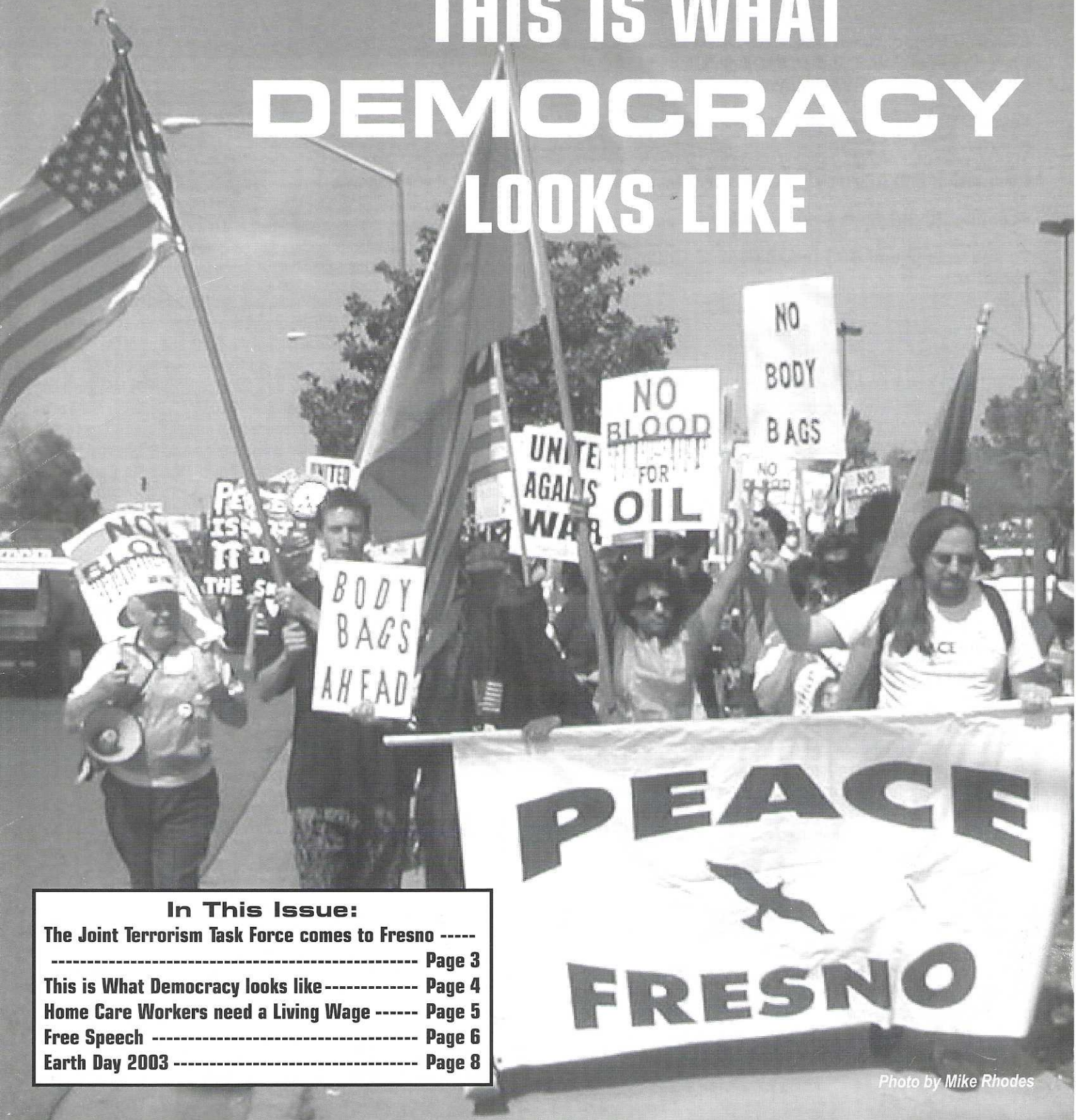


THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE



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

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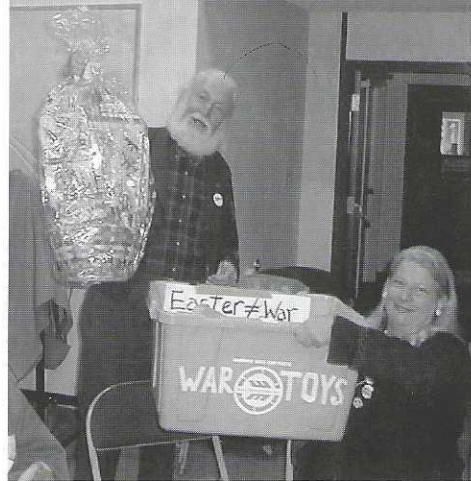
THIS IS **NOT** HOW TO RESOLVE CONFLICT

By Mike Rhodes

The peace and social justice community was saddened to hear that Su Kapoor has been removed from the Human Relations Commission (HRC) by City Council member Jerry Duncan. Kapoor was removed for his support of Peace in Iraq and supporting other causes of importance to Fresno's progressive community. Dr. Kapoor is one of the founding members of the Fresno Center for Non-violence and has been active in peace and conflict resolution issues for many years. The Human Relations Commission is a liaison between the City and the community which helps resolve misunderstandings and conflict.

Council member Duncan has stated that he will try to de-fund the Commission because of their liberal bias. He argues that the HRC supports such nefarious concepts as peace, has encouraged events in the community honoring Cesar Chavez, and that some commission members even supported the appearance in Fresno last month of Jesse Jackson.

If the HRC is to be an effective body to bring about peaceful conflict resolution they need members like Su Kapoor. It is my hope that another City Council member will re-appoint Dr. Kapoor to the commission. We need his voice of reason to be heard.



Peace conference participant Utah Phillips holds up Easter basket containing war toys. The new Nevada City Peace center succeeded in getting a major department store to remove the baskets from their shelves. See the story about the Peace Center conference in Fresno on page 12.

Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor,

Kudos to Catherine Campbell for her recent piece on the Revolutionary Environmentalism conference at CSU-Fresno. I was despairing of ever reading anything in the media that bore a semblance of reality to the conference. Her piece was a much-needed corrective and antidote to the vitriol of the corporate press. I appreciate the *Community Alliance* for running it.

The Bee, John Harris, Ray Applehead, and the Center for Consumer Freedom can ignore the activists' critique of voracious, mass-consumer-corporate capitalism and its impact on the health of the Earth and all of the creatures and plants and minerals of the Earth, but it does so at our collective peril. Worse, calling the activists terrorists only plays into the mass hysteria being generated by the Bureau of Propaganda in Washington. It is only in the eyes of Usama bin Ashcroft and other corporate front men that taking direct action in defense of human and nonhuman animals without doing physical harm to human and nonhuman animals is terrorism. Again, I thank Ms. Campbell for pointing this out.

Sincerely,

Michael Becker

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno

Rev. Bryan D. Jessup

*Welcomes you, whoever you are
and whomever you call family, our doors are open.*



Sermon Topics:

April 6 • A Covenant Relationship of Right

Bryan Jessup

April 13 • Taking God's Name in Vain

Bryan Jessup

April 20 • To Be Raised from the Dead

Bryan Jessup

April 27 • Guest Speaker Rev. Stephen Furrer

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POLICE INFILTRATE LOCAL GROUPS

By Mark Schlosberg

Thirty years ago last November, Californians voted overwhelmingly to include a right to privacy in the state's constitution. The era in which the constitutional right was adopted was in many ways defined by unchecked law enforcement and intelligence abuses, including the infiltration and disruption of the civil rights and anti-war movements and abuses that are still being documented to this day. When voters went to the polls in 1972, there was a growing concern about government intrusions into personal autonomy and liberty and Californians took a stand against the "proliferation of government snooping [that] is threatening to destroy our traditional freedoms." Unfortunately, this precious right is being threatened at both the federal and local level.

Last May, Attorney General John Ashcroft unilaterally and without congressional consultation eliminated or significantly loosed a number of key provisions in guidelines controlling FBI intelligence practices. Most chillingly, the new guidelines encourage a "fishing expedition" approach to intelligence gathering by permitting near standardless monitoring of political and religious activities – without requiring any particular belief or suspicion that evidence related to terrorism or crime generally might be obtained. The federal government is now claiming the right to send agents to religious services, political rallies and organizing meetings open to the public to monitor who says what and to see who is in association with whom.

While the prospect of federal agents spying on people in places of worship or political rallies is disturbing, equally troubling is the thought of local Fresno police officers doing the same thing in violation of California's constitutional right to privacy. This prospect may become even more likely because the Fresno Police Department is in the process of joining the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF).

In recent years, but especially since September 11, there has been a major push by the Federal government to create Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) to coordinate and expand intelligence-gathering practices. These entities are made up of federal, state, and local officers working under the direction of the FBI. They are billed as seamless and fully integrated efforts – as FBI Director Mueller has stated: "When we work together side-by-side, we don't see agencies or jurisdictions, even uniforms."

While that attitude of multi-agency cooperation may be laudable and even provide certain efficiencies, in the absence of specific protections, JTTFs

threaten to involve local police officers in activity that violates our state constitutional right to privacy. As part of the process of joining the JTTF, the Fresno Police Department will have to enter into an agreement with the FBI. This agreement will describe and define the relationship between the Fresno Police Department, the JTTF, and the FBI. It is commonplace that these agreements specify that all members of the JTTF follow federal guidelines. This is extremely problematic given that the federal guidelines allow police spying that is inconsistent with California's constitutional right to privacy.

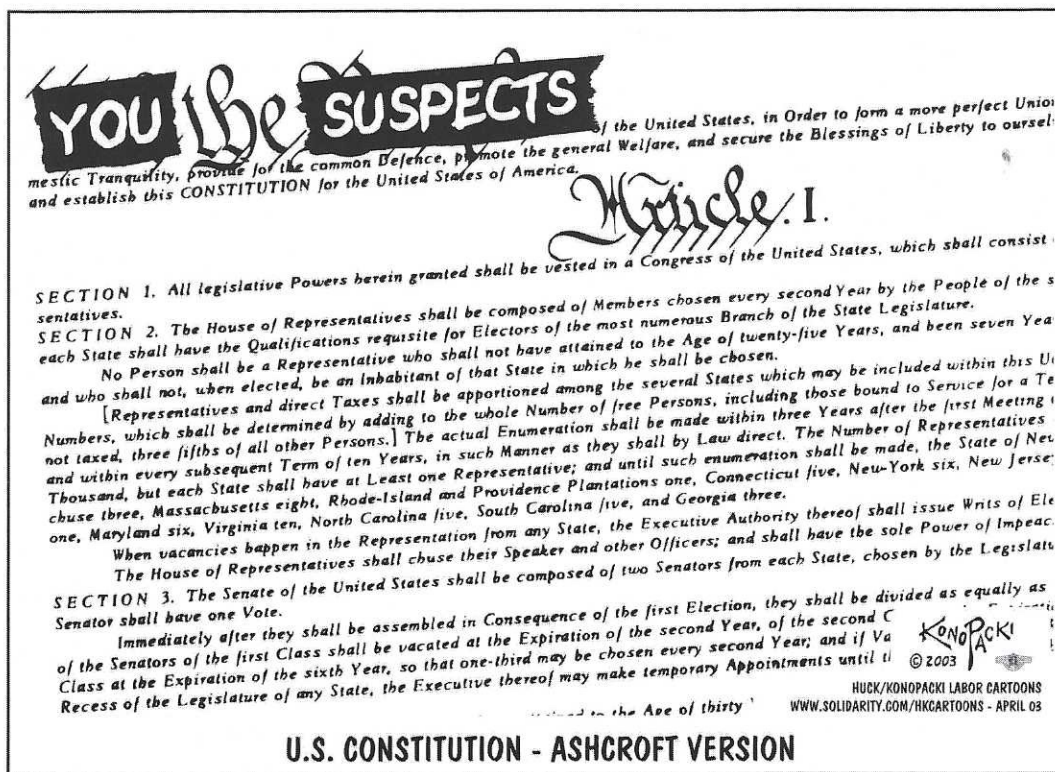
The Fresno Police Department has not finalized its agreement yet, however. In an effort to ensure that protections are put in place to guard against intelligence abuses, a coalition of civil rights and community organizations wrote to Chief Dyer and requested copies of the draft agreement and the Department's guidelines governing monitoring of political and religious activity. Unfortunately the Department chose not to disclose the draft agreement and, even more disturbing, it appears that the Department does not

have any policies prohibiting Fresno police officers from engaging in politically and religiously based spying.

It is not too late, however to influence this agreement as the agreement has not been finalized. Chief Dyer can still take steps to ensure that Fresno residents are protected against federally encouraged abuses. It is essential that before joining the JTTF, Chief Dyer work to ensure that any agreement contains clear language stating that no member of the JTTF may spy on or monitor

people or organizations engaged in religious or political activity in the absence of reasonable suspicion of criminal activity. Further, the agreement should protect Fresno residents against racial profiling, which has become a hallmark of recent federal anti-terrorism policies.

While the federal government continues to pass legislation and take executive actions that curtail vital civil liberties, it is crucial that our state and local officials work to protect our rapidly eroding freedoms. As we celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of our constitutional right to privacy, we must not forget the gross intelligence abuses of the past. Fresno has yet to join the Joint Terrorism Task Force and there is still time for Chief Dyer to take the necessary steps to ensure Fresno residents' rights are not sacrificed in the process. Fighting terrorism does not require sacrificing important civil liberties. We can be both safe and free.



PEACEfresno

Action for social justice and alternatives to war
By Ken Hudson

Get connected and active to help stop the war! Below are local peace groups, events, contacts and resources. We've heard a new saying: There are two superpowers in the world today— the U.S. government and the worldwide peace movement. For readers who have internet access, all groups can be reached by using a search engine like <www.google.com>. This list certainly contains inadvertent omissions. Please contact Peace Fresno at www.peacefresno.org to be included in our updated list.

Ongoing events and meetings:

Fresno: Protests on Fridays, 4:30 – 6:30 PM, Blackstone & Shaw. Peace Fresno meets on Tuesdays, 7:00 PM, 985 N. Van Ness, (559) 487-2515.

Other Fresno groups such as WILPF, FCNV, and Green Party are found in this issue.

Visalia: Vigils on Sundays, 12:30 – 2:30 PM, Mooney & Walnut, South Valley Peace Center (559) 539-5300. Visit their website at www.southvalleypeacecenter.org for contacts in Tulare, Exeter, Porterville and Springville (also a fine resource).

Merced: Protests on Fridays, 4:30 – 5:30 PM, Courthouse Park, 21st & M St. Merced Area People for Peace meets on Thursdays, 5:30 PM, 357 W. 18th, (209) 723-3265.

Reedley: Marches on Fridays, 6:00 – 7:00 PM, Pioneer Park, G St. & 8th (559) 897-7547.

Modesto: Weekly events, locations and times vary. Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St. Board meetings are held the 4th Tuesday of each month. (209) 526-9588.

Bakersfield: Protests on Fridays, 4:30 PM, Stockdale Highway and California Ave/New Stine Rd.

Peace Bakersfield meets on Saturdays, 2:00 PM, 327 18th St. (661) 633-2930.

Mariposa: Vigils on Tuesdays, 5:15 PM, at the Courthouse. (209) 966-4894.

State of California: California Peace Initiative. The campaign to place this proposition on the general election ballot for March, 2004 kicks off at Earth Day celebrations statewide. See the CPI at www.peacefresno.org.

Campus groups:

CSU, Fresno: Campus Peace and Civil Liberties Coalition meets on Fridays,

3:30 – 5:00 PM, CSUF Women's Resource Center. Contact morghanyoung@csufresno.edu.

Fresno City College: Campus Greens meets on Wednesdays, 4:30 – 5:00 PM, Soc Sci 104, (559) 903-0589.

Modesto City College: Alternatives to War meets on Fridays, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, MJC Founders Hall 123. (209) 526-9588.

Resources:

88.1 FM, KFCF Radio

www.fresnoalliance.com

www.sunmt.org

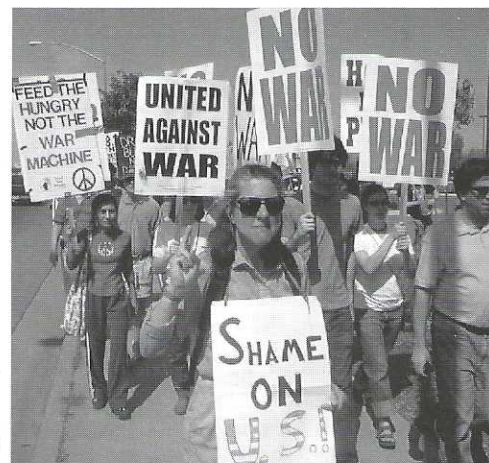
www.unitedforpeace.org

www.sf.indymedia.org

www.zmag.org

WarTimes monthly newspaper,
www.war-times.org

Photos by Mike Rhodes



Jesse Jackson and Homecare Workers in Fresno Rally for a Living Wage

by Mike Rhodes

Saying they "can't survive on \$6.75," hundreds of homecare workers and their allies rallied March 12 with the Rev. Jesse Jackson to demand a living wage. At a large rally at noon in downtown Fresno, the Rev. Jackson called on the county to pay these valuable workers a living wage and benefits. Referring to the threat of war in Iraq, Jackson questioned why there was so much money available for death and destruction while money to fund social needs could not be found. The theme of meeting human needs, not waging war, resonated with the crowd of about six hundred.

After winning the election to represent homecare workers in Fresno County by a 92% Yes vote, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) local 250 is now negotiating a contract with the County of Fresno. In more than eight months at the bargaining table, the county has refused to offer anything more than minimum wage and will not provide health care benefits. Numbering more than 10,000, these homecare workers, who provide health care to their clients, have no health care benefits for themselves and must try to survive on \$6.75 an hour. The county is losing tens of millions of dollars in state and federal matching money by refusing to put in seed money. For about 21 cents per dollar, the county could leverage a living wage and medical benefits for the workers who take care of our seniors and people with disabilities.

Fresno City Council members Cynthia Sterling and Tom Boyajian presented Jackson with a proclamation welcoming him to the city. For reasons that only they could explain, the *Fresno Bee* tried to make a controversy about City Council support for this proclamation. When asked about this "controversy" Jackson said, "When Martin Luther King and I were in Memphis none of the City Council supported a proclamation welcoming us. We have two City Council members in Fresno presenting a proclamation welcoming me to Fresno. I think we are doing great. That is a step forward."

The rally brought together a labor and community alliance for peace, and social and economic justice. Standing together were community activists and organized labor to support a living wage for homecare workers. SEIU 250 did an outstanding job, on very short notice, to organize this successful event. The issue of a fair contract for homecare workers is now on everyone's mind. The decision to bargain a contract in good faith is up to the Fresno County Board of Supervisors. The *Community Alliance* magazine encourages you to contact your supervisor and tell him or her how you feel about this issue.

To contact Supervisor Phil Larson:

2281 Tulare, Room 300, Fresno, CA 93721-2198

Phone: (559) 488-3541 • Fax: (559) 488-6830 • jbarlow@fresno.ca.gov

To contact Susan Anderson:

(559) 488-3542 • cbourbon@fresno.ca.gov

To contact Juan Arambula:

(559) 488-3663 • jarambula@fresno.ca.gov

To contact Judy Case:

(559) 488-3664 • dbeigi@fresno.ca.gov

To contact Bob Waterston:

(559) 488-3665 • kburrows@fresno.ca.gov

To contact SEIU Local 250:

(559) 265-4890 • www.seiu250.org

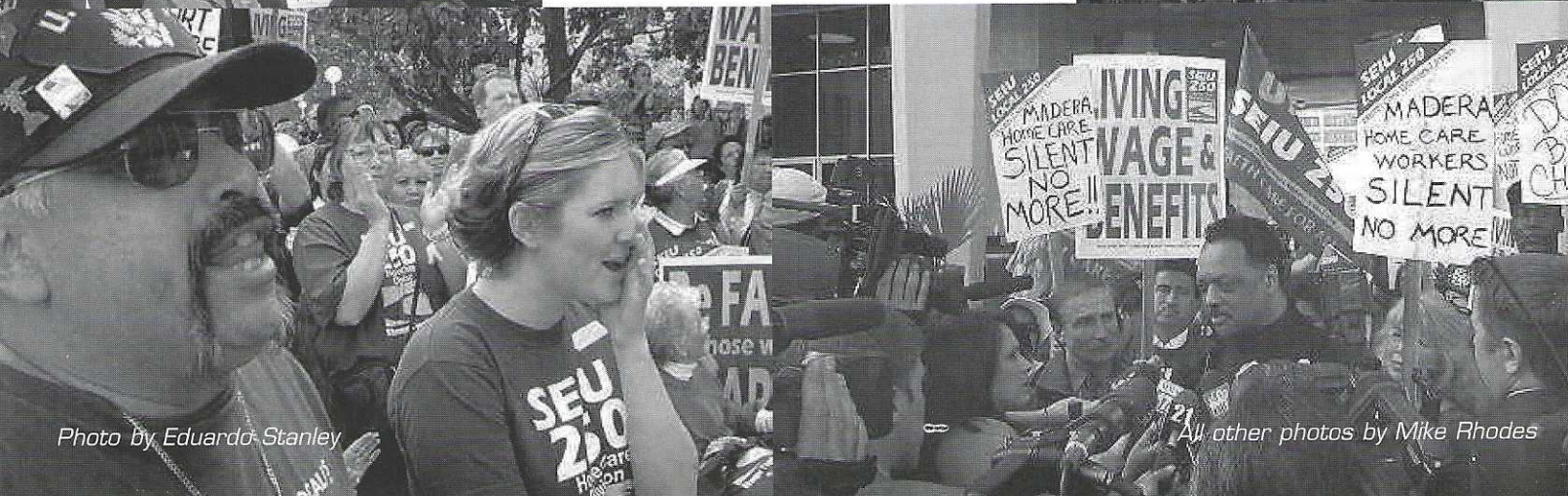


Photo by Eduardo Stanley

All other photos by Mike Rhodes

Free Speech

by Paul Thomas Jackson

In our last article, we mentioned three categories of free speech case law: unrelated speech on private property, related speech on private property, and related speech on public property. Following is the first of three articles discussing the history of unrelated speech on private property.

In this country, the legal issue whether free speech may be exercised on others' private property began in the U.S. Supreme Court's 1946 case of *Marsh v. Alabama*. The court overturned the conviction for trespass by Marsh, a Jehovah's Witness who was leafleting in a company-owned town. The court said that it makes no "significant constitutional difference" whether the State of Alabama allowed a municipality or the private company to operate the town, since "the public in either case has an identical interest in the functioning of the community in such manner that the channels of communication remain free."

This issue, which has developed into a body of federal and state case law, bears directly on the free speech rights of demonstrators. But it also has to do with the well-being of the community in which they live. That free speech is necessary for a community to function effectively has been an underlying theme of the reasoning of the state and federal courts whenever they've made an expansive interpretation of First Amendment rights. Since *Marsh*, very few company towns have been around; but the idea behind that decision has come into play whenever the court has reasoned that in a reasonable time, place, and manner, persons may exercise free speech on other's private property which is open to the public.

Beginning 1964 and ending 1972—in a period that's come to be known as the Civil Rights Era—the state and federal courts gradually moved toward the protection of the exercise of free speech upon private business property open to the public.

In 1964, the California Supreme Court held that the First Amendment interests of a bakery workers' union, whose members were peacefully picketing outside the entrance to a bakery owned by their employer, outweighed its property interests (functioning as a business and allowing customer access). The court overturned the injunction that the employer got against the union.

In 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court—applying reasoning similar to that in *Marsh*—held that picketers must be given access to a large, privately owned shopping center. The court overturned an injunction against the Amalgamated Food Employees Union Local 590, allowing it to resume its picketing against its employer, Logan Valley Plaza, Inc.

In 1969, the California Supreme Court overturned the convictions for trespassing and leafleting, under local ordinances, of a demonstrator named Lane, who was peacefully distributing leaflets on the private sidewalk outside the entrance to a grocery store. Even though the store was located within a private parking area (like today's mall), the court held he was acting within his free speech rights.

Then, the U.S. Supreme Court took a different course with respect to free speech

on publicly accessible private property. In its 1972 case of *Lloyd v. Tanner*, the Court considered whether antiwar demonstrators had a First Amendment right to distribute leaflets at a large, privately owned shopping center. Largely because the content of their speech was unrelated to the center, the Court held they did not.

The *Lloyd* decision overturned both the *Lane* decision and a decision made in 1970 by the California Supreme Court, holding that persons may circulate initiative petitions on shopping mall property. But many legal researchers, the writer included, believe that for Californians, these two decisions were reinstated in 1979 by the state supreme court's decision in *Robins v. Pruneyard* (discussed below).

Meanwhile, in a case similar to *Lloyd* heard three years later, the U.S. Supreme Court looked at two of its prior decisions and concluded that *Lloyd* overruled *Logan Valley* and that speakers had no constitutional right of access to large, privately owned shopping centers. The change in the Court's opinion was probably due to a change in its personnel. The four justices remaining from the *Logan Valley* majority dissented in *Lloyd*, which remains the basis for federal law to

this day. *Lloyd* denies free speech on private property—even the largest retail centers—in all cases where adequate channels of communication exist. We focus on state court decisions in the remainder of this article.

A state constitution may give its citizens greater protection than the federal constitution. In 1979, the California Supreme Court made a decision giving such protection to Californians' free speech rights. Demonstrators who were high school students stood in the central courtyard outside the Pruneyard Shopping Center (in San Jose) and were speaking to patrons and gathering signatures to oppose a UN resolution having to do with the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Though their speech had nothing to do with the center, the California Supreme Court held that they had substantial First Amendment interests in reaching and communicating with its many visitors; and that such interests outweigh the "bare title" of the property owner, which would normally allow the owner to exclude anyone it did not like from being on the property.

Because of their size and their many enticements of the public, the court reasoned in *Robins v. Pruneyard* that large shopping malls are "miniature downtowns."

Recognizing the public's "swelling demand that ownership be responsible and responsive to the needs of the social whole," the Court based its 1979 decision on an expansion of the state's traditional power to protect the health, safety, and morals of its citizens. Because a shopping mall is not publicly owned but, under California's free speech law, functions as if it were, it is sometimes called a "quasi-public forum."

The Court analyzed the growing importance of shopping centers in society and in community development, concluding, "To protect free speech and petitioning is a goal that surely matches the protecting of health and safety, the environment, the aesthetics, property values and other societal goals that have been

First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."



John LeBosquet / WHYY

Steven Downs (right) was arrested in a shopping mall last month for wearing this T-shirt. Mr. Downs was arrested when he refused to take off the T-shirt, which he bought in the New York mall.

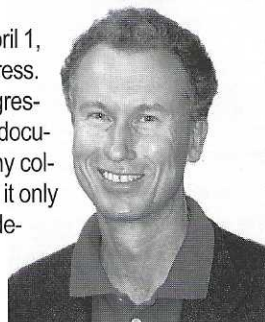
Continued on page 7

Clearing the Air:

Business Leaders Launch Clean Air Plan

by Kevin Hall

The following statement, marked for release on April 1, 2003, arrived in the mailbox just before we went to press. While this space is normally reserved for the progressive community viewpoint, I've decided to run the document in its entirety. Given last month's quite lengthy column on our statewide coalition's plan for clean air, it only seems fair to give the "other side" a chance to describe their plan. These folks will be gathering in Fresno later this month for their Clean Air Summit and, apparently, this release is intended to generate public interest in the event. I say we should at least give them a fair hearing.



April 1, 2003

FRESNO—A grassroots coalition of business leaders from oil, agriculture, home-building and industry have announced a bold plan for cutting air pollution in the San Joaquin Valley to "lung-tolerant" levels by the year 2025. The Coalition Allied for Clean Air (CACA) is serving as the clearinghouse for a host of business friendly programs that are sprouting mushroom-like in CACA's fertile pasture of the merchant mindset.

CACA spokesman A. "Fresno" Eddy says, "We can do this. We know we can. With the right combination of local control and enough money from the federal government, we can implement a series of voluntary programs with lots of financial incentives that will ensure our economic prosperity and create lung-tolerant air within another generation. We owe it to them and to ourselves."

A major component of the CACA push will be the establishment of business-friendly Pollution Reduction Incentive Credits (PRICs). These PRICs will provide a profit incentive for all businesses, according to Fresno Eddy.

For example, two new industry groups have joined together in a surprising coalition: developers and builders! The recently formed Developers Incentivized to Reduce Traffic (DIRT) and Builders Against Graft (BAG) will be seeking financial support to establish a new category of mixed use development: Clean Air Subdivisions for Kids, Elders and Teens (CASKET).

"These DIRTBAGs will be building CASKETs for a whole new generation of valley residents," says Eddy. "The PRICs will reimburse the DIRTBAGs for innovative design, such as putting sidewalks on both sides of the street to encourage walking."

DIRTBAG has even garnered support from the Coalition of Fireplace Fans (COFF). The group hopes to show that enough people walking and breathing will reduce particulate levels through lung filtration to levels low enough to allow for open-pit, living room fireplaces.

Not to be outdone, agribusiness leaders have announced their desire to join the effort by calling for the funding of further research. Agricultural Supporters of Healthy Environmental Studies (ASHES) has been formed to demand at least another decade of air pollution studies before calling for ag PRICs, however small.

"Ag stands ready to accept money for research, no matter what the cost," says Eddy. "No matter how long it takes, ASHES is determined to see the best science available applied to the problem. If it takes two more decades and another \$30 million of research, they're willing to wait. In the meantime, ASHES will be spread throughout the valley for decades to come."

Rounding out the package of pollution reduction credits will be the Oil Incentives to Not Kill (OINKs). Created by Kern County oil industry leaders, they are the

biggest group of PRICs in the valley.

"Oil runs thicker than blood around here," says Eddy. "Deeper, too. Why, the same companies that drill, refine and sell oil, manufacture and market pesticides to farmers and medicine to patients. They are everywhere!" gushes Eddy. The OINKs will increase the economic benefits of product sales in all these categories.

"For example, with more than 1,300 people dying annually in the Valley due to particulates, the job creation benefits of air pollution are not being factored into the Valley's bottom line," says Eddy. "And those same people spend substantial amounts of money on very expensive medicine for years before finally being rushed to a hospital for a few hours or even days of fantastically expensive emergency care."

The OINKs will seek direct refunds from the federal government for gasoline and diesel sales, pesticides applied and medicine prescribed in the Valley.

"Between the DIRTBAGs building CASKETs for all of us, farmers willing to spread our ASHES and PRICs such as the OINK program, we see a much brighter future in store for all Valley businesses," concludes A. Fresno Eddy. "No fooling!"

(Kevin Hall is the Sierra Club-Tehipite Chapter's chair for transportation, air quality, and global warming. To learn more about the air we breathe and the California Clean Air Campaign, please visit <www.calcleanair.org>.)

Free Speech continued from page 6

held to justify reasonable restrictions on private property rights." This conclusion places a value on free speech that is equal to, if not greater than, a mall's interest in an aesthetically pleasing environment for customers. The Court is not saying a business owner may consider the aesthetics of free speech activity, which would produce absurd results. (E.g.: Do the colors of the "Stop Gap Sweatshops" balloons match Fashion Fair's? Perhaps it ought to require the Students Against Sweatshops to model Old Navy clothing. Would that be more aesthetically pleasing to the owner?)

Rather than an absurdity, the state supreme court is saying that, just as in past cases, the lower courts have justified regulation of private property for aesthetic purposes (e.g., city beautification laws), so it may consider the aesthetic value of free speech as justification for requiring that free speech activities be allowed, despite private ownership. Aesthetics is justification for regulating private property—not for regulating free speech, which is protected by the state and federal constitutions unless it falls into one of the four unprotected categories of speech. This distinction will become important in the discussion we will have in our next article.

What about a shopping mall's free speech rights? Since a mall is open to the public for use at its pleasure, the views of those engaging in expressive activity there are not likely to be identified by the public representing the views of the owner. Furthermore, the state supreme court explains, the owner may disavow these opposing views by posting a sign. This, too, will surface in our next article.

Freedom of speech has always been crucial to labor—a grass-roots movement that depends on open channels to communicate its cause. In the history of California case law, for example, the *Pruneyard* decision helped paved the way for two California court decisions, also reached in 1979, protecting labor. In one case involving striking Sears employees, the state supreme court held that a union may peacefully picket on the privately owned sidewalk adjacent to the employer's business. The other case, involving agricultural workers, held that an ALRB agent, who is legally required to provide "worker education," may do so on an unannounced visit to a grower's premises without getting any consent from the grower.

Having traced the development of our free speech rights in the state and federal courts, we reached the summit—the leading case of *Robins v. Pruneyard*. In our

The Role of Community Organizing in the Environmental Movement

by Jeremy Hofer

It seems as though the environmental movement has gone soft and fluffy. Thirty-three years after the first Earth Day, mainstream environmental organizations continue to build much of their membership through direct marketing campaigns (those letters you receive that offer you duffle bags and stickers in exchange for your tax-deductible donation). Through these mail and phone solicitations they attempt to mobilize support, inform, and raise their budgets, all aimed at a middle-class, suburban constituency. No time on your hands? No problem, send that check and they will do the work for you. Unfortunately, this is the face of environmentalism that much of America has come to recognize, not the hands-on political activism that came from the civil rights era in the 50s and 60s, but a passive and trendy recycle-and-donate culture.

Not that every effort doesn't help in this day and age when the situation looks pretty apocalyptic: unprecedented species extinction, a worldwide fresh water shortage, parts of Africa reaching 140 degrees last summer, a projected doubling of the world's population in 50 years with the richest 10% owning 90% of the resources—the consensus is that we've got a major problem on our hands. Most alarming is that it seems that most of America doesn't seem to get it. No matter how sophisticated the environmental marketing schemes get, our consumer culture continues to overlook the effects of its rampant mission to commodify the world. In the face of so much destruction we find ourselves saying: I'm only one person, what can I do about it?

In order to begin to understand the problem, we need to acknowledge that most of us don't consider ourselves to be tree-hugging environmentalists. If you disagree just take a look at the streets during trash-pickup day (fill-the-landfill day). Though recycling may be up and throwing trash out the window on the freeway may be down, most of us don't accept that it will take a great change in our collective way of life in order to build a sustainable society. There are many reasons people aren't changing their way of doing things. Some are disillusioned with the environmental movement; turned off by its hypocrisies and inadequacies. Others just don't see the earth as something worth sacrificing their quality of life for. Others fear that its political ramifications would mean a loss of power or money, even actively opposing it through moneyed front groups that advocate for industry. Big business has successfully pitted environment

against economy and everyone seems to be losing.

While the above groups make up a powerful constituency, there is another group that finds itself outside of mainstream environmentalism's scope, not to mention the scope of mainstream society in general: the working class and rural poor. This large group of people finds itself in a state of perpetual attempts at survival, struggling for the most basic of human rights—housing, healthcare, employment, and so on. The irony is that of all of the groups mentioned, it is this group that is most affected by environmental degradation. The 1987 report by the United Church of Christ, "Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States," found that people of color were twice as likely as whites to live in communities with a commercial hazardous waste facility, and three times as likely to live in a community with multiple facilities or a large one. It is a well-known fact that low-income communities and communities of color are more likely to be the recipients of the wastes of industrial society.

The Central Valley consists of communities that are targets for everything from pesticide drift to prisons. These communities also have difficulty telling their stories when they are being polluted. Coverage of environment in the media has been reserved for more sensationalist stories—like fires and earthquakes, not to mention the weather—altogether missing the stories of groups that are involved in grassroots struggles. This lack of access essentially constitutes a lack of voice for the most vulnerable communities.

In the pursuit of wilderness, public land, and natural resource conservation, mainstream environmentalism has also overlooked the stories of these communities. As a result, "environment" has become something out of reach for working-class families. A farm-worker that is out of work for seasons at a time will say that he has little interest in rivers and trees when he is fighting for the health of his family. A woman working 40 hours a week at minimum wage will say that spending a little more on organic food is out of the question while she is having trouble putting food on the table in the first place. In a day and age when organic has become trendy, much of the environmental movement finds itself out of touch with the people who are most directly affected by environmental degradation.

Out of the void has emerged the environmental justice movement. It doesn't fit inside the box of mainstream envi-



Fresno Earth Day Festival Sunday, April 27th Noon till sundown Courthouse Park

Environmental exhibits
Solar-powered stage
Live bands and speakers
Arts & crafts sales
Vegetarian cuisine
Children's activities

Sponsored by:

Whole Foods Market, the Vanguard Foundation, CalTrans,
the Sierra Club, Offline Solar, KFSR, KFCE, Alice 102.7,
the Vernacular, Sun Mountain, the Community Alliance,
and the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

ronmentalism but finds itself more aligned with grass-roots struggles for social justice. These are the community-based groups that fight for rights to clean air and clean water by organizing in their own neighborhoods and communities under the banner of environmental justice. Activists in these groups are not necessarily buying hybrid vehicles, but they are forming networks, organizing events, and building leadership in towns that have yet to see a hybrid on the street. This can be called a civic environmentalism—by getting involved in decisions that affect the health of their communities, these groups and individuals are on the cutting edge of the environmental movement by tying community organizing to environmental problem-solving.

This is not a simple task. Community organizing and creating broad-based coalitions is an arduous task that takes willingness on all sides to reach compromise. However, the power of a broad-based community coalition far outweighs that of a well-moneyed special-interest group because coalitions are the building blocks to a sustainable and democratic society. Community organizations and coalitions are the foundations on which future decisions will be made. Too often do we lose sight of the big picture when we focus on a specific campaign—missing the forest for the trees. Building a community-based strategy to resolve a problem means prioritizing the development of relationships and trust within a community at all levels—including the planners, the churches, the schools, the political strata, the environmentalists, etc. It must be emphasized that not only should environmentalists try to include all of these groups in building community-based campaigns, government must make every effort to include the community in its decision-making process. A true democracy has its citizenry taking part in it on a daily basis, not just at voting time.

As we approach another Earth Day—challenged by war, drought, air pollution, and a myriad of other environmental problems—we mustn't allow ourselves to get overwhelmed. The answer to "What can I do about it?" is all around us: in the air, the water, in our food, and our conversations—most of all, the answer is in our community. Next time you send your donation to your environmental organization of choice, ask them if they are supporting community organizing in your area.

Jeremy Hofer is co-chair of the Fresno Earth Day Committee and a member of the Central California Environmental Justice Network. Send him comments at jhofer@hotmail.com.

People Power vs. the WTO

by Pasquale Carbone

Didn't make it to the WTO protests in Seattle 1999? Well, here's your chance to get out and protest against GMOs, pesticides, food irradiation, toxic sludge, the weakening of organic standards, and other industrial agricultural practices. It's PEOPLE power vs. the WTO, as the USDA will be hosting a WTO-Ministerial-level Conference on Agricultural Science and Technology, June 23–25 in Sacramento.

According to the USDA, the purpose of the conference is "to address access to technologies, new scientific research, the relationship between regulatory practices and innovation and the creation of partnerships to help developing countries adopt new technologies to increase agricultural productivity." In layman's terms, the USDA wants to pressure smaller nations to allow imports of GMO foods and promote big Ag's agenda. It's a way for US negotiators to "soft sell" neoliberal trade policies prior to the upcoming WTO meeting in Cancun.

But not everyone agrees with the USDA's vision of agriculture. Luckily, a group of concerned citizens have just starting organizing to protest and educate ministers at the conference. They represent a coalition of organic farmers,

farm workers, food activists, antipesticide activists, trade activists, and others fighting for people power. They are looking for groups to network and join in protests and direct actions. They have just starting forming groups to coordinate activities. Their goal is not to shut down the conference, but draw attention to alternatives to industrial agriculture and to help smaller nations stand up to US bully tactics.

If you are interested in joining their efforts, contact Heidi McLean (Sacramento Activists for Democratic Trade), at (916) 456-9435, or email her at SILR@jps.net, or check out their web site at www.sacacts.org.

As the threat of war still lingers, we cannot let our guard down on other issues. It's important that we here in the Central Valley do not miss this rare opportunity to come together with other like-minded people and show our opposition to the imperial corporate takeover of the Earth. In Sacramento, PEOPLE Power must deliver another defeat to the Monsanto's, ConAgra's, ADM's, and neoliberal trade policies.

POETRY CORNER

Wow—threat of war must stimulate the poetic impulse. We received five submissions this month, with only one small "corner" available. Apologies to those who are not included. New submissions are still welcome, with a premium put on political relevance, conciseness, and (to my ear) interesting language.

excerpts from:

A Little Poem That Could

by Ken & Jenny Levens

...No impeachment today? I must be okay!
Just get me to the war on time!

...I'm bankrupting the nation, do a need a month's vacation?
No, just get me to the war on time!

...School districts are floundering, deficit spending's astounding
so get me to the war on time!

...My wife's afraid of poets, but I've got all the bullets,
just get me to my war on time!

...Don't get mad, I'm doing this for Dad
and get me to the war on time!

War

by Rhonda Brooks, Valley State Prison for Women

A child's game of wooden soldiers
A cry of boom boom boom

War, the ultimate challenge, like a game of chess
A cry of "my strategy is best"

War, ancient
Moaning throughout the centuries

A man's game of power and flying body parts
A cry of sonless mother
War, the nature of man?
"I do not eat green eggs and ham,
I will not eat them, Uncle Sam I am."



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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

Vickie M. Fouts, Branch Coordinator, contact at 559.658.8260 or email at vmfout1@sti.net

WILPF Fresno Dates

Tuesday, April 1, 10:30 AM: Sonia Sanchez, reception in the Peace Garden at CSUF.

Tuesday, April 1, 7:30 PM: Poet Sonia Sanchez will read her poetry. She has been described as a dynamic, transcendent female voice, one of the finest poets of our time. Some pieces are plaintive and poignant, others are tough and militant, but all are significant, brilliant, and original. Ms. Sanchez is a strong peace activist and a long-time WILPF sponsor. You are all invited to a special morning reception with her in the Peace Garden at CSUF, 10:30 a.m. And do attend her evening reading as well.

Monday, April 14, 7 PM: WILPF meeting at 985 N. Van Ness. All are invited to attend. Please submit agenda items to Vickie Fouts at vmfout1@sti.net or 658-8260 by Sunday, April 6.

Tuesday, April 15: Tax Day; location & times TBA.

Wednesday, April 23, 3:30 PM: Stir It Up! WILPF Style hosted by Gabrielle Kirkland. Call KFCF at 225-8888 to join in the discussion. Submit ideas for future programs to Gabrielle at tellgabbie@yahoo.com.

Sunday, April 27: Earth Day, WILPF will be on site with T-shirts, pendants, and cheer. Take part, enjoy the company and the music, and learn about how to help Mother Earth. Courthouse Park, Tulare & Van Ness, Fresno.

Saturday, May 3, time & location TBA: WILPF Spring Clean Yard Sale. Contact Vickie (vmfout1@sti.net) or Gabrielle (tellgabbie@yahoo.com) to donate goods and volunteer for a day of fun.

May 9-11: WILPF West Gathering at the Asilomar Conference Grounds. Mail late registration forms to: WILPF - PO Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755, DEADLINE: March, 15, 2003. Costs run from \$201.00 to 156.25 plus \$60 late registration fee for the weekend. Vickie Fouts has already sent out registration forms. Contact her at vmfout1@sti.net or 658-8260 with questions or email her your registration form ASAP.

WILPF Fresno Business

1. **Peace pendants & pins available** for sale. They are selling fast for \$8.00 each. Don't miss out. Contact Ingrid (225-8491) or Vickie (vmfout1@sti.net) to get yours.
2. **Volunteers needed** for help with Peace Camp, education fund art show fundraiser committee, budget committee, education fund committee. Contact Vickie at vmfout1@sti.net.
3. **Substitute host** needed for May and June Stir It Up! Gabrielle Kirkland is due to have her baby the end of May and will be taking a couple of months off to care for her newly expanded family. Contact Vickie to help.
4. **Finances:** It was agreed to limit funding issues to board meetings to facilitate planning in our pattern of spending. The finance committee proposed that each event WILPF takes part in should have a budget so that the costs can be considered prior to committing to the event.
5. **JAPA & racism books:** A set of this year's award-winning JAPA books are being presented to the Fresno County Library this month.
6. **Peace Garden:** WILPF Fresno has voted to support the submission of Jane

Addams as its candidate for the next person to be memorialized in Fresno State's Peace Garden.

7. **Kenley Neufeld of the Nonviolent Peace Force** presented information about the international peace force being created. His appeal was for member organization to support this important work. As a member organization WILPF Fresno would be part of the actual operation of the organization, help (where possible), recruit & train people, aid in obtaining funds and political support from the government, find and financially sponsor a person from Fresno who is willing to be a full-time member or part-time reservist and publicize the project.

Burning Issues

by Desi Cortez

By the time this issue of the *Community Alliance* is in your hands we may be at war. If so, we've been hard at work to stop the insanity and we must be vigilant in watching the moves by our representatives on all levels. Locally, Peace Fresno is generating the hot issues. They have requested a city resolution for a peaceful solution to possible war with Iraq and are spearheading a petition effort to get "War" on the March 2004 ballot. You go Peace Fresno, the force is with you! Now, onto two health care bills we can make change with (or without).

On March 13, the US Senate received HR5, deceptively titled Help Efficient, Accessible, Low-cost, Timely Healthcare (HEALTH) Act of 2003. Public Citizen states that the "spike in medical malpractice premiums reflects the insurance industry's attempt to make up for investment losses on the backs of doctors and patients—not an increase in lawsuits or malpractice awards." They ask for Congress to focus on medical insurance reform and to implement programs to crack down the health care providers (only 5%) causing medical malpractice. Don't blame the victim; ask our senators to say no!

Senator Sheila Kuehl introduced SB 921, the Health Care for All Californians Act, which establishes a single comprehensive health plan for all California residents at no cost to the state. This bill proposes to accomplish this by consolidating tax dollars currently used for health care (60% of health dollars are paid by taxes), improving efficiency by delivering 95-99% of every dollar to services (up from 67-70% in private health care systems) and a low health tax replacing health insurance premiums, copayments, and deductibles. This tax will be less than premiums paid by employers, employees, and the self-insured. California residents can have freedom to change jobs without considering their health care options. What a concept, *freedom*.

Repeal the US PATRIOT ACT now! Passage of this act means that Middle Eastern and South Asian immigrants can be detained in sweeps and through reporting measures, reminiscent of both the World War II detention of Japanese-Americans and the blacklisting of the McCarthy era. Trading civil liberties and security has not decreased the likelihood of terrorist acts nor has it increased public safety. This act places dangerous powers in the lap of the Administration. This act achieves the following: It reduces judicial review and limits congressional oversight of Administration actions; it decreases public access to information about government activities; it increases surveillance of the lives of private citizens and control over state and local law enforcement; it merges federal law enforcement and intelligence-gathering functions; and it increases use of "emergency" legislation without due process. Contact the FCNL web site for more information: www.fcnl.org.

MAY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: Sunday, April 6.

Submit articles to Desi Cortez at 4618 N. First, #166, Fresno, CA 93726, desicortez@cviip.net, or 907-2200.



Creating Sustainable Growth

Last month we explained that without a sustainable contributor base, the Fresno County Green Party cannot grow as a viable party. One of the main reasons is that because we are a grassroots organization, we take no corporate contributions. Therefore, it is important for each Green to contribute what he or she can toward the continuing operation and expansion of the party. To help you become a sustainer, we have added PayPal to our website. By utilizing PayPal, you can make a one-time contribution of any amount. However, what we really need is for people to become *monthly sustainers*. Via PayPal, you can sign up to give a fixed amount each month to *your* Fresno County Green Party. If each registered Green in the county would commit to giving just \$10.00 per month, we would have a solid basis for growth in the county. Please visit our website, <www.cagreens.org/fresno>, and then click through to PayPal and become a sustainer today!!

We are planning on having a booth at the Fresno Fair this year. We want to support candidates for local offices. We want to support Campus Greens at CSUF and FCC. However, none of these things can be done without funding. Will you do your part?

European Greens Visit U.S. in Bid to Avert War

In early March, Green members of 11 European parliaments traveled to New York and Washington to get the message to America that Bush's war on Iraq must be opposed. They brought with them an antiwar appeal from more than 300 parliamentarians from nearly 20 countries. The group met with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Chief Weapons Inspector Hans Blix, various UN ambassadors and members of Congress. One highlight was a debate between Daniel Cohn-Bendit, co-leader of the Green Party Caucus in the European Parliament, and Richard Perle, an advisor in the Bush administration.

"No Child Left Behind" Act's Military Recruitment Provision Violates the Rights of Students and Parents

The Green Party of the United States has urged Congress to repeal the provision of the "No Child Left Behind" Act that requires high schools receiving federal funding to turn over names, phone numbers, and addresses of all students to military recruiters.

The act authorizes recruiters to make unsolicited calls and to visit students' homes without their parents' consent. The Idaho Green Party has drafted a form to assist high schoolers in having their names removed from the list that schools turn over to recruiters. You can view it at <<http://www.idahogreenparty.org>> in PDF format. Said ex-Marine Howie Hawkins of Syracuse, New York, "The increased militarism in our schools and from our national leaders and the media is an attempt to condition us to accept war."

Get Involved!

Come to our monthly meeting at the Center for Nonviolence located at 985 N. Van Ness on April 10 at 7 PM and get involved. Listen to *The Green Scene* on KFCF 88.1 on April 16 at 3:30 PM. And don't forget to visit our website at <www.cagreens.org/fresno> or call us at 265-3647.

Greens Carol Bequette and Mattias Thorslund march for peace.



CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE

CENTER REPORT

PEACE CENTERS CONFERENCE

Days before Bush's promised war, representatives from ten Northern California peace centers, along with other interested parties, participated in an annual conference hosted this year by our Center. One sign of the times: the emergence of three new centers in the past months, including one from Reedley and one from the South Valley.

The imminent invasion of Iraq was on everyone's mind. Yet a recurring theme of the conference was that building a nonviolent world is much more than an antiwar movement. Much of our time was spent in break-out sessions discussing, for example, how to sustain the involvement of new activists drawn to protest the war. And how to utilize the inevitable damage to working Americans by the war buildup (no matter what happens!) by focusing on core issues such as wages, health and education, civil rights. And how to strengthen peace centers' role in a statewide network for information sharing and pointing to emerging issues. For instance, a committee was established to explore responses to a little-known part of the Patriot Act that gives the FBI access to library and bookstore records without us even knowing that our privacy has been violated.

As always, it was fascinating to see how the particularities of institutional history and character create a different dynamic for each center. For example,

the circumstances of our founding made our first priority to maintain a facility for the use of other organizations which can be more issue-oriented. (Thus in our programs we focus on disseminating the basic ideas of nonviolence rather than specific policies.) Also, because we do not have paid directors, we have to rely on the initiative of those willing to take charge of this or that activity to fix our agenda.

An added delight of the conference was the participation of Utah Phillips, notorious Wobbly, storyteller, and folksinger, whose wisdom and rich cadences are familiar to KFCF listeners.

The conference was also the occasion for the FCNV to bring Tim Wise to Fresno for a public presentation. He spoke about the personal and pragmatic—as well as moral—reasons for whites to be involved in the struggle for racial equity. Tim's dynamic address is available on audio tape and will be shown on cable channel 14—contact us at the Center for details.

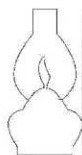
The Conference Organizing Committee wants to give special public acknowledgement to Eve Hudson, Deborah Eacock, Nancy Skeen, and Fran Saunders for work above and beyond the call of duty.

Fresno Center for Nonviolence

985 N. Van Ness • Fresno, CA 93728

Ph. (559) 237-3223 • zaygb@csufresno.edu

<http://www.fresnoalliance.com/peacefresno>



THE WELCH REPORT

Jack H. Welch, M.D.

March 11, 2003

I fear that Mr. Bush will have launched his long-threatened war on Iraq before this April issue of *Community Alliance* will have gone to press.

The Bush Administration's approach to security in the post 9/11 world is composed of the following: "increased military expenditures, the pursuit of global military dominance, indefinite reliance on nuclear weapons, the deployment of missile defenses" (which do not work) "and the threat to initiate pre-emptive wars in the name of security."

There is every reason to believe that this war against Iraq will make U.S. citizens far less secure. Such a war will be perceived in the Arab world "as reflecting the double standard that allows the US to turn a blind eye to Israel's arsenal of some 200 (to 400) nuclear weapons while being willing to attack an Arab country for pursuing the same path."

THE PROLIFERATION PROBLEM

Instead of solving the threat from weapons of mass destruction (WMD), preemptive war on Iraq very likely will make the proliferation problem worse by encouraging military buildups in other nations. Only the continued strengthening of a comprehensive disarmament regime will make the world more secure from WMD threats. "But as long as the U.S. continues to maintain huge stockpiles of nuclear weapons and persists in advancing WMD technology, it will be unable to effectively promote a nonproliferation and disarmament agenda internationally."

The term *proliferation* can refer not only to the spread of WMD to new countries, but also to the advancement of existing WMD arsenals by countries already having such capabilities. The United States continues to possess more than 10,000 nuclear weapons, and the US Congress, the weapons labs, and the Department

of Energy (DOE) are all engaged in furthering US reliance on these weapons in violation of US international disarmament obligations.

RECENT US EFFORTS TO INCREASE RELIANCE ON WMD

Congress recently authorized \$15 million for a study of a new, more usable nuclear weapon, the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator, or nuclear "bunker buster."

The National Ignition Facility is under construction at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to further advance nuclear weapons science.

The DOE plans to build a new plutonium pit manufacturing plant so that the US can resume the production of nuclear weapons at Cold War levels.

Both Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore Laboratories are attempting to obtain permits which would allow them to work with live strains of anthrax, bubonic plague, and other deadly agents just as the US is thwarting strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention.

"Regardless of whether the UN inspections are successful . . . or the US overthrows the Saddam regime, the threat of WMD will persist until the world's leading proliferator," the US, "leads the way towards disarmament."

A new approach to security is needed, "built on the power of diplomacy and aid rather than on military power. It must be built on policies that reverse inequities in the world and seek to provide basic human rights and human dignity for all."

(Source: "Waging Peace," newsletter of Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, Winter 2002)

MORE BUSH LEAGUE

On December 17, 2002, the Bush Administration announced its decision to field a missile defense system; the program is moving ahead in the face of continuing technical problems. In December, an \$80 million test failed, the third in as many years. Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) charged Bush with "violating common sense."

(Source: Tri-Valley CARE's Citizens Watch, January, 2003)

Tuesday, April 1 • 7:30 PM

Poet Sonia Sanchez will read her poetry. She has been described as a dynamic, transcendent female voice, one of the finest poets of our time. Some pieces are plaintive and poignant, others are tough and militant, but all are significant, brilliant and original. Ms Sanchez is a strong peace activist and a long time WILPF sponsor. You are all invited to a special morning reception with her in the Peace Garden at CSUF, 10:30 a.m. And do attend her evening reading as well.

Thursday, April 3 • 5:30 PM

The Central California Institute - a Liberal/Progressive "think tank" which has been in the organizational stages for over 4 years will be introduced to the public and the media of the valley at the Smittcamp House at CSUF from 5:30 to 7:30 PM

The primary purposes of the think tank is to be proactive rather than reactive to events by supplying pertinent information to the media in a timely manner and to help create a well informed populace which seeks to understand all sides of an issue in order to form rational judgements and responses.

The 35 fellows and the 12 member board of directors will be introduced at the reception. All are welcome. Betsy Temple is the President of the Central California Institute. Call (559) 439-0821 for more information.

Friday, April 4

Oliver North is coming to Fresno. Ollie, you may recall, was the person in the Reagan administration who funded "the contras" (a group of Nicaraguan terrorists) by selling arms to Iran and Iraq. It was a sordid affair that should have toppled the Reagan administration. But, instead it made him somewhat of a folk hero of the far right. Go figure. I would think that Ollie would be so embarrassed about what he did he would no longer go out in public. In any event, he is coming to Fresno as a featured speaker for the Central California Association of Health Underwriters 2003 Health Forum. Seems like a good opportunity to remind people that in order to end terrorism - you have to stop funding terrorists. To see details about his visit, go to: <http://www.ccahu.org/CCAHEALTHFORUM.pdf>

Monday, April 7

AIDS Lobby Day in Sacramento. According to Center for Disease Control in their 2000 reporting, "one in seven living persons in the State of California will have AIDS" - California is one of the leading states, impacted with individuals living with the HIV Virus. This means that there are far too many people who are HIV+. Treatment is costly. The stigma and discrimination has serious impacts on individuals living with this virus. Please join us for AIDS Lobby Day April 7th. Take action in Sacramento. We would like to take a bus load from the Valley to meet with our legislators and ask them not to cut the budget, for people living with HIV/AIDS. This event is supported by CHAANGE: California HIV/AIDS Advocacy Network Grassroots Evolution — Jean Kennedy is our State Regional Rep. for the San Joaquin Valley. If you know someone currently living with HIV, or who passed with the disease AIDS, or if you want to see more provision made for individuals affected by the HIV virus, you are invited to join us in Sacramento. Call 559-270-1023 or 209-725-3000. Bus will leave Fresno.

Wednesday, April 9

Community Hunger & Nutrition Forum on the upcoming Community Food Assessment of 2 City Council and 2 Board of Supervisor Districts. The Fresno Metro Ministry Community Food Assessment Team will present their plan and survey instruments prior to a training of neighborhood residents who will look at their neighborhood access to food, and what barriers exist to people getting nutritious food. Concerned about low income neighbors access to food in the City and County, this is a follow up to the training last May by the Community Food Security Coalition here in Fresno by an urban planner and medical anthropologist. Results from other communities around the country are strong local changes in access to local produce, improved transportation, ways to get quality food to people for better health, and a Food Policy Council The Forum is open to the public, lunch is provided. Please call Edie Jessup, Fresno Metro Ministry for further information and registration, 485-1416.

Friday, April 11 • 5 & 8 PM

Fresno Filmworks presents: Standing in the Shadows of Motown. Fresno Filmworks movies are shown at the Tower Theatre. Tickets are \$8.50; \$6.50 for students and seniors. For more information call 221-0755.

April 12th through April 18

National Week of Action to support immigrant students' aspirations to complete their education and obtain legal status. The week is being planned by numerous national, state, and local organizations from all regions of the country. Activities that week will include rallies, press conferences, visits with Members of Congress, and more. For

information about local activities contact Graciela Martinez at Proyecto Campesino (559) 733-4844 email: gmartinez@afsc.org

Saturday, April 12 • 7 - 9 PM

Contra Dance at Margaret Hudson's Barn in Fresno. Park diagonally on the Arthur St. side (4230 Arthur) and follow the lighted path to the barn. We are asking a donation of \$5 for the core band, snacks and other expenses (\$10 max per family). Children who don't want to dance: bring your cards and table games! It will be too dark to play outside, but the room next to the dance floor will be at your disposal.

Musicians and callers are invited to bring your instruments, or come forward to call. For more information call Katzi at 291-3972.

Tuesday, April 15 • All Day

WILPF will do their annual Tax Day leafleting at the local post office. The leaflet will show people where their tax dollars go, largely to the military industrial complex instead of social programs. For more information or to volunteer contact Vicki Fouts, vmfou1@sti.net or (559) 658-8260.

Tuesday, April 15

Deadline for articles and calendar items to the April 2003 Community Alliance magazine. Send information to AllianceEditor@attbi.com

Wednesday, April 16 • 6 PM

Central California Criminal Justice Committee meeting at the downtown library in the Sarah McCordle room.

Friday, April 18 • 4 - 6 PM

The Pros and Cons of war with Iraq will be the subject of a debate at CSUF. Two CSUF professors and one student against the war, Dr. Becker (Poli-Sci) and Dr. Jendian, (anti-war student speaker to be announced) will speak. For the pro-war camp, no definite speakers have been chosen but Dr. Thornton and Dr. Hanson have been requested to speak. The pro-war student speaker is still unconfirmed. After briefly explaining their views, each speaker will address audience questions. Sponsors: Poli-Sci Student Club/Organization, Campus Coalition for Peace and Civil Liberties. For more information contact Christine H. Downing at Chrishoovler@yahoo.com

Friday, April 18 • 1:30 PM

AHH YEAH 3 Year Anniversary Jam at The Starline: 831 E Fern. 10 Poets/ 1 Short Film/ Giveaways & More. Music Provided by: Beat Dynasty Sound & Funk Band The Late Night Bump. All Ages \$5.00 cover Doors open at 8:30pm

Friday, April 25 • 5:30 PM

Sen. Barbara Boxer will speak at a benefit dinner for the Fresno Democratic Party Headquarters at Pardini's Restaurant, West Shaw & Van Ness. Tickets are \$75/person in advance, \$85 at the door. Tables of eight are available for \$600. Cocktails at 5:30 PM and Dinner at 7:00 PM. For information and tickets call Mary Stanley at 268-5756, Billie MacDougall at 448-0160 or the Democratic Party Office at 486-5422. Tickets may be ordered by mail, checks payable to FCDWC and mail to Democratic Party Office, 255 N. Fulton, #104, Fresno, CA 93701.

Friday, April 25 • 7:30 PM

The Fresno Folklore Society presents - "PERFECT STRANGERS" Jody Stecher's new band—Bluegrass: Jody Stecher, mandolin; Bob Black, banjo; Forrest Rose, bass; Chris Brashear, fiddle; Peter McLaughlin, guitar. And can they sing! Admission: \$12/ \$15 Advance Purchase Available 3 weeks prior to performance at Patrick's Music Store at Barstow & First, The Movies Video Store 1435 Van Ness Ave; National Hardware (new outlet) 7173 N. Blackstone in Pinedale. For early bird and out-of-townners send check and SASE to Pat Wolk 6661 N. Forkner, Fresno 93711. Information: 431-3653.

Sunday, April 27 • Noon - Sundown

Earth Day Festival at Courthouse Park from noon to sundown. For more information visit <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/earthday/> For more information call Sandra Guzman (559) 243-9338 or email zoie7@hotmail.com

For up-to-the-minute information about what is happening in Fresno's progressive community, join the Community Alliance email alert network. We send out an updated calendar of events once a week and alert you when there is an emergency rally or demonstration. This is a free service. You can join by sending your email address to [AllianceEditor@attbi.com](mailto:<AllianceEditor@attbi.com>) and saying you would like to subscribe to this service.

Fresno Folklore Society

by Mike Starry

As a child, Pat Wolk sat on the edge of the stage of a theater when folk singer Pete Seeger performed. Growing up in Seattle, Pat learned Croatian folk dancing at Croatian picnics. "The music went straight to my feet," she said. "You name it, I learned about Croatian, Russian, dances, and more, all of the dances of the people from the cold war countries, the countries we were supposed to hate. I loved those dances so I loved those people."

Now, as the acting president of the Fresno Folklore Society (FFS), she helps organize and publicize various folk music performances and dances throughout the Central Valley. FFS is presenting the bluegrass group Perfect Strangers at the Fresno Art Museum's Bonner Auditorium on Friday, April 25, at 7:30 PM. Advance-purchase tickets are available at The Movies at 1435 N. Van Ness; Patrick's Music Store at Barstow and First; and National Hardware at 7173 N. Blackstone. As a convenience for out-of-town folks, checks can be made out to FFS and mailed (please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope) to Pat Wolk at 6661 N. Forkner, Fresno 93711.

Ticket prices are \$12 for members, \$15 for nonmembers.

About Perfect Strangers, Murphy Henry of Banjo Newsletter writes, "This group goes on my 'must see' list."

Pat had family experiences as a child. "My dad was a union organizer," she said. "As a merchant marine sailor he would dock at different ports throughout the world and go into a city and get on a bus or into a taxi and find music. He would see people playing music and dancing and when he came home he would tell us all about it. Folk dance and music brings us all together. It is very much a family and community thing with common themes like work, women, and gospel. When you bring your children to a folk concert and dance, they may enjoy the performances or they go off to the side and be by themselves. Whatever, they are in a safe environment. We take care of each other's children."

For music from the heart and soul, the FFS provides enjoyable experiences for adults and children, featuring many kinds of music: folk, old timey, bluegrass, Irish, Scottish, Cajun, and Armenian—to name just a few. Founded in the 1960s and reincarnated in 1977 by musicians who wanted to find ways to make folk music more available to those in the Valley, FFS members and audiences have fun making and enjoying "alternative" music. FFS continued to develop over the years with the help of people like CSU-Fresno English professor Gene Bluestein and Sweetstill camp owner Virgil Bixby. Membership benefits also include a monthly newsletter, opportunities to sing, dance, and play music, telephone contact for special impromptu events, and discounts on concert tickets.

FFS also publicizes local activities such as contra dances, autoharp lessons, Free Speech Radio/KFCF activities, the Irish Dance Recital, the Rogue Performance Festival (independent theater, dance, storytelling, music, and film), monthly musical performances at the Bonner Auditorium in the Fresno Art Museum at First and Clinton, Celtic events, and Belly Dance News.

Regardless of the adult or child's learning level, experienced dancers will help novices learn a dance. Contra dancing will be occurring at Margaret Hudson's Studio Barn in the Old Fig Garden neighborhood (see the Full Moon Drumming web address below). A traditional form of dance, contra dance is an American tradition whose present form would be instantly recognized by anyone from the pre-Revolutionary War era, during which it first became popular. We can give a great share of the credit to Queen Elizabeth I of England for creating this popularity, for it was she who introduced what was then called "country dancing" at court late in the sixteenth century.

On Wednesdays, 5:30 to 7:30 PM, Kenny Hall on fiddle and mandolin plays at the Santa Basque Restaurant, 3110 N. Maroa, just south of Shields.

To contact Pat Wolk, call (559) 431-3653 or email patwolk@yahoo.com.

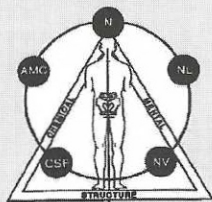
Web Addresses:

Fresno Folklore Society: <<http://home.pacbell.net/ckjohns/flier.html#anchor1134537>>

Full Moon Drumming: <<http://fresnogarden.org/>>

Contra Dance: <<http://together.net/~chiph/about/history.htm>>





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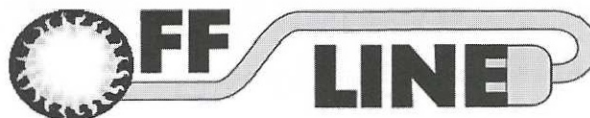
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Spoken Word Comes to Fresno

by Devoya Mayo

Welcome to the April edition of The Shameless Self-Promotion Chronicles. This basically means that I will extol the virtues, of some grand creation, of which I played a major part in developing. So without further delay let's get the adulation under way.

April 2003 marks the three-year anniversary of Fresno's very own Ahh Yeah Poetry Jam. Now before I can go any further, let's just back up and say those lovely words together, slowly this time, with some feeling. A-h-h Y-e-a-h Poetry Jam. There, that's better.

So you're asking yourself, How did it all start? Where did it all begin, and most important, when is this big celebration going to take place? Well, I'm glad you asked.

Basically it all started out of necessity. Long drives up to the Bay Area (the mecca of spoken word venues) were tiresome and weighed heavily on my otherwise thin wallet. That, plus the fact that so many people here in Fresno already had that itch to vibe in that type of atmosphere, prompted me to get on the phone and call in reinforcements. That just means I called my girl Joy, my oldest and closest friend and asked her what she thought we could do to remedy this plight. Her answer (in all her maternal wisdom) was a simple one: We should just do our own poetry happening.

You would have thought it would have been harder than that, but in all honesty it wasn't. We scouted several places, but they all looked at us like we were just some crazy girls. Well, everyone that is, except for the fine folks over at the now defunct Java Café.

Next we tackled the issue of ambiance. We are definitely two women who thrive on ambiance. We gathered up a bunch of nice candles and incense, a few pieces of pretty cloth and we were almost there. All we needed now was some sounds, some soft jazzy, melodic grooves to bring it all together.

So on a rainy Wednesday evening during the Beat Dynasty show on 90.7 KFSR, I called up one of the DJs. I explained myself to the voice on the other end and much to my amazement he didn't laugh, hang up, or give me the bum's rush. Instead he suggested we meet for drinks sometime and discuss the idea further. Long story short, this is how I persuaded Mykal Powell, Josh Ganshorn (dj sleep 1) and Jason Chavez (dj 4am) collectively known as Beat Dynasty, to agree to play music behind poets, on a dimly lit patio in the Tower District once a month, for nothing more than a sincere "thank you." Yep . . . those were the days.

Alas good people, things change quickly. We soon moved from Java Café to the atmospheric swank of Veni Vidi Vici's. Shortly after our arrival it was apparent that we needed more space. Enter the Starline (our happy home for the past two years now), who graciously offered its venue once a month on a Tuesday night.

This Ahh Yeah thing is special. What started out as a monthly poetry event

has somehow become a gathering of sorts. It's intimate and full all at once; it's friends, family, elixirs, attitude, gratification, and home all rolled up into one. People have come and rocked the stage never to be seen again. People have recorded our words and released them for the world to enjoy. People have donated time, money, love, and support and it all restores my faith in the fact that Fresno is not just a place for complacency. It is a place where everyday people can make extraordinary changes in the way they create, live, and participate in their communities.

Before I end this shameless self-promotion I must give you the skinny on the celebration of said occasion. Instead of converging upon the Starline on our usual third Tuesday of every month, we've decided to have the anniversary show on the third Friday instead. We hope this will make it more accessible for all you late-night revelers.



Friday April 18, 2003 AHH YEAH THREE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY JAM

The Starline: 831 E Fern

10 Poets / 1 Short Film / Giveaways & More

Music Provided by:

Beat Dynasty Sound & Funk Band The Late Night Bump

All Ages \$5.00 cover • Doors open at 8:30 PM

Okay, that's it; you got it out of me. All the dirt on Ahh Yeah. Well, maybe not all of it, but hey, I have to save a bit for next year, right?