

Protests Are Growing

BY BOB MCCLOSKEY

More Than 7 Million Protest on No Kings Day

According to the Oct. 18 No Kings Day organizers, in one of the largest single day nationwide demonstrations in U.S. history, nearly 7 million people gathered in cities and towns across America for the day of action. The protests were organized by Indivisible, MoveOn and other organizations.

The number of protesters grew by more than 2 million since the last national protest in June. All No Kings Day demonstrations were peaceful, and there was no political violence reported anywhere in the United States.

In Fresno, many organizations, including the May 1 Coalition for Immigrant Rights, SEIU, Indivisible, Peace Fresno and Raza Against War, organized the event. Organizers from Indivisible estimate that more than 7,000 attended the diverse, lively and energetic rally at Manchester Center in Fresno, the largest local anti-Trump event to date.

Protests also took place in other cities throughout the Central Valley.

At the Fresno event, there were inflatable “animal army” costumes and many expressive signs like “The Power of the People is Stronger than the People in Power,” “The Only Monarch I Recognize is a Butterfly, Migration is Natural and Beautiful,” and “We Are the Drops that Make the Ripple that Create the Waves that Build the Tide that Is the Movement.”

Many carried signs calling for an end to immigration raids and mass deportations. FresnoLand reports that ICE arrests are up nearly 60% in the area over the past year, and the *Fresno Bee* reported in mid-October that more than 500 people have been deported from the area.

Fresno Protesters Speak Out

“It’s not about Trump,” said Lourin Hubbard. “It’s about the people that have been silent at this point. People are out here to preserve democracy.”

Hubbard recently declared his candidacy for Congressional District 21 against Jim Costa (D–Fresno). He previously ran in a special election for CD22 and received 38% of the vote in a heavily Republican district.

“The Democrats have just abandoned their Congressional oversight,” added Hubbard. “They will write a strongly worded letter—oh boy.

“To this point, the Democrats are doing no [constitutional] enforcement at all. We need a partnership to demand better from our government.”

Max was passing out copies of the U.S. Constitution. She favors impeaching the President and his entire cabinet and cited Article 2, Section 4, of the Constitution, which outlines the process for removing the President, Vice President and other civil officers from office through impeachment for treason, bribery and other high crimes.

Dr. Mohammed Shaikh, a prominent surgeon and community activist, attended with his family and spoke of the health effects of the immigration crack down. “The Democrats don’t appreciate the seriousness of the situation. What we are seeing at the policy level, and [with] the ICE thugs and goons, is putting fear into people.

“The negative impact on health and wellness is referred to as structural violence or social murder. We’re seeing people missing clinic appointments because they are afraid of getting apprehended.

“Their stress levels are high; it’s not good for anyone’s health. When people get sick they go to the ER, and that impacts everyone.”

Another demonstrator, Tiffany Curtis, wearing a Black Lives Matter t-shirt, said it was great to see so many people protesting but that “Black folks have been screaming about this for decades and decades.

“A lot of Americans are [now] looking at things we gotta confront, things that are deeper and darker, that affect all people, not just Black and brown people. I think they [the government] don’t listen when the Black community talks.

“People from different backgrounds that have a louder voice, that have power and privilege, need to speak up more.”

Cindy Piombino, a volunteer and advocate for unhoused folks in Fresno, said that she “showed up because of the division Trump [has] created and the taking away of



A protester at No Kings Day with an anti-ICE message. Photo by Peter Maiden

Medicaid, food stamps and other assistance to those less fortunate. He’s acting like a king and needs to be de-throned.”

Veronica Martinez, a young woman from Fresno holding an antiwar sign, asserted that “we have waged war against humanity. My sign is a remembrance of people we have

Continued to page 2

Keep Us Alive!

BY MIKE RHODES

The *Community Alliance* newspaper is in a financial crisis. The worst crisis I have seen in the 28 years that I have been a part of the paper. We have reduced our expenses, staff have taken draconian salary cuts and if things don’t improve we will have to consider ending the print version of the paper.

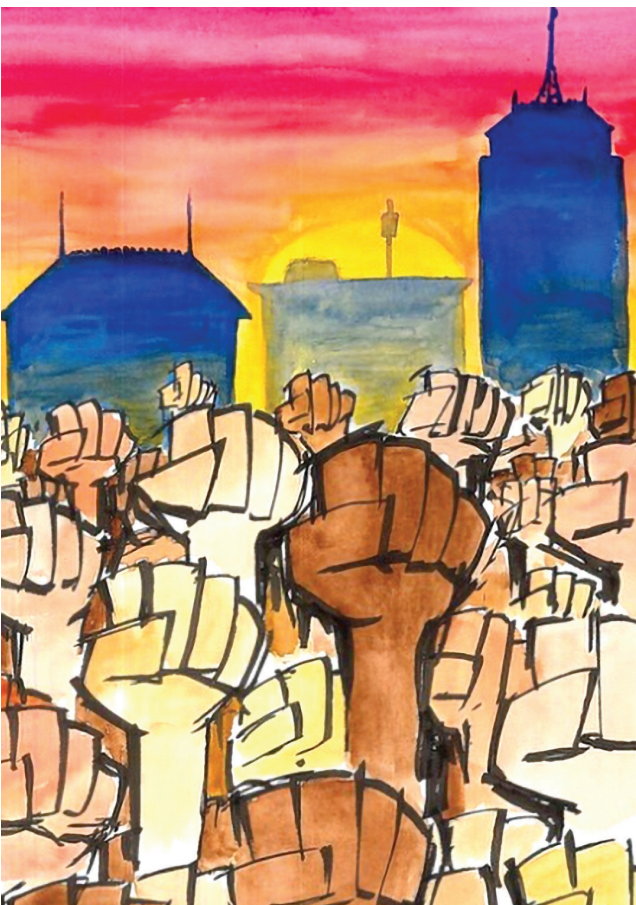
I am confident that we can count on readers like you to save this newspaper. You know the value of a free press that fearlessly turns a spotlight on greed and corruption and focuses on grassroots community groups that are fighting for social, economic and environmental justice.

Every time the *Community Alliance* has gotten in a financial crunch, you have come through with the support needed

to keep us going. I believe that will happen again, because together we give a voice to the voiceless, we stand up for those that are the most vulnerable (like the homeless and immigrants) and we are building a progressive movement that will change our world.

Join me in this great experiment in grassroots journalism. Become a subscriber, a sustainer, come to our fundraiser on Dec. 6 (see the ad on page 2) and/or make a donation. Contribute at fresnoalliance.com/support/ or send a check to Community Alliance, P.O. Box 5077, Fresno, CA 93755. *Si se puede!*

Mike Rhodes is the co-founder and longtime editor of the *Community Alliance* newspaper. He has also authored several books. Contact him at mikerhodes@fresnoalliance.com.



A

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Continued from page 1

committed atrocities against: Palestine, Sudan, the Congo, Yemen, Venezuela and Ukraine.

"My other sign says, 'The Only Minority Destroying America is the Rich.'"

Carlos Bravo from Fresno summed up the moment: "People come here for the American dream. They work hard to support their families. That is being taken away from us, our freedom of speech is being taken away. They're putting a lot of fear in everybody."

Trump's Bizarre Post and Presidential Memorandum

Late on Oct. 18, Trump posted on his social media platform, Truth Social, a video of himself wearing a crown and flying a jet over demonstrators in New York City bombing the people with large amounts of fecal matter.

On Oct. 9, the Trump administration published a presidential memo, technically, a national security presidential memorandum, outlining its upcoming efforts to combat political violence. In a section titled "anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism, and anti-Christianity," the document states:

"There are common recurrent motivations and indicia uniting this pattern of violent and terroristic activities under the umbrella of self-described 'anti-fascism.' Common threads animating this violent conduct include anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism, and anti-Christianity; support for the overthrow of the United States Government; extremism on migration, race, and gender; and hostility towards those who hold traditional American views on family, religion, and morality."

In another section titled "Designation as a 'domestic terrorist organization,'" the memo says that "the Attorney General may recommend that any group or entity whose members are engaged in activities meeting the definition of 'domestic terrorism' in 18 U.S.C. 2331(5) merits designation as a 'domestic terrorist organization.'"

Designating something a domestic terrorist organization sounds like a parallel to the process we use for identifying foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs). That process was created by Congress in a statute. Being designated as



According to organizers, 7,000 people came to Manchester Mall in Fresno for No Kings Day. The inflatable frog costume became popular after it was used in Portland to provide protests with a joyful aspect. Photo by Peter Maiden

an FTO triggers a number of legal effects, enabling the government to seize assets, revoke visas, bar entry of non-citizens and prosecute people who provide any direct help to the organization.

Congress has the ability to block or revoke an FTO designation, and organizations themselves are entitled to judicial review of the decision to include them on the list.

The "domestic terrorist organization" definition proposed here has no legal support and no clear significance. It's completely made up.

It seems that an organization so designated will receive extra scrutiny from the federal government until it pleases

the attorney general and then be removed from the list. Donors, speakers, employees and members of these organizations will all have their speech chilled for as long as the executive branch sees fit.

The increasing number of Americans demonstrating and speaking out in resistance to the administration's assault on democracy is a hopeful development.

Bob McCloskey is an activist and a Community Alliance reporter. Contact him at bobmccloskey06@gmail.com bobmccloskey06.bsky.social.

POETRY CORNER

This Morning

BY PAUL E. PIERCE

this morning I am heartbroken

watching a tidal wave approaching
with no high ground

watching a stalking tiger
with no place to hide, or run

watching people shoved to the ground
zip tied, bundled into unmarked vans
and no one held accountable

watching the house of the people
crumbling, falling for a golden ball room

watching children go hungry while
congressmen and oligarchs dine together
in luxury.

watching as my country tis of thee
is stolen by he – who must not be named

he, who represents, fronts, is used by
the heartless, supported by the fear-driven,
misinformed, lacking critical thinking,
lacking compassion,

lauding the 10 commandments
and ignoring the beatitudes.

what indeed would Jesus do?

what would any of the prior holders
of that office do?

heart broken, but not incapable
of compassion, of grief, of a desire
for a better outcome, of a determination
to make a difference.

Paul E. Pierce lives and writes in the Tower District.

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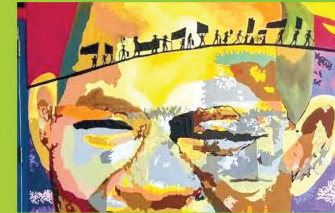
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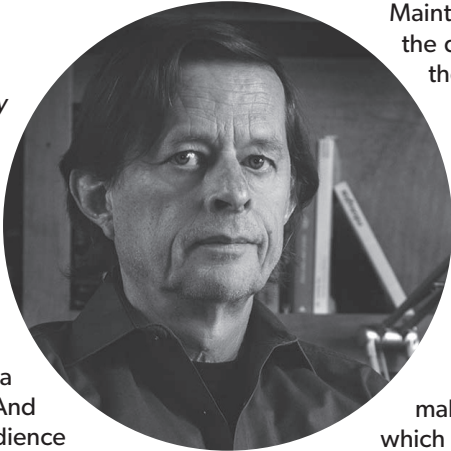
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Farewell

I’ve made the decision to leave the *Community Alliance* newspaper after five years as editor. I’ve been putting off this decision for several months, but the time has come to dedicate time to myself—that is, to my health and to organizing personal and family matters. It hasn’t been easy.

This has been an intense, creative and at times fun experience. I’m grateful to the newspaper’s team, which, as many know, works almost entirely on a volunteer basis. It’s not easy to produce a monthly newspaper with such limited resources. And yet, it maintains the energy and vigor that its audience recognizes and respects. The *Community Alliance* maintains its original mission after almost 30 years.



Maintaining this mission in every article, while improving the quality of the stories and the images that accompany them, is no easy task.

The *Community Alliance* is a newspaper, but it’s also a philosophy of life captured in pages and ink that our Valley needs, especially at a time when the corporate media is being subservient to the will of the White House.

That’s why supporting this effort is more important than ever.

I’m proud to have been a part of this effort, of this mission, which is a collective and liberating act.

I wish the best for the newspaper and the team that makes it a reality every month. And for our community, of which I have been a part for more than 30 years and to which I contribute every day.

Thank you all.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks

I am so grateful for the *Alliance*! As a long-time progressive (actually left of left), I have been reading and then supporting your publication ever since moving to this very conservative area of California.

Renée Pittman
Clovis

Trump’s Antifa

President Trump has designated Antifa as a domestic terrorist organization. He calls it a “SICK, DANGEROUS, RADICAL LEFT DISASTER” filled with domestic terrorists. Trump emphasized he will be “strongly recommending” that its funders be investigated.

Antifa is short for “anti-fascists.” It is not a single organization but rather an umbrella term for far-left-leaning militant groups that confront or resist neo-Nazis and white supremacists at demonstrations.

Trump can call any group a domestic terrorist organization, based on nothing more than Trump’s say so.

Antifa is the first step in the normalization of designating anti-Trump groups as terrorist organizations and cutting off their funding for being on Trump’s Enemies List.

The designation matters in part because it enables the Justice Department to prosecute those who give material support to entities on the list even if that support does not result in violence. Write a check or make a donation, and go to prison for “aiding and abetting terrorism.”

America’s better half just got Trumped.
Marc Keyser
Fresno

Nobel Peace Prize Winner

After rejoicing on the announcement of the Nobel Peace Prize going to Venezuelan politician María Corina Machado and not to Trump, some in the social media spheres started raising objections about her choosing. The objection? Her right-wing political views.

Some of Machado’s comments during Venezuela’s presidential campaign in 2024 surfaced, steering a change of heart among those rooting for someone else, anyone but Trump, to win this year’s Nobel Peace Prize.

Machado, who was banned from running but campaigned for the opposition candidate, espoused a “U.S. invasion of her country” to “restore democracy” and praised Trump in some of her statements. While this is true, those now questioning the Nobel Peace Commission’s pick are missing the point.

The Nobel Peace Prize is not supposed to only go to left-leaning personalities, but to whomever shows “integrity and courage” for a worthy cause such as opposing an authoritarian regime and struggling to restore democracy through democratic means, peacefully and at her own peril.

The Nobel Peace Committee is sending a clear message. No matter what your political inclination, if you put yourself in danger by using your voice even at the cost of becoming a target of political retribution...you are deserving of worldwide recognition.

Edgar R. Ayala



Since 1996, the *Community Alliance* has been an independent progressive voice for the Central San Joaquin Valley. The *Community Alliance* advocates for

- Racial, social, environmental and economic justice
- Equal rights for all, including immigrants, the unhoused and the LGBTQ+ community
- Access to a free quality public education for all
- Access to healthcare for all
- A living wage for all working people

Our goal is to expose racial, social, environmental, economic and political injustices. We will help to build a powerful progressive movement that will make all our communities safer, healthier, more equitable and more livable.

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COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

2026 Election on the Horizon

BY I. SMILEY G. CALDERON

On Oct. 11, the Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee (CVPPAC) introduced many of its endorsed candidates for the 2026 election cycle at its annual fundraiser. The keynote speaker was Michael Tubbs, the former mayor of Stockton and current candidate for Lt. Governor of California.

“This is so inspiring,” Tubbs noted as he looked across the packed venue. “The fact that you all are still fighting, still pushing, still gathering—still in community—that’s the antidote to fascism.”

Another guest speaker, Layla Darwish, president of the Palestine Freedom Project, told the audience that “you care—because what’s happening to my people in Palestine is not just some distant tragedy, but a moral crisis that demands your attention, your voice, your leadership here at home.”

Darwish is creating local awareness about the Palestinians’ plight and was instrumental in the Palestinian flag-raising ceremony held in December 2023 at Eaton Plaza in downtown Fresno.

“You understand that the fight for justice in Palestine is deeply connected to the fight for justice here in the United States,” she stated.

The emcee, Simone Cranston-Rhodes, who is president of the CVPPAC, introduced several of the organization’s endorsed candidates. The funds collected at the event will be distributed among those endorsed candidates.

Rey León, who is running to replace retiring Buddy Mendes for Fresno County Board of Supervisors District 4, recognized the struggles in his small hometown of Huron. León has served as mayor of Huron for almost a decade.

“Sometimes I wonder,” he said, “should I be looking over my shoulders because Huron is the only sanctuary city in the county? Should I be worried because we’re the only city in the state that has passed a ‘no vigilante’ law?”

“Bounty hunters coming into the community and assaulting my families? My officers have orders to put a stop to it,” León proudly told the crowd.

“I am of the people, *soy del pueblo, soy de la gente*, that’s how I grew up, serving my people—and I will continue to do so,” he said.

León exited the stage to excited chants of “*¡Sí se puede! ¡Sí se puede!*”—yes it can be done, yes we can do it! León wants to make a difference for disenfranchised farmworker families in Fresno County as the District 4 supervisor.

“As a lifelong resident of the Central Valley and as a member of the Progressive PAC, I’m honored to have your endorsement,” said Sandra Celedon, candidate for Assembly District 31, acknowledging her supporters.

“I decided to run because, as we all know, the simple fact is career politicians have left our community behind.

“There’s a reason that folks feel disenfranchised—and that’s because career politicians have promised and promised that they’re going to make our lives better, but in fact, things remain the same for many, and in fact worse for a lot of us.

“We need leaders who don’t just talk, but show up and deliver real results for folks.

“What I have learned through my parents is the power of community—that when you show up for people, they show up for you. And, we have to show up for each other. Impossible things are made possible by people.”

Naindeep Singh is a candidate for Fresno City Council District 1, which is an open seat as the incumbent is seeking higher office. “In Fresno, there is often a ‘tale of two cities,’ but in some ways, I call it a ‘city of two tails,’” he joked.

“But, there’s also a story of love,” Singh reflected. “Some people call it resiliency—I’d really like to see a city that can thrive and not merely survive.



Ariana Martinez Lott (center) at the Oct. 11 CVPPAC event. She is running for City Council District 7, the seat for which Nelson Esparza is terming out. She is endorsed by the CVPPAC. Photo by Chris Schneider

“That means that what is good for our neighbor is what we will also champion, that we’re really here to build that community together. It’s really that throughline of love that brings folks together.”

With a passionate appeal for her hometown, Ariana Martinez Lott, candidate for Fresno City District 7, noted that “District 7 is the only home my kids have ever known and I am in this race because, for the last 15 years, I have lived in a community with mothers who have taught me what courage looks like, when they are willing to speak up and say ‘our neighborhoods deserve better.’

“As a mother, I am tired of politicians moving into District 7.

“With some of the oldest, most disinvested neighborhoods—I am tired of our neighborhoods being sold out to big developers and urban sprawl. Our neighborhoods are not political stepping stones.”

Also speaking was Maria Lemus on behalf of Fresno City Council District 3 candidate Joaquin Arambula.

The CVPPAC (cvppac.org) recruits, endorses and supports candidates for office who are committed to the core values of Central Valley residents as expressed by the CVPPAC. These core values include, but are not limited to, climate, class, gender, immigrant and racial justice.

I. smiley G. Calderon is a Southern California Gen X Chicano now living in the Central Valley. He believes in building community through education. He also loves world peace and tacos. He is the advertising director for the Community Alliance newspaper. Contact him at smileycalderon@gmail.com.

MLK and His Legacy in Fresno

BY MALIK SIMBA

The September 2025 issue of *Vanity Fair* magazine features Bernice King’s essay entitled “The Fight to Protect MLK’s Legacy.” She begins her essay with these words: “...on March 28, 1968, I celebrated my fifth birthday...with Daddy and seven days later on April 4, he was assassinated.”

King then shares her father’s dream as expressed at the March for Jobs and Freedom (Aug. 28, 1963) and his speech “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence” (April 4, 1967).

MLK believed in democratic socialism, which calls for “a better distribution of wealth” and a more equitable society. However, King, quoting her father, states that “we have got some difficult days ahead” as this “world house” continues to address and hopefully resolve the great issues of militarism, poverty and inequality.

She encourages “a collective focus on reviving the revolutionary, love-centered movement that my parents and other courageous, hopeful people cultivated.”

In conclusion, she calls for activists to use Kingian nonviolence against what her father called “the triple evils of racism, militarism and poverty.”

She ended with a reference to an observation from her father’s book, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?*, “We must learn to live together as brothers or will all perish together as fools.”

With the assassination of the right-wing podcaster Charlie Kirk and the voluminous commentary on that tragic event, not one writer, to this author’s knowledge, quoted Dr. King’s foreboding, which is the purpose of the annual celebration of Martin Luther King Day.

As a Black, southern, Baptist minister, King gave us iconic words of wisdom as guide lights so we can all find our way out of the darkness of the secular world and its conflicts. King’s sermons were soulful jeremiads birthed from the Black experience and its resistance to racism and racial oppression. King calls her father’s words the philosophy of Kingian wisdom.

Dr. King came to Fresno in 1964 and used his nonviolent approach to address housing discrimination in the city. He led a march of more than 1,000 from Fresno High School to Fresno City College’s Ratcliffe Stadium. Dr. King spoke before a mass of 3,000 concerned citizens. The City of Fresno has replicated this historic event for dozens of years.

In 2024 and 2025, the West Fresno Ministerial Alliance (WFMA), composed of Black ministers such as Reverend B. T. Lewis, Reverend Bruce McCalister and others, has organized a supportive MLK celebration parade with the emphasis on Kingian philosophy. The WFMA has always reminded me of King’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference, composed of Black Baptist ministers, which was King’s civil rights activist organization. Pastor Jim Franklin has co-coordinated this event. Reverend Edward Jones IV also coordinated a march in 2025 at Fresno City College.

This brings us to the renowned Fresno City Council Member Lester Kimber and Dr. Sudarshan Kapoor, both of whom served on the board of the MLK March. The march has also been supported by the City of Fresno and several mayors including the present mayor, Jerry Dyer.



A march honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Fresno on Jan. 19, 2025. Photo by Peter Maiden

Dr. Kapoor has served on the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Committee and co-coordinated the “Stop the Hate, Build the Culture of Peace Week” in Fresno. He has promoted nonviolence as advocated by Mahatma Gandhi’s idea of Satyagraha or love force which, in a mass movement of civil disobedience, led to the end of British colonialism in India.

Les Kimber and now his son, Mark Kimber, have been the editors of the major Black newspaper, the *California Advocate*, that is the straw that stirs the drink concerning all news fit to print about the life and times of Black folk in Fresno and the Valley.

Current editor Mark Kimber has partnered with Fresno State to cover Black academic achievements and has an annual interview with Fresno State President Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval on his strategies in recruitment and retention of Black students.

At Fresno State, all students are required to take a critical-thinking course. Dr. King, while an undergraduate at Morehouse College, wrote a paper entitled “The Purpose of Education.”

King argued two points: 1) education should make one a critical thinker, and 2) it should build moral character. King wrote that the most “dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason, but no morals.” That warning is relatable to many American politicians today.

These separate celebrations are organized by sincere individuals who want to continue Dr. King’s legacy and champion the idea of “unity without uniformity.”

Malik Simba is a professor emeritus of Africana studies/history at Fresno State.

Starting a War with Venezuela

BY LENI VILLAGOMEZ REEVES

As of Oct. 15, the United States had attacked five small boats off the coast of Venezuela, in international waters. Six people were killed in the most recent attack (as of this writing).

The first such attack took place on Sept. 2, killing 11 people. Two further attacks took place on Sept. 15 and 19, with three people killed in each case.

Then, a fourth strike came on Oct. 3, with U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth claiming four fatalities aboard that boat. The known death toll is at least 27. Trump did not offer any evidence for the allegation that the boat was “conducting narcotrafficking.”

An unclassified video of the bombing, which appeared to show a small boat seemingly drifting in the water, not moving, before the U.S. missile makes impact, was shown, just as has occurred in the past. Experts and human rights groups have deplored the attacks. Even in the unlikely event that these boats had drug traffickers on board, that would not make these people armed combatants.

Daphne Eviatar, director of Amnesty International’s Security with Human Rights program said of the Sept. 15 attack, “This is an extrajudicial execution, which is murder.”

Eviatar added, “There is no legal justification for this military strike. The U.S. must be held accountable.”

“All available evidence suggests that President Trump’s lethal strikes in the Caribbean constitute murder, pure and simple,” said Jeffrey Stein, staff attorney with the ACLU’s National Security Project.

“The public deserves to know how our government is justifying these attacks as lawful, and, given the stakes, immediate public scrutiny of its apparently radical theories is imperative.”

Center for Constitutional Rights legal director Baehr Azmy stressed that “in a constitutional system, no president can arbitrarily choose to assassinate individuals from the sky based on his whim or say-so.”

On Sept. 12, the U.S. vessel USS Jason Dunham (DDG-109), a destroyer equipped with cruise missiles, sent 18 men armed with heavy weapons to detain and occupy the Venezuelan fishing vessel Carmen Rosa that had been sailing 48 nautical miles northeast of La Blanquilla Island, well within Venezuela’s Exclusive Economic Zone. They terrorized and detained the nine fishermen for eight hours.

The United States has deployed eight warships, a nuclear submarine and 10 F-35 fighter jets in the Caribbean, all to threaten Venezuela. The excuse is that the United States is trying to combat “drug trafficking.”

However, UN data indicate that Venezuela is not a nation that engages in drug trafficking. Former executive director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Pino Arlacchi states that during her tenure in that position “I frequently traveled to Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Brazil, but never to Venezuela. There was simply no need.

“The Venezuelan government’s collaboration in the fight against drug trafficking was among the best in South America, rivaled only by Cuba’s impeccable record. This makes Trump’s narrative of a ‘narco-state’ in Venezuela sound like geopolitically motivated slander.”

The 2025 UN Office on Drugs and Crime report only briefly mentions Venezuela, stating that a small amount of Colombian drug production passes through the country en route to the United States and Europe. According to the United Nations, Venezuela has consolidated its status as a territory free from the cultivation of coca leaves, cannabis and similar crops, as well as from the presence of international criminal cartels.

“This document merely confirms the findings of the previous 30 annual reports, which did not address

Venezuelan drug trafficking because it does not exist,” states Arlacchi.

Venezuela is not a drug trafficking country and the “Cartel of the Suns” is a U.S.-invented myth to justify sanctions, like the alleged Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq in 2003. Tren de Aragua is a small prison gang, not a state-sponsored threat. Maduro is not a dictator or the head of a (nonexistent) cartel. He’s the elected president of a country that holds free and fair elections.

This country provides free healthcare and education and has eliminated homelessness.

The United States is trying to regain control of Venezuela’s resources, especially its vast oil reserves. This has been a U.S. goal ever since Hugo Chavez was elected president in 1998, and the Bolivarian Revolution, a term referring to the ideals of independence leader Simón Bolívar, not the country of Bolivia, began to build popular democracy, economic independence, equitable distribution of wealth and an end to corruption.

In 2015, the U.S. government placed economic and political sanctions on Venezuela with the goal of wrecking the economy. These were effective in causing suffering and emigration. Venezuela has worked hard to recover.

In addition, Trump needs a war right now as a distraction from his Epstein involvement and as an excuse for repression. The killing of a right-wing media figure will function only briefly as a media distraction. Being a war president—now that has emotional appeal for this narcissistic sociopath as well as enormous political utility.

What is missing from these accounts? It is the point of view of the people of Venezuela.

“Waiting for the Invasion”

The media reports the Trump-Rubio lies and the alternative media reports the point of view of those of us who oppose U.S. imperialist aggression abroad and fascist repression at home. What is it like to be in a country threatened with war and invasion by the biggest military empire in history? What does it feel like to have eight destroyers carrying over a thousand missiles, and a nuclear submarine offshore, prepared for an invasion, an occupation, bombings?

The people of Venezuela are firmly united in favor of peace and in defense of the country’s sovereignty, states Maduro, and undoubtedly this is true; it is the natural response of people faced with foreign invasion. People are signing up for militia training in huge numbers. “We’re going to make them respect our country” say the social media posts.

Giselle P., a biologist-ecologist in Caracas, Venezuela, talked about “waiting for the invasion” and how the Venezuelan people have developed their strength to resist in a recent interview. (Her English is excellent; this is not a translation.)

“It’s been 25 years since the revolution. We’ve seen every way to take us down.”

Commenting on the recent U.S. actions, she asked, “How can you just go and blow people up?...You cannot bring nuclear vessels into a non-nuclear zone...The U.S. has always ignored international law in Latin America; we can take lessons from that, from history.

“I was listening to a Cuban song called ‘Waiting for the Invasion,’ and it’s a calm song, very Cuban; it gives me strength.” (“Esperando la Invasión,” a 1961 song by Carlos Puebla)

“I find strength in many things,” she says. “We’ve seen many things, overcome many things. Trump has a certain cockiness, and that is going to be expressed in the way that they attack us.

“I think they’re going to mess around and find out. They think we’re this small country, incompetent.

“But you don’t carry out a socialist revolution in a country that is close to the U.S., with so much oil under its feet, by being silly, incompetent, incapable. We have done this through strategy, we did it through competence, through dedication, and this is what we still have.



“We want to continue with our revolution. We want to continue having sovereignty over our own oil, and this is what’s going to happen. There are over four million people prepared to defend in people’s militias. We’ve been resisting for 25 years; we’ve been through a lot, and therefore we are very organized.

“The militias are over 16 years old, and now more people are enlisting. The people who have resisted the economic sanctions that have been very rough on our systems—our electrical systems, technological systems, our food systems, our everything—what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.

“We’ve become self-reliant for many things in our food system that we didn’t used to rely on ourselves for. The resistance is not just now; it has been built up and now we’re seeing more people enlisting in these militias.

“Now, what does this militia actually mean? What it means—it’s a group of citizens willing to follow military orders if needed. It’s an attempt to create a people’s war, so not only the military will respond. That’s the objective: The people who have been in Venezuela resisting are willing to continue to do so under whatever circumstances come our way.

“Something that happened to me this morning: my little girl—she’s eight—she was listening to music from different parts of the world, Chinese music, music from Egypt, whatever, then she came back to Venezuelan traditional music. It struck me that music from each country sounds different, and you don’t have to be an expert to perceive that and to be warmed within, when you hear what rings true to you.

“When I heard that music, I felt: this is what they’re attacking, this is what the United States is trying to change, to denigrate, to disappear. And that sense of ‘This is me,’ this is what moves me, what moves my daughter...

“That makes you want to defend what is yours, and you were asking me whether I thought the militias could really have the strength that it requires and I think that this feeling of wanting to preserve what is yours is what gives it strength.

“And the organization that has been necessary to survive under the economic siege that the U.S. has brought upon us in Venezuela is what gives us the tactical strength as well so that I think that on our past, it’s just love for what you are, for what you are trying to build, for the dream that you are trying to build, and just the experience that we have.

“As Chávez said, we’re a peaceful country, we are a peaceful revolution, but we are not unarmed. When we went out of our country to participate in wars it was for the independence of Latin America, and that is what Venezuela is, was and continues to be.”

Leni Villagomez Reeves is a local physician and activist. Check out her news and views about Cuba on Facebook (facebook.com/fresnosolidarity/).



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FRESNO

National Women’s Political Caucus (NWPC) is a multi-partisan, multi-racial, prochoice grassroots organization dedicated to increasing women’s participation in the political process and creating a true women’s political power base to achieve equality for all women. Dinner meetings are the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm social and dinner at 6:00 pm. For location, please check our website: nwpcfresno.org.

PO Box 5553
Fresno, CA 93755-5553
nwpcfresno.org

Contact: Cathy Brass 559-225-5433 (home) or 559-288-8973 (cell)

Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world.
— Hillary Clinton

In memory of our past president, Carol Bequette



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WILPF Fresno, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing



Photos by Sandra Iyall

FRESNO BRANCH HOLDS ANNUAL FALL RETREAT AND ELECTION

At least 20 members of our Fresno Branch showed up at the lovely home of Pat Wolk for our Annual Fall Retreat. We set out to be inspired, look back and plan forward with energy and commitment to build and strengthen our organization toward justice, peace and radical democracy.

Fresno's Raging Grannies got us off to a great start by singing "We're Not Giving Up" (lyrics by Sara Williams, Raging Grannies of Madison) and "Now You've Pissed Off Grandma" (lyrics by Vicki Ryder of Triangle Raging Grannies). Both songs captured our mood and commitment.

In-person reports on committees were given by Patty Bennett, representing Raging Grannies (who want to recruit new members); Jean Hays from Legislative, Earth Democracy and *Stir It Up* radio program; Cheryl Caldera from the Library Committee; Dr. Jean Kennedy from Unpacking Racism and Rudy's Soup Kitchen; and Jan Slagter from WILPF International.

Some members were not in attendance, but their submitted reports were read to the group: Teresa Castillo's Treasurer's Report; Nancy Hatcher's Corresponding Secretary Report, Membership Report and WINGS Report; Carol Goiburn's Disarm Committee Report and Valley Voices for Peace Report (in need of a new podcaster); Gerry Bill's Dakota EcoGarden Report; and Patricia Wells-Solorzano's Teatro de la Tierra Report.

One of the functions of our Annual Retreat is to hold elections. We are pleased to announce that we have elected Cam Fanning to the positions of Chair of our Fresno Branch and Membership Chair. We also reelected Teresa Castillo as our Branch Treasurer, Nancy Hatcher as our Corresponding Secretary and Leni Villagomez Reeves as our Recording Secretary.

During lunch, we were privileged to have a Zoom conversation with the new WILPF-US Executive Director, Linda Low. She's been told we are one of the most active branches in the U.S. She shared with us the launching of a new campaign for WILPF: Peace is/Peace is Not to challenge the Administration's militarized definition of peace. WILPF US's Peace is/Peace is Not campaign reclaims the definition of peace to reflect the following:

Human rights and dignity
Disarmament and nonviolence
Social, economic and environmental justice
Sustainable well-being for all

After the inspirational Zoom call with Linda Low, we set about planning for the upcoming year, beginning with a discussion of the importance of the Oct. 18 No Kings Protest in Fresno at Manchester Center. We went through the calendar to list important dates and activities to help us move forward with activities to reinforce and reflect our vision to organize for sustainable existence in our diverse community.

A giveaway was held after lunch and at the close of the Retreat. Two lucky members went home with donated copies of *Arm in Arm: The Grimké Sisters' Fight for Abolition and Women's Rights*, donated to us by the author and new member, Angelica Shirley Carpenter.

We thank member Pat Wolk for her generous hospitality; Nancy Hatcher, Jean Hays, Sandra Iyall, Kyla Mitchell, and Jan Slagter for their planning of the Retreat; and Sandra for also taking photographs, which can be found on our Facebook page, facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064849473970.

—Sandra Iyall

PEACE IS...

"WILPF US announced the launch of its national Peace is/Peace is Not campaign to challenge the Administration's militarized definition of peace."

"Peace is not a slogan you can weaponize. Peace is justice, dignity and freedom for all people. When the Administration wages war abroad, represses dissent at home, and violates human rights, that is not peace—it is violence by another name. WILPF US will not let peace be redefined by those who

profit from war," said Linda Low, Executive Director of Women's International League for Peace & Freedom US. Linda Low Zoomed with attendees of our Fall Retreat to launch the Peace is campaign and presented a video of the new posters.



CAM FANNING: PRESIDENT, WILPF FRESNO

Cam Fanning is the newly elected president and membership chair of the Fresno branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). A lifelong advocate for social justice, Cam's work bridges education, creativity and grassroots organizing.

An adoptee raised in the Deep South, Cam studied developmental psychology and has spent much of her career helping children learn and grow through movement-based play. As a climbing coach, she specializes in using climbing and games to build confidence, executive function and coordination in early childhood. Early next year, she will travel to Memphis Rox, a nonprofit climbing gym in Tennessee, to help develop their youth curriculum and adaptive programming.

Cam's path to activism has been shaped by both compassion and lived experience. After Hurricane Helene, she traveled to western North Carolina to help with mutual

aid efforts in the wake of widespread destruction. She later joined the Global Movement to Gaza, helping coordinate both the recent flotilla that sailed to break the siege on Gaza and parallel actions of solidarity here in the U.S. to raise awareness of the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

At the heart of her work is a belief that art and imagination are vital tools for liberation. A textile artist and avid reader, Cam often fuses creative expression with advocacy (you may have seen her Free Palestine banner displayed at local events or community spaces). She sees art as a way to both honor grief and spark possibility, bridging the emotional and practical dimensions of social change.

Cam and her wife, Gigi, recently relocated to Fresno for Gigi's new role at Valley Children's Hospital overseeing the development of their new pediatric bone marrow transplant/cellular therapy program. They are excited to build roots in Fresno's vibrant and diverse community.

As WILPF Fresno's new president, Cam hopes to strengthen connections



Photo by Gigi

between local and global justice movements while continuing WILPF's century-long tradition of women-led peace work. Her vision for the chapter centers on collaboration, education and joyful resistance, creating a welcoming space where people can learn, create and take action together for a more peaceful and equitable world.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW! HERE'S HOW

Send dues to WILPF Fresno, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755.

WILPF-US membership is \$35/year. WILPF-Fresno sponsors a low-income rate of \$20.

For questions and information updates, contact Nancy Hatcher at nhatcher46@gmail.com or Kyla Mitchell at kyla.noelle@gmail.com.

WILPF MEETING

Nov. 13 (second Thursday), 6:30 p.m., via Zoom (and sometimes also at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave.). This meeting is open to all. Watch your e-mail for an announcement.

STIR IT UP—WILPF ON KFCF 88.1 FM

Nov. 26 (fourth Wednesday), 3 p.m. Jean Hays highlights people and events important to our WILPF community.

Listen to our new monthly podcast! "Valley Voices for Peace" can be found on SoundCloud and YouTube, thanks to host Carol Goiburn and a mini-grant from WILPF US.

WOMEN IN BLACK

Nov. 5 (first Wednesday), 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Federal Building, 2500 Tulare St., Fresno. We are now joining Raza Against War's protest. Check with Sue Kern at skern@netptc.net or 559-349-3777.

THE CONTENT ON THIS PAGE IS PAID FOR BY WILPF. THE WILPF PAGE IS USUALLY COMPILED AND EDITED BY LENI VILLAGOMEZ REEVES (LENIVREEVES@GMAIL.COM).

Protect Children from Hazardous Pesticides

BY CRISTINA GUTIERREZ

October is Children’s Environmental Health Month in California, and there’s no better time to face a hard truth: Here in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, in counties like Fresno and Tulare, children are among the most pesticide-exposed in California. They inhale drifting pesticide sprays from fields next to homes and schools, and many risk exposure on campus because the Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) still reserves the right to use highly hazardous pesticides—including products other countries have already rejected for safety. A new peer-reviewed study from the Public Health Institute’s Tracking California and UC Berkeley’s Center for Environmental Research and Children’s Health (CERCH) analyzed more than 390,000 California births and pesticide applications statewide, finding that 7.5% of all pregnant women lived within one kilometer (about 0.6 miles) of organophosphate (OP) pesticide use during their pregnancy.

Researchers found that 23% of pregnant women in Tulare County and 6%–10% of pregnant women in Fresno County lived within one kilometer of hazardous OP pesticide spraying during pregnancy. Extensive research reveals that pregnant women living near farm fields where OP pesticides are applied face higher risks of harm to their developing babies—including lower IQ, learning and attention problems, and lung damage. No amount of a brain-harming chemical is acceptable for a developing child.

The authors of the new study warn that these exposures fall hardest on Latino families. Fresno and Tulare counties remain among the highest users of agricultural pesticides in California, with Fresno as the top pesticide user county (nearly 26.3 million pounds of pesticide active ingredients applied in 2023) and Tulare the third highest (nearly 16.8 million pounds of pesticide active ingredients applied in 2023).

In Fresno County, OP use remains substantial. In 2023, growers applied more than 174,000 pounds of OP pesticides on fields across the county—with heaviest use on crops like pistachio, tomatoes, cotton, oranges and alfalfa. In Tulare County, growers applied approximately 57,040 pounds of OP pesticides, with heaviest use on crops like citrus and cotton. When the wind picks up (and in the Valley it always does), those sprays don’t stay put; they drift into neighborhoods, across schoolyards and other places where children play and sleep.

Organophosphates are not “normal” chemicals. Many were adapted from the same nerve-agent chemistry developed for warfare. They kill by blocking acetylcholinesterase—the enzyme insects’ brains and our brains use to shut off nerve signals. When that shut-off switch is jammed, nerves fire uncontrollably: tremors, headaches, memory problems, seizures; in high doses, paralysis. For a fetus or a young child whose brain is wiring itself in real time, the damage can be permanent.

Children aren’t “little adults.” Pound for pound they breathe more air, drink more water and eat more food—so the same exposure delivers a bigger dose. They’re also closer to the ground, they crawl and touch surfaces, and they put their hands and objects in their mouths, which means more contact with pesticide residues in dust and on floors. And for many farmworker families, exposure begins before birth and continues when residues come home on a parent’s clothes, shoes, skin and car seats; that dust collects in living rooms and bedrooms and becomes the backdrop of childhood. “My kids can’t play outside when they’re spraying,” said Ofelia Ochoa, a mother in Fresno County. “The smell comes through the windows. We all feel it in our throats. But we can’t afford to move.”

This is environmental injustice in plain view. Latino families are more likely to live near fields where OPs are applied, to attend schools adjacent to agriculture and to experience multiple exposure routes at once—prenatal, drift, take-home and on-campus applications. The new Tracking California/CERCH study underscores that reality: OP proximity during pregnancy is common enough statewide to be alarming, and it clusters in places where working families already shoulder the heaviest burden. Unfortunately, it’s not just the fields. The FUSD, the third largest school district in the state, still authorizes a list of pesticides for use on school grounds that includes particularly hazardous pesticides, despite safer integrated pest management options.

According to the district’s own documents, the FUSD reserves the right to use more than two dozen pesticides that are banned in the European Union because of risks to children, workers or the environment.

“No Hatred, No Bullies”—Really?

BY BAYARD TAYLOR

Charlie Kirk was assassinated on Sept. 10 at Utah Valley University. Whatever Kirk stood for, whether you’re pro or con, he didn’t deserve to be murdered like that. It was a tragic death that should give us all pause. The memorial service, held 11 days later, was held in Glendale, Ariz., and was attended by 90,000 people. One of the speakers was Stephen Miller, Trump’s deputy chief of staff for policy. Miller’s speech was in English but struck the same notes as a Nazi propaganda speech by Joseph Goebbels in 1932. Here are some clips from Miller that echo Goebbels: “When I see Erika [Kirk’s widow] and her strength and her courage, I’m reminded of a famous expression. The storm whispers to the warrior that you cannot withstand my strength and the warrior whispers back, I am the storm.” Goebbels’ speech was entitled “The Storm Is Coming.” Hitler’s brownshirts were called the Sturmabteilung, the “storm department.” It is no coincidence that neo-Nazis affectionately use “storm” imagery, such as with the Internet message board that calls itself “The Daily Stormer.” Another clip from Miller: “They cannot conceive of the army that they have arisen in all of us because we stand for what is good, what is virtuous, what is noble.” Here Miller poses an absolute dichotomy between the pure and good “us” of MAGAs and adorers of Kirk versus

the “they” and “them” of degenerate and worthless Democratic voters and anyone who questioned Kirk’s extreme statements (of which there were plenty). In another clip, Miller switches from “they” to “you.” “You have nothing. You are nothing. You are wicked. You are jealous. You are envious. You are hatred. You are nothing. You can build nothing. You can produce nothing. You can create nothing.” This is nothing like, “We’re in this together as Americans, and we’ll find a way through.” This is more like, “We’ll annihilate you if you don’t fall into line,” an absolute nullification of disfavored people. Miller is saying, “Vengeance is ours; we will repay,” and he is urging the MAGA faithful, with the martyr Kirk inspiring from heaven, to rise up like a “dragon” and reduce their demonized opponents to “nothing.” Miller’s actions match his hate-filled talk. In Trump’s first administration, Miller urged using force against peaceful George Floyd protesters. His fingerprints are all over Trump’s Muslim travel ban (assuming all Muslims are potential terrorists and ignoring right-wing domestic terrorism). Miller was the architect of the “zero tolerance” policy that deliberately ripped thousands of families apart at the southern border, some never to be reunited—a moral travesty that Miller refused to repair. More recently, Miller instantly blamed Kirk’s assassination on “a vast terrorist network” on the left. But when the violence is instigated by right-wing extremists, he says nothing. Remember the Jan. 6, 2021, attack against the Capitol? Remember when Nancy Pelosi’s husband was attacked with a hammer? Remember the murder of Melissa

OPINION & ANALYSIS



In counties like Fresno and Tulare, children are among the most pesticide-exposed in California. *Photo courtesy of The Commons*

“If these pesticides are too dangerous for Europe, why are they still being used around our children’s schools?” asked one Fresno parent. California’s 2020 chlorpyrifos ban was a necessary step, but swapping one organophosphate for another is not a solution—especially when the health endpoint is the same: harm to the developing brain. Regulators know this. The science is strong, the monitoring tools exist and the exposure routes in Fresno are well understood. What’s been missing is the political will to put children’s health ahead of chemical convenience. Here’s what Fresno and Tulare counties can do right now. First, establish stronger buffer zones where OP applications are prohibited near homes, schools, childcare centers, farmworker housing, parks and hospitals. Drift doesn’t respect property lines, and children don’t choose where the wind blows. Second, phase out the remaining OPs, period. Other countries have already moved on; our families should not serve as the control group for chemical policy failure. Third, ban synthetic pesticides on school grounds and require the district to adopt safer pest prevention—repair and sanitation, physical barriers, least-toxic products as a last resort and full transparency in plain language to families. Fourth, provide exact location information as part of the California Department of Pesticide Regulation’s precedent-setting SprayDays notification system and stronger air monitoring in agricultural neighborhoods so families can better protect themselves and so health agencies can act on real exposure data rather than averages that hide local spikes. Finally, prioritize protections where the burden is highest—pregnant people, infants and children, farmworkers and the elderly—so our policies match what the science and common sense already tell us. Fresno’s and Tulare’s agricultural economies shouldn’t hinge on chemicals that can rewire a child’s brain. The workers who feed California should not have to sacrifice their own children’s futures to do it. It’s Children’s Environmental Health Month; if those words mean anything, they must mean that our counties choose our children over pesticides. Fresno and Tulare counties can lead. The Department of Pesticide Regulation can act. And our largest area school district can decide that a playground and school room are no place for products that other countries have abandoned as too dangerous. The continued use of organophosphate and other particularly hazardous pesticides around children is not an accident—it’s a policy choice. Our children deserve clean air, safe schools and a chance to grow up without permanent chemical interference in their developing brains. The next generation is watching. ***** *Cristina Gutierrez was a farmworker and is a mother of four. She advocates for voter rights here and in Mexico. Currently, she is the San Joaquin Valley regional environmental justice coordinator of Californians for Pesticide Reform.*

Hortman, Minnesota’s Democratic speaker emeritus of the House, and her husband? Miller’s selective and partisan condemnation of alleged violence by “antifa” amounts to active encouragement of violence by right-wing extremists. We can’t forget that Miller sent hundreds of immigrants, without due process, to El Salvador’s infamous “CECOT” torture prison. He has illegally promoted “Alligator Alcatraz” in Florida as an inescapable concentration camp for deportation detainees. Miller tried to but was stopped from deporting nearly 700 unaccompanied minor children to Guatemala. Miller has targeted Columbia and Harvard universities’ diversity, equality and inclusion initiatives, threatening academic integrity and free expression. His influence is behind the attempted elimination of Jimmy Kimmel’s late-night comedy show. Miller is responsible for illegally federalizing National Guard troops to establish police states in Democratic-led cities like Los Angeles, Chicago and Portland. Miller is the driving force behind overly aggressive and excessively violent ICE raids and mass deportations across the country. The Supreme Court has enabled Miller’s Gestapo-like tactics of racial profiling, having masked men accosting Hispanic-looking people, throwing them into unmarked cars and vans, and “disappearing” them in undisclosed locations for weeks and longer. Miller’s hatred of darker-skinned immigrants is exemplified in the militaristic attack on a 130-unit apartment building in Chicago that was occupied by Black and Brown families. Residents were rousted from their beds and separated from their children. Children were zip-tied together and forced to stand in the cold waiting to be put

Continued on page 16



SIERRA CLUB

TEHIPITE CHAPTER

With Salmon on the Brink of Extinction, the Trump Administration Ignores Reality, Violates Federal Reclamation Law: Part 1

by Gary Lasky

The San Francisco Bay Delta is the largest inland estuary in the world, a rich ecosystem positioned where the Pacific Ocean meets the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. Its complex habitat includes stocks of salmon and steelhead fish, and nearly a dozen federally endangered fish species. As are all estuaries, the Delta is a brackish water feature open at both ends, a contested geography where saline ocean water pushes in to meet the mountain rivers fed by rainfall and snowmelt.

The Delta is fed by the Sacramento River from the distant Siskiyou Mountains near the Oregon border; and the San Joaquin River from the Sierra Nevada range to the east, which flows across the flat and hot San Joaquin Valley. Where these mighty rivers meet the Delta, a brackish mixing zone is created, which shifts east and west depending on the season: eastward in the dry spring and summer months and westward in California's wet season when its rivers run high, historically from the first rains in October through March, but less certainly since our increasingly frequent droughts in the past two decades.

The Delta ecosystem is, to put it bluntly, on life support, a victim of excessive water withdrawals over more than a century. Unless brought back from the brink through an organized recovery effort by state and federal agencies, the salmon, steelhead trout, and nearly a dozen other fish listed under the federal and state Endangered Species Act will go extinct, the Delta's biodiversity converted to a marine environment.

If it collapses, the Delta's demise will have been caused by a lack of political will and an economic system which fails to recognize the value of Nature unless it can be captured and sold, as is the river water, diverted to San Joaquin Valley billionaire farms and Los Angeles. In a battle of powerful financial interests, the fish have been losing, its \$1.3 billion commercial fishery closed three years in a row, waiting to see if the salmon, which live for just three years, can make yet another comeback from the brink of extinction.

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) lies within the U.S. Department of the Interior. It is the federal agency responsible for the Central Valley Project (CVP), a complex, New Deal-era "water-conveyance system" created to erect



U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Credit: Rock Design Associates, National Wildlife Federation



State Water Project California Aqueduct
Credit: California Department of Water Resources

dams, canals, and other infrastructure to deliver irrigation water from the Sierra Nevada to San Joaquin Valley farmers. It was devised for family farms which lie along the foothills of the Sierra, the so-called Eastside San Joaquin Valley, but not the arid Westside San Joaquin Valley lands which lie in the rain shadow of the Coast Range.

In the early 1990s, recognizing the decline of the Delta habitat for fish and other aquatic species, Congress passed into law the Central Valley Improvement Act (CVPIA), which was supposed to ensure sufficient flows of the Delta's rivers into and through it to the Pacific Ocean, but these protections to the salmon and the Delta have never been realized. This is due to constant, intense pressure from the wealthiest San Joaquin Valley farmers from Fresno to Bakersfield, and their slick, effective propaganda, deliberately concealing the damage to the Delta habitat, and denying the reality that the finite supply of California water has been vastly overpromised to competing priorities and interest groups. And since salmon neither vote nor make campaign contributions, they continue to lose.

These government policies are sponsored by the Agricultural industry, executed by the billionaire growers' hand-picked representatives in Sacramento and Congress and the Trump administration.

The Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN Act) Is a 2016 statute, one of a series of historic compromises between powerful, competing interests to allocate surface water deliveries. Southern California's large metropolitan regions with municipal and industrial water needs are always seeking new supplies; central California farmers in the 300-mile long, 50-mile-wide San Joaquin Valley, adjacent to the Sierra range; and northern California's cities and farms, where the majority of California's precipitation falls.

The WIIN Act provides the mechanism—though not the funding—to enable the construction of dams and waterways which make the capture and conveyance of water possible on a massive scale, under both the CVP and the State Water Project (SWP), which carries water from northern California southward to the San Joaquin Valley and (primarily), urban water customers in Central and Southern California via the California Aqueduct, which can be seen from Interstate 5.

TO BE CONTINUED

Thursday, Nov. 6 at 7:00 PM
Woodward Park Regional Library

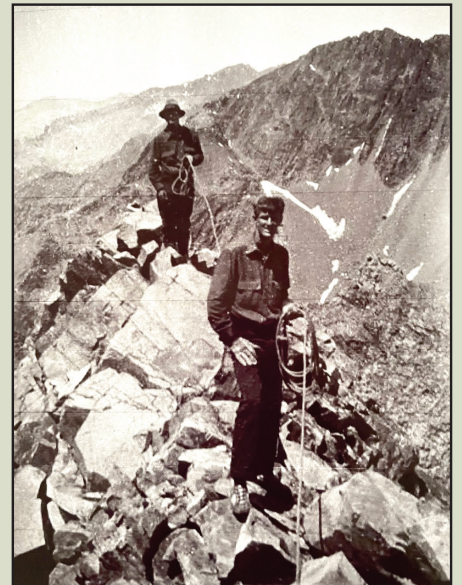
The Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club presents, "Mountains and Music: Ansel Adams and Jules Eichorn, A Lifelong Friendship."

This program will tell the story of how Jules Eichorn's piano teacher, Ansel Adams, shaped his life with regard to music, mountains and the environment.

We will also see a "home movie" of the first ascent of the Higher Cathedral Spire from April 15, 1934 by Jules Eichorn, Richard Leonard and Bestor Robinson. This marked the beginning of modern rock climbing in Yosemite Valley, according to Galen Rowell.

This program will be presented by the daughter of Jules Eichorn, Linda Renfro, who will share personal insights into the lives of these legendary figures of the Sierra.

Free and open to the general public.



Pioneering climber Jules Eichorn
Credit: Linda Renfro, private collection

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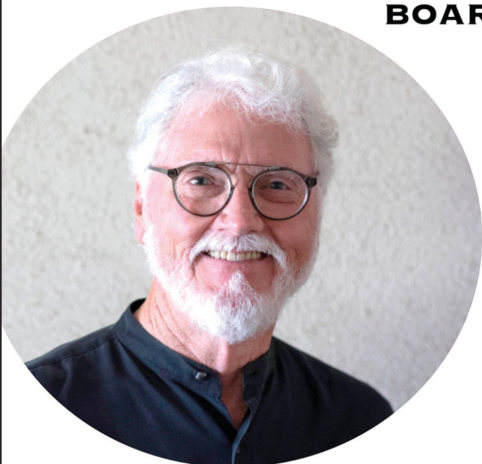
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Has the power to divest: Can withdraw from Israel's gas market at any time but chooses not to.

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The Unique Publishing Career of Steve Alcala

BY PETER MAIDEN

Steve Alcala was born in Hanford, then moved to Fresno as a young child. He graduated from Roosevelt High School in southeast Fresno, and then in 1979 from Fresno State, with a major in music.

“Let me start from the beginning,” Alcala said.

“When I took over the music program at Roosevelt High School in 1982, it was called the Roosevelt Marimba Band. It was based around a marimba. We played some Herb Alpert tunes. Then we had guitars, and we had folklórico dancers.

“It was really formed by a Spanish teacher, Margie Fenton, who wanted to get more Mexican kids involved with the arts, particularly performing arts. Southeast Fresno had a large Mexican community. It still does.

“She heard some kids playing, I think it was Sabor a Mí, in the band room on guitar. They were playing the wrong chords, and she was passing by the room. She said, ‘No, no, this is how you play.’

“She showed them the right chords, and it gave her the idea of creating a band of musicians. They didn't have to read [music] as long as they could learn by ear. And so, she formed this marimba band, as she called it.

“And it wasn't really about traditional music from Mexico or like that. It was just basically getting Mexican kids involved in the music program.

“It expanded into being a folklórico and rumba band. The rumba band would play songs for the dancers, and they would dance and stuff. So I [led] that for many years. But then I started listening. I go, ‘enough of Sabor a Mí and all these other standard Mexican melodies, maybe the kids could be challenged a little bit more with a different style.’

“My wife [and] her father are from Tampico [Mexico], which is in the Caribbean. She had learned about salsa from him, because all the musicians would come from Cuba, and they would go to Tampico and all the...bands used to play there, the Charanga bands and the ones that played Danzón. She had a large collection of salsa records from her father. She said, ‘Why don't you check this stuff out?’ I went, ‘that's really cool. I really enjoy this.’

“The first [Latin jazz] I had my kids play, that I transcribed, was [Tito Puente's] ‘Ran Kan Kan.’ The one before that was by Carlos Santana, which was kind of a Latin rock kind of piece, but it wasn't really what I wanted. I wanted to be a little more Afro-Caribbean based. I started getting a bigger repertoire, but I had to transcribe it all, because the music that I loved—Tito Puente, Poncho Sanchez, Pete Escovedo—there wasn't any sheet music for that back when I started the class.”

Alcala went to San Francisco in 1984 and visited Tito Puente at the Fairmont Hotel, where he was performing. Puente was an internationally known timbalero and bandleader who recorded more than 100 LPs. Alcala asked Puente if he would consider coming to Fresno for a concert, and Puente said he would.

A year later, the arrangements were made, and the concert was set for the Roosevelt High School auditorium, which held 2,000 people. Around 1,500 came out. The opening act was Roosevelt's Latin Jazz Band, and Puente came out to join them at the end of their set, soloing on ‘Ran Kan Kan.’ This caused a stir among Puente's musicians.

Alcala said, “They were looking behind the curtains and watching us play. They couldn't believe we were playing ‘Ran Kan Kan’...You could see them peeking back there. They couldn't believe these were kids doing their music!”

Since “Ran Kan Kan,” Alcala has transcribed or solicited 600 charts from 70 artists. The vehicle for that was his music publishing company, 3-2 Music, which distributes sheet music and pays royalties to composers. Latin jazz composers sometimes work without sheet music, or they write out the music just for their own bands. 3-2 Music was a game changer.

Alcala followed his own tastes, cold calling artists who recorded songs he liked to ask permission to publish those songs. He would run up to the Bay Area to obtain records that could not be found in Fresno. He was filling a niche.

“Back when I started,” Alcala said, “I had a fax machine. I would come home after a long day of teaching, and there's a stack of orders in my fax machine. And fortunately, Kinko's was open 24 hours a day back then. So, I would drive down to Kinko's in River Park, and then I would spend hours over there copying the music, mailing it out. [I would] get home at one or two in the morning and get up at 6:30 for work.”

Now everything is digital, from writing out the charts, to selling them online, to having customers download PDFs.



Steve Alcala in his home with posters from festivals he helped produce. Photo by Peter Maiden

“I still have a little corner of the market,” Alcala said. He explained that the big publishing companies, “they have millions of people on their e-mail list. I have thousands, but not millions. So, I’m still growing and still learning the field. It’s still all new to me. And I’ve been in it for over 30 years.”

One of the highlights of Alcala's career was working with Eddie Palmieri, who passed away on Aug. 6 of this year, at the age of 89. His passing was noted throughout the Latin music world and across the range of mainstream media. Palmieri, said Alcala, was a “maverick.” He was a superlative band leader, piano player and composer.

“I was the first person to ever publish Eddie Palmieri. You would think...It's crazy! It does sound crazy. It's like saying nobody ever published Beethoven!”

“When I played that stuff for my students, they got all excited. They started learning hand percussion, and they really enjoyed that. But it's just so crazy. I'd say the majority of musicians that I publish were never approached before about getting their music out into the public.”

Alcala takes particular pride in having published the songs of Palmieri's Grammy-nominated Latin jazz album *Palmas*.

Alcala told me Palmieri came one time to the Fresno area, and the promoter asked him if Chukchansi Stadium would be good. Alcala told him no, this isn't Puerto Rico, and it would be tough to fill a fraction of the seats there. The show ended up being in a lounge at the Chukchansi Casino in the foothills near Coarsegold. As sometimes happens in Latin jazz, the publicity was inadequate, and attendance was sparse, only about 20 people.

For Alcala, though, the concert was memorable. He related an anecdote: During the break, the band members went to explore the casino floor, and they didn't come back in time for the beginning of the second set. Only the trumpet player, the greatly talented Brian Lynch, was ready along with Eddie. They went ahead and performed an extended improvised duet. “It was phenomenal,” said Alcala. “I wished I would have recorded it, but I didn't have a smartphone then.”

Alcala later brought Palmieri to Arte Américas, and they filled the plaza. He brought other bands to Fresno, including Poncho Sanchez, Pete Escovedo and the Spanish Harlem Orchestra.

His own band, in which he plays trumpet, includes some graduates of his high school classes and classes he taught at Fresno City College. It is called Rumba 32, and they have a CD, called *Renovation*, which is well put together, and features quality Latin jazz treatments of jazz and popular songs. It is available on Apple Music.

He said the club scene in Fresno is lacking. There are some wineries in the area that have good Latin jazz and salsa for dancers, but the concerts are few. For such a singular art form, there are often few venues. He likes Roger Rocka's but says the cost of renting the club, \$1,000 a night, is too high for his band.

One time a winery broke a contract with Alcala and canceled his band, and after he threatened to sue he got kind of a bad reputation.

He has a solution. “In my next life,” he said, “I'm gonna have a club.”

Peter Maiden is the photo editor of the Community Alliance newspaper.

“A Lot of Empty School Buildings”

BY STEVEN ROESCH

Given the flurry of news stories that appear every day, it's not surprising that recent developments in the Department of Education don't often get much attention.

But maybe they should.

A recent ProPublica article by Megan O'Matz and Jennifer Smith Richards traces a disquieting trajectory that the agency has been taking. If continued, its actions will result in a profound transformation of this country's educational priorities and practices.

Since Linda McMahon became the department's head earlier this year, big changes have been under way.

ProPublica provides an extensive list of its activities and initiatives.

Among them:

Officials in the agency have hollowed out the department's civil rights division, which has worked to make sure that young people can attend public schools without being discriminated against.

They've cut back on protections for LGBTQ+ students and students of color and opened investigations of districts and states that it claims are still accommodating transgender students.

They've often encouraged states to help poor and at-risk students to attend private schools using federal dollars.

They've also ended an official policy mandating that schools offer language help and related services for English



Under the current administration, public education is under serious threat, with the Department of Education intentionally taking actions aimed at encouraging families to choose private schools over public schools. In this image, an elementary public school in Maryland. Photo courtesy of The Commons

learners. O'Matz and Richards note that this new stance ignores federal law.

The department has also established a fund for what it calls “patriotic education”—which, according to its critics, de-emphasizes such aspects of America's past as slavery.

At the same time, it seeks to expand the presence of conservative Christianity in schools. McMahon helped to

found the America First Policy Institute in 2021, and its 2023 policy paper, “Biblical Foundations,” seeks to eliminate the separation of church and state and “plant Jesus in every space.”

One area of particular concern for advocates of public education: changes in Title I grants—funds that focus on

Continued on page 13



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Make a Wave for Gaza

BY COMMUNITY ALLIANCE STAFF

On Oct. 4, more than two dozen people attended the “Make a Wave for Gaza” event at Broadway Parque in downtown Fresno. Participants folded and decorated small paper boats, some of which included statements in support of the international flotilla navigating at that moment to Gaza, bringing food and medical supplies to Palestinians living in Gaza, which was under constant bombardment by Israel.

“This is kind of art...we are trying to get people’s attention,” explained activist Cam Fanning while painting a paper boat.

The activists planned to hang the paper boats around the Tower District.

The flotilla was intercepted by Israel, and the occupants of the vessels were arrested and then deported. Those taking part in the flotilla were volunteers of different nationalities, including six Mexicans. Environmental activist Greta Thunberg, who was among the



Cam Fanning holds up a paper boat she made saying “Free Gaza.” Photo by Peter Maiden



(L to R) Gloria Hernandez, Jonathan Ekparian-Hadden, Jennie Ramirez and Anoush Ekparian-Hadden make paper boats in support of Gaza. Photo by Peter Maiden

volunteers bringing food and medicine to Gaza, accused Israel of intercepting the flotilla on international waters and mistreating those arrested.

The flotilla “is part of a global movement in support of Gaza and Palestinians,” said Fanning, an activist from Atlanta who just moved to Fresno.

“There are several organizations helping, it’s kind of a temporary organization—like a coalition. The global movement to help Gaza is kind of three or four different organizations coming together [and] instead of everyone doing their own flotilla we are combining forces.”

According to news reports, tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed by Israel attacks—including thousands of children—and many others literally starved because of the Israeli blockade of Gaza. Israel has had the full support of the United States under the presidencies of both Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

On Oct. 8, a peace agreement was announced for Gaza, which includes the liberation of 20 hostages held by Hamas and the withdrawal of the Israeli army surrounding Gaza. While activists welcomed the peace agreement, many expressed doubt about Israel’s intentions to make it hold.

School Buildings

Continued from page 11

support for students from low-income families.

The department wants to rework how districts and states can use these grants. For example, it’s already argued that such money could be used for private tutoring.

Public school advocates are concerned that, in the future, Title I assistance could be employed in ways that weaken public schools—such as private school vouchers.

If such actions are a far cry from the department’s former practices, there’s a reason for that.

At least 20 political appointees from right-wing groups have now been brought on board, all of them apparently interested in shrinking the footprint of public education.

One of them is Lindsey Burke, the lead author of Project 2025’s education section.

In an interview in April, Burke stated that, in years to come, “We’re going to have a lot of empty school buildings.”

Given that more than 80% of elementary and secondary students in the United States now attend traditional public schools,

this would herald a momentous shift in America’s educational landscape.

As their public statements make clear, these new appointees want to encourage and enable more families to exit public schools.

One way to accomplish this: growing programs that provide financial support to parents so that they can assemble customized educational plans for their children. Rather than turning to public schools, families would use these resources to pay for such costs as private school tuition, online learning, tutors and transportation.

How might all of these initiatives impact the nature of K-12 education as we’ve come to know it?

For starters, those in charge of the current Department of Education would downsize oversight of schools and districts. The monitoring of actual teaching practices and student learning would be significantly curtailed. Instead, the marketplace would decide what counts as successful practices—for example, by means of parent reviews.

Burke has made it clear that she opposes “any sort of regulation.”

Beyond that, smaller cities and rural areas would face new challenges. Both depend more heavily on public education, given that private and charter schools are less likely to be close by.

Because charter schools play a significant role in the agency’s vision of America’s

educational future, it’s illuminating to look at what some recent in-depth studies of charters have uncovered.

In his book *The Privateers*, Josh Cowen, an education policy professor at Michigan State University, reviews decades of high-quality education research.

His finding: The use of school vouchers to promote charter schools hasn’t resulted in superior learning outcomes. Two major studies between 2005 and 2010 found that vouchers had no effect whatsoever on student learning.

Beginning in 2013, however, several scholars concluded that they’ve actually caused “some of the largest academic declines on record in education research.”

In addition, Cowen points out, charters have often cherry-picked students, sometimes nudging out disabled students or learners who had below-average results on standardized exams.

Charters are also often unstable, as shown in “Doomed to Fail: An Analysis of Charter Closures from 1998–2022,” a report that the Network for Public Education released in mid-October 2024.

The study draws on information from the Common Core of Data, the leading database on non-private elementary and secondary education in the United States, and it paints a sobering portrait of the failure rates of charter schools.

More than 25% of charters have shut their doors within the first five years of their existence. Almost 40% have closed within 10 years, and almost half have fizzled within 15 years. Such rates are far higher than closures among public schools.

Leading reasons for such failures include low enrollment (46.8%), fraud and/or mismanagement (21.6%) and academic issues (13.7%).

Thus, for more than three decades now, “charter closures have broken their promises to more than one million children whose parents believed they had enrolled their children in a better, stable alternative to their local public school.”

Burke and her colleagues might welcome a vast number of desolate public school sites, but it’s far from clear that alternative educational forms such as charters are more desirable.

A steady, long-term commitment to using best practices in education—including a rock-solid commitment to serve all students—would be a far better strategy than an intransigent focus on privatization at all costs.

Steven Roesch is a retired German and English teacher who taught in the Fresno Unified School District for 30 years. Contact him at stevenroesch12@comcast.net.



Cecilia Castro, facilitator of the Central Valley Partnership’s Valley Solidarity Assemblies, at an Oct. 21 meeting at Fresno City College. The Assemblies aim to bring community members into organizations struggling for social justice. The Community Alliance was one of the groups that was receiving support. Photo by Peter Maiden



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Bredefeld Solidifies Role as Cock of the Walk

BY RACHEL YODELMAN

The Oct. 7 Fresno County Board of Supervisors meeting centered on ruminations about roosters and ended with another Garry Bredefeld (District 2) crowing and squawking tirade—this time over Covid vaccines and surgical masks. And, though not raised at this meeting, a revealing update demonstrates the length already reached by the Board’s new speech restrictions imposed on County staff.

Roosters Revisited

The supervisors voted unanimously to delay a new ordinance limiting the number of roosters on a single property. At the ordinance’s Sept. 23 first hearing, the Board voted to restrict the number of roosters that residents can keep to five per property, with a permit required for up to 24 birds.

In some instances, as many as 500 roosters are now kept on a single property, causing noise and animal cruelty complaints. Many roosters, kept for illegal fighting, are tethered or chained and have their wattles cut off.

At the second hearing on Oct. 7, the item appeared on the consent agenda, scheduled for final approval, all with a single vote, along with 49 other routine matters. However, it was pulled for discussion and, based on the extensive ensuing public comment, is now delayed.

Supervisor Nathan Magsig (District 5) noted that the County has received complaints consistently for years about rooster noise, men engaged in forcing roosters to fight each other and other types of animal cruelty. In the weeks leading up to the hearing, calls and e-mails were received for and against the proposed new ordinance, Magsig said, noting that, as there were many members of the public present to speak, their concerns would be heard in the interest of “making the ordinance better.”

There were just two people who spoke in favor, including a woman whose elderly parents live in Yokuts Valley (she, Magsig, and others repeatedly referred to it as “Squaw” Valley, the recent name change having been opposed by Magsig), and she was adamant about the noise made by what she said was 400 roosters neighboring her parents’ property.

Another person spoke about the “corruption, cruelty and violence” of a rooster farm he had experienced in Haiti.

Eleven people spoke against the ordinance. Several were leaders of specialty-poultry breeding societies and serious hobbyists who competitively exhibit their birds; they complained that the proposed rules would “harm legitimate breeders.”

Supervisor Brian Pacheco (District 1), noting that the ordinance allowed for exemptions for 4-H and FFA (Future Farmers of America) members, asked one of the hobbyists how many roosters were needed for breeding; the reply was between five and 50—at least five roosters were needed per specific breed.

Another commenter brought a recording of his 200 roosters as evidence that they were quiet. His voice was heard shouting, “Make some noise, boys!” over a few half-hearted cock-a-doodle-does.

Members of the Hmong community then spoke. They said that the rooster was traditionally a “spiritual” animal within the Hmong religious and social culture.

Roosters are “sacred” and feature in cultural and family celebrations and events. The ordinance would “criminalize” cultural practices, one of them noted.

While the traditions described were compelling, exactly how they use roosters was not clarified, and why, for these purposes, a family would need more than five roosters, if not a permit for up to 24 of them, was not addressed.

Others said that feedstores would go out of business, and some said that there were already laws which address rooster fighting and noise.

Back to the Board: Supervisor Luis Chavez (District 3) remarked that he had not known he’d learn so much about chickens today. He emphasized that it was not the intent of the ordinance to impinge on religious rights or deprive anyone of their livelihood.



Pao Yang of the Fresno Center appeals to the Board on the subject of rooster-keeping. Screenshot from livestream

Pacheco noted that he also learned a lot and reiterated that the intent was not to harm anyone; people want noise and cockfighting addressed, and today’s testimony meant reconfigured solutions were needed.

Bredefeld chimed in: “This city boy learned a lot,” he remarked, agreeing with everyone else.

Chair Buddy Mendes (District 4) said that he “loved the comments” and noted that it was “too bad we didn’t hear from everyone earlier.” He seemed to understand “the chicken deal” regarding breeding needs because it was “the same as cattle.” But noise was a problem, he said.

Magsig suggested delaying the matter as written and forming a committee to address changes, to include representatives from the Hmong community as well as feedstore operators and hobbyist breeders. Magsig would engage the CAO’s office to help refine the ordinance, he said.

Mendes asked Chavez to participate. When Chavez quipped, “I’ll never look at KFC the same,” Mendes, owner of a commercial dairy farm, took the opportunity to school Chavez that poultry production was no joking matter.

Who Was That Masked Man?

During the “supervisor reports and comments” portion of the meeting, Bredefeld said that he’d had a Zoom meeting with the CEO of Community Hospital, at the hospital’s request, to “share what they do with Covid vaccines.”

The hospital, per Bredefeld, said it was responding to the public health department’s “mandating” the Covid vaccine. But Bredefeld told them that “Fresno County is not mandating anything.”

Community Hospital staff “seemed surprised,” said Bredefeld, feigning equanimity for a moment, then launching into a tirade he’d been plotzting about. “The County of Fresno is not mandating any Covid vaccine, nor should we,” adding that “these vaccines” were not effective.

Now firmly on his soapbox, MAGA Republican Bredefeld, long hostile to vaccines and masks and still bitter about “2020” and state vaccine policy, complained that Community Hospital will “force” its staff to be vaccinated, and if they refuse, will “force” them to wear surgical masks temporarily.

Masks, bellowed Bredefeld, were “unhealthy,” asking people to wear them was “punitive,” and “per lots of literature,” vaccines were “harmful.”

Why were these matters seemingly left to Bredefeld, who has no medical expertise and no business interfering with the policies of a private hospital? Why does the CEO of a private hospital with questions about the County’s vaccine policy call Bredefeld and not Interim Director of Public Health Joe Prado?

No one made any objection or questioned Bredefeld. Calls to Bredefeld’s office, the Department of Public Health, Community Hospital and the CAO’s office were not returned at the time of submission of this article.

However, a staff person at the Fresno County Immunization Program said that the County follows state guidelines, which do require a course of vaccinations, excluding Covid (“recommended” but not “required,” as is the flu vaccine), at various life stages, beginning at kindergarten, and that private hospitals, such as Community, set their own policies.

Vaccine guidelines at the federal level—from the Trump Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), for example, which is now led by a former heroin addict and conspiracy-theory-wielding anti-vaccine extremist—differ from the state’s.

CAO Paul Nerland, appearing to enthusiastically acquiesce to Bredefeld’s demands, agreed that he would make matters “crystal clear” with the hospital, indicating that his office would reiterate the County’s guidelines to hospital staff, who could then “make their own decisions” based on that information.

Why Community Hospital met with Bredefeld rather than the County’s health department remained a mystery, as did why the CAO and not the health department was tasked with sharing vaccine guidelines.

Library Update: Policy 81

Though not on the day’s agenda or otherwise raised at this meeting, County residents noticed that as of mid-September, all branches of the Fresno County Public Library suspended their social media accounts, following implementation of the Bredefeld brainchild, Policy 81, which effectively imposes speech restrictions on library staff.

The policy bans all County departments from publicly mentioning, recognizing or celebrating any holiday, theme or event unless it has been preapproved by a Board majority. The measure, approved by a 3-2 vote, followed Bredefeld’s homophobic attacks on Pride Month book displays in libraries and County participation in the Pride Parade.

In mid-September, identical posts appeared on every library branch Facebook account, announcing—without explanation—a “pause” in social media activity. County Communications Director Sonja Dosti later made an obfuscating claim that the move was merely an effort to “consolidate” accounts, but the timing—and silence about Policy 81—clearly suggest otherwise.

Rachel Youdelman is a former photography editor and lives in Clovis. She attended UC Berkeley, CalArts and Harvard University. Contact her at rachel27@berkeley.edu.



Screenshots of the Facebook accounts of Fresno County Library branches stating their “pause” in social media announcements.



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A Conversation with Ian Masters

BY VIC BEDOIAN

On Nov. 15, Ian Masters will be the keynote speaker at the KFCF/Fresno Free College Foundation annual banquet. Masters hosts the nationally syndicated news analysis radio program *Background Briefing*, which is carried on KFCF.

Masters, who has produced documentaries for ABC News and *Frontline*, is a BBC-trained broadcast journalist who has covered national security affairs for more than 30 years on public radio. He has edited features and documentaries including *The Secret Life of Plants* and *Koyaanisqatsi*, and worked as a screenwriter and consultant on feature films.

Masters spoke with *Community Alliance* reporter and KFCF correspondent Vic Bedoian about his life and work.

Vic Bedoian (VB): Ian, you have broad experience in both national and international reporting. How did you get started being a journalist in the first place?

Ian Masters (IM): Well, I was in medical school at the University of Sydney and didn't like my colleagues. They were all into money, not healing people. And I just thought, I don't want to do this.

And I got interested in the local university theater and the local university newspaper. I had some friends who had a sailboat in Sydney Harbor, and they worked for a newsreel company in those days. I would moonlight with them. I learned how to become an assistant cameraman, how to load film magazines and how to put microphones on people and how to do interviews.

Then I saw some French and European movies, what was called the New Wave, and Ingmar Bergman films, and wanted to get into the movie business. So, I got a scholarship to a French film school in Paris. I had no money, so I went around Sydney Harbor and asked the captains of all of the various ships there whether I could work my passage to Europe.

I worked my passage across the Pacific through Panama, and this was in 1964. There was a riot that took place against the American occupier, if you will. And it was my first introduction to a revolution, albeit pretty much a storm in a teacup.

Then I got to the U.S., and I only had \$50 on me, and they wouldn't let me ashore because I didn't have a return ticket or a hotel reservation. I eventually got another ship in Canada to the U.K. and then went to Paris. I got a job as an assistant newsreel cameraman. So that was how I got into journalism. And then eventually I got a job at the BBC as an editor.

VB: What are some of the more interesting or eventful happenings that you recall in your international reporting days?

IM: Well, I suppose certainly being in France in the 60s was pretty dramatic. In 1968, there were the student riots, that was all very dramatic. There were lots of wars, Vietnam, the Six Day war.

I remember also being in Greece when the colonels took over. I was on vacation with a bunch of other reporters. We were on the island of Rhodes watching a Paul Newman movie, and we saw the newsreels of the colonels and the generals. And it was literally a flashback to the 1930s to Mussolini, Hitler.

We were just laughing at this ridiculous time warp, and then I noticed all the Greeks in the theater started to move away from us. Then these flashlights came on, and the Greek police or military hauled us up, beat the hell out of us, and put us on a fishing boat to Turkey. So, we got deported.

That bit of a taste of being in Greece under military occupation is certainly something that I can feel the echoes of at this moment here in this country. [Trump's] already got his private army in ICE, but if he can get the military on his side and they start rounding up people, then we are in that situation depicted in the Brazilian movie *I'm Still Here*.

VB: Well, I think a lot of people have that same feeling. And we're all wondering if it's already gone too far, whether the ICE troops and the U.S. Army have already signed on to the administration's agenda. What do you think?

IM: He's firing all the generals and the heads of various agencies, including the Black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Not only is [Trump] racist, he's going to have a bunch of loyal lackeys in the Pentagon.

You better believe that the officers in the military hate Defense Secretary [Pete] Hegseth because he's such a joke. But Trump will find enough of them if he's in there long enough over the next three-plus years; he could end up with his own military, which is a requisite for all dictators.

VB: Your podcast, *Background Briefing with Ian Masters* provides a comprehensive review and in-depth analysis of national and world events and trends. How do you put that all together on such a timely basis?

IM: Doing a one-hour program five days a week, and having to deliver it by 2 p.m. Pacific every day is exhausting and a lot of work. We have to find three or more people every day to cover the important stories in the news and make sure you get the best, most qualified person you can find anywhere in the world.

I've studied the issues, know the history, know the context, and then I do the interviews. I have a very small crew.

I have a new assistant producer who's fantastic. She's a 28-year-old millennial, Sasha Cohen. I'll have her do a segment or two of the program and interview people from the perspective of Gen Z. So, I'm hoping to expand the audience of the program.

VB: You have been an independent journalist for many years, doing programs on KPFK and KPFA and many other radio stations. What was the trajectory between working for the BBC, a mainline media organization, to being independent and trying to make it on your own?

IM: When I worked for the BBC, I went through a training period where they did thorough training on film and documentary production and everything about journalism. I was more on the film side from the very beginning.

And then I met and worked for some really interesting people, including the Monty Python people. I trained Terry Jones and Eric Idol in film editing. And they wanted me to join them. Being too busy, I said no.

VB: When you moved on from the BBC, what did you do?

IM: I became a film editor in the motion picture business. I did a movie in Australia called *Ned Kelly* that starred Mick Jagger. On the way I dropped off in Los Angeles and saw my younger brother who was living with Liza Minelli.

Once I finished the film in Australia I decided to go back to LA because it was so exciting when I was there. I worked for a while in the film business and wrote some screenplays.

I got back into journalism with this wonderful reporter, a guy called Clete Roberts, who goes back to World War II and Edward R. Murrow. We made a bunch of documentaries and news pieces.

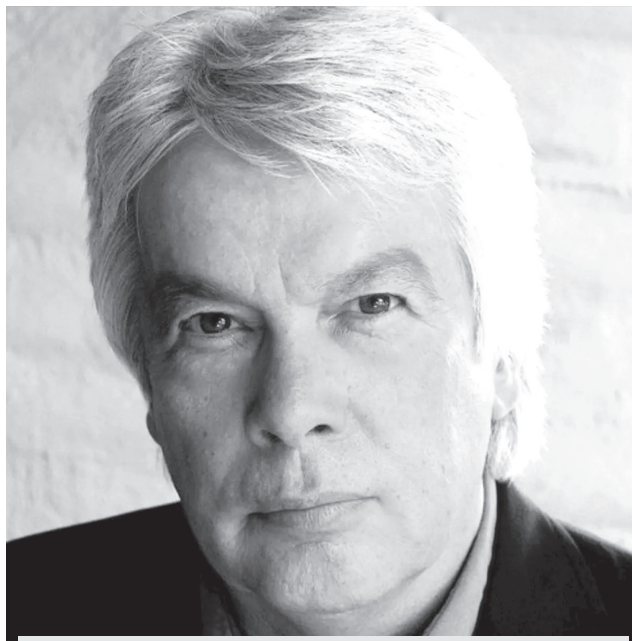
I got involved with Paul Newman who financed a film with this Washington group called the Center for Defense Information. So, I did this documentary for the Center for Defense Information, and got really educated about nuclear strategy, arms control, nuclear weapons and then got to know all these characters in the *Dr. Strangelove* world.

VB: Is that what got you involved with radio work and Pacifica's LA station KPFK?

IM: I got involved with the nuclear freeze movement, as well. They offered me a slot to talk about nuclear issues for two hours on Sunday. The program was called *National Security*. It was an ironic title, meaning national security in the broadest definition, not just about the military; it's about our economy, our society, our soft power. I had access to all the top people in the United States in strategy and arms control and defense, people like Kissinger and others.

VB: I think one of the great values of *Background Briefing* is the broad variety of experiences that you've had and the people that you've been in touch with. You have an amazing Rolodex, and I think that's one of the things that listeners really appreciate, because you get down to the roots of issues. You talk to people who have made these kinds of national security and economic decisions.

IM: Right. And these are the very people that Trump and Hegseth and Kash Patel and Tulsi Gabbard are firing. They're



Ian Masters. Photo courtesy of KFCF

the people that I've known and developed relationships over the years.

This is the death of expertise that we're living through. It's shocking the institutional knowledge that's being destroyed. Trump's talk recently to the generals and the admirals; it's frightening that this guy has his finger on the button.

So, [that's] more reason to try and talk to people who've been on the inside and particularly talk to people that have been in the room. They know exactly who he is and what his failures are.

VB: We have a media environment where so many people are in information silos. How do you communicate this sense of urgency that you have to a wider population than the folks who are already opposed to Trump and Project 2025?

IM: I don't want to spend my life preaching to the choir. I would like to have a broader audience, but on the other hand, nobody in the mainstream media's going to hire me because I'm not interested in that ridiculous false equivalence of, on the one hand and on the other.

I'm not interested in playing that game because I don't think it works. I don't think anybody seriously thinks that reporters are unbiased.

What you do is you try to be honest and skeptical and not ideological, not have preconceived ideas, just trying to seek out information. So that's the mission.

And it's frightening and difficult in post-truth America since we now have this attack on reality itself, where there's no consensus about what is real, what is true.

The KFCF/Fresno Free College Foundation celebrates their 50th anniversary at the 2025 Annual Banquet featuring Masters as the guest speaker. The banquet is Nov. 15 at the Unitarian Universalist Church (2672 E. Alluvial Ave., Fresno) beginning at 5:30 p.m. (see the ad on page 10).

Background Briefing with Ian Masters is available on KFCF 88.1 FM Monday–Thursday at 3 p.m. and online at backgroundbriefing.org.

Vic Bedoian is the Central Valley correspondent for KPFA News and a Community Alliance reporter specializing in natural history and environmental justice issues.

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<https://fresnoalliance.com/>

No Hatred

Continued from page 8

into U-Haul trucks and moved; they and their parents knew not where.

This is domestic terrorism, it is traumatic—and it is endorsed at the highest levels in the White House.

Right-wingers sell Miller's white supremacy, hatred and wicked abuse of power as "patriotism."

Technically speaking, Miller is not a Nazi. He's not looking to destroy Jews wherever they are (he's Jewish!). Instead, Miller's hatred, vitriol and rage is directed at darker-

skinned people whom he fears are gaining too much power in our culture, and on those who oppose his unjust, unlawful and illegitimate actions.

In short, Miller is a white supremacist who takes gleeful pleasure in inflicting pain and suffering on those weaker than him. He uses Nazi-style language and tactics to achieve his political objectives. He is the definition of a *bully*.

Miller's speeches and actions should have set off five-alarm fire bells among conservative evangelicals. Instead, the warning bells have been muted, if they have rung at all.

White evangelical friends who watched all five hours of the Kirk memorial broadcast

at the end said that it was "beautiful," "loving" and, significantly, that there was "no hatred, no bullying"—completely ignoring Miller's diatribe.

Maybe they just got up and went to the refrigerator during Miller's speech. Or maybe they heard him but were somehow able to excuse what Miller was saying.

"No hatred, no bullying" was emphatically not the message in Miller's speech. His message was and is, "Hate your enemy. Deport massively and indiscriminately. Terrorize anybody who opposes you." Where is the common decency? Where is the loving kind?

Evangelicals, especially white evangelicals, need to take a long hard look

in the mirror—not only at how they are behaving now with regard to racist attitudes and laws but also at how they have behaved in our nation's history with regard to racist attitudes and laws. It's not a warm and fuzzy story.

Self-criticism is hard but necessary if we're ever going to get closer to a tolerant, peaceful society, what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called "the beloved community."

Bayard Taylor is a Fresno county activist, a nature lover and a graduate of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Contact him at bayardtaylor1@aol.com.

Peace & Social Justice Calendar

November 2025

Sponsored by the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

Weekly
KFCF 88.1 FM: *Nuestro Foro* (Tuesdays; Spanish) 7 p.m.–8 p.m. News, commentaries and music with a Latino touch hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kcf.org.

Raza Against War/Women in Black (Wednesdays) 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Federal Courthouse, 2500 Tulare St., Fresno. For more info, contact comworkeradvocate@gmail.com.

National Parks Protest (Saturdays) 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Three Rivers Post Office, 40857 Sierra Dr., Three Rivers. Reverse wrongful terminations. Keep public lands in public hands. Speak up for your parks.

Stop Trump’s Wars, End Genocide (Saturdays) 6 p.m.–7:30 p.m. Blackstone and Nees avenues, Fresno. Yokuts’ Land. Connect, build community and stand for all oppressed and occupied people.

Stand Up, Speak Up, Spread the Truth (Sundays) 3 p.m.–5 p.m. Mooney and Walnut avenues, Visalia. Free Palestine. Let Gaza Live! Ceasefire Now. For more info, contact fida.taha@gmail.com.

Hands Off! (Sundays) 5 p.m.–6:30 p.m. Tower District, Fresno. Central Valley Indivisible’s peaceful protest. For more info, contact pattycapp@gmail.com.

SAT 01 **Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin Valley** 9 a.m.–11 a.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact 559-435-4043 or claval@comcast.net.

Disappeared in America: National Day of Action Protest against ICE 3 p.m.–4:30 p.m. Blackstone and Nees avenues, Fresno. Hosted by Peace Fresno.

Black Liberation and Palestinian Solidarity 5:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m. Room 251, OAB, Fresno City College. Panel discussion with Zenia Rousan, Razan Kaileh, Professor Dessalines Yamoussou and Ahmed Mshaka. Register at bit.ly/blpsevent.

Dia Del Los Muertos Gala 6 p.m.–11 p.m. Cabana Venue, 2814 N. Maroa Ave., Fresno. Presented by the Casita Feliz Latine LGBTQ+ Center. For more info, visit [@casitafelizfresno](https://www.facebook.com/casitafelizfresno) on Facebook or Instagram.

TUE 04 **Tenants Rights Training Series** 5 p.m.–8 p.m. Build your knowledge on tenant rights. Register at bit.ly/4q6RnUM. For more info, contact 415-439-0651 or victoria@tenantstogether.org.

National Women’s Political Caucus (NWPC) 5:30 p.m. Los Amigos Restaurant, 5088 N. Blackstone Ave., Fresno. Speaker: Nora Zaragoza, program manager of Valley Watch Network. For more info, contact joanne@pbyoga.com.

WED 05 **ED Talks** 11 a.m.–noon. Room 110, Thomas Building, Fresno State. Speaker: Pazao Lao. Topic: True Crimes and Community Care—How Health Literacy Prevents Victimization.

Education as Social Justice 1 p.m.–2 p.m. Room 139, OAB, Fresno City College. A conversation with Daren Miller. For more info, contact 559-442-8200.

California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) 1 p.m. Via Zoom. Regional meeting. Link: us06web.zoom.us/j/2284684729.

KFCF 88.1 FM: *Stir It Up!* 3 p.m.–3:30 p.m. *Community Alliance* radio show hosted by Daren Miller. For more info, visit kcf.org.

THU 06 **Soup for My Family Gathering** 3 p.m.–8 p.m. LGBT EOC Sanctuary, 1252 Fulton St., Fresno. Potluck and community meet-up for nourishment of mind, body and soul.

Tenants Rights Training Series 5 p.m.–8 p.m. Build your knowledge on tenant rights. Register at bit.ly/4q6RnUM. For more info, contact 415-439-0651 or victoria@tenantstogether.org.

Screening: *No Other Land* 5:30 p.m.–8 p.m. Forum Hall 101, Fresno City College. RSVP at bit.ly/nolfresno. Sponsored by the Fresno City College Social Justice Center and the Fresno Peace Coalition.

Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter 7 p.m. Woodward Park Regional Library, 944 E. Perrin Ave., Fresno. “Mountains and Music: Ansel Adams and Jules Eichorn, A Lifelong Friendship.” This tells the story of how Eichorn’s piano teacher, Adams, shaped his life with regard to music, mountains and the environment. For more info, contact ecuagirl45@yahoo.com.

Tulare Democratic Club 7 p.m. For more info, contact tularedemocraticclub1@gmail.com.

No Kings ArtHop 7:30 p.m.–8 p.m. Little Green Studio, 411 E. Olive Ave., Fresno. Public lecture by Patrick Fontes, professor of American history. Knowledge is the difference between freedom and enslavement.

FRI 07 **CineCulture: *Souleymane’s Story*** (L’histoire de Souleymane) 5:30 p.m. Peters Education Center Auditorium, Fresno State. Discussant: Dr. Rose Marie Kuhn. A recent immigrant from Guinea-Conakry delivers meals on his e-bike in Paris while awaiting an asylum interview and a possible work permit. Free and open to the public. For more info, contact mhusain@mail.fresnostate.edu or visit cineculture.csufresno.edu/.

Medieval Book Curses: How Armenians Guarded Their Manuscripts 7 p.m.–8 p.m. Room 101, Grosse Industrial Tech Building, Fresno State. Speaker: Dr. David Zakarian, Haig & Isabel Berberian professor of Armenian studies. For more info, contact 559-278-2669.

SAT 08 **By Any Dreams Necessary** 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Fresno City College West Campus. Learn how communities can build power, take action and create a sustainable future. Led by Dr. Bruce Strouble, a veteran community development leader advancing environmental justice and empowering underserved communities to create lasting change. For more info, contact kimberly@faithinthevalley.org.

Boycott Chevron/Boycott Home Depot Event 3 p.m.–4:30 p.m. 7216 N. Blackstone Ave. Gather at Chevron, march about a quarter mile to Home Depot, then march back to Chevron. For more info, visit peacefresno.org.

SUN 09 **PFLAG Fresno** 2 p.m. Fireside Room, Wesley United Methodist Church, 1343 E. Barstow Ave., Fresno. Supporting, educating and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and their families. For more info, contact pflagfresno@gmail.com.

MON 10 **Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA)** 5 p.m. Democratic Party HQ, 1033 U St., Fresno. For more info, contact swgamble@aol.com.

Tulare County Stonewall Democrats 6 p.m. Me-n-Ed’s Pizza, 1331 W. Henderson Ave., Porterville. For more info, contact tcstonewalldems@gmail.com.

TUE 11 **Black American Political Association of California (BAPAC)** 6 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact bapacfresno@gmail.com.

Kings County Democratic Central Committee 6 p.m. Democratic Party HQ, 621 N. Irwin St., Hanford. For more info, contact cathyjorgensen@hotmail.com.

Porterville Democratic Club 6 p.m. Pizza Factory, 879 W. Henderson Ave., Porterville. For more info, contact contactportervilledems@yahoo.com.

Fresno Stonewall Democrats 6:30 p.m. Los Amigos Restaurant, 5088 N. Blackstone Ave., Fresno. For more info, contact info@fresnostonewalldemocrats.org.

WED 12 **Schmalle’s Hot Takes: The First Amendment** 3 p.m.–4 p.m. Room 139, OAB, Fresno City College. An interactive discussion led by Law Professor Robert Schmalle. For more info, contact 559-442-8200.

KFCF 88.1 FM: *Stir It Up!* 3 p.m.–3:30 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence radio show hosted by Josh Shurley. For more info, visit kcf.org.

San Joaquin Valley Democratic Club 6:30 p.m. Round Table Pizza, 3710 W. Shields Ave., Fresno. For more info, contact sjvdemclub@gmail.com.

THU 13 **KFCF 88.1 FM: *Valley Rising*** 3 p.m.–3:30 p.m. Hosted by Daren Miller and Daniel O’Connell. For more info, visit kcf.org.

Organizing Series: Unionize! 5:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. Fresno City College. A power-building workshop for workers seeking a union election. Sponsored by the Empowerment Institute. For more info, visit powerwithpeople.org.

Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) 7 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno. Online/in person. For more info, contact taca_03@ymail.com.

FRI 14 **CineCulture: *Songs of Slow Burning*** 5:30 p.m. Peters Education Center Auditorium, Fresno State. Discussant: Olha Zhurba (director). Following the lives of Ukrainians during the first two years of Russia’s full-scale invasion, the film captures the everyday resilience and deep personal losses of a country living through war. Free and open to the public. For more info, contact mhusain@mail.fresnostate.edu or visit cineculture.csufresno.edu/.

Homeland vs. Home: When a Call to Return to the Homeland Is Not Answered 7 p.m.–8 p.m. University Business Center, Fresno. Speaker: Kevork Oflazian. Organized by the Armenian Studies Program. For more info, contact 559-278-2669.

SAT 15 **Central Valley Progressive PAC** 3:30 p.m.–5 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact swhalen79@gmail.com.

KFCF Annual Banquet 5:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church, 2672 E. Alluvial Ave. Speaker: Ian Masters, host of *Background Briefing*. With a buffet-style dinner by Hummus Republic. For more info, contact skern@netptc.net.

TUE 18 **2025 California Connects: Regional Meeting** 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Fresno. Participants will learn practical tools, connect directly with state partners, and build lasting regional networks. Deadline to register: Nov. 4. For more info or to register, visit ocpsc.ca.gov/regional-convenings/.

Central Valley Partnership 5:30 p.m. Room 251, OAB, Fresno City College. For more info, contact admin@centralvalleypartnership.org.

Kings County Jimmy Carter Club 6 p.m. Lemoore. For more info, contact kcjimmycarterclub@gmail.com.

WED 19 **San Joaquin Valley Town Hall** 10:30 a.m. Saroyan Theatre, 700 M St., Fresno. Speaker: Father Greg Boyle. Topic: Belonging Gone Right—The Path to Gang Rehabilitation.

KFCF 88.1 FM: *Speaking Truth to Empire* 3 p.m.–3:30 p.m. Hosted by Dan Yaseen. For more info, visit kcf.org.

Visalia Democratic Club 5:30 p.m. Amigos Restaurant, 5113 W. Walnut Ave., Visalia. For more info, contact colijiafeliz@gmail.com.

Central Valley Indivisible 6 p.m. The Big Red Church, 2131 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno. For more info, contact pattycapp@gmail.com.

Screening: *Motel Drive* 6:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m. OAB Auditorium, Fresno City College. In this documentary, within a community of motels infamous for illicit activity, the Shaw family grapples with housing insecurity and addiction while trying to raise their young son. When California’s high-speed rail project displaces them, a glimpse of stability appears within reach. Followed by a discussion with Director Brendan Geraghty and Jason and Justin Shaw. For more info, contact 559-442-8200.

John Robert Lewis Democratic Club 7 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact ibedam@gmail.com.

THU 20 **Clovis Democratic Club** 6 p.m. Seven Bar & Grill, 25 Shaw Ave., Clovis. For more info, contact clovisdemocraticclub@gmail.com.

Peace Fresno 6:30 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno. Monthly meeting to plan antiwar strategies. For more info, contact president@peacefresno.org.

Tulare County Democratic Central Committee 7 p.m. In Tulare and via Zoom. For more info, contact tcdccsecretary@gmail.com.

FRI 21 **KFCF 88.1 FM: *It’s a Queer Thang*** 5 p.m.–6 p.m. Covering local and national LGBTQ+ issues and events. Hosted by Chris Jarvis and Kaylia Metcalfe Armstrong. For more info, visit kcf.org.

SOURCE LGBT+ Center Transgender Day of Remembrance 5 p.m.–7 p.m. 109 NW 2nd St., Visalia. Vigil to honor the trans and nonbinary lives lost to transphobia within the past year. For more info, contact kaede@thesourcelgbt.org.

CineCulture: *Murder My Sweet* (1944) 5:30 p.m. Peters Education Center Auditorium, Fresno State. Discussant: Dr. Ed EmanuEl. A gumshoe, Philip Marlowe, is drawn deep into a complex web of intrigue and finds his own life in increasing jeopardy. Free and open to the public. For more info, contact mhusain@mail.fresnostate.edu or visit cineculture.csufresno.edu/.

MON 24 **Fresno County Democratic Women’s Club** 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Marie Callender’s Restaurant Garden Room, 1781 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno. For more info, contact claval@comcast.net.

WED 26 **KFCF 88.1 FM: *Stir It Up!*** 3 p.m.–3:30 p.m. WILPF radio show hosted by Jean Hays. For more info, visit kcf.org.

Submit upcoming community activities to calendar@fresnoalliance.com by the 15th of the month preceding publication, or you can post anytime online at fresnoalliance.com (select Calendar).

Haiku for Assata Shakur

BY HOMER GEE GREENE JR.

Rest in Peace Shakur
Black Female Warrior’s Fall Death
Died Free Black Woman



El periódico *Community Alliance* (*Alianza Comunitaria*) se publica mensualmente por San Joaquin Valley Media Alliance, ubicada en 1584 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno, CA 93728. El periódico *Community Alliance* (*Alianza Comunitaria*) se distribuye gratis o por suscripción. Las suscripciones son de \$40 por año; \$60 por año para activistas; y \$15 para personas de bajos ingresos.

Desde 1996, *Alianza Comunitaria* ha sido una voz progresista independiente para el Valle Central de San Joaquín. *Alianza Comunitaria* aboga por

- la justicia racial, social, ambiental y económica;
- Igualdad de derechos para todos, incluidos los inmigrantes, las personas sin hogar y la comunidad LGBTQ+;
- Acceso a una educación pública gratuita y de calidad para todos;
- Acceso a la atención sanitaria para todos;
- Un salario digno para todos los trabajadores.

Nuestro objetivo es exponer los problemas raciales, sociales, medio-ambientales y económicos e injusticias políticas. Ayudaremos a construir un poderoso movimiento progresista que hará que todas nuestras comunidades sean más seguras, más sanas, más equitativas y más habitables.

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Hasta 200 palabras.

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Los recortes al presupuesto federal, incluidos en áreas como salud y educación pública, aumentarán dramáticamente la pobreza en EE.UU. La población está reaccionando a estas medidas por medio de protestas masivas, tal es el caso de la “No-King” realizada nacionalmente el pasado 18 de octubre. En la imagen, participantes en la protesta realizada en Fresno. *Foto de Peter Maiden*

El Gobierno Crea la Crisis Para Justificar el Extremismo

POR MARIBEL HASTINGS

(Nota del Editor: esta nota se reproduce con el permiso de www.hispanicla.com)

Aunque jueces federales han bloqueado el despliegue de la Guardia Nacional ordenado por Trump en ciudades lideradas por demócratas como Chicago y Portland, hay un creciente temor de que el próximo paso del presidente sea invocar la Ley de Insurrección, aunque carezca de las bases legales para hacerlo.

Militarizar la democracia

Y es que Trump permanece desafiante a pesar de las objeciones legales y constitucionales a su plan de militarizar ciudades demócratas donde él asegura que hay “enemigos internos”. Con la excusa de combatir la inmigración indocumentada y la criminalidad, la administración quiere normalizar la militarización de ciudades, con resultados adversos.

Hay mayor inseguridad, sobre todo para personas de color así sean ciudadanos por las detenciones indiscriminadas conducidas por agentes de ICE enmascarados que actúan con violencia e impunidad.

De hecho, la jueza federal, Sara Ellis, prohibió a los agentes de ICE utilizar la fuerza contra manifestantes y periodistas que no supongan una amenaza. Ellis sostuvo que las acciones de los agentes “claramente violan la Constitución”.

Ni los religiosos están exentos de la violencia de ICE. Uno de los demandantes que solicitó al tribunal que se restrinja el uso de fuerza es el reverendo presbiteriano, David Black, a quien agentes de ICE le dispararon bolas de

gas pimienta, una de las cuales lo golpeó en la cabeza. El pastor cayó de rodillas. “Podíamos escuchar que se reían”, dijo Black.

Los recortes aumentan la pobreza y la criminalidad

Las políticas de Trump son además terreno fértil para la criminalidad que él dice combatir porque las agencias policiales han sido reasignadas a labores migratorias desatendiendo el combate contra delitos como explotación infantil, fraude fiscal y narcotráfico, entre muchos otros.

Eso sin contar los severos recortes a las agencias policiales avalados por esta administración.

Por ejemplo, el presupuesto del año fiscal 2026 le quita \$1.000 millones de dólares a 40 programas de subvenciones del Departamento de Justicia que buscan reducir los delitos violentos, de odio y contra la mujer; reduce \$468 millones de dólares de la Oficina de Alcohol, Tabaco y Armas de Fuego (ATF), lo que afecta el combate al tráfico de armas de fuego y la reducción de la violencia armada. Recorta además \$646 millones de dólares de FEMA para la prevención de la violencia y el terrorismo; \$545 millones del FBI y elimina 2.000 empleados; y \$212 millones de dólares a la Administración para el Control de Drogas (DEA).

En otras palabras, el gobierno de Trump critica a ciudades demócratas por sus índices de criminalidad pero les quita los fondos para combatirla. Luego alega que hay que enviar a la Guardia Nacional para tomar control y despachar agentes de ICE que terminan generando violencia y caos.

Es como iniciar un incendio de manera intencional para después extinguirlo y fungir como héroe. Es crear la crisis para justificar severas medidas que atentan contra los derechos y las protecciones de todos nosotros.

Porque de momento la pelea judicial es por activar la Guardia Nacional en ciudades y estados que no lo han solicitado porque no lo consideran necesario. Incluso, en las protestas generadas por la presencia de ICE han sido los propios agentes los que han generado situaciones de violencia disparando a mansalva bolas de gas pimienta y gases lacrimógenos.

¿La Primera Enmienda de la Constitución es terrorista?

Luego Trump llama a los manifestantes “insurrectos” y se teme que invoque la Ley de Insurrección de 1807, promulgada por el entonces presidente Thomas Jefferson. Esta ley permite que el presidente despliegue militares a nivel doméstico para combatir una insurrección que amenace a la población.

Esta ley se invocó en 30 ocasiones, especialmente en los años 60 en medio de la cruenta lucha por los derechos civiles para proteger activistas. En 1992 el presidente George H. W. Bush la invocó en medio de los disturbios en Los Ángeles por la absolución de los policías acusados de golpear brutalmente a Rodney King.

“Si tuviera que aplicarla, lo haría. Si se estuviera matando personas y los tribunales nos estuvieran frenando, o los gobernadores o alcaldes nos estuvieran frenando, claro que lo haría”, aseguró Trump.

Pero el exfiscal federal Shanlon Wu declaró a la revista Newsweek que no es solamente invocarla sino justificar su uso. Trump “disfrutaba de la autoridad legal teórica para invocarla, pero parece carecer por completo de una base de hechos que respalde su uso”.

Y es que no hay ninguna insurrección en curso, solamente la inventada por el presidente quien, de hecho, instigó la más reciente en récord el 6 de enero de 2021 cuando sus seguidores intentaron impedir violentamente la certificación de la elección presidencial que perdió ante Joe Biden.

Maribel Hastings es asesora principal y columnista de America's Voice y America's Voice Education Fund. Originaria de Puerto Rico, Maribel se graduó de la Universidad de Puerto Rico con una especialización en comunicación pública y una especialización menor en historia. Trabajó para La Opinión y se convirtió en su primera corresponsal en Washington, D.C. en 1993. Maribel ha recibido numerosos premios, incluyendo el Premio al Liderazgo en Medios de 2007 de la Asociación Americana de Abogados de Inmigración (AILA) por su cobertura del debate sobre inmigración en el Senado de Estados Unidos.

ENVÍE SUS COMENTARIOS. CORREO ELECTRÓNICO:
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legendarios ganadores de múltiples Grammys Los Tigres Del Norte, la múltiple ganadora del Latin Grammy Chiquis y los artistas musicales Marisela y Wil-Dog Abers de Ozomatli, así como la periodista de televisión hispana Daniela Ganoza, y las personalidades de radio y televisión Don Cheto y Said García Solís, la campaña se centra en historias personales, orgullo cultural y contribuciones de la comunidad para cambiar el diálogo nacional.

“Los inmigrantes no solo forman parte de la historia de Estados Unidos; son fundamentales para su éxito”, afirmó Dolores Huerta, activista estadounidense y cofundadora de la Unión de Trabajadores Agrícolas (United Farm Workers) y fundadora y presidenta de la Fundación Dolores Huerta. “Las personas que están siendo atacadas no son solo inmigrantes; son los pueblos indígenas de estos continentes. Sí, algunos son inmigrantes de Asia y otras partes, pero la gran mayoría son originarios de estas tierras. Se está acosando a las personas por el color de su piel; es una limpieza étnica».

- Los inmigrantes en cifras
- Emprendimiento y empleo: Los inmigrantes latinos representan el 52% de todas las empresas de propiedad latina; las empresas de propiedad hispana emplean a 3 millones de trabajadores en todo el país. Las empresas de propiedad latina crecieron un 44% entre 2018 y 2023, superando ampliamente a sus pares no latinos.
 - Impuestos y contribuciones fiscales: Los inmigrantes pagaron \$579 mil millones en impuestos en EE.UU. en 2022, incluyendo \$96.7 mil millones provenientes de inmigrantes indocumentados, la mayoría de los cuales son latinos o de América Latina.
 - Industrias esenciales: Más de 500,000 trabajadores inmigrantes hispanos apoyan la agricultura estadounidense; los latinos representan 1 de cada 4 trabajadores en las industrias de fabricación de alimentos, venta al por mayor y servicios.

“Como orgullosa actriz mexicana que ha trabajado y vivido en Estados Unidos durante muchos años, he presenciado de primera mano la fuerza, la resiliencia y la belleza que los inmigrantes aportan a este país. Casi la mitad de la fuerza laboral nacida en el extranjero

Steve Alcalá

Continúa de página 20

Alcala dijo: “Estaban mirando tras las cortinas y nos observaban tocar”. No podían creer que estuviéramos tocando *Ran Kan Kan*... Se les veía asomándose por allá atrás. ¡No podían creer que estos chicos estuvieran haciendo su música!

Desde *Ran Kan Kan*, Alcalá ha transcrito 600 partituras de 70 artistas. El vehículo para ello fue su editorial musical, *3-2 Music*, que distribuye partituras y paga regalías a los compositores. Los compositores de jazz latino a veces trabajan sin partituras o escriben la música sólo para sus propias bandas. *3-2 Music* fue un cambio radical.

Alcala seguía sus propios gustos, llamando en frío a artistas que grababan canciones que le gustaban para pedirles permiso para publicarlas. Iba corriendo al Área de la Bahía para conseguir discos que no se encontraban en Fresno. Estaba cubriendo un área desierta.

“Cuando empecé”, dijo Alcalá, “tenía un fax. Llegaba a casa después de un largo día de clases y había un montón de pedidos en mi fax. Y, por suerte, Kinko’s abría las 24 horas en aquel entonces. Así que iba en coche a Kinko’s en River Park y pasaba horas

allí copiando la música y enviándola por correo. Llegaba a casa a la una o las dos de la mañana y me levantaba a las 6:30 para ir a trabajar.

“Ahora todo es digital, desde la creación de las listas de éxitos hasta la venta online y la descarga de PDF por parte de los clientes.

“Todavía tengo un pequeño sector en el mercado”, dijo Alcalá. Explicó que las grandes editoriales “tienen millones de personas en su lista de correo electrónico. Yo tengo miles, pero no millones. Así que sigo creciendo y aprendiendo en este campo. Todavía es nuevo para mí. Y llevo más de 30 años en esto”.

Uno de los momentos más destacados de la carrera de Alcalá fue trabajar con Eddie Palmieri, quien falleció el 6 de agosto de este año a los 89 años. Su fallecimiento fue recordado en todo el mundo de la música latina y en los principales medios de comunicación.

Palmieri, según Alcalá, era un “inconformista”. Fue un líder de banda, pianista y compositor excepcional.

“Fui la primera persona en publicar a Eddie Palmieri. Uno pensaría... ¡Qué locura! Suena a locura. ¡Es como decir que nadie ha publicado a Beethoven!

“Cuando les toqué esas canciones a mis alumnos, se emocionaron muchísimo. Empezaron a aprender percusión manual

es latina, y juntos, nuestra comunidad está impulsando el futuro de Estados Unidos. Esta campaña sirve como recordatorio del poder que tenemos los inmigrantes”, dijo Melissa Barrera.

“La inmigración es el corazón de la cultura estadounidense; el recordatorio de que nada grande aquí se construyó solo. Todos somos prueba viviente de la valentía de alguien para empezar de nuevo, y eso es lo que mantiene vivo y en constante evolución a este país; es algo hermoso”, dijo Mishel Prada.

El anuncio de servicio público bilingüe (inglés/español) y el contenido de la campaña se distribuirán a través de medios tradicionales y digitales, redes sociales, alianzas estratégicas con medios, las redes de comunicación de AFSC y las de organizaciones aliadas.

Al aprovechar el poder cultural de las celebridades e influencers latinas, la campaña de AFSC busca transmitir un mensaje con valores y una gran resonancia emocional: los inmigrantes fortalecen nuestras comunidades. Para obtener mayor información sobre la campaña visite el sitio: afsc.org/stronger-immigrants

Acerca del Comité de Servicio de los Amigos Americanos (AFSC)

El Comité de Servicio de los Amigos Americanos (AFSC) promueve un mundo libre de violencia, desigualdad y opresión. Guiados por la creencia Cuáquera en que Dios está en cada persona, promueve cambios positivos y el respeto por la vida humana.

AFSC trabaja con personas y socios de todo el mundo, de todas las religiones y orígenes, para atender las necesidades urgentes de la comunidad, combatir la injusticia y construir la paz.

AFSC ha tenido y tiene una presencia destacada en el Valle de San Joaquín desde 1955, representada en programas como Proyecto Campesino—que originalmente contribuyó a la creación de Self Help Enterprises, en el Condado de Tulare—que aún continúa vigente con su misión de construir casas y barrios para comunidades de ingresos limitados. Programas en Stockton y el aún existente Pan Valley Institute, en Fresno, que desarrolla un original trabajo con diversas comunidades inmigrantes y de refugiados.

Obtenga más información sobre AFSC visitando www.afsc.org.

Nota: Eduardo Stanley contribuyó a este reporte.

y lo disfrutaron muchísimo. Pero es una locura. Diría que a la mayoría de los músicos que publiqué nunca se les había contactado para que difundieran su música”.

Alcala se enorgullece especialmente de haber publicado las canciones del álbum de jazz latino de Palmieri, nominado al Grammy, *Palmas*.

Alcala me contó que Palmieri fue una vez a la zona de Fresno y el promotor le preguntó si el Estadio Chukchansi sería una buena opción. Alcalá le dijo que no, que no estábamos en Puerto Rico y que sería difícil llenar una fracción de los asientos. El concierto terminó siendo en un salón del Casino Chukchansi, en las colinas cerca de Coarsegold. Como suele ocurrir en el jazz latino, la publicidad fue insuficiente y la asistencia fue escasa, solo unas 20 personas.

Para Alcalá, sin embargo, el concierto fue memorable. Contó una anécdota: durante el descanso, los miembros de la banda fueron a explorar el casino y no regresaron a tiempo para el comienzo del segundo set. Solo el trompetista, el talentosísimo Brian Lynch, estaba listo junto con Eddie. Acto seguido, interpretaron un dúo improvisado extenso. “Fue fenomenal”, dijo Alcalá. “Ojalá lo hubiera grabado, pero entonces no tenía teléfono inteligente”.

Alcala posteriormente llevó a Palmieri a Arte Américas, y llenaron la plaza. Trajo otras bandas a Fresno, como Poncho Sánchez, Pete Escovedo y la Orquesta Española de Harlem.

Su propia banda, en la que toca la trompeta, incluye a algunos graduados de sus clases de preparatoria y de las que impartió en Fresno City College. Se llama *Rumba 32*, y tienen un CD, titulado *Renovation*, que está bien compuesto y presenta versiones de jazz latino de calidad de jazz y canciones populares. Está disponible en Apple Music.

Dijo que el ambiente musical en Fresno es deficiente. Hay algunas vinerías en la zona que ofrecen buen jazz latino y salsa para bailar, pero los conciertos son escasos. Para una forma de arte tan singular, suele haber pocos locales. Le gusta Roger Rocka’s, pero dice que el costo del alquiler del club, \$1,000 por noche, es demasiado alto para su banda. Una vez, una vinería rompió un contrato con Alcalá y canceló su banda. Tras amenazarla con una demanda, se ganó mala fama.

Pero él tiene una solución. “En mi próxima vida”, dijo, “tendré un club”.

Peter Maiden es el editor de fotografía del periódico Community Alliance.

Día de los Muertos en Arte Américas

POR EL PERSONAL DE ALIANZA COMUNITARIA

La exposición por Día de los Muertos en Arte Américas durará hasta el 23 de Noviembre.

Dice la directora de educación y programas públicas Lorena Marrón en el sitio de web de Arte Américas:

“Desde 1985, la celebración del Día de los Muertos ha sido central en la identidad de Arte Américas, con exposiciones anuales de ofrendas que honran las tradiciones ancestrales a la vez que inspiran al diálogo cultural y artístico. Nuestra exposición anual de Día de Muertos no es solo una celebración de temporada, sino una piedra angular de nuestra presencia cultural en el Valle Central.

“El tema de este año, *Figuras monumentales, Monumental Figures*, está inspirado en los alebrijes y nahuales de más de veinte pies de altura que visitan Fresno (los encuentras en nuestra plaza al aire libre y en los campus de California State University Fresno y Fresno City College). Estas esculturas monumentales, creadas por artistas mexicanos, encarnan el poder de la escala, el mito y la imaginación. En diálogo con ellas, las ofrendas aquí presentadas representan la monumentalidad en espíritu, presencia e impacto.

“Creadas por artistas, estudiantes, colectivos y organizaciones locales, las ofrendas exhibidas aquí transforman los elementos tradicionales del altar de muertos (como flores de cempasúchil, papel picado, pan de muerto, velas o calaveras) en entornos inmersivos.

Los visitantes se encontrarán con ofrendas que asemejan salones de clase, salas de estar, plataformas escénicas o portales a mundos fantásticos. Cada altar incorpora al menos un elemento a gran escala, amplificando la voz de quienes son homenajeados e invitándonos a recorrer la galería con enorme curiosidad.

“Las figuras recordadas aquí son tan grandes como la vida misma, desde adorados íconos culturales como Paquita la del Barrio o importantes líderes revolucionarias como la comandanta Ramona del EZLN, las ofrendas de este año honran a célebres activistas, feministas, líderes comunitarios, educadores y poetas. Junto a estos celebrados personajes, las ofrendas también honran los legados silenciosos pero monumentales de los trabajadores agrícolas del Valle Central, los organizadores comunitarios, las guardianas de la cultura y las abuelas: de aquellos que se mantuvieron de pie en el día a día para defender la tradición, la justicia y el amor.

“En conjunto, estos altares narran historias heroicas de resistencia, solidaridad y orgullo cultural. Nos recuerdan que las figuras monumentales no son únicamente aquellas consagradas en los libros de historia, sino también quienes hacen que un lugar se sienta como hogar, quienes enraízan a nuestras comunidades a través del cuidado y viven en nuestra memoria. En última instancia, estos homenajes nos muestran que la monumentalidad no se mide por la fama o el reconocimiento, sino por la fuerza del impacto en la comunidad y en las generaciones que siguen.”

Arte Américas está localizado en 1630 Van Ness en el centro de Fresno.



Una ofrenda en Arte Américas en 2024. Foto de Peter Maiden

ALIANZA COMUNITARIA

LA VOZ DEL MOVIMIENTO PROGRESISTA DESDE 1996

Original Campaña Para Enfrentar la Narrativa Contra los Inmigrantes

POR COMMUNITY ALLIANCE Y AFSC

El Comité de Servicio de los Amigos Americanos (American Friends Service Committee, AFSC por sus siglas en inglés), una organización Cuáquera pacifista creada hace más 100 años y que obtuvo el Premio Nóbel de la Paz en 1947, anunció este pasado 14 de octubre el lanzamiento de una campaña publicitaria y anuncios de servicio público con celebridades hispanas titulada “Los inmigrantes fortalecen nuestras comunidades”.

Esta iniciativa bilingüe cuenta con la participación de artistas y activistas que por medio de anuncios destacan la dignidad de los inmigrantes y sus contribuciones, enfrentando así las narrativas de odio negativas.

Los inmigrantes, especialmente los latinos, son un motor del crecimiento económico, el tejido social y la vitalidad cultural de Estados Unidos. Casi la mitad (47.6%) de la fuerza laboral estadounidense nacida en el extranjero es latina, lo que impulsa sectores clave, mientras que los



**IMMIGRANTS
MAKE OUR
COMMUNITIES
STRONGER**



Artistas y activistas latinos participan de una original campaña publicitaria para enfrentar la narrativa de odio contra los inmigrantes. Foto cortesía de AFSC

latinos en general, tanto nacidos en Estados Unidos como inmigrantes, son responsables del 80% del crecimiento de la fuerza laboral estadounidense.

“Los inmigrantes fortalecen nuestras comunidades: vecinos, compañeros de trabajo, estudiantes y empresarios”, afirmó Brian Minter, Jefe de Marketing y Comunicaciones de AFSC, organización basada en Filadelfia con oficinas y programas en varios estados de EE.UU. y en el exterior. “Pero ahora mismo, los inmigrantes están siendo detenidos y desaparecidos, destrozando familias y barrios. En todo el país, las redadas gubernamentales están perturbando nuestras comunidades y creando una cultura del miedo”.

“Mi madre llegó a este país sin saber el idioma y sin un plan preciso. Se enfrentó a una tarea imposible y perseveró. De trabajar en un autoservicio a abrir dos negocios y criar una familia. Gracias a su determinación, pasé de una escuela pública a protagonizar una película de Hollywood. Nuestra historia no es única; es la historia de innumerables estadounidenses que vinieron antes que nosotros. Los inmigrantes no son un problema que haya que solucionar; somos la viva imagen de los valores estadounidenses. Me uno a la histórica campaña de AFSC para recordarle al país que los inmigrantes son Estados Unidos”, dijo Tonatiuh.

La campaña de AFSC coincide con la clausura del Mes de la Herencia Hispana, la cual se extenderá hasta fin de año. Esta campaña busca humanizar a las comunidades inmigrantes y, al mismo tiempo, fomentar políticas migratorias más equitativas. Al reclutar a líderes culturales, entre ellos a la activista estadounidense Dolores Huerta, los actores Tonatiuh, Melissa Barrera, y Mishel Prada, los

Continúa en página 19

La singular carrera editorial de Steve Alcala

POR PETER MAIDEN

Steve Alcala nació en Hanford y se mudó a Fresno de niño. Se graduó de la preparatoria Roosevelt, en el sureste de Fresno, y luego, en 1979, de la Universidad Estatal de Fresno, con una especialización en música.

“Comenzaré desde el principio”, dijo Alcala.

“Cuando me hice cargo del programa de música en la preparatoria Roosevelt en 1982, se llamaba la Banda de Marimba Roosevelt. Su base musical era la marimba. Tocábamos algunas melodías de Herb Alpert. También teníamos guitarras y bailarines folclóricos.

“En realidad, fue fundada por una profesora de español, Margie Fenton, que quería que más niños mexicanos se involucraran en las artes, en particular en las artes escénicas. El sureste de Fresno tenía una gran comunidad mexicana. Y todavía la tiene. Un día escuché a unos chicos tocando la guitarra, creo que era *Sabor a Mí*, en la sala de la banda. Estaban tocando los acordes equivocados, y ella pasaba por la sala y dijo: ‘No, no, así es como se toca’.

“Les mostró los acordes correctos, y eso le dio la idea de crear una banda de músicos. No tenían partituras que leer, o sea que tenían que aprender de oído. Así que formó esta banda de marimba, como la llamé.

“Y no se trataba realmente de música tradicional de México ni nada parecido. Se trataba básicamente de involucrar a los chicos mexicanos en el programa de música.

“Se expandió hasta convertirse en una banda de folklore y rumba. La banda de rumba tocaba canciones para los bailarines, y ellos bailaban y cosas así. Así que la dirigí durante muchos años. Pero luego empecé a escuchar. Yo les dije: ‘Ya basta de *Sabor a Mí* y todas esas melodías mexicanas típicas, tal vez los niños podrían desafiar a un poco más con un estilo diferente’.

“Mi esposa y su padre son de Tampico, México, que está en el Caribe. Ella aprendió sobre la salsa gracias a él, porque todos los músicos venían de Cuba e iban a Tampico y todas



Steve Alcala en el estudio de su casa en Madera. Foto de Peter Maiden

las bandas solían tocar allí, las charangas y las que tocaban danzón. Tenía una gran colección de discos de salsa de su padre y me dijo: ‘¿Por qué no escuchas esto?’. Le contesté: ‘Es genial, me encanta’.

“El primer [jazz latino] que les hice tocar a mis chicos, y que transcribí, fue *Ran Kan Kan*, de Tito Puente. El anterior era de Carlos Santana, que era una pieza tipo rock latino, pero no era realmente lo que quería. Quería que tuviera un toque más afrocaribeño. Empecé a conseguir un repertorio más amplio, pero tenía que transcribirlo todo, porque la música que me encantaba—Tito Puente, Poncho Sánchez, Pete Escovedo—no tenía partituras cuando empecé la clase.”

Alcala fue a San Francisco en 1984 y visitó a Tito Puente en el Hotel Fairmont, donde se presentaba. Puente era un timbalero y director de orquesta de renombre internacional que había grabado más de 100 LP. Alcala le preguntó a Puente si consideraría ir a Fresno para un concierto, y Puente aceptó.

Un año después, se hicieron los arreglos y el concierto se programó para el auditorio de la escuela secundaria Roosevelt, con capacidad para 2.000 personas. Asistieron alrededor de 1.500. El acto de apertura fue la Banda de Jazz Latino de Roosevelt, y Puente se unió a ellos al final de su presentación, interpretando un solo en *Ran Kan Kan*. Esto causó un gran revuelo entre los músicos de Puente.

Continúa en página 19