coming up, this is opportunity for Gay men to claim their freedom and independence and thus put the DL behind them. Just as *Broke Mountain* was set in the past, the DL and “in the closet” should be a thing of the past. With Gays on the verge of legalizing Gay Marriage and settling down and raising families, men no longer have to hide away in shame and fear. If you have questions feel free to contact PROJECT: MALE at (559) 268-1969.

###

Gary Dennis is President/CEO of PROJECT: MALE. Gary feels that as a Christian, it is his duty to take a stand against HIV/AIDS in our community and he would like others to join him in uniting to stop the spread of this preventable disease.

Sex and the Real World

By Ruth Gadebusch

Proposition 73 (the so-called parental consent law) is back with us, again as the wolf in sheep’s clothing. This time it is Proposition 85 on our November ballot. Prop 85 is as out of sync with the real world as was its predecessor, defeated last November.

Of course, we all want our children to feel free to talk with us about any thing that matters to them. This is particularly true where our daughters are concerned because society still looks on them as needing more protection than do sons who are supposed to be big and

brave! Alas, even in the best of homes, there are certain subjects in which parents and teens may not have developed the rapport necessary for open and frank conversation — teenage sex being at the top of the list.

This society, that sells almost any product via sex appeal, refuses to teach much in the way of sex education, especially regarding the deep emotional level of this human instinct. We couple that situation with the idea of forbidden fruit and wonder why our teens are indulging. There are also those victims of predators of one sort and another.

When the results are an unplanned pregnancy, Prop 85 would demand parental consent before termination by an abortion. Of course, we want our daughters to consult with parents in such a serious matter. That would be ideal. Unfortunately we do not live in an ideal world.

In the very real world such consultation can produce very dire results. It might be violence, or kicked out of the home to the street, The pregnancy might be due to incest. Family communication cannot be legislated. Nor should we even try.

In these cases of family dysfunction it is all the more imperative that the teen have proper medical care and counseling immediately. The obstacles of Prop 85 only makes it more difficult for a frightened teen to get the necessary help.

By and large we adults shy away from the courts. Most assuredly, courts are too formidable a process for our inexperienced scared daughters to navigate, to say nothing of the delay. Access is near impossible in some areas, as well as imperilment of confidentiality.

Prop 85 is not about protecting our daughters. It is part of the proponents’ larger political agenda of overturning Roe. Their efforts would be much better used in preventing the need for such a serious decision as abortion. Reducing unwanted pregnancy is the real need.

In the meantime, let us look beyond that great sounding term, “Parental Consent,” to the real world. Agencies such as Planned Parenthood provide full health care to many who have no other access. Needed counseling, including urging teens to consult with parents and alternatives to abortion, is offered. All known cases of sexual abuse are reported, as required by law. Responsible sexual behavior including abstinence is encouraged.

When that sexual behavior is not as responsible as we would hope, these agencies offer help in dealing with the consequences. The comparison with having to have a parents permission to get an aspirin simply trivializes this extremely serious decision.

The grieving father of a young woman, who died recently following an abortion, would not have been notified under Prop 85 because she was over 18, qualifying as an adult who makes her own decisions. Neither does this proposition offer any further protection from predators. That is covered in Jessica’s law.

Unanswered questions include: What happens when parents disagree? If a minor boy is identified as the father, can the girl’s parents sue? What if the pregnancy is the result of rape? How does a teen find a lawyer for the court bypass? What happens when a pregnant girl delays, or worse yet gets no, medical care due to fear? Isn’t giving birth just as life altering as having an abortion? Don’t be fooled by the title of Parental Consent and all its wonderful sounding connotations. VOTE NO on Proposition 85, thereby giving our daughters true safety and protection needed in this world. We don’t live in the ideal world conjured by this measure. We live in a very REAL WORLD.

###

Ruth Gadebusch was born and raised on a Georgia farm. In 1977 she was elected to the Board of Education of Fresno Unified School District and served for thirteen and a half years. She continues to be active in the community while serving as Vice-President of the Center for Civic Education (promoting responsible citizenship and democratic principles internationally) and writing for the Liberal Opinion, a weekly national newspaper.



AREA 1



LUISA MEDINA

A hardworking non-profit executive and the current President of the Fresno Unified School Board.

Luisa Medina has been a strong advocate for Fresno children and families for the past thirty years, fighting to improve their lives and equal access to services.

Luisa Medina joined the School Board in 2003, and is in her second year as Board President. In her second term, Medina's top priorities are to:

- Improve student performance, for children throughout FUSD;
- Significantly reduce the number of children who drop out or are suspended or expelled; and
- Bring greater financial stability to the district and focus financial and staff resources on classroom learning.

AREA 3



STAFFORD PARKER

A retired redevelopment director with 23 years of community development experience in Fresno.

Stafford Parker brings over thirty-five years of high-level experience in housing and community development, twenty-three of them in Fresno. Parker is an independent thinker and a proven leader who knows first-hand how to build consensus within communities and create public-private partnerships.

Stafford wants to use his extensive budget and community development experience to help direct Fresno Unified services to students who need them most. For Stafford, children come first. He believes we must all work together to balance the budget and help our kids perform at or above grade level.

AREA 4



JULIE HORNBACK

A McLane High graduate, now the Fresno County Director of Employment and Temporary Assistance.

Everyday Julie Hornback is confronted with Fresno Unified dropouts — and even graduates — who lack basic reading, math, and job skills. Julie believes today's students are tomorrow's job seekers, and that student achievement is the cornerstone of economic development in Fresno.

Hornback is running for the School Board to ensure that our schools give students the skills they need to succeed in life. She is committed to being an actively engaged, well-informed member of the School Board, who will seek input from all stakeholders on decisions that affect our students and schools.

AREA 7



PATRICIA BARR

An award-winning mentor teacher and the President of the Fresno Unified School Board in 2004.

Patricia Barr brings a valuable perspective to the Board, with thirty years as a distinguished classroom teacher and 200 hours of board member training in policy, governance and instructional leadership.

In her first term, Patricia Barr played an active leadership role in Board decisions to:

- Resolve a serious financial crisis to avert the threat of a state takeover;
- Recruit an outstanding Superintendent and build an effective leadership team focused on supporting classroom teachers and serving school sites; and
- Restore funds for elementary music and library media teachers.

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Donna Warren, Green Party Candidate comes to Fresno

by Richard Gomez

“I want to turn the Green Party, black, brown, yellow, red and white...” that would be Donna Warren, a passionate, funny, caring woman and mother fighting for social justice for all Californians.



She is also the California Green Party’s candidate for Lt. Governor who came by the studio of KFCF 88.1 FM in Fresno, on her way to the Tulare County Fair September 13, to let the folks of the Central Valley know that she is deeply if not personally committed to changing Education, Prisons, Renewable Energy and bringing Jobs to the Central Valley.

“..looking at the farmlands and wishing all these prisons weren’t here.” she said while riding through the Central Valley. Although she hadn’t gone by the city of Mendota to see the uncompleted prison she assured me that her organization; “Families to Amend 3 Strikes, will get there.”

According to her, it’s one thing for California taxpayers to pay for courts, counselors, foster care and the support systems for prisons but if we could return non-violent offenders back to their families, giving them rehabilitation, if needed, and jobs.

“If we could get solar energy in, if we can create jobs in that industry, if we could ween off of these stupid prisons, where really, the only people who are making money are the rich...”

Jobs, especially in the renewable energy field; solar and wind, should be the growing industry in the Central Valley. Well paying jobs in these field should keep people out of the jails according to her.

She believes that Governor Arnold Schwarzeneggar

and Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa are both chameleons willing to change their colors or positions on issues that will afford them the best protections.

“He’s not for us, he wants to build prisons, ...he won’t sign SB840...”

When talking about Schwarzeneggar, even reminded of his signing into law the bill that would put a million solar panels on homes she replies that he took the idea from the Greens and that he has no plan to implement it in a timely manner.

She claims that the initial cost of the solar panels despite the rebates would be too high for those who have to live on the lower end of the pay scale. “Who’s going to get it, are poor people going to get it?”

Instead she would require that all new homes be fitted with solar panels and that they should be made available to everyone, in time, according to the home owners income. Donna Warren has been involved in the struggle of families who had made themselves a home on a 14 acres plot of land in South Central where she lives. Monies from California taxes and loans had made the land valuable, yet despite her efforts and the every day efforts of the local Greens, even begging the LA Board of Supervisors to stop the bulldozers to save the farm and families; the people of South Central Farm were sold out by Mayor Villaraigosa and now the land is awaiting a Wal-Mart Distribution Center.

Donna Warren, like the Greens and over half the American people, believes that the USA should be OUT of Iraq, NOW!. She condemns the use of foreign workers rebuilding the country and that the people of Iraq should be allowed to do it themselves. Unemployment among Iraq’s citizens is way too high.

When asked about the California Green Party slate of Candidates:

“WE reflect California. WE are California, ...when we started, we decided we’re going to take our communities: the gay communities, the Muslim community, the black community, the undocumented community, the environmental community, all of these communities that are asking for a voice.”

She has worked on the Board of Pacifica for two years and a retired Auditor for the Department of Defense in Israel. She wants everyone to know that the people

there (in the Mid East) are, “just like us, some of the worlds warmest and friendliest people you would ever see.”

When asked doesn’t Israel have a right to exist? She says, “Yes, and so do the Palestinians and every other country; We all have the right to exist.”

With Donna Warren, I found her to be as seriously committed as well as relaxed and easily full of humor to the few of the many problems facing California that we discussed. In our session, she bounced around my questions on different issues but returned to answering them in her own way. Perhaps, by making them sound as if they were connected and thus by solving a few serious issues we could find ourselves solving many more on the way or maybe just solving these few issues in a 4 year time is plenty.

Unfortunately, we ran short on time to talk about immigration and trade relations with Mexico, two issues to be discussed hopefully with the Green gubernatorial candidate Peter Camejo next month.

Her pre-recorded interview was aired on KFCF 88.1 FM as part of the “Green Scene,” radio show on Wednesday, September 20th.

Websites information:

For information about Donna Warren:
www.donnawarren.com
or e-mail at ecottry@socal.rr.com
or phone number (213) 427-8519.

For information about California Green Party candidates: www.cagreens.org
For local information the Fresno County Green Party: www.cagreens.org or contact by phone at (559) 265-3647 and regarding the Million Votes for Peace: millionvotesforpeace@yahoo.com

-Richard Gomez is a member of the Fresno County Green Party and host the “Green Scene” a locally produce half hour radio show by the Fresno Greens, which is heard the third Wednesday of every month starting at 3pm on KFCF 88.1 FM. His tentatively scheduled guest for October is Green Party candidate for Governor; Peter Camejo and John Miller candidate for the 21st Congressional district.



2nd Annual Fresno Solar Tour, part of the National Solar Tour

By Mark Stout

On Saturday October 7th, thousands of solar-powered homes and buildings in 44 states will be open for public tours as part of the 11th annual National Solar Tour. This event reached 68,000 in attendance last year. Locally, the 2nd annual Fresno Solar Tour offers Valley residents an opportunity to see how their neighbors are putting reliable, zero pollution solar power and other energy efficient technologies to work. The City of Fresno is demonstrating its commitment to solar power by co-sponsoring the event along with NorCal Solar and the American Solar Energy Society.

Solar Trends

Interest in solar power has increased dramatically in the wake of escalating fuel costs, devastating weather and growing concerns over energy security. Statewide, installed solar photovoltaic capacity has leapt from less than 10 megawatts before the 2001 energy crisis to over 177 megawatts this summer.

During California’s record heat wave in July, families using solar power helped keep the grid up and running

by providing their surplus energy to the utility grid.

An increasing number of businesses and public sector facilities are turning to solar power. The nation’s largest commercial solar photovoltaic system, one million watts of AC capacity on P-R Farms’ Clovis packing house, will be featured on this year’s tour.



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Fresno Solar Tour Saturday October 7th, 10am-4 pm

Registration:
Tour materials distribution at the
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More information:
<http://norcalsolar.org/tour/fresno>
or call
559-273-4037

Sunday, October 1 • 2 - 4 PM

Stop the Hate, Stop the Violence, Build a Culture of Peace. This is a series of events happening at CSU-Fresno. Cultural, musical and floral tribute to Mahatma Gandhi at Fresno State. Gandhi's Birthday Celebration - Concert Hall, Music Building. For more information call Raul @ 278-5750, Su Kapoor @ 435-2212, or Josh @ 278-2741

Sunday, October 1 • 4:15 PM

Stop the Hate, Stop the Violence, Build a Culture of Peace. This is a series of events happening at CSU-Fresno. Garlanding and Meditation at the Peace Garden (CSUF). For more information call Raul @ 278-5750, Su Kapoor @ 435-2212, or Josh @ 278-2741

Guest Speakers:

Dr. John D. Welty, President
California State University, Fresno
and
J.P. Moncayo, President
Associated Students

Sunday, October 1 • 5:30 PM No Host Bar • 6:30 Dinner • 7 PM Speaker

KFCF 88.1 FM/Fresno Free College Foundation annual banquet. Historian Matthew Lasar will be the guest speaker. He wrote the two volume history of Pacifica Radio and is a frequent guest on KPFA speaking about Pacifica issues, community radio and what the FCC is up to. The event will be held at Love and Garlic, 5351 N Diana in Fresno. \$40. For more information call (559) 233-2221 or go to: www.kfcf.org

Sunday, October 1 • 7 PM

The Imperial Dove Court de Fresno/Madera Inc. invites the public to attend "Harvest Festival/Hillbilly Heaven at the Red Lantern, a tavern located at 4618 N. Belmont, one half block east of Maple. Donation of \$5.00 at the door, includes country style chicken dinner at 7:00pm and a variety show including female impersonators at 8:pm. There will also be items for auction and raffle as well. The IDC is a non profit service organization in its thirty third year, raising money for gay related and other charitable causes. For more information please call Ray Hutchins at 477-0976 or email rickeytickey2000@aol.com

Friday, October 6 • 5:15 PM

The movie *Amu* will be shown in Instructional Technology Bldg. 101 at Fresno State, entrance off Barstow near Cedar. *Amu* begins with the everyday dilemmas of a young Indian-American, Kaju, returning to the "foreignness" of her Indian homeland. Like an approaching thunderstorm, the film gathers a potent political charge as Kaju begins to question her past and realizes how her own privileged life in America was born out of communal violence in India. After Prime Minister Gandhi was assassinated by Sikh bodyguards in 1984, carnage erupted in the streets of Delhi. This film is sponsored by the Cineculture Club at CSUF. For more information: President: Kumar NavaneethaKrishnan kum.nav@gmail.com

Friday, October 6 • 6:30 - 8:30 PM

The Reedley Peace Center presents Speaker: Noel Rodriguez. Topic: Women in the United Farm Workers. Noel will speak of her project done at Harvard a few years back based on interviews of women of the United Farm Workers.

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 dfriesen0@gmail.com

Friday, October 6 • 8 PM

The Third Annual Gene Bluestein Memorial Concert featuring The Bluestein Family will be held at the Tower Theatre, 815 E Olive in Fresno. Tickets are on sale now. Call (559) 485-9050.

Saturday, October 7 • 8 AM to 3 PM

Annual Book Sale, a fundraiser for the Fresno Center for Nonviolence will be held at the parking lot southwest corner Olive and Van Ness. Also on sale will be CDs, DVDs, videos and tapes. Donations of books, CDs etc. and volunteers welcome. Please call 237-3223.

Sunday, October 8 • 3 PM

The Central California Peace Council meeting will be held at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness (just south of McKinley, across from Fresno City College). For more information see page 4.

Wednesday, October 11 • 12 Noon and 7 PM

The movie, *Iraq for Sale*, will be shown by the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Because it is expected that more people than the Center can hold will want to attend the evening showing, we have changed the venue to Woodward Park Regional Library, 944 E. Perrin. The 12 noon showing will be at the Center, 1584 N. Van Ness. For more information about this movie, see: www.bravenewtheatres.com or call the Center 237-3223 during open hours M-F 11 - 3.. All are invited to this FREE event.

Wednesday, October 11 • 3 PM

Tune in to 88.1 FM for the Center's monthly radio program on KFCF "Stir It Up" series. Angela Price will host guests Fran Saunders and Barry Nishkian, who will tell about their recent trip to the International Peace Bureau Conference in Helsinki, Finland, including their attendance at a few sessions of the IPPNW (International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War) conference also held in Helsinki.

Friday, October 13 • 9 AM

Joseph Wilson, a former U.S. ambassador to Iraq and husband of ex-CIA agent Valerie Plame, will be the keynote speaker for the 4th annual Roger Tatarian Journalism Symposium, "Truth, War & the CIA," at California State University, Fresno. Wilson and Plame are at the center of a controversy about classified information leaked to media by the Bush administration that identified Plame as a CIA agent. Wilson contends exposing his wife's status was retaliation for criticism of the Bush administration's reasoning leading up to the war in Iraq. Free parking will be available in Lots N, O and P. (See map and other event updates at www.FresnoStateNews.com . For more information, contact the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism at 559.278.2087.

Friday, October 13 • 5 PM and 8 PM

Fresno Filmworks presents "The House of Sand (Casa de Areia)" at the Tower Theatre. This period drama from Brazil is being acclaimed for its stunning cinematography and its moving performances from Fernanda Montenegro (nominated for best actress for "Central Station") and her real-life daughter, Fernanda Torres. In Portuguese, with English subtitles. Tickets can be purchased at the Tower Theatre Box Office, 815 E. Olive Ave., The Movies, 1435 N. Van Ness Ave., 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

Friday, October 13 • 6:30 - 8:30 PM

The Reedley Peace Center presents Speaker: Don Friesen, Topic: Stories From the Occupation from his experience with the recent Christian Peacemaker Team delegation to the West Bank.

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 dfriesen0@gmail.com

Friday, October 13 • 7 PM

It's Friday Night At the Movies! The Democratic Club of Coarsegold and DFA Presents A Special Screening of "Iraq for Sale: The War Profiteers" The story of what happens to everyday Americans when corporations go to war. Acclaimed director Robert Greenwald (Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price, Outfoxed and Uncovered) takes you inside the lives of soldiers, truck drivers, widows and children who have been changed forever as a result of profiteering in the reconstruction of Iraq. Iraq for Sale uncovers the connections between private corporations making a killing in Iraq and the decision makers who allow them to do so. Brave New Films are both funded and distributed completely outside corporate America. Location: Byl Construction Office 30950 Corral Drive Coarsegold State CA

Friday, October 13 • 7:30 PM

Fresno Folklore Presents: Laurie Lewis and Tom Rozum. \$18 advance; \$20 at door.

This popular duo return to Fresno the second Friday in October. Terrific fiddler, singer, songwriter (twice named Female Vocalist of the year by IBMA), Laurie is one of the pre-eminent bluegrass and Americana artists of our time. Her songs helped shape the template for the modern bluegrass-pop style. Tom Rozum is her performing companion and sideman, complementing her music, always responding to what's going on at the moment. Their concerts sell out because they are so good. Advance tickets may be purchased in Fresno Art Museum gift shoppe, The Movies, Patrick's Music.

Saturday, October 14 • 3:30 PM

Central Valley Progressive PAC has its General Meeting at the Center for Non-violence. 1584 N. Van Ness at Mc Kinley. Public welcome. Let's review all, evaluate, and decide what are our next steps. How are we moving toward Getting Out the Vote? Have any new ideas? Bring them or send your suggestions.. Information Lydia Flores 435-7360 or www.cvppac.org

Sunday, October 15 • 6 PM

The alternative/independent Community Alliance newspaper celebrates 10 year of publishing. See page 28 for details.

Friday, October 20 • 5:15 PM

2 films celebrating Armenian-American month: *The Genocide in Me & California Armenians: The First Generation* will be shown in Instructional Technology Bldg. 101 at Fresno State, entrance off Barstow near Cedar. This film is sponsored by the Cineculture Club at CSUF. For more information: President: Kumar NavaneethaKrishnan kum.nav@gmail.com

Sunday, October 22

Stop Police Brutality. See: <http://october22-ny.org/national/>

Sunday, October 22 • 6 - 8:30 PM

Kevin Hill Trio (funky soul jazz) live music at Grandma's All Natural Vegetable Market and Herb Nursery 403 W. Olive, 1 blk east of Fruit, (559)495-114. Tickets \$3.00 in advance \$5.00 at the door Info: (559)495-1141

Wednesday, October 25

Cindy Sheehan will speak at the Satellite Union at CSUF. See the story on Page 1.

Friday, October 27 • 5:15 PM

The Camden 28 will be shown in Instructional Technology Bldg. 101 at Fresno State, entrance off Barstow near Cedar. How far would you go to stop a war? On August 22, 1971, twenty-eight men and women in Camden, New Jersey, carried out a powerful act of civil disobedience against United States involvement in the Vietnam War. The group was part of a nonviolent antiwar movement popularly known as the "Catholic Left." One of the most dramatic tactics utilized by this movement was breaking into draft board offices to remove and destroy government records that identified young men available for military service. This film is sponsored by the Cineculture Club at CSUF. For more information: President: Kumar NavaneethaKrishnan kum.nav@gmail.com

Friday, October 27 • 7 PM

ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE, a presentation about the World Social Forum., will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno at 4144 North Millbrook south of Ashlan. Hear from local activists who attended the 2006 World Social Forums in Venezuela and Pakistan. Mike Rhodes, Pam Whalen, Simone Whalen-Rhodes, Jean Hays, Dan Yaseen, and Camille Russell will show a Power Point presentation featuring their pictures, analysis, and impressions. The free event will be presented by the UU Adult Religious Education Committee. For more information contact Lydia Flores (559) 435-7360

Sunday, October 29 • 6 - 8:30 PM

Lance Canales and Friends (native American fluting and delta blues) live music at Grandma's All Natural Vegetable Market and Herb Nursery 403 W. Olive, 1 blk east of Fruit, (559)495-1141 Tickets \$3.00 in advance \$5.00 at the door Info: (559) 495-1141




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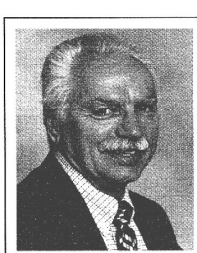
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From the Editor continued from page 2

Shovel Toilet.” Scott’s article was about the plight of sheep herders in this area and the award was from New California Media for Central Valley Reporting. Some of the information in the article was used to influence legislation in Sacramento that helped improve the working conditions of the sheep herders.

That was not to be our last award for outstanding journalism. I was awarded the Project Censored award for the 16th most censored story in 2005. This story was about the infiltration of Peace Fresno by an undercover law enforcement officer. Because of the power of the alternative/independent press, this story reached a much larger audience - it was featured in Michael Moore’s movie *Fahrenheit 911*, heard on Amy Goodman’s *Democracy Now!* radio show, and seen on Bill Moyer’s PBS show *Now*.

By the summer of 2004, at a retreat for the staff and volunteers of the Community Alliance, we realized that we had reached a plateau in our distribution. We agreed that we wanted to reach beyond the choir of committed activists currently reading the magazine. The solution was to change the format and in December 2004 we became a newspaper with a full color cover and twice as much room for content. The newspaper was a hit and in the next year we went from 2,000 magazines to 10,000 newspapers a month. Our goal is to be a weekly newspaper, but we are not ready for that transition yet. Maybe in a year or two.

We are proud of our achievements over the last ten years and thank everyone who has been a part of this project. The community is invited to join us as we celebrate ten years of publishing. I hope to see you there.

Sunday, October 15 • 6 PM

The alternative/independent Community Alliance newspaper celebrates 10 year of publishing. There will be music, food & drink, a movie, and keynote speaker at the Full Circle Brewery, 620 F St. in downtown Fresno. \$10

- Keynote speaker: Journalist Conn Hallinan will speak on the importance of alternative/independent media.

- docu-poem video compilation of local actions for peace and justice by Elfie and Maia Ballis
- Movie: Independent Media in a Time of War (produced by Amy Goodman).
- Music: The Urban Nomads (Middle Eastern music)

Progressive community groups are encouraged to set up a literature table (no charge).

Cindy Sheehan, who will be in Fresno on October 25 (left), and Medea Benjamin read the Community Alliance at the World Social Forum in Caracas, Venezuela earlier this year. Photo by Mike Rhodes.



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Interfaith Alliance Responds with Courage and Compassion

By Marilyn Byrne

On Monday September 11 as public media steeped in the tragic story of 9/11 the President used the opportunity to push his political agenda of his never ending war on terrorism. Not continuing the war in Iraq he stated would certainly bring the Islamic extremists into attacking us on our own shores. When he defined the war on terrorism as a conflict of civilizations he demeaned the enemy generating further hate. In this climate of fear, hate, and violence the Interfaith Alliance gave us a refreshing program specifically meant to counter the hate and build courage and compassion.

The speakers included Father Perry Kavookjian, Reverend Grace Schireson, Rabbi Robert Ourach and Imam Seyed Ali Ghazvini representing Catholic, Buddhist, Jewish, and Islamic Religions respectively. The moderator was Jim Grant television host of a show a local television station.

Each speaker addressed the question how to bring courage and compassion into a world of fear and violence. The moderator encouraged us to really listen to what each person was saying. After each speaker spoke a different panelist summarized what they had said. I could give you a brief snipped of what they said but it would be out of context and wouldn't do them justice.

Each panelist showed great courage and compassion in their carefully chosen words. By example they inspired the best in each of us along with our admiration. They clearly led by example and I was moved by each of them as they worked and sometimes struggled to create their own peace within themselves while giving us patterns for peace. This was an evening of hope created by the coming together of Americans with diverse ideologies which illustrates that the force of love and compassion can endure within our own politically generated climate of fear and violence.

Bedfellows continued from page 16

The slate's list of financial backers seems strange enough when the above folks are combined with the likes of Washington-based New Democrat Network and Assemblymember Juan Arambula. But it takes a turn toward the bizarre with the addition of its out-of-town backers. Joining Arambula in the slate's \$5,000 club are three of the most pro-free trade, anti-public sector forces at work in our society today.

John Birch Society, Cato Institute

According to Wayne Madsen's "Another Oily Tie That Binds: Koch Industries" (Feb. 2002, CorpWatch.org), "Through the years, Koch Industries has had a close relationship with various right-wing causes. Fred Koch, the founder of the privately-owned company, helped to establish the John Birch Society. Koch Industries is also a major contributor to the right-wing 'libertarian' Cato Institute, a Washington think tank.

"In 1996, Koch brothers Charles and David, the current co-owners of the company, set up one of the first soft money organizations that ran 'issue-oriented' commercials against Democratic candidates. They were thus able to funnel money to GOP candidates in order to get around campaign spending limits. This was a tactic that Bush used successfully against his primary opponent John McCain and presidential opponent Al Gore."

Maquiladora Sweatshops

Emerson Electric appears on the short list of the top Fortune 500 countries cited by The Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras report "Making the Invisible Visible: A Study of Maquiladora Workers in Mexico - 2000" (New Study: Mexicans Unable to Live on Sweatshop Wages, Jan. 2001, CorpWatch.org).

"In community after community, maquiladora workers can afford only to live in make-shift houses without water, electricity, and to even talk about nutritious diets for themselves and their children is a luxury," stated Ms. Martha Ojeda, a former maquiladora worker, now executive director for the Coalition. "They work long, productive hours for the world's biggest corporations and still cannot provide the most basic needs for their families. They cannot even afford to consume the items they produce.

"This is a violation of Mexican worker's human rights

HOWARD'S HOPEFULS

Here are my voting recommendations for the November 7, 2006 general election. Most are clear choices, some are close calls. I hope you find this list helpful. Thank you and please vote.
- Howard K. Watkins

FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL RACES		STATE PROPS.	
U. S. SENATE	FEINSTEIN	1A	YES
18th CONGRESS	CARDOZA	1B	YES
19th CONGRESS	COX	1C	YES
20th CONGRESS	COSTA	1D	YES
21st CONGRESS	HAZE	1E	YES
GOVERNOR	ANGELIDES	83	NO
LT. GOVERNOR	GARAMENDI	84	YES
SEC. of STATE	BOWEN	85	NO
CONTROLLER	CHIANG	86	YES
TREASURER	LOCKYER	87	YES
ATTORNEY GENERAL	BROWN	88	YES
INSURANCE COMM.	BUSTAMANTE	89	YES
STATE SENATE 12th	NICKEL	90	NO
STATE SENATE 14th	FIRCH		
STATE SENATE 16th	FLOREZ		
ST. ASSEMBLY 29th	CROCKFORD		
ST. ASSEMBLY 30th	PARRA		
ST. ASSEMBLY 31st	ARAMBULA		
ST. BD. of EQUAL. #2	RABOY		
SHERIFF	MIMS		
COUNTY BD. of ED. #1	HARRIS		
SCCCS #4	THONESSEN		
SCCCS #5	SMITH		
FRESNO COUNTY MEASURE		B	NO
FRESNO COUNTY MEASURE		C	YES
FRESNO CITY COUNCIL #1	XIONG		
FRESNO UNIFIED SD #1	MEDINA		
FRESNO UNIFIED SD #3	DAVIS		
FRESNO UNIFIED SD #4	HORNBACK		
FRESNO UNIFIED SD #7	PAT BARR		
FRESNO IRR. DISTR. #4	METZLER		
NORTH CENTRAL FPD	BELLUOMINI		
NORTH CENTRAL FPD	NONINI		

and of the Mexican Constitution that guarantees a living wage. The foreign-based corporations that benefit from free trade have a moral obligation to pay their workers a sustainable living wage. *Even though workers realize that they take a big risk in organizing independent unions, still they challenge the system because it is the only way to improve their working conditions and standard of living*" (emphasis added).

Mickey, Tobacco & Guns

In his March 2005 article "The Media Lobby," Alexander Lynch (AlterNet, CorpWatch.org), describes how the Washington lobbying firm Verner, Liipfert, et al. earns its money.

"Walt Disney (ABC) and GE share the lobbying firm Verner, Liipfert et al, with insurance agencies such as Aetna Inc., the conservative think tank the Heritage Foundation, the New York Stock Exchange, PhRMA, General Motors, the tobacco industry's Philip Morris, the richest in the banking industry Citigroup, and weapons manufacturers such as Raytheon, Harris Corp. and the infamous Carlyle Group," writes Lynch.

Reagan Chief of Staff

Just to round things out, there's \$1,000 donor Steven Champlin of The Duberstein Group Inc., Washington, D.C. Russ Baker wrote about the firm in his article "The Top 10 Corporate Democrats-For-Hire" (Aug. 2006, AlterNet, CorpWatch.org).

The firm's president Michael Bergman, reports Baker, "is a former chief of staff to President Reagan. Firm clients have included Comcast (nation's largest cable operator; uses aggressive anti-union tactics; trying to block cities from providing cheap wireless internet access; censored political issue ads it didn't like); DeBeers (hired to protect the interests of the huge international diamond mining/trading company as Congress considered legislation that would strengthen bans against the sale of so-called 'conflict diamonds' that fund civil wars in parts of Africa);... and something called 'Americans for Accountability' (lobbying disclosures for this 'accountability' group say it is interested in educational reform but unaccountably does not show up in article database searches or search engines.)... the Business Roundtable (big business super-lobby; goals include social security privatization, elimination of class action suits, and opposing mandatory reductions of greenhouse e missions)."

Fresno Business Council

When all was said and done four years ago, the 4 Voices PAC had \$21,500 left over. In late 2003 they gave all of the money to the Fresno Business Council as a contribution to the "Literacy Initiative of the Collaborative Regional Institute."

Mayor's Slate 2002 Major Contributors

\$10,000 The New Democrat Network <i>Washington, D.C.</i>
\$5,000 Arambula for Supervisor
Citizens for Housing Opportunities <i>[Building Industry PAC]</i>
Koch Industries <i>Wichita, KS</i>
Lyles Diversified <i>Fresno, CA</i>
Robert McDonald <i>Emerson Electric, Washington, D.C.</i>
John Merrigan <i>Verner, Liipfert et al Washington, D.C.</i>
\$3,000 Al Galvez <i>Pacific Gas & Electric, San Francisco</i>
Klein Financial Corporation <i>Fresno, CA</i>
\$2,500 California Real Estate PAC
\$2,000 Richard Johansen

Source: Recipient Committee Campaign Statements, Fresno County Clerk's Office

The Word on the Street

by Wendy Russell

It seems as if we are under scientific scrutiny ever since my friend came to visit. Dionisio “Nito” Paniagua, a naturalist guide in Costa Rica has been university-trained in scientific observation, which helps him when guiding tourists on nature hikes in the jungles of Costa Rica’s beautiful Osa Peninsula. Now he visits our urban jungle, making observations about us. Soon, I was studying “us” too.

Like how humans - well - THIS human puts off things until the last minute, maybe thinking it improves performance to be under pressure - so when it came time to go get answers to this month’s Question, I chose the Reptile Show at Fresno’s Discovery Center as my location because that’s where I would be the day before my deadline. I am a member of the Cen-Val Chapter of the California Turtle and Tortoise Society and we had several tables at this yearly event. The Discovery Center is so great for kids, even in the hard times the place is having since that fire. It seems our city can spend big money fighting against unsightly garbage bins but alas - there is no money for the Discovery Center - where young creative minds are made aware of an expansive universe and are hopefully sparked into their own exploding futures.

We should start a donation drive for books, educational displays and stuff, I am thinking as I wander over to watch the kids as they scramble the rocks clutching little fishing nets as they chased after thousands of pollywogs that were in the ponds.

There I see an official-looking person so I decide to start with her to get answers to this month’s Question:

Will you vote in the November elections? Why or why not?

RONI WEIL is the Executive Director of the Discovery Center. She exudes confidence and knowledge and I like the idea of all these young girls here knowing all the pollywogs and stuff are her responsibility. Her answer is clear:

“Definitely. Because we need a new governor. Phil Angelides is serious about protecting our environment and will pay attention to education and health issues.”

Over the loud speakers, a man sang, “R-E-P-T-I-L-E spells REPTILE!” as I walked towards a big clot of people and in the center was a man holding a huge black monitor lizard - and by huge, I mean 5 feet long and probably 150 pounds! The magnificent creature clung to his human, using all five appendages to wrap himself on tight, and his human



Roni Weil

would pat his back like burping a baby to reassure him and “remind him who he was holding onto” so he did not get whipped by that huge tail. I moved in and asked the Question.

DAVE and his monitor lizard, BIG BOY, answered: “No. I am not voting because I don’t know which liar to believe. And why vote on something when I don’t even know if they will do what they say?”

As we walk away Nito said that in Costa Rica’s last election only 66% of people voted and that was a sad record for the lowest voter turn-out in years. Traditionally there are two parties fielding candidates for office, but in the last election a fresh third party surged forward to almost win - losing the presidency by only 18,169 votes. Nito predicts that new party will win the presidency in the next election. The new party has the youth and new ideas. The old parties continue the old ways populated by career politicians.



Dave with Big Boy

...Wow. A new political party rises up in just a few short years and will likely run their country soon. Now, *that’s* democracy in action!

Next, at our Cen-Val table I ask fellow member, CAROLE BAILEY, the Question. She told me she has several family members stationed in Iraq.



Carole Bailey

“Yes. I’m voting for Schwarzenegger. He ‘s done so much for education. He’s out to help the poor people - he really is.”

I heard a high shriek of pure joy. Across the grass I could see the kids at the bubble-blowing station and the shriek was the result of a hula-hooped-size quasi-bubble bursting over the white-foamed swimming pool of bubble-making liquid. Wow - I did not know you could even *do* that. The scene was aglow with sun-lit floating bubbles



Sarah Johnson

and much laughter. I walked over there and asked first time mother, SARAH JOHNSON, holding her 6-week old baby, Deveion, with her nieces and nephews tumbling and bubbling all around us, if she was going to vote in the November elections.

“Yes. Every person counts and if you want to make a difference you have to voice your opinion.”

As I left her happy group I could see she was probably already making a difference - sparking the imaginations of her extended family by bringing them to this fun educational event.

A giant caterpillar made of children weaves in front of me. They are singing “I’ll never kiss a crocodile!” led by children’s entertainer, OKLIN BLOODWORTH, strumming his guitar. Later on his break, I ask if he will vote?

“Yes. To make the world a better place. That’s in my mind when I vote. Dr. Wayne Dyer said “I’m not against hate - I’m for love!” That’s me.”



Oklin Bloodworth

Remember Dr. Wayne Dyer? He wrote books with titles like “Pulling Your Own Strings’ encouraging you to control your life and your own destiny. Sounds good. Sounds right. Costa Rica did that too, abolishing their army 50 years ago and turning more than 25% of their lands into national parks. Recycling is rampant and medical care is free. Elections are a big deal with almost full participation. Flashy ostentation is frowned upon; their president even continues to live in his own home after election. Nito says politicians in Costa Rica are under a microscope to do right after much corruption (paid for by US banana companies) in the past.



Jeremy Hofer with his son, Geronimo

Lastly, I caught JEREMY HOFER of Fresno Metro Ministry. He is so intelligent and articulate that once again I think that public office should be in his future, so let’s hear his answer to this month’s Question;

“Yes. I will vote because of local initiatives and elections - with an understanding that we vote everyday - with our pocketbooks, pens, and even how we get to work. The biggest impact we have is in how we treat those closest to us. In pursuit of ‘the Cause’ we must never forget the biggest cause of all, the health of our home. Causa sin Casa es Causa muerta.”

I agree. And Nito says one big observation he has made here in the United States is that not many people look at each other when they pass one other on the street. We don’t say hello to our neighbors. Everyone is in a hurry.

Slow down. Vote! If everyone voted think how different things might be. Let’s vote as if our future depended on it.

Because it does.