

A COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

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PÁGINAS 20-24

Keep Your Independent/Progressive Newspaper in Fresno Alive

Featured Speaker

Robin McGehee / City of Fresno LGBTQ+ Liaison

Friday, December 8 @ 6 p.m.

SEIU 521 Union Hall

5228 E. Pine Ave., Fresno

This is a fundraiser for the *Community Alliance* newspaper. The *Community Alliance* supports Free Speech, Social and Economic Justice, Immigrant Rights, Healthcare for All, Stop the Hate, Police Accountability, LGBTQ +, No War, Yokuts Valley, Black Lives Matter, and an End to Homelessness. English/Spanish translation, Dinner and good company.

Tickets are \$40 in advance and \$50 at the door. Buy tickets online at eventbrite.com or tinyurl.com/3ke9c4fk. To make a donation or subscribe to the *Community Alliance*, visit fresnoalliance.com/support/ or use the QR code to the right.



Robin McGehee to Headline Annual Fundraiser

BY COMMUNITY ALLIANCE STAFF

What do you feel passionate about? For some *Community Alliance* readers, it is immigrant rights. For others, it is treating the homeless with dignity and respect. For our keynote speaker at this year's fundraiser on Dec. 8, it is LGBTQ+ issues.

This paper supports the broad spectrum of progressive social justice activists in the Fresno area by providing a space for them to tell their stories, frame the issues confronting the community and encourage people to become involved in the causes they are passionate about.

The featured speaker at our 2023 fundraiser will be Robin McGehee. A transplant from Jackson, Miss., she received her M.A. in human communication, with an emphasis on public speaking, interpersonal and intercultural communication, from Fresno State. She has been a full-time instructor at College of the Sequoias for more than 20 years and believes that "when we speak, we shape the world!"

Earlier this year, McGehee was appointed by Mayor Jerry Dyer to be the first LGBTQ+ liaison for the City of Fresno.

She helped organize Meet in the Middle for Equality, a statewide reaction to the passage of Prop 8 in California, and co-directed the successful National Equality March in Washington, D.C., in 2009.



Union icon Dolores Huerta and Robin McGehee sharing a moment at a fundraiser for the Central Valley Progressive PAC. Photo by Howard Watkins

She helped co-found GetEQUAL—a direct action organization that won marriage rights for gay couples.

She was arrested twice after being handcuffed to the White House fence as a way to draw attention to the needed repeal of "don't ask, don't tell." After the repeal, she was invited by the White House to witness the signing by President Obama in December 2010. She was invited to the White House again in 2022, by the Biden administration, to attend the signing of the Respect for Marriage Act.

Her efforts to speak truth to power have been recognized with the Sheila J. Kuehl Trailblazer Award by the Stonewall Democratic

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"Americans and the Holocaust" Arrives in Fresno

BY PETER MAIDEN

The traveling exhibit "Americans and the Holocaust" comes from the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. It is circulating among only 50 libraries in the United States. Two are in California: the Fresno Central Library and the library at UC Irvine.

"It arrived in shipping crates," said the Fresno County Library's community engagement manager, Fae Giffen. "There were some instructions sent by the American Library Association, including a video of how to unpack it, and some floor plans we could choose from. Our maintenance crew was able to unpack it and put it together."

The exhibit, a series of panels with photos and text and several video screens, is now in the Saroyan Gallery near the entrance of the Central Library on Mariposa Street downtown.

Giffen said that the exhibit has been well received. "We've gotten such positive

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DECEMBER 2023

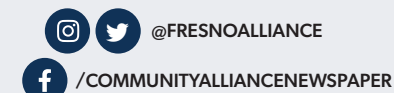
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Robin McGehee to Headline Annual Fundraiser

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Club of Los Angeles, the Top Dog Alumna Award by Fresno State, the Democratic Trailblazer Award by the Fresno County Democratic Women's Club and the Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Award by the City of Fresno.

She says her greatest accomplishments are her two children and being able to marry her wife on the first day it was legally possible after the Supreme Court made marriage equality a reality for everyone in 2015.

Eduardo Stanley, editor of the *Community Alliance* newspaper, says that if you want to "keep your independent/progressive newspaper in Fresno alive, join us on Dec. 8 for this annual fundraiser." The *Community Alliance* is experiencing a significant growth spurt and needs grassroots community support "for us to achieve our goals," Stanley said.

"The dream is to become a more influential publication, one that will influence public policy, engage a younger readership through social media posts and expand our Spanish-language content to reach monolingual readers in what is a media desert in San Joaquin Valley rural areas."

The Dec. 8 fundraiser will be held at the SEIU 521 union hall (5228 E. Pine Ave., Fresno). The event starts at 5:30 p.m. and will include food and special guests. Tickets are available online at eventbrite.com and tinyurl.com/3ke9c4fk or from all staff and board members of the *Community Alliance*. For more information, contact 559-978-4502 or mikerhodes@fresnoalliance.com or visit fresnoalliance.com.



Standing up for LGBTQ+ rights, Robin McGehee was arrested for being handcuffed to the White House fence. Photo courtesy of Robin McGehee

"Americans and the Holocaust" Arrives in Fresno

Continued from page 1

feedback from the community about this exhibition.

"We've had a lot of people come up to staff and say how happy they are that this exhibition has been here, that they've really learned a lot, that they found it really interesting and they're just really glad that they had the opportunity to tour it."

It was standing room only at the opening ceremony on Nov. 5, when around 75 people came to hear a panel of speakers and take a first look at the exhibit.

Dr. Robert Nelson, superintendent of the Fresno Unified School District, said, "This exhibit that we celebrate today is a great way to expand our understanding and be comfortable with information that is at best unsettling, horrific at worst. But you can't walk away from the things that happen in the world if you want to be an educator. [Learning] contributes to making us better human beings."

Rabbi Rick Winer of Temple Beth Israel, the Reform congregation in Fresno, spoke briefly. "Here we are in the library surrounded by books," he said.

"Books are a crucial part of Jewish tradition and certainly American tradition as well. Across town at Temple Beth Israel, we have quite a collection of books, but the most important ones [are] the scrolls that we call Torah.

"The Torah scroll contains our ancient legacy of sacred storytelling. One of our Torah scrolls came to us through the Memorial Scrolls Trust, which cares for just over 1,500 scrolls rescued from the Holocaust. After World War II, these scrolls were dispersed throughout the world as a living memorial to the culture devastated by the Nazis, to the people murdered by the Nazis."

Dr. Nelson said that teachers in Fresno schools should be prepared to teach about the Holocaust, and that knowledge of the Holocaust ripples out into understanding of the trials and tribulations of many other minority groups.

"We really don't need you as an educator in Fresno County if you don't understand some of your history," he said.

"You can't really teach Hmong students without understanding something about the Secret War in Laos. Or the Armenian genocide. Or if you don't know about redlining in 93706, or if you aren't sure about braceros or you don't understand migrant labor. There's just some stuff you need to know if you want to work here in the Valley and serve the kids that we serve."

Also speaking on Nov. 5 was Dr. Jill Fields, the founding coordinator of the Jewish Studies program at Fresno State.

She said that Jewish Studies crosses social barriers: "What I've found in my classroom is that our students of Armenian descent

understand things about Jewish history and vice versa. This is a dynamic kind of relationship.

"I've also found Mexican American students, African American students, students of all backgrounds, Hmong students, they understand certain aspects of what we talk about in Jewish studies classes. And it's that reaching out, reaching across boundaries [that] is so significant about having this exhibit here in Fresno."

There has been a series of events around Fresno in connection with the exhibit. On Nov. 8, there was a lecture at the library at Fresno State called "Remembering the WWII Past through Popular Media," given by Dr. Amila Becirbegovic. She herself is a survivor of the Bosnian genocide.

Dr. Becirbegovic has been teaching in higher education for 15 years. She is program coordinator for the German Studies program at Fresno State.

"My research," she said, "is focused on genocide representation and how younger generations consume the past."

Becirbegovic realized the importance of that area of research when she was starting out as a professor of Holocaust studies at Arizona State. It was 2009, and Quentin Tarantino's film *Inglourious Basterds* had just been released. The film featured a fictionalized account of Hitler's assassination in a movie theater in occupied France. Hitler actually died committing suicide in his bunker.

"*Inglourious Basterds* came out," she said, "and the following Monday three young freshmen ran up to me so excited, and they said 'Dr B.! Dr B.! We watched *Inglourious Basterds*, and we finally know! I asked, 'What do you finally know?' 'We finally know how Hitler died!' They had gotten the story wrong.

"I had spent two months going over maps and charts and dates," she said, "and I realized none of that had sunk in, and that was when I tried to incorporate more popular representations into my genocide and Holocaust courses."

In another event, on Nov. 14, the topic was the Japanese internment. Dale Ikeda, a retired Fresno County Superior Court judge, spoke at Temple Beth Israel.

He said that Japanese Americans during WWII were considered suspects as possible saboteurs or spies for the Japanese empire, which they were not. There were no cases of espionage or sabotage by any Japanese Americans. Nonetheless, Japanese on the West Coast were sent to camps, mostly losing their farms and businesses.

There were some positive stories from the period, Ikeda pointed out.

"Charles Pashayan was an insurance agent...Min Omata was his friend; they went duck hunting together, they were in the



Rabbi Rick Winer speaks at the opening of the "Americans and the Holocaust" exhibit at the Fresno Central Library on Nov. 5. Photo by Peter Maiden

same blind," Ikeda related. "On New Year's Day, the Omatas invited the Pashayans over for sushi and sashimi."

When Japanese began to be rounded up, Pashayan and Omata entered into an agreement that Omata would sell his ranch to Pashayan for one dollar and when they came back, Pashayan would sell it back for one dollar. "And that's what happened, the Omata family got their farm back."

In the 1970s and 1980s, there was movement toward reparations for the interned Japanese. Pashayan's son, Chip, who had played as a child with the Omata children, had become a Republican member of Congress from the Valley. He was the first Republican to sign on to the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, the law providing for reparations to Japanese who were interned. Ikeda asked him about that afterward, and he said that he knew firsthand how the internment was unconstitutional.

Under the law, the internees each received \$20,000.

Ikeda asked, "When you think about detention for nearly three years, what is that

worth? Your business is lost, your farm may be lost, if you're a student you can't continue your education except through a leave program, and so that was the economic loss, but the loss of your freedom? You thought you were an American. You had these rights, now they were taken away. What is that worth?"

"The exhibition is going to be at the Central Downtown Library until Dec. 30," says Giffen. "It is free. You do not need registration. You don't need to call ahead; you don't need a library card. You can just show up and you can tour the exhibition. It's designed to be self-directive and interactive, so you can just show up whenever it's good for you."

Learn more about both the exhibition and the supportive programs at fresnolibrary.org.

Peter Maiden is the photo editor of the *Community Alliance* newspaper. Contact him at maidenfoto1@gmail.com.

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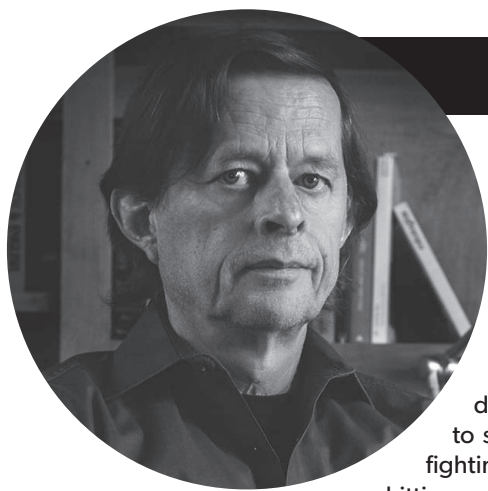
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FROM THE EDITOR

So Much Hate, So Little Love



In the past few years, we've witnessed an increase of rage everywhere. In these times of social media dominance, it is common to see short videos of drivers fighting at a stoplight, bikers hitting cars or vice versa, customers yelling at cashiers and even attacks with weapons. Two people were attacked in Fresno on Nov. 21 in what appears to be a hate crime.

Where does all this hate come from? And why? The *Community Alliance* is participating in the Stop the Hate campaign with the hope of helping our community to identify hate crimes and know how and where to report them (see "Responding Should You Witness a Hate Crime" on

page 9). Our community needs to make an effort to confront this issue with the hope that we can eradicate hate some day.

However, those in positions of power are not helping. There are wars and vitriolic statements from world leaders—even from the "quiet" Joe Biden.

The world is polarized as never before. And there is no sign of that ending. To make things worse, in Argentina the newly elected president is continuing insults to his political adversaries (see "Right Wing Spreading" on page 6), to the excitement of his many right-wing sympathizers around the world—some of them in the United States.

Next year, we will have important elections that will no doubt be accompanied by aggressive rhetoric that will only add fuel to the fire.

I wonder what happened to the "Summer of Love." Or just plain love. It seems that we have forgotten the meaning of the term "love." We must bring it back. And the sooner the better.

The *Community Alliance* is an independent voice for workers and progressive groups in the Central San Joaquin Valley. The goal of this monthly newspaper is to build a powerful progressive movement that will support social, environmental and 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.

EDITOR

Eduardo Stanley
editor@fresnoalliance.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mike Rhodes
559-978-4502

NONPROFIT BOARD

Beverly Fitzpatrick
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DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

Peter Maiden
maidenfoto1@gmail.com

ADVERTISING

I. Smiley G. Calderon
714-290-6651 (text)
smileycalderon@gmail.com
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PHOTOGRAPHY

Peter Maiden
maidenfoto1@gmail.com

COPYEDITOR

Michael D. Evans

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Letters to the Editor

On Senate Candidate Barbara Lee

"If the U.S. can fund an \$886 billion defense budget, we can afford Medicare for All. If the U.S. can fund an \$886 billion defense budget, we can afford the Green New Deal. If the U.S. can fund an \$886 billion defense budget, we can afford to cancel student loan debt."—Rep. Barbara Lee

Should Barbara Lee win her bid for the U.S. Senate, she would become the only elected African American woman in the U.S. Senate. Lee's Democratic Primary opponents—Reps. Adam Schiff and Katie Porter—are both considerably more conservative and pro-corporate than proud progressive stalwart Lee.

Lee has been proven correct time and again for the many politically difficult decisions she has made in Congress, including having courageously cast the only vote in the House of Representatives on Sept. 14, 2001, against the Bush-Cheney regime's reckless carte blanche Authorization for the Use of Military Force that created the catastrophic failure known as the "War on Terror."

Lee will continue to speak truth to power as a U.S. Senator and to oppose pointless, counterproductive genocidal wars. Truth is exactly what Californians want and need from our elected Democratic leaders in perilous times such as these.

Jake Pickering
Arcata

Re "Naming a Street after Cesar Chavez Is a Privilege"

First, it is a privilege to name a street after the renowned labor movement leader Cesar Chavez. Both I Community Compact and I applaud the idea of honoring his significant legacy with a Fresno city street. But, let's also be clear: The City of Fresno doesn't just want to rename one street after Chavez. Instead, it wants to rename three historical iconic city avenues (Kings Canyon, Ventura and California) after him.

We believe the decision to rename these avenues to Cesar Chavez Boulevard is in itself divisive. Furthermore, we believe the renaming of streets of this magnitude—that practically cover the width of our city—without robust community engagement is an injustice. We believe in doing so, public trust has been violated. Moreover, we feel intentionally misled and misinformed regarding procedures and opportunities for open community engagement on this matter.

Our city council should have considered alternative streets to honor Chavez. One proposal that should have been discussed is renaming P Street (and Abby Street) to Cesar Chavez Boulevard. This would make more sense as P Street runs in front of Fresno's prominent City Hall and the adult school already named in honor of Chavez. Wouldn't that be a prestigious and reasonable alternative?

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People of Fresno Speak Out

BY BOB MCCLOSKEY

On Nov. 11, several hundred people rallied at the corner of Blackstone and Nees avenues in Fresno calling for a ceasefire in Israel's continuing war on Gaza. It was a diverse crowd with people of all ages.

"The U.S. should not be funding this war; it's colonization in 2023," said Lethal Garcia of Fresno. "The Western media is paid off by big government to [portray it] as a Hamas-Israel [conflict]. Palestinians need to fight back."

Her 13-year-old son Benicio said that "Palestine needs to be free; it's not right [that] we're sending money to support [the war]. Free Palestine!"

Katie Myers, also a Fresno resident, said, "I'm out here to support the people of Palestine, to stop the genocide, to stop the bombings of schools, churches and hospitals. These are war crimes."

Her husband Jason said that "it's time to stop the killing of innocent people."

"We need to put in more effort and speak up for what's right," noted Anisa, another demonstrator. Her friend Yossra said that "our money should not be used for killing innocent people." Both said they have e-mailed their Congressional members.

Mohsin, who was holding a large flag of Palestine, said that "there should not be double standards. Israel should be held accountable. What's going on is also bad for Israelis."

"We need a ceasefire now and a long-term solution."

As for Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer's castigation of pro-Palestine supporters as "unpatriotic," Mohsin said, "We're

the most patriotic. Protesting and exercising our First Amendment rights is patriotic."

Regarding the mayor's unbridled support of Israel and the raising of the Israeli flag, a young man named Shahid said, "It's not shocking. He's a Christian Zionist that believes in it."

"When he was police chief, he trained with the Israeli Defense Forces. What do you expect from such a person?"

A young woman named Rania said that the "Palestinians deserve human rights. This is a humanitarian issue. There is genocide and war crimes going on in Gaza and the West Bank."

"I'm a human and I respect the sanctity of all human life," noted Marisol Coronado, a registered nurse. "There's a massacre and genocide happening. We all need to step in and step up to stop it."

Asked about the fact that only 24 members of Congress are calling for a ceasefire, Coronado said that "there's corruption and special interests in Congress. They don't stand with their constituents. I think an overwhelming number of people are demanding a ceasefire."

Zaid, at eight years old one of the youngest attendees at the demonstration, said, "My great grandfather had a farm in Palestine, but sadly Israel took it in 1948. In 1948, they did not have a home."

"Palestine shared the land with Israel. Then, they attacked Palestine and tried to make the whole country theirs. Now the Palestinians want to get their land back."

As of this writing, more than 11,100 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since Oct. 7, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. Although there is no breakdown between fighters and civilians, most of the dead are women and children (4,600 children) in just a little more than a month of war. That amounts to above 0.5% of Gaza's more than 2 million people.



Protestors gather in Fresno to demand a ceasefire in Gaza.
Photo by Bob McCloskey

It's time for an immediate ceasefire.

Bob McCloskey is an activist and reporter for the Community Alliance newspaper. Contact him at bobmccloskey06@gmail.com.

Palestine and Imperialist Intent

BY BOB MCCLOSKEY

Although Hamas initiated the war with Israel, upon researching the war and related issues it seems that there are several factors that should be considered as the violence rages on. These factors—including massive intelligence failures, talk of the mass relocation of Gaza's population, the proposed Ben-Gurion canal and the existence of a large natural gas field off the coast of Gaza—call into question if there is imperialist intent and greed operating behind the scenes.

Intelligence Failure

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) is a "bipartisan, nonprofit policy research organization dedicated to advancing practical ideas to address the world's greatest challenges."

On Oct. 25, CSIS experts participated in a commentary titled "Experts React: Assessing the Israeli Intelligence and Potential Policy Failure."

"It is incredible that Hamas planned, procured and financed the attacks of Oct. 7, likely over the course of at least two years, without being detected by Israeli intelligence," noted Jessica Davis, senior associate of the CSIS's Transnational Threats (TNP) Project.

"The fact that it appears to have done so without U.S. detection is nothing short of astonishing."

According to Emily Harding, deputy director of the CSIS's International Security Program, the "Israeli intelligence services are among the best in the world—clearly focused on mission, creative and technologically advanced."

"Their tech has handed them some impressive intelligence wins in the past, but in October 2023 an overreliance on technology likely contributed to an intelligence failure."

Daniel Byman, a senior fellow on the TNP, stated that "reports of what Israeli military intelligence and Shin Bet, Israel's domestic intelligence agency, which has responsibility for Gaza, told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his senior advisors about Hamas's intentions and capabilities, are still unfolding—yet these agencies are already taking responsibility for a massive failure."

"However, Israeli policymakers probably also bear considerable responsibility. They prioritized Iran and the growing violence in the West Bank, as well as the turmoil in Israel itself."

"Some of the Israeli policy response might have stemmed from a careful consideration of intelligence analysis, but it also could be due to Israeli leaders' own sense of Israel's interests, their belief that the Hamas challenge was effectively managed and their political priorities, such as appeasing the settler community that is expanding its presence on the West Bank."

All these statements point to a massive intelligence failure.

Talk of Mass Relocation

A Canadian Broadcasting Corporation report dated Nov. 2, titled "Leaked document fuels concern Israel plans to push

Palestinians from Gaza into Egypt," states that "an Israeli government document suggesting the mass relocation of Gaza's 2.3 million people to Egypt's Sinai Peninsula is fueling concerns about the possible ethnic cleansing of Palestinians."

"The leaked document, first reported in Israeli media, was compiled by an Israeli government research agency known as the Intelligence Ministry and was dated Oct. 13—six days after Hamas led deadly attacks on Israel and the Israeli government declared war against the Palestinian militant group, which controls Gaza."

"Although not a binding policy, it has deepened long-standing Egyptian fears that Israel wants to make Gaza into Egypt's problem and revived Palestinians' memories of the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people who fled or were forced from their homes during the fighting surrounding Israel's creation in 1948, which Palestinians refer to as the Nakba, the Arabic word for catastrophe."

Ben-Gurion Canal

On Nov. 13, the *Indian Express* reported on the proposed Ben-Gurion Canal through Israeli occupied territory. "Many decades ago, the Americans proposed to use nuclear weapons to blast a waterway through the Negev Desert. But the plan never progressed. [Now] there is some talk about the 'Ben-Gurion Canal' again as Israel pushes to destroy Hamas in Gaza."

"It has been speculated that one of the reasons behind Israel's desire to eliminate Hamas from the Gaza Strip and completely control the Palestinian enclave is to give itself the chance to better explore a dramatic economic opportunity that has been talked about for several decades, but for which peace and political stability in the region is an essential prerequisite."

"The idea is to cut a canal through the Israeli-controlled Negev Desert from the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba—the eastern arm of the Red Sea that juts into Israel's southern tip and south-western Jordan—to the Eastern Mediterranean coast, thus creating an alternative to the Egyptian-controlled Suez Canal."

It would begin at the port city of Eliat and finish right next to or directly through Gaza. The new canal would be situated at the intersection of three bodies of water, and it would cut shipping time and costs significantly. The new canal would give the United States and Israel control over maritime trade in the world's most significant shipping lane.

According to Richard Medhurst, an independent journalist and political commentator based in Great Britain, the Ben-Gurion canal would be part of a new economic corridor stretching from India through the Middle East on to Europe. Medhurst says it's an attempt to rival China's Beltway Initiative by creating a new trade route controlled by the United States and Israel and greatly benefiting Europe.

In a related development, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu told ABC News, "I think Israel will, for an indefinite period, have the overall security responsibility because we've seen what happens when we don't have it."

Gas Field off the Gaza Coast

On June 18, Reuters reported that "Israel gave preliminary approval for the development of a gas field off the Gaza Strip on Sunday while saying it would require security



Complete devastation in Gaza financed by U.S. taxpayers.
Photo by Rama Alquodsi

coordination with the Palestinian Authority and neighboring Egypt. If concluded, the agreement would be a boost for the cash-strapped Palestinian economy.

"Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said progress would hinge on 'preserving the State of Israel's security and diplomatic needs.'"

Hamas official Ismail Rudwan told Reuters: "We reaffirm that our people in Gaza have the rights to their natural resources."

Industry experts estimate the gas field holds up to 1.6 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. If developed, liquefied petroleum could be easily exported to Europe. Currently, Europe is suffering from a gas shortage due to the mysterious explosion of the Russian gas pipeline to Germany. Obviously, whoever controls the Gaza gas field stands to make enormous profits.

In conclusion, as in every war, there is always more to it than meets the eye. The motives are often economic in nature. As American taxpayers funding this war, we should all feel obligated to end it immediately.

Bob McCloskey is an activist and reporter for the Community Alliance newspaper. Contact him at bobmccloskey06@gmail.com.

Only Some Lives Matter

The Basic Assumption of Colonialism

BY LENI VILLAGOMEZ REEVES

All colonial nations have acted with the clear assumption that some people—white Europeans and their descendants—are people and that all others are human-shaped animals who can be used or disposed of according to the needs of the colonizers.

Israel is just saying it out loud.

“We are fighting human animals and we act accordingly,” Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said.

“We are imposing a complete siege on Gaza. There will be no electricity, no food, no water, no fuel.”

Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu suggested that one way to deal with Gaza would be to drop a nuclear bomb and kill everyone. He claimed that “there is no such thing as uninvolved civilians in Gaza.”

Eliyahu was not fired or even suspended for these remarks as some news sources have stated. He has continued to take part in phone votes held by the Israeli Cabinet, though he has been “suspended” from being present in person.

Asked about the Palestinian population, Eliyahu said, “They can go to Ireland or deserts; the monsters in Gaza should find a solution by themselves” and “anyone waving a Palestinian flag has no right to exist.”

This from a government minister of Israel, a member of the cabinet.

The death toll in Gaza was officially 11,240 on Nov. 14. That includes 4,630 children. This is a gross undercount because it includes only those bodies found and brought to a hospital for identification, as reported by the BBC in an article on how the dead are counted.

The article quotes Dr. Ghassan Abu-Sittah, a Médecins Sans Frontières plastic surgeon based in London who has been treating people at hospitals in Gaza City. He says the hospital morgue records deaths after confirming the identity of the dead person with their relatives and that the number of deaths registered so far is far fewer than those that have actually occurred.

“Most of the deaths happen at home. The ones we could not identify, we did not record.”

Dr. Mads Gilbert, a Norwegian physician who’s worked in Al-Shifa Hospital for years, stated that “6,000 of the killed and missing are children. When did that become the defense of a country? When did it become decent to drag neonates out of their incubators and kill children?”

“You know, the only explanation for this is a deep-rooted and very frightening racism, because you don’t do these things to people you consider your equal.”

Dr. Tanya Haj-Hassan, a pediatric intensive care physician with Doctors Without Borders, spoke with *Democracy Now* (which is doing a good job of reporting, and you can listen to it on KFCF 88.1 FM of Fresno) on Nov. 13 and said that “healthcare facilities are directly targeted, with intent. Ambulances are directly targeted, with intent.”

“The entire infrastructure of a civilian population, everything that is needed, that is indispensable to their survival, from food to water to medical facilities to their shelter—everything has been targeted, intentionally targeted and destroyed. That is what we should be focusing on.”

“There are also, you know, almost 5,000 children who have been killed, that we know of, but we don’t have statistics from the last 48 hours because they have completely destroyed the ability to even expose these atrocities.”

Speaking about her colleague, Dr. Hammam Alloh, who was killed in an Israeli bombing on Nov. 11, Dr. Haj-Hassan said that in “the last message Dr. Hammam Alloh had sent, just a few hours before he was killed, to one of my colleagues, he said, ‘Your shouting means a lot to us. Please keep it up.’”

Democracy Now had interviewed Dr. Alloh on Oct. 31, just days before he was killed, and asked him, “Why don’t you go with your family south?”

He answered, “And if I go, who treats my patients? We are not animals. We have the right to receive proper healthcare. So we can’t just leave.”

“The Ministry of Health declared two hours ago that the electricity would be cut off from Al-Shifa Hospital, the largest hospital, representing 40% of the healthcare power in the Gaza Strip and providing services for many machine-dependent patients, like the ventilated patients and the hemodialysis patients.”



An unidentified hospital in Gaza. Israel is systematically bombarding hospitals in Gaza.
 Photo courtesy of The Commons

“So, if electricity is cut out from this hospital, we are directly deciding those patients are going to necessarily die. Ventilated patients will die in minutes. Dialysis patients will die in hours to days after stopping their hemodialysis.”

“So, my very simple answer to your question is that death is coming to so many people in the Gaza Strip, in hours to days, if this continues the same way it’s going on.”

Dr. Alloh added, “First, we need this war to end, because we are real humans. We are not animals. We have the right to live freely.”

“Second, if you were, and your citizens, to live under these circumstances, what would you do for them? This is exactly what we would like you to do for us as a superpower country, as the United States, because we are really as human as your U.S. citizens are.”

“We are being exterminated. We are being massly eradicated. And you pretend to care for humanitarian and human rights, which is not what we are living now. To prove us wrong, please do something.”

And as you read this column, dozens more Palestians have been killed.

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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Planada Flood Relief Plan Remains Unfinished

BY BRIANNA VACCARI

(Editor's note: The following article is printed with the permission of the Central Valley Journalism Collaborative, a nonprofit newsroom based in Merced.)

Planada residents were left feeling shocked, disappointed and even angry last month after a community meeting where they expected Merced County officials to present a draft spending plan for \$20 million in state flood relief.

Instead, the County collected additional feedback on 19 "decision points" around an environmental study, home and vehicle repairs, small businesses and more.

Merced County hosted several workshops last month collecting feedback from hundreds of residents on how to distribute the money, which was secured through the state budget process by State Senator Anna Caballero (D-Merced) and Assembly Member Esmeralda Soria (D-Fresno).

The small unincorporated community of Planada, populated mostly by Spanish-speaking, Latino agricultural workers, was devastated in January by historic flooding after a levee on a nearby creek was breached during a powerful storm.

"I know a lot of you wanted a complete plan," Erick Serrato, Merced County's director of workforce investment, told residents as he opened the meeting, held at Cesar E. Chavez Middle School.

"The truth is, we're not there yet," he told the room of about 50 people. "But, we're on our way."

County staffers were stationed around the room next to 19 different display boards explaining possible uses for the funding. Residents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the potential uses for the money. County officials stressed that no suggestions were final, and changes to the plan could still be made based on feedback collected that night.

Reasons Behind Residents' Disappointment

One of the first boards included a proposal to spend \$1.75 million on a study, an environmental review and a plan to capture and divert future flood waters. County officials said that would help the county secure infrastructure funding to improve infrastructure.

County CEO Raul Lomeli Mendez told the Central Valley Journalism Collaborative that officials are seeking other funding sources for such a review, but using a portion of the \$20 million might help expedite the project.

Other county boards suggested residents would not receive aid for wages lost due to flooded agricultural land. One board said residents would not be reimbursed for home repairs they already completed. Only new repairs for flood damage would be reimbursed.

"This meeting is an insult," said Planada resident Saul Calderon, who already repaired the flood damage to his home.

"What did they expect? For us to leave the house rotting there for a year? And where are you going to put the family?" he said. "This was not a natural disaster. It was man-made. Merced County should be responsible to pay for all the damages."

At one point during the meeting, a few residents approached Mendez and Serrato to discuss the meeting. The conversation became tense as more community members joined, but it eventually dissipated.

"I'm mad. I'm real mad," said Anastacio Rosales Jr. His home sustained major damage from the flood, and he spent his savings and took on additional debt to repair it. He attended each of the workshops and has been vocal about the community's needs after the flood.

Mendez and Serrato said they were prepared for residents' reactions. Ever since the funding was secured in the state budget, county officials have said their hardest job would be "managing expectations."

"We also understand and appreciate that people have suffered through a lot of trauma. It's been a very difficult experience," Serrato said. "Just a couple days ago, there was another storm with some rain. So, I think that heightens anxiety because it makes it very present."

"Folks have had a really difficult 10 months, 11 months, after the flood. So, we understand that what they want is immediate relief. So, we are not surprised that there was some reaction around some of the constraints of the funding program," Serrato said.

"Our goal is always to provide maximum access and flexibility, so we just will continue to work through that."

For Lydia and Catarino R. Flores—a retired couple who were deemed homeless since the alternative dwelling unit they lived in was a complete loss in the flood—attending the meetings is becoming emotionally taxing.

"It's exhausting," Lydia Flores said.



Planada residents give feedback on a \$20 million spending plan for flood victims during a Merced County workshop on Nov. 22 at Cesar E. Chavez Middle School. Photo courtesy of Brianna Vaccari/Central Valley Journalism Collaborative

At each meeting, they give feedback advocating for rental assistance or income-based housing options.

"We're kind of screwed," Flores said. "Like I said, we're on every waiting list."

"This is a good thing here. However, not one of these things has anything to do for renters who are displaced, or low-income based housing units," she said.

The couple has spent the last 10 months couch surfing in relatives' homes, but they'd like to move back to Planada to be closer to family and their various doctor appointments. The housing options in Merced are expensive, and they fear there might be nowhere in Planada for them to return.

Other Challenges Remain

Mendez pointed out the state funding comes with some constraints. For example, if residents received FEMA aid, other state aid or aid from a nonprofit, the portion of \$20 million they receive cannot duplicate that aid.

"The biggest challenge for us as a county is to develop a program that's going to address the unique needs because every household experienced something a little bit differently," he said. "So we have the daunting task of trying to develop a program that's going to provide assistance to those households that were impacted as the state intends the funding to be utilized."

County officials initially planned five community meetings and workshops. Depending on how the upcoming Dec. 5 meeting goes, they might add a sixth meeting. They also recognize that many Planada residents return to Mexico during the holiday season and that they must be cognizant of not making decisions during that time.

"We're juggling between the need to be expedient and move things as quickly as possible but also move at the speed of trust so that people are brought along in that decision-making process," Serrato said.

Officials are hopeful the application for the funding will open near the start of the year so funding can be distributed by spring.

For Planada residents, that means more waiting.

"We're getting left behind," said Joaquin Romero. This kind of engagement should've been done in February and March, shortly after the flood, he said.

"The damage is already done, and everything has been fixed up. We corrected everything. And then they're trying to say we're not going to get any refunds because we've already made all the repairs and everything. So, what's gonna happen with those \$20 million?"

The next workshop is scheduled for Dec. 5 at Cesar E. Chavez Middle School.

Brianna Vaccari is the governmental accountability/watchdog reporter for the Central Valley Journalism Collaborative, a nonprofit newsroom based in Merced.

Right Wing Spreading

BY EDUARDO STANLEY

The electoral victory of Javier Milei in Argentina on Nov 19 sparked a feeling of enthusiasm among right-wing activists and demagogues such as Donald Trump, Elon Musk, Jair Bolsonaro (the former president of Brazil) and many others around the world. One wonders why and how a political victory in a far away, medium-sized country could produce such a wave of excitement.

Milei defeated the well-established political machine built by the *peronismo* over the past two decades, a machine that hasn't worked well lately and has shown signs of wear and tear. *Peronismo* is a loose ideology attributed to Juan Peron, the popular president of Argentina from 1946 to 1955, who enacted several labor laws while controlling the unions for his political ambitions.

Milei reached out to the young people with promises of "real and drastic changes." He jumped into the political arena thanks to the support of a media mogul who promoted him as a constant guest on radio and TV shows, where Milei expressed his virulent opinions, accompanied by his body movements and facial expressions. All of which contributed to his nickname El Loco ("the madman"). Sound familiar?

His political opinions, which he plans to implement as soon as he takes over the presidency of Argentina on Dec.

10, are nothing new: privatize everything the state owns, such as public radio and TV, education, oil. Eliminate all civil rights protections, unions and social welfare, including abortion rights. He also wants to derogate a partial rent control law, which some analysts predict could spark a massive eviction of people.

He plans to dollarize the economy and "bomb the central bank."

His verbosity sounds out of control, and he doesn't spare victims—even Pope Francis was a target of his insults.

Milei wants to pardon all—or most—military officers condemned for crimes against humanity committed during the last military dictatorship, which controlled the country from 1976 to 1983 with Washington's strong support.

Perhaps the combination of all these ingredients makes him a popular right-wing hero, the underdog who defeated the political machine, or the establishment that looked untouchable before the election. A machine that many believe is responsible for the 40% poverty in a country once the envy of Latin America.

Although Argentina led the region in promoting civil rights protections for minorities such as LGBTQ+, and passed a comprehensive abortion law in the last decade, its history is plagued with military coups and ruthless leaders that could explain, at least in part, the triumph of Milei—who won with a margin of more than 10 points over his rival, Sergio Massa, the official candidate of the party in power and currently the Minister of Economy.

Milei's main support—besides right-wing zealots and CEOs—comes from young voters, and, ironically, from



Javier Milei, the newly elected president of Argentina. Photo courtesy of The Commons

unemployed or part-time employees who are desperately seeking a change that could improve their lives.

But looking at the new president of Argentina's agenda, one wonders how long that support will last.

Eduardo Stanley is the editor of the Community Alliance newspaper. Contact him at editor@fresnoalliance.com.

Evaluating an Averted Strike

BY STEVEN ROESCH

During the author's 30-year stint as a Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) instructor, teachers were encouraged to appropriate the so-called cycle of teaching in regular educational practice. The phases of this cycle included effective ways of planning lessons, but it went beyond just that. It also included a phase of reflection after a lesson had been implemented.

What had gone well?
Where were improvements possible?
How could the lesson be introduced more effectively in the future?

Recently, a district-wide strike action was averted at the 11th hour. Given the opportunity cost that such a strike would

have precipitated for student learning, it would be helpful to reflect on the events of the past several months with an eye toward making improvements when contract negotiations become necessary again.

Both the union and the district would be well advised to consider such matters, of course. But some of the FUSD's actions merit special scrutiny.

Consider the following:

- In the early stages of negotiation, representatives of the FUSD arrived at meetings without having adequately prepared for them—something that was clear to the union representatives present and others who viewed the proceedings.
- In the weeks leading up to the might-have-been strike, the FUSD disseminated misleading information, for example, overstating the amount of money that FUSD teachers were earning on average at that time.

Spreading fake news hardly helped to promote speedy progress in the negotiations.

- For several weeks, the FUSD stressed that, were a strike to take place, it would have ample substitutes "ready" to shoulder the burden of classroom instruction and that it was willing to shell out an exorbitant amount of money for these substitutes. The absurd implications of the FUSD's stance were that a) student progress wouldn't be impacted or harmed in any significant way during a strike action, and b) giving \$500 per day to such temporary instructors would be money well spent.

Part of a teacher's life is evaluation. Administrators meet with them, observe them in their classrooms and assess their performance. When teachers receive a poor or lackluster evaluation, they are expected to take the matter seriously and to make

substantial changes in their instructional practices. When their work is less than adequate—if it fails to meet standards—they are supposed to change course and make improvements in a timely way.

It remains to be seen if FUSD leaders will now do the same—if they will now take note of the missteps that have been taken and implement some substantial changes.

The new contract, for all the benefits that it includes, covers a scant three years. It would be a shame—and it would be shameful—if the FUSD didn't resolve to improve its approach in negotiation. Was last-minute crisis management really necessary? Fresno students—and the community at large—deserve better than this. They deserve leadership that meets standards.

Steven Roesch is a retired bilingual teacher who has lived in Fresno since 1985. Contact him at stevencrosch12@comcast.net.

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Fresno Center for Nonviolence December 2023

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- (559)237-3223. To see a more colorful and complete version of our page, go to our website.

Edited by
Richard Gomez

Dear Friends of the Center:

Since our beginning in 1992, the Fresno Center for Nonviolence (FCNV) has played a significant role in serving the local peace and justice community. We have survived 31 years due to support from people, like you. To continue our work, we still need your financial support. We must stress the importance and impact of FCNV to the community. FCNV works with and supports the Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee, Community Alliance, Fresno Free College Foundation, Fresno Chapter of Veterans for Peace, Peace Fresno, Women's International League for Peace & Freedom, Fresno branch, and free meditation classes to the community every Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. We are reaching out to smaller grassroots groups that are working toward peace in their neighborhoods. FCNV needs your help to inform the community that we offer meeting space, a copier, Wi-Fi, fiscal resources and more for their organizing needs. When you hear your friends and colleagues struggle with these resources, make sure they know we are here.

We must be honest that we are struggling financially. Right now, we are in dire need of funds to cover rent, insurance, internet, and utilities. Please consider supporting us with a financial gift, ensuring our doors stay open and we can continue to provide necessary support to the community. Please send your tax-deductible donation in any amount using the enclosed envelope, or via our website:

<http://centerfornonviolence.org/wp/contribute/>

FCNV continues to host the Stir It Up radio show on KFCF 88.1 FM every second Wednesday of the month. Host Joshua Shurley has discussed the conflict in Ukraine and the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous persons in recent shows with plans to focus on the Middle East soon. We hope you listen in every second Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. We continue to sponsor a page in the Community Alliance, as well as the paper's community calendar. If you do not receive the Community Alliance, come into the Center for a copy at 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. We also have fair trade coffee, tea, and chocolate for sale. Our desire is to continue these

outreaches, but they cost money. We had to cut our Community Alliance sponsorship from a full page to a half page. Please help – your continuous support is deeply appreciated; it helps us provide our services to peace and justice community.

We are gravely concerned with the horrific loss of life taking place in Israel Palestine. We urge our supporters to support a cease fire. You can join a local demonstration or join us for meditation on Tuesdays or contact your congressional representatives and local leaders to push for an end to U.S. involvement in war. If we are true to our values, the U.S. should choose diplomacy over funding weapons. We call for an end to all warfare. You can still tell your congressman to sign the Ceasefire NOW! Resolution for Israel Palestine at <https://rootsaction.org/cosponsor-ceasefire-resolution>. Make sure to add a sentence about why this is important. In peace and gratitude,

Fresno Center for Nonviolence Board.

Wishing all a very merry and safe holiday season.



88.1 FM KFCF

Stir it, UP!

Next show is

Wednesday December 13th
at 3pm.

Our host Joshua Shurley and his guest, hopefully Reza Nakumanesh for a discussion of recent events and the pursuit of peace, etc. For more information call on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at (559) 237-3223 or check our website at www.centerfornonviolence.org.

In November, Our host Joshua Shurley and his guest, Veterans for Peace Board member, Paul Cox. They discussed their campaign to reclaim Armistice Day (Nov. 11) and how it relates to today's current war hostilities all over the globe.

To hear again go to:

<https://on.soundcloud.com/YLJMt>

To hear other shows done this year go to:

<https://souncloud.com/joshua-shurely>



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
WILPF Fresno, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

I SUPPORT PALESTINE!

First, I absolutely believe that violence will never bring peace! I also believe that the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israeli civilians was deplorable, but I understand the decades of tension and oppression that built up to bring this on. Second, I completely disagree with Israel's position that its response attack on Palestinians is self-defense! Third, I will not use Hamas and Palestinians interchangeably. Hamas is a militant governing body and does not represent all Palestinians.

By the time everyone reads this article, Gaza will have been under attack by the Israeli Defense Forces for two months—unless the Israeli air and ground attacks have finally stopped. At any rate, we must all look at the lack of restraint exercised by the Zionist government of Israel. Its lack of humanity and complete disregard for the people held under siege and occupation!

Tens of thousands have been killed, hundreds of thousands injured physically and millions emotionally injured as they are now displaced again from their homes, and they have no security. Plus, we must recognize that nearly half the population of Gaza is under 18 years old and have only known a life controlled by Israel, a life where they know they must resist or perish.

And we must recognize that the U.S. government is overwhelmingly complicit with Israel's crimes against Palestinians. Israel's outright slaughter and demolition of entire neighborhoods and killing entire family lines is genocidal. The intense aggression we've seen since Oct. 7 makes it perfectly clear that Israel is using the Hamas attack as its opportunity to take over more land from the Palestinians. Its attack has never been self-defense and is solely for the purpose of eliminating more of the population it occupies.

Attacks on hospitals, schools, UN centers and ambulance convoys; the killing of journalists and medical and aid workers; and targeted attacks on people's legs while they are evacuating all fall under violations of international law, yet Israel acts with impunity—why? I cannot say "enough" as it was "enough" many years ago with the siege on Gaza and the occupation of the West Bank!

The following is a statement from WILPF-US. WILPF-Fresno supports this statement, yet I personally choose to label Hamas as such and not "Palestinian militants." I also recognize that the majority of people living in Gaza are Palestinians, so I use that title to protect the diminishing population of Palestinians in the region due to the Nakba, Israel's occupation and siege on them.

—Teresa Castillo

WILPF-US STATEMENT

Take action to stop the bloodshed in Gaza and Israel!

On October 7, 2023, following 16 years of brutal siege on Gaza; decades of soldier-protected Israeli settlers terrorizing Palestinian children, farmers and villages throughout the territories; and Israeli ministers openly calling for genocide and expulsion—Palestinian militants attacked Israel.

The same day—in line with decades of U.S. policy that has enshrined the safety and interests of one people only—President Biden described attacks by Palestinian militants against Israel as "unprovoked."

We disagree, Mr. President!

WILPF-US calls for an immediate ceasefire and talks that address root causes and include all parties. We urge WILPF members and others who support peace and justice to contact elected officials and the media. We offer talking points to convey your passion for peace. We encourage you to advocate for nonviolent means to end Israeli apartheid.

As more Palestinians and Israelis die and suffer injury, as more homes and infrastructure are destroyed, we call for a just peace based on equality, human rights and dignity for all. We endorse the following messages:

- Stand for human rights and safety for all people and build a foreign policy that will actually end the violence (from Jewish Voice for Peace).
- Stop funding Israel's massacres (from US Campaign for Palestinian Rights).
- Call for immediate ceasefire and end to violence and occupation in Palestine and Israel (from American Friends Service Committee).
- Occupation is indefensible (from CodePink).
- Contact Washington and the media.

We demand an immediate ceasefire, diplomacy and respect for human rights. Don't let the Anti-Defamation League and others, who will get out thousands of calls to increase military funding for Israel, be the only voices heard!

Call your Representative (202) 224-3121, Senators (202) 224-3121, President Biden 202-456-1414 and Secretary of State Blinken (202) 456-1111.

Call your Members of Congress at their home offices if the DC switchboard is busy.

Write to your media outlets.

Here are important talking points that will help you convey your passion for peace.

- *War is not the answer.* Demand an immediate ceasefire and talks involving all parties, including democratically elected Hamas, to discuss root causes and how to move forward with justice, safety and dignity for all. For more information, read and share our booklet *Hamas at the Middle East Peace Table: Why?* and the 2021 update. Both are included as Resources on our webpage.
- *Freeze military sales to Israel pending investigation of Israeli human rights abuses.* Ask your Representative to sign on to HR 3103 Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families.
- *Demand that Israel sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.* Unregulated nuclear weapons of any nation are a threat to the region and the world.

Now is the time to advocate and take action for non-violent means to end Israeli apartheid.

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.



Israel must be stopped and held accountable for its war crimes, its violations of Palestinians' human rights and its apartheid control over the Palestinians. We must continue to hold our U.S. Congressional representatives accountable for their support of Israel. For their acceptance of monies from AIPAC. For their misuse of the censure of their fellow representative. For their inaccurate label of antisemitism when we criticize Israel and speak against Zionism.

Why are we allowed to speak against our own government but criminalized when we speak against Israel? There is a lot wrong with that!

I thank all who have taken a stand against Israel's ethnic cleansing and genocidal actions against Palestinians. For humanity's sake, we must stand together for justice and peace to protect our fellow global neighbors.

—Teresa Castillo, Fresno WILPF Branch Chair

Learn about and support the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS). Since 2005 Palestinian civil society has called for ending international support for Israeli oppression of Palestinians and for pressuring Israel to comply with international law.

It is not antisemitic to criticize Israeli government policy that denies freedom, dignity and safety to half the population of Israel proper and the territory it occupies.

Lobby to repeal state and municipal laws that ban the support of BDS by falsely stating that BDS is antisemitic. The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld such a law.

For more information or to reach WILPF's Middle East Peace and Justice Action Committee, contact MEPJAction@wilpfus.org.

—Women's International League for Peace and Freedom US Section

PEACE COMMUNITY CRAFTS FAIRE CANCELED

We made a difficult decision this year to cancel our planned Crafts Faire two and a half weeks before the event. We felt we made the best decision for the few vendors who responded, interested in having a booth to sell their wares.

This was a difficult decision as we miss all of you! We really wanted to gather and celebrate the day with good music, good food and good shopping from artisans and crafts vendors who take the time to produce items we love to share as gifts and keep for ourselves. We also miss the many nonprofit, peace and social justice groups who have had booths in the past.

The decision came due to the low level of interest we had this year. Our Faire was scheduled to be at a new location, Free AME Church, in West Fresno. I certainly hope that our followers and supporters were not holding back because we chose to hold our event in an area they are not used to going to!

I also hope that our followers and supporters will help us to break some of the underlying barriers that exist in the Fresno/Clovis community! As a social justice minded group, it is in our best interest to be present in many communities.

I welcome all of you to join us in the new year as we plan our 2024 Crafts Faire. Let's take that time as the opportunity to come together as we have in the past, perhaps with a different twist, and celebrate each other.

I wish you all peace through the holidays and the coming year.

Remember, if you need to renew your membership or wish to become a member, contact me at taca_03@gmail.com or mail in your membership to Fresno WILPF, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755.

—Peace ~ Teresa Castillo, Fresno WILPF Branch Chair

WILPF MEETING

Jan. 11 (second Thursday), 7 p.m., online and in person at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Watch your e-mail for an announcement with a link and a call-in number. For info, contact Teresa at taca_03@gmail.com or Leni at lenivreeves@gmail.com.

STIR IT UP—WILPF KFCF 88.1 FM

Dec. 27 (fourth Wednesday), 3 p.m. Jean Hays highlights people and events important to our WILPF community.

UNPACKING RACISM

With Dr. Jean Kennedy. Moving toward community event participation. To join, RSVP with your e-mail address to drjeankennedy@yahoo.com or text 559-270-1023.

WOMEN IN BLACK

Dec. 6 (first Wednesday), noon, Courthouse. Check first with Sue Kern at skern@netptc.net or 559-349-3777.

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Responding Should You Witness a Hate Crime

BY COMMUNITY ALLIANCE STAFF

A diverse group gathered at the Visalia Friends Meeting Hall for a training on what to do if you are in a situation where someone is being harassed because of the color of their skin, their sexual orientation or religious beliefs. Hina Fatima, with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), led the discussion.

There are several steps to take when confronted with a situation like this. Fatima said that “safety, support and solidarity” are the fundamental guidelines to follow.

“De-escalation is the safest way of responding,” she said. “Be aware of how your intervention will affect the safety of the person involved in the situation.”

Evaluate the situation, make sure you have an exit plan and avoid becoming an additional target of the hate crime. Do not engage with the abuser, but rather ask the targeted person if they want your help. “Ask how you can best help them and ask before you touch them,” Fatima said.

The next step is to interact with the targeted person and take the attention away from the abuser. Fatima said when she was first introduced to this training her instinct was to jump in and confront the abuser, but she now understands why de-escalation is a better option. According to Fatima, you are not there as a savior but in solidarity with the targeted person.

This event was organized by the Central Valley Partnership, the San Joaquin Valley Media Alliance and the Community Alliance newspaper in coordination with several community groups.

The next in a series of Stop the Hate events will be at the Fresno Center (4879 E. Kings Canyon Rd.) on Jan. 24, 2024. There will be more details about this event in the January issue of the Community Alliance newspaper.

This event was made possible by a grant from the California State Library under the statewide Stop the Hate initiative.



Hina Fatima was the presenter at the Stop the Hate training in Visalia on Nov. 21. Photo by Peter Maiden



Daren Miller was the moderator for the Visalia Stop the Hate, Be the Love event. Photo by Peter Maiden



Some of the attendees at the Visalia Friends Meeting Hall in Visalia. Photo by Peter Maiden

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The Passing of Susan Rowe

BY PATRICIA BROWN

The Central Valley lost a political icon on Nov. 16 with the passing of Madera County Democratic Central Committee Chair Susan Rowe. She was also active in the Rural Caucus of the California Democratic Party (CDP).

Rowe became active in Central California's Democratic progressive grassroots through Howard Dean's presidential campaign. She was elected chair of the Madera County Democratic Central Committee in 2005 and held that post for the rest of her life. She also represented Madera County as a delegate to CDP conventions.

Rowe championed the Rural Caucus, serving at various times as vice chair and South Central regional chair. The Caucus works to ensure that rural counties get the attention, services and funding they deserve.

Rowe provided political counsel to an army of grassroots volunteers, elected officials and candidates. Described as "inimitable," "a force" and "irreplaceable," she was adept at explaining the political landscape.

Rowe also brought her leadership skills to the Fresno County Democratic Women's Club, founded in 1932, where she was chair of its Candidate Endorsement Committee for more than eight years. The club's endorsement is coveted by many candidates.

Hailing from Anderson, Ind., Rowe is survived by her husband, Mike, senior deputy counsel of Fresno County. They met in a thespian class in high school and were lifelong partners.

Rowe was recognized twice as a CDP Regional Volunteer of the Year and received a State Senate Certificate of Recognition for her community service as a "Woman Leader of the Valley." She will be missed by her multitude of friends.

Patricia Brown is a retired Fresno-based family law attorney and community activist.



Susan Rowe, former chair of the Madera County Democratic Central Committee.
 Photo by Howard Watkins

A Mystery to Me

BY RUTH GADEBUSCH

Try as I might I cannot comprehend the current political world: the state of public opinion, the blame for this direction, the drought of honesty and integrity of one party, the concern re diminished mental acuity in another term for one presidential candidate with little regard for one just four years younger and the lack of value of experience gained in age.

Granted, my focus on this latter might be prejudiced by my own life of nine decades plus. However, I grew up in a time when age was respected for the wisdom gained from life's experiences. It was not assumed that old age meant locked in glorifying the past instead of ideas for the future.

It is increasingly difficult for me to be polite to those shouting out that it is time for a new generation. Successful societies function with a balance of freshness and experience. No one group has a monopoly on wisdom.

There was a time when both of our major political parties wanted a well-functioning government within the beautiful concept of our founding fathers (again, I note that our mothers were ignored) developed for diverse peoples living together in harmony. Their differences were in how to achieve the goal. Now it is difficult—no, worse than difficult: impossible—to see anything but the Republicans grasping for power for those in office and their rich friends, far from what those early settlers envisioned.

Yes, power plays a part in any legitimate group but it is valid only if used for the good of all. Above all else should be integrity.

We are in serious trouble when the Supreme Court needs an ethics code. It goes without saying that only those with demonstrated respect for embracing the intent of a properly adopted law—integrity—should ever be considered for such a lofty position.

Intellect should triumph over political leanings. Prospective justices should be vetted to the extent possible for their commitment to the Constitution, not their desire for a different political world.

Of course, a Congress that within itself has more than its fair share of questionable members, be it their integrity or intellect, has a responsibility. It will censor a member who expresses an opinion that is the purpose for being a member of a legislative body but refuses to expel a person who was elected on a totally false campaign. Not just a few mistakes or an ill-stated belief but lawbreaking in almost every aspect.

The difference seems to be in political party membership. Also, if you belong to the party in power you can be excused for bizarre behavior or outrageous statements based on no truth whatsoever.

The Congress itself has its own horror rules of behavior adopted under totally different conditions. When the in-power party is reversed, the rules remain because the out-of-power group is just waiting for its opportunity to use the rules in its favor.

Designed for a different era, the Electoral College has given us a non-majority vote for President more than once. One senator continues to hold up military promotions completely, endangering our military to say nothing of fairness. All due to his desire to force his obviously minority opinion on reproductive rights.

It is absolutely frightening that a sexual predator, if not pervert, by his own comments, not an enemy's rumor, could be the Republicans' leading candidate

ONE WOMAN'S VIEW

for another term as President. There is astounding evidence questioning his integrity, whether it be in business, government, personal or whatever. It is no comfort that he was elected by the quirky Electoral College, not a majority vote, for the first term.

There is absolute evidence that he led an insurrection in an effort to retain the power of the President. Despite all our protections in our Constitution and subsequent action, this was entirely too close for comfort.

Another area too close for comfort is the near shutting down of the government because of the power control in Congress. And if that was not enough, we are dangerously close to another shutdown due to the House of Representatives replacing the Speaker because he prevented a government shutdown by daring to compromise for the good of the nation.

I never thought the San Joaquin Valley's Kevin McCarthy (R-Bakersfield), who sold his soul to get the job, could look so good! Of course, that is only by comparison with his replacement.

The mystery is where the responsible adults are. Particularly sad and frightening because these condemnations are not just the rantings of an opposing party member. These are real happenings.

Lest you think I have ignored the shortcomings of the Democrats in this confusing array, I note President Biden's own party members are endangering him when they focus on his age or his failure to enact all their wants expressed in the campaign, or the occasional misspoken word, or a stumble, or anything else showing that he is human.

Don't they appreciate that he has had an opposing Congress, or do they know of any speaker who has not at some time stumbled over a word, or any person who has never stumbled physically?

Don't they know the conditions that we deplore were set in motion long before the election? Don't they understand that good change requires time? Don't they see what the alternative is if we fail a Biden second term? Where is their thinking?

Do they really think that the dictator "friend" of the previous president will stop his success in Ukraine? I would advise the Rs to also consider this last question.

There are more considerations, but you know them. Any day, give me the person with well-known integrity, experience and competence, regardless of age. Our government is designed to function not by the failings of one man but as a system. How else did we survive Jan. 6, 2021?

We are the world's example for the hope of democracy, all that is good for humankind on this planet. At this time, there is no room for another egotistical maniac or his colleagues. Let us accept Joe



Biden for the service he has given us despite whatever human frailties he might have. The superiority of his dedication and character are above question unless one's judgment is limited by current political party affiliation.

It is our obligation, it is our opportunity to provide the best leadership possible. It is a mystery why there could be any question when the contrast is so obvious. Let us accentuate the positive with our support by voice and action to see that our nation has the leadership we deserve.

Ruth Gadebusch, a former naval officer, has long been a community activist with a variety of interests including election to the Fresno Unified School District Board, a governor's appointment to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, serving as president of the Association of California Urban School Districts and currently an emeritus member of the Center for Civic Education Board of Directors.



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SIERRA CLUB

TEHIPITE CHAPTER

National Park Service Ignores Evidence in Misguided Sequoia Planting Project

by Jeremy Clar and Dr. Chad Hanson

(This is an updated version of a Valley Voices Op-Ed which appeared in the Fresno Bee on Oct. 20, 2023)

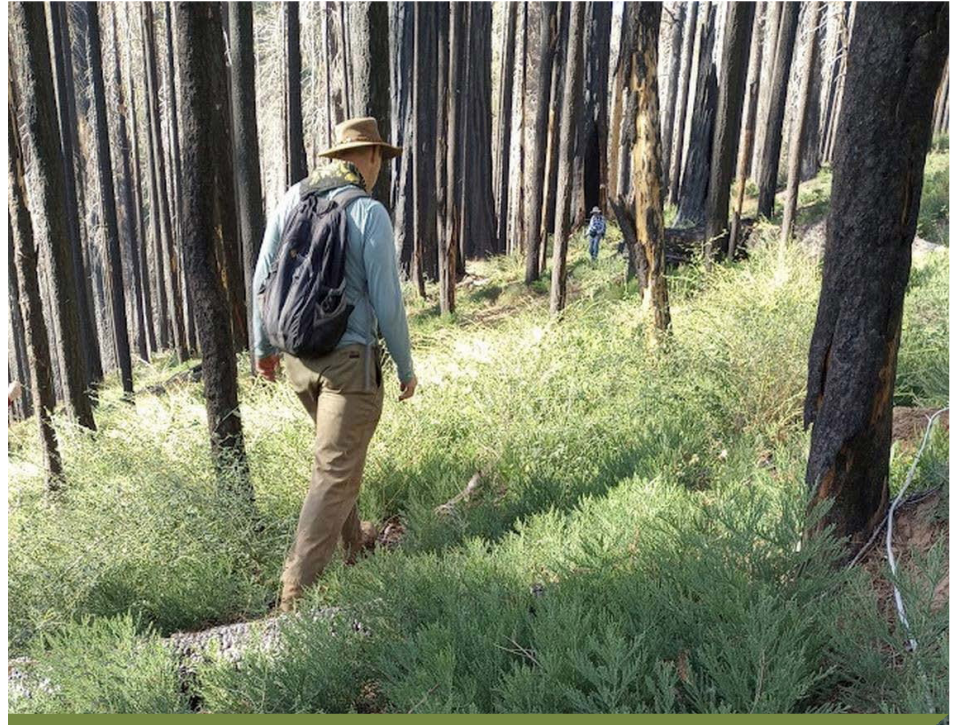
Two years ago, a forest fire, including a few hundred acres of high-intensity fire, burned through Redwood Mountain Sequoia Grove in Kings Canyon National Park. Park management quickly concluded—without evidence—that the fire had been of such an unprecedented intensity that the sequoia forest ecosystem “is unlikely to recover.” Without action, management warns, these forests will instead convert to frequent fire shrub communities. Now the Park has launched a project to replant 120,000 sequoia seedlings in six groves in designated Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park Wilderness Areas.

Fortunately, Nature has ignored this gloomy forecast: *incredible numbers of sequoia seedlings have sprouted* in the aftermath of the fire, which cleared the forest floor, creating a nutrient-rich ash medium for the new trees. This spectacular growth has not been witnessed in over 100 years, dating back to when fire suppression was begun in these world famous groves.

Contrary to the National Park Service’s press release, Sequoia trees have lived with fire for tens of millions of years, and high-intensity fire is *ideal* for sequoia tree regeneration. In the Redwood Mountain Grove of Kings Canyon National Park, and elsewhere in the 60-mile wide band of Sierra Nevada sequoias, high-intensity fire has produced, in some areas upwards of 40,000 sequoia seedlings per acre (one per square foot). Photos barely do justice to this amazing sight.

Unwilling to admit that they were wrong, however, Park management began a misguided replanting project on October 17. Little about this project makes sense. Park plans state that seedlings will be planted only in areas of the Grove containing fewer than 14,112 sequoia seedlings per acre (one every 2x2 feet). Yet, in areas surveyed by our volunteer Sierra Club team, germinating Redwood Mountain Grove seedlings are so dense that it’s difficult to avoid stepping on them. Also, the seedlings are already two to three feet tall, and Park management fails to explain how planting 3-inch seedlings would improve the chances of the grove’s regeneration, given that hundreds of thousands of natural seedlings have already established themselves. As Marek Warszawski noted in the *Fresno Bee*, it would make sense to plant in an area *without any naturally-regenerated sequoias*. But, according to the Park’s own data, sequoias are regenerating in 100% of locations surveyed in the high-intensity fire areas, and the new crop of 2023 seedlings survived the 3rd-hottest summer and 2nd most severe summer drought on record at a time in their development when they were most vulnerable. *There’s no reason to be pessimistic that the sequoia grove will recover from the fire.*

What is the harm from attempting this tree planting experiment? Two main concerns: first, the current project’s activities could seriously harm the six groves planned for tree planting. Helicopters, chainsaws, explosives, and mule teams are being introduced into designated Wilderness, altering the habitat for endangered species, and interfering



Dr. Chad Hanson visiting a carpet of natural sequoia seedlings in the aftermath of the 2021 high-intensity fire. Redwood Mtn. Grove, Kings Canyon Natl. Park, Sep-2023.

with the public’s right to quiet enjoyment. Also, if Park management is not satisfied with the survival of their planted seedlings (regardless of the actual number of surviving seedlings), then it would open the door to herbicide spray (Roundup) on the forest floor.

Second, there is a threat of infecting the sequoia groves with tree seedlings grown in nurseries, which can harbor invasive, sometimes deadly, root pathogens. These can spread and infect native seedlings and mature sequoia trees, too, stunting growth, or even causing widespread tree mortality. Just one of the “several dozen species of these pathogens killed 50 million trees in California after planting. Last month we learned that the seedlings being planted in the Redwood Mountain Grove were raised in nurseries not on the accredited list of nurseries which screen for root pathogens. Park management has refused to answer whether their seedlings are being screened.

The Precautionary Principle tells us that the *burden of proof* is on the Park to demonstrate that this drastic intervention is required in designated Wilderness. The National Park Service needs to comply with federal law by preparing an Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate the harms to be caused by this project.

In sum: Park management should trust in the resilience and persistence of our majestic giant sequoia groves which have adapted to high-intensity fire for tens of millions of years, and whose reproductive success depends on high-intensity fire. Sequoia trees have survived for eons without human assistance — and they don’t need our help now. Any benefits created by this project are simply outweighed by the risks.

Jeremy Clar, based in the Fresno area, is the Chair of the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club. Dr. Chad Hanson is a research ecologist with the John Muir Project, and author of the book Smokescreen. If you want to learn more about this project or join the Tehipite Chapter giant sequoia field volunteers, contact Jeremy at jclar440@gmail.com or call Gary at 559-790-3495.

Thursday, December 14 at 7 PM via Zoom

The Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter presents forest and fire ecologist **Dr. Chad Hanson** for a presentation on “Giant Sequoia Regeneration” after recent fires in the Sierra. Dr. Hanson will present scientific evidence refuting claims that sequoias cannot regenerate in larger high-intensity fire patches, claims being

used to justify destructive logging and artificial planting projects in giant sequoia groves. Join the Zoom meeting and learn more about giant sequoia reproduction now taking place in previously-burned local forest areas.

Visit sierraclub.org/tehipite now to register in advance to get on the mailing list to receive the Zoom link on Dec. 14 prior to the event.

WWII-Era Internment Camp Unites Asians and Latinos

BY MARY JO MCCONAHAY

Mothers and grandmothers clutched children close on trains rolling through this dry stretch of south Texas, not knowing what waited for them at the end of the line. They were Peruvians of Japanese heritage, kidnapped and brought to the United States in a secret World War II program as trade bait for Americans caught behind Japanese lines.

Recently, survivors of the State Department operation called Quiet Passages returned to the grounds of this erstwhile concentration camp just 35 miles from the Mexican border. They had come to demand justice—reparations or an apology or both—to memorialize history and decry the xenophobia that continues to affect this border region and Asian Americans.

The group, including descendants of those incarcerated, found allies that might have been unexpected 75 years ago: Latino activists and local government authorities, some of whom had helped launch the Latino/Chicano civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

“What’s to prevent this from happening again?” asked Larry Oda, national president of the Japanese American Citizens League,



History teacher Ruben Salazar, Crystal City High School. Photo by Mary Jo McConahay

looking over the lonely expanse where up to 4,000 captives lived in barracks—some for more than five years—originally built for migrant Mexican farmworkers. The land was home to scorpions and biting red ants. Armed guards, often on horseback, patrolled.

Oda was born in the camp when his parents, like some other U.S. citizens of Japanese descent, were transferred to join the Peruvians from facilities in Tule Lake, Santa Fe and elsewhere. They were being held under a wartime order that considered them potential enemies.

“Rhetoric like that of the former president leads to this,” Oda said, referring to anti-Moslem and anti-immigrant language used by Donald Trump, leading contender for the Republican candidate for president in 2024. “Rhetoric matters.”

In Crystal City, Latino activists who once struggled successfully in the 1960s and 1970s, as part of La Raza Unida, against local discrimination practices with walkouts and demonstrations, accompanied visitors who came from several states.

“We can fight the white reactionary surge together,” said Manuel Garza, a former local youth activist who is now a field director for the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project.

“It’s about sharing our knowledge, training people to work on issues of voter suppression. People of color are being persecuted right now. We can build coalitions with the Asian community. We can be another country.”

It can’t happen without education about history like that of the Texas concentration camp, said the town’s school board vice president, Cruz Mata, but “it’s not in the books—we need to make it part of the curriculum because history repeats itself.”

Arguably, the U.S. wartime kidnapping operation, which included people of Japanese, German and Italian descent taken forcibly from Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Bolivia and other countries, might have disappeared from memory except for the work of some on the “Crystal City Pilgrimage” such as Grace Shimizu, whose father and uncle were incarcerated here.

Shimizu directs projects to preserve the captives’ oral histories and to demand redress. Japanese Latin Americans were excluded from the 1988 Civil Liberties Act that recognized the harm done to Japanese Americans.

Or like Bekki Shibayama, who shepherded the case of the captive Shibayama brothers of Lima, including her late father Art, to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), which is mandated to protect human rights in the Americas. In 2020, the IACHR affirmed the obligation of the U.S. government to provide “material and moral” redress to the complainants. Neither the Trump nor the Biden administration has complied.

“Here I was going to Crystal City High School in the 1960s, and nobody ever told us we were on the site of a former concentration camp,” said Severita Lara, who once led massive student walkouts until the school board agreed to demands to stop discrimination against Mexican American students—like forbidding them to speak Spanish. Later, Lara became the town mayor.

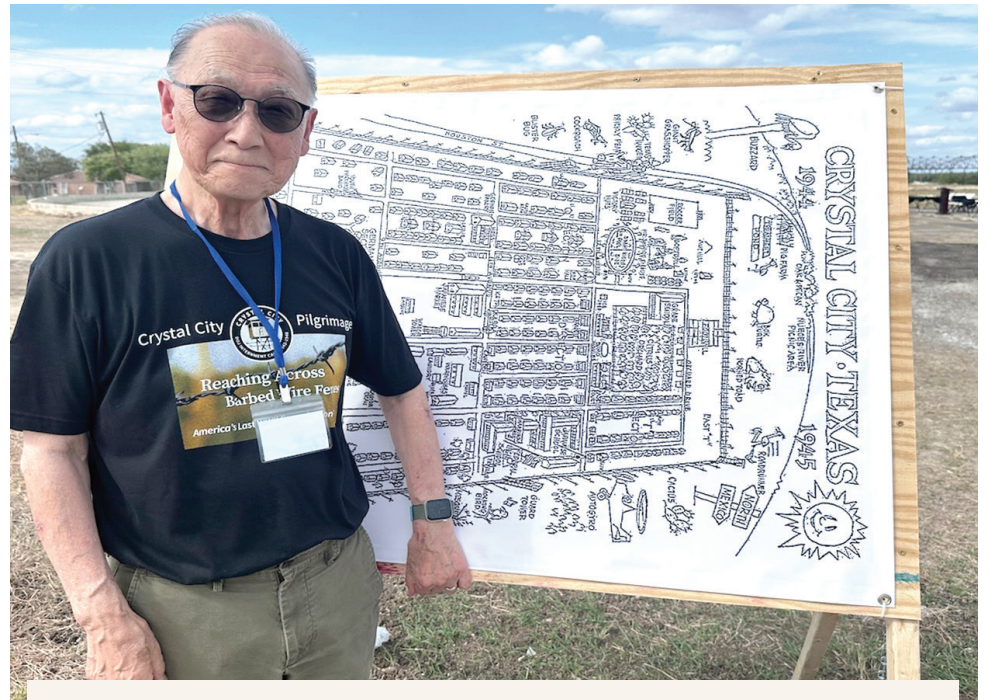
“Their struggle and our struggle is the same,” said former history teacher Ruben Salazar, who had posted photos of the camp around the school lobby. Salazar also serves on the board of the Crystal City Pilgrimage Committee, which organized the four-day journey.

Japanese began migrating to Peru in the early 20th century on rural labor contracts, picking cotton or harvesting rubber, but eventually owning their own businesses and forming a thriving community more than 30,000 strong. Their children, with Spanish names, spoke Spanish, and were growing up Catholic.

But Peru, where most of the Crystal City inmates came from, refused to take its citizens back after the war. U.S. authorities had seized their passports and birth certificates, so they became “undocumented aliens” when the camp closed. Many went to work at Seabrook Farms in New Jersey for \$0.57 an hour in a kind of indentured servitude for years until they could arrange formal release.

“We’re connected in so many ways,” said Kazumu Naganuma of San Francisco, speaking of the Mexican Americans of Crystal City. Naganuma, whose family

JAPANESE INCARCERATION



Kazumu Naganuma stands in front of a map of the Crystal City internment camp, where up to 4,000 captives lived, including many kidnapped from Peru—like Naganuma’s family—as part of a secret State Department operation. Photo by Mary Jo McConahay

of nine was brought from Callao, Peru, Alaska. Uno’s great uncle, George Kumemaro Uno, who lived at the camp, was never charged with a crime yet was held by the government until 1947, long after the war ended.

Keriann Uno said that growing up she had “an outsider’s perspective,” only hearing “bits and pieces” of her own history, leading to a feeling of “fragmentation.” Sometimes, families felt shame at admitting incarceration.

“I wanted to hear our stories, and my family’s stories, to understand,” she said. “I think a healing process has started.”

Mary Jo McConahay is author of *The Tango War: The Struggle for the Hearts, Minds and Riches of Latin America during World War II*.

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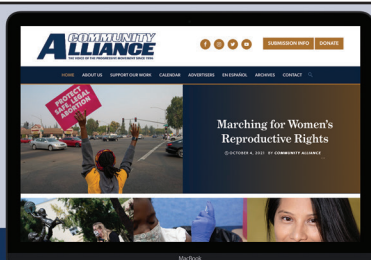
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Barbed Wire Baseball

BY VIC BEDOIAN

It is a date that will live in infamy—Feb. 19, 1942. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. It disrupted the lives of more than 120,000 Japanese Americans, incarcerating them in concentration camps for the duration of World War II. Most of them lost their farms, businesses and possessions.

But the camps ironically provided an opportunity for those interned to create something beautiful despite their dire circumstances, to resist giving in to their imprisonment and to shine. That opportunity was baseball.

Harvey Zenimura was 13 years old living in Fresno with his family when it happened, “I had no inclination of knowing what Japan was or what and why I was put into camp. But the order says that all Japanese from the West Coast go into the camp. So, I was just one of the unfortunate ones to go in.”

His brother Howard was 14 at the time, “We got the notice of the executive order, and going to school was hard the next day. Everybody had to prepare to go into camp, and everybody had to pack, get shots. And before we knew it, we were in camp already.”

The Zenimura family, like other local Japanese Americans, were first moved into the Fresno Assembly Center at the site of the Fresno Fairgrounds and housed in block after block of hastily built barracks.

Kenichi Zenimura with his wife Kiyoko and their two boys soon settled into their one-room apartment. Here’s where baseball, America’s national pastime mind you, enters the picture.

Kerry Yo Nakagawa has produced three books and a film about Nisei baseball. He reflects on how the sudden shock of losing everything must have felt, “I always look at the logistics they faced with living in a quadrant, rope blanket hanging as privacy in a 20’ x 100’ building in that searing heat.

“Wouldn’t I rather be playing out with my teammates, or cheering on my favorite players or teams in the camp? It brought a sense of normalcy in their ‘abnormal lives’ and created a social and positive atmosphere.”

Many years later, Harvey Zenimura recalled, the “first thing my dad was thinking about was for recreation. He built a ball field on the assembly center there. He got everybody out on the field with the rakes and hoes and everything else and built a ball field there.”

That simple act soon mushroomed into something larger and more profound than anyone could imagine. But then, Kenichi Zenimura was no ordinary man.

Kenichi Zenimura is acknowledged as a pioneer of American baseball. He is honored as the “Dean of the Diamond” and the “Father of Japanese American Baseball.” Much has been written about his illustrious history as the catalyst of organized Japanese American baseball in Fresno and throughout the Valley.

Born in Hiroshima, he was raised in Hawaii where his love for baseball was nurtured. Kenichi moved to Fresno in 1920, immediately joining the Fresno Athletic Club and determined to cultivate Japanese baseball teams, organizing a 10-team Nisei baseball league.

He built the first of his baseball fields on the west side of town. He organized games against other small-town teams up and down the Valley, Negro League teams and even professional Pacific Coast League clubs. In 1927, his Fresno team notably played an exhibition game with a barnstorming team of major league players that included Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. A famous team photo shows Kenichi standing front-row center between the two towering legends.

By late summer 1942, the Zenimura family, along with 13,000 other Japanese Americans from Valley towns, were transferred to a camp built in the southern

Arizona desert on the Gila River Indian Reservation. It was a flat, dusty sagebrush covered desert, hot in the summer and cold in winter.

Kenichi wasted no time. Only a barbed wire fence separated the camp from the open desert. Howard recollected, “They only had the barbed wire fence. So, we can go outside the barbed wire fence and do whatever we want. So, in this open field, we started to dig the sagebrush.”

They were bold. To build a backstop, they took out every other 4x4 post from the camp’s perimeter fence and covered it with padding used to keep concrete from drying too fast. And they also helped themselves to other found materials they thought useful.

The field was complete with dugouts for the players and bleachers for fans. The outfield fence was a row of castor bean plants that curved around the foul lines made of flour, having no chalk on hand.

Nakagawa points out everyone got in on the act, “Women and mothers tore up mattress ticking and made uniforms or sliding pads for their kids and teams.”

Harvey described their pursuit of perfection, “They have these pebbles. Some of those pebbles are pretty bad, pretty big. And if a ball hits one of those pebbles you get these crazy bounces. What we used to do is scrape that topsoil of that desert sand and screen it. And before you know it so many times you screen it, and the darn thing gets perfect.”

Once word got around about building a baseball field, others joined in, “You should see all the guys that came out there, started digging. We got that sagebrush cleared maybe 300, 400 feet out and then got a requisition for a bulldozer to come out there and just level that out.”

This enterprise seemed to please the relocation camp commanders, who likely thought it would keep a lot of intelligent and resourceful people from making trouble. It was all engineered and laid out with precision, using whatever materials they could gather or request. It was dubbed Zenimura Field. The original wooden home plate resides in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Soon baseball games were regular camp entertainment and enormously popular. Thousands of people attended the games, Harvey remembered, “When you go to see one of these games it’s just flocked with people. You can’t imagine how many people are at the ball game. The grandstand was filled up, behind, off field, everywhere. They were all over. It’s amazing.”

Soon, Gila River had games going on all the time. Teams competed with other teams within the camp and played home games with teams from other internment camps.

There were two camps at Gila: Butte, where Zenimura Field was, and the smaller Canal Camp five miles away. Japanese Americans from California cities such as Los Angeles, Pasadena and Lodi lived there and formed their own teams and leagues.

Gila teams even played games on the road at distant camps. Howard Zenimura described how they pulled that off, “We kind of snuck out of the camp. We got permission, we got passes from the administration of Gila and there’s a truck that [would] take us to Phoenix. We purchased our ticket over there and then transferred to Salt Lake City and then to Heart Mountain, Wyo. And we went in shifts of two or three groups so that it doesn’t make it really suspicious where a whole [lot of] Japanese [people] are leaving camp.”

“The fans would dress in their Sunday best and called it ‘BBC Day’ (Baseball Crazy), Nakagawa observes. “Imagine traveling all the way from Gila River, Ariz., to Heart Mountain, Wyo., for a baseball tournament. Or a team from Amachee, Colo., coming to Gila River.”

Kenichi used his acumen and contacts to keep this universe of teams, leagues and games in motion. He even recruited players from other camps to come to Gila River. Through his friendship with the owner of Holman’s sporting goods store in Fresno, Kenichi supplied the teams with hats, shoes, balls, bats, gloves—everything necessary to play ball by ordering all their gear from a catalog.



Gila River All-Star team. Photo courtesy of Kerry Nakagawa

For all the recreational baseball benefits that baseball provided for players and fans alike, there was still the harsh reality of regimented daily life in a concentration camp.

As Harvey recalled, “They had about 14 barracks. And on the one end they would have a mess hall in the center. They would have a laundry room. And then on both sides, they would have a men’s latrine and shower place and a ladies’ latrine and shower place. And each one of these barracks would have four apartments.”

Other aspects of life were also regulated, “We used to eat in what they call a mess hall. Just like in the Army. Everybody would, at a certain time, eat breakfast, eat lunch and dinner. And then as to clothing, supplies or what, I think my parents were getting \$16 a month, something like that, for my dad would go out to the farm and do some farm labor.”

Along with baseball games, entertainment such as weekly movies and dances eased somewhat the rigors of camp life.

After the war, the Zenimura family, like many others, came back to reconstruct a life in Fresno. But Nakagawa notes that although returning Japanese Americans strove to move on with their lives, there was a residual bitterness, “I’m sure losing your home, business, ranch, education, civil liberties, constitution, dignity was humiliating for the Japanese American communities especially when they controlled 48% of the cash crops in California, Oregon and Washington.

“Eighty percent of the fishing and canneries were controlled by Japanese American families. The elders could not start over after losing everything.”

Kenichi continued with baseball, playing until the age of 55. He was also deeply involved in promoting youth baseball and taking teams to visit Japan. Throughout all his years of baseball playing, coaching and organizing, Kenichi encouraged diversity and international brotherhood and compassion.

Howard and Harvey, still in their teens, completed high school, then went on to star at Fresno State. Both brothers continued into professional baseball in Japan, playing for the Hiroshima Carp for several years before returning to Fresno to continue their lives.

For many other Japanese American boys, such intense focus on playing baseball for three or more years made them good. Very, very good. When they returned to play for high school teams, their standout skill levels forged championship teams.

Japanese American baseball and its role during the internment years resonates even now as Nakagawa notes, “Throughout the many eras of pre-war, during WWII, post war and today’s legacy players, baseball has always provided the healing spark of diplomacy when needed.

“Today’s players never faced being banned because of any Jim Crow laws, and I hope they realize they are standing on the shoulders of the ancestral godfathers to these modern players in today’s game.”

(Author’s note: I want to acknowledge the people who helped create this article. In the mid-1990s, my friend and radio colleague, Kathy McAnally, produced a documentary for NPR, Baseball Behind Barbed Wire, for which I interviewed Harvey and Howard Zenimura. I also consulted the websites of the Nisei Baseball Research Project and the Baseball Hall of Fame. For more in-depth information about Nisei baseball, I recommend Kerry Yo Nakagawa’s works: Japanese American Baseball in California: A History and Diamonds in the Rough: The Legacy of Japanese-American Baseball. He also produced a feature film titled American Pastime.)

Vic Bedoian is an independent radio and print journalist working on environmental justice and natural resources issues in the San Joaquin Valley. Contact him at vicbedoian@gmail.com.

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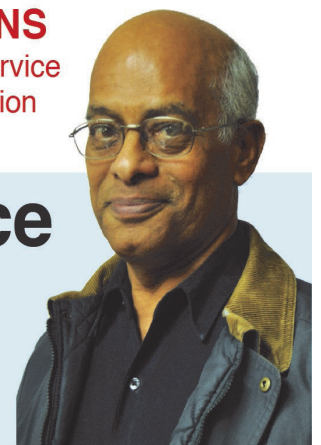
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"We will not learn how to live together in peace by killing each other's children."



Al Jazeera Arabic's bureau chief Wael Dahdoh in Gaza holding his daughter killed by Israeli strike
photo credit: yahoo news



Palestinian man carrying niece killed by Israeli attack
photo credit: Getty Images

We can neither stand by as widespread genocide takes place in Gaza; nor do the same as the U.S. & NATO foster a proxy war against Russia while the Ukrainian people pay the price.

Curious about what's really happening in Palestine beyond what's presented in the mainstream news? Visit...

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- ❖ **chris hedges report at substack.com**
- ❖ **democracynow.org or listen at KFCF 88.1FM at 6am & 9am**



Monthly Meeting: 4th Thursdays, 6:30 pm at Fresno Center for Nonviolence

Street Demonstrations: We've been joining the Palestinian protests.

For details of upcoming events follow our facebook page and join our email list: Camille.Russell@peacefresno.org

For more info: president@peacefresno.org or call/text 559.668.0591



peacefresno.org

Tell Biden & Congress!!!

- **CEASEFIRE NOW**
- **NO WEAPONS APPROPRIATIONS**
- **GENOCIDE: NOT NOW, NOT EVER!**

*Let your voice be heard
Stand with others for peace*



FCNV: A Lamp Has Been Lit

BY ANGELA PRICE AND JOSHUA SHURLEY

As we celebrate three decades of service to the Central Valley by the Fresno Center for Nonviolence (FCNV, or the Center), our mission of fostering peace requires sustained support from you, our beloved community.

When the FCNV opened its doors in 1992, largely as a response to the first Gulf War, its purpose was to stimulate changes that reduce violence at all levels—local, national and global. Several groups that met monthly agreed to form a coalition of sorts, steeped in the principles of nonviolence. They pledged financial support to sustain the existence of a peace center for the next six months.

That was 31 years ago, and today the Center continues to keep its doors open. Although the Center's future is uncertain amid a world increasingly characterized by uncertain times, its important work as a base of support for Fresno's peace and social justice community continues.

It is hard to assess the impact the Center has had on the community since its foundation, but one of the more consequential impacts has been providing a meeting space for many progressive groups and others that require a physical space (so long as they do not contravene our commitment to peace). Over the past three decades, our modest space in the Tower District has seen our work flourish in the face of many challenges.

After the events of Sept. 11, 2001, and the subsequent turbulence of the Iraq War, the Center helped guide the birth of new groups such as Peace Fresno, whose antiwar voices have become a fixture in Fresno, providing an invaluable voice in resisting the culture of militaristic violence that has become all too common in our society.

In addition, the Center has assisted many like-minded organizations that provide important information and resources to the community in great depth. These groups include the local chapters of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the Citizens Climate Lobby and Veterans for Peace, just to name a few, as well as local meditation, self-help and 12-step groups. Such groups have called the Center home and in some cases benefited from fiscal sponsorship by the Center.

The Center's annual anniversary events and the distribution of our Way of Peace Awards have recognized countless activists for their tireless efforts in fostering peace and social justice in the Central Valley. It now hosts a monthly radio show on KFCF 88.1 FM (*Stir It Up*, the second Wednesday of each month at 3 p.m.) with guests on various important and current topics.

The FCNV has brought in many important speakers over the years, such as Robert Fisk, David Barsamian, John LaForge and Bill McKibben. More recently, during the shutdowns as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Center's work took a significant hit, as community engagement (and monetary donations) saw a noticeable decline.

It is important that readers understand that the base of support long offered by the Center remains a valued resource and its board of directors wishes to assure Central Valley residents that its programs and mission are intact and evolving to meet the diverse needs of our community—whether that is empowering LGBTQ+ youth, resisting police violence, supporting justice for our indigenous sisters and brothers, addressing the climate crisis or standing up to the hate that is too often directed at those most marginalized in our society.

The core belief of the FCNV is that the relationship between these issues and achieving real change requires understanding and adherence to the principles of nonviolence. The Center is governed by a board to maintain its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and has no paid staff except

for a small stipend to maintain routine administrative and facilities maintenance duties.

The Center's major source of funding comes from community donations, and it receives no corporate money or assistance from private companies. In this way, the FCNV continues to represent an independent and authentic commitment to peace at all levels—local, national and global.

The FCNV is located at 1584 North Van Ness Avenue in Fresno's Tower District, at the intersection of Van Ness and McKinley avenues, and can be reached at 559-237-3223. Its motto, "A lamp has been lit," remains a clarion call to those dedicated to act in the interests of peace to join together in solidarity and demonstrate a nonviolent alternative to the status quo.

Before leaving this earth, the late Richard Stone (a much beloved founding member of the FCNV) wrote that "our progressive community has grown from being a voice in the Fresno wilderness to having established a substantial base and visibility." The Center's board echoes these words of pride in what they have accomplished and welcomes you to be a part of the Center's ongoing work.

Consider donating financially to help the FCNV keep the path of nonviolence well-lit in the months and years to come. We have our work cut out for us and are eternally grateful for your continued support.

Angela Price is a founding board member of the Fresno Center for Nonviolence and has until recently been its president and development director. Her leadership in all aspects of the Center's operation has been an invaluable asset to the pursuit of peace and justice in our community.

Joshua Shurley is a peace activist and local educator and currently serves as a board member and secretary of the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Contact him at joshuashurley@gmail.com.

Everybody Is a Star Rising Above Their Social Condition

BY PAUL THOMAS JACKSON

Some homeless man says, "You label me, you negate me," echoing the premier Existentialist, Søren Kierkegaard. He articulates, "You may be tempted to hate me for being homeless and since my life, like yours, is hard." The sorry fellow can shame as well as fascinate me, recounting the tragic story in which he starred.

The comforting belief you could have picked him in a police lineup isn't, you know, always true. (Unsure which one he is if circumstances tricked him, but sure he is close and, after all, could be you.) Too many of us are prone to blame the victim if we lack insight and don't know what else to do.

Is anyone an island? Never needing help from someone? "You are never strong enough where you don't," said Cesar Chavez, inspiring victories still hard won. For having left some out, how shall we have atoned? How will we serve so many when we've just begun? If we fail to truly live in community, we won't.

The cards the angels dealt some from the deck left them few choices, incurring homelessness, like an albatross hanging round their neck. Escape is near impossible and through duress. Tragedy befell them, devouring their paycheck. It left them no pot to piss in, in a mess.

Do you assume they belong in a facility? The call requires professional judgment to meet each one's needs and respect their autonomy.

Underserved today, they face begrudgement. Unsheltered folks, at least the great majority, do as they feel they must in their daily adjustment.

They didn't set out in life to make such a scandal. The scandal is ours in homelessness prevention; unwished for while in their mothers' dandle. "The homeless" didn't hold a convention wherein they appointed some thief, thug, or vandal to go to your alley, biz, or home with evil intention!

Like it or not, Fresno isn't only our but also their city. They're under Nature's law, elemental curfew. Destitute, they live under forced mobility for lack of dialogue between me and you, steeped in our comforts and individuality but afforded no convenient venue.


They're also persons under the law of the land, which doesn't guarantee them living quarters. At some point in their lives, most had early trauma and substance use disorder, factors predisposing one, you'll understand, to homelessness of the poor lodger or boarder.

"Trust is built on dialogue," wrote Paulo de Freire, known for the Brazilian students he liberated. Not only is our homeless neighbor a beneficiary but so are we all when dialogue is consecrated, when contributions thereto aren't extemporary but the speakers are well facilitated.

Rights (a liberal mantra) come with responsibility, said the late civil rights activist Maya Angelou who in her life knew triumph and tragedy; and knew that as a basic proposition to pursue through moral dialogue seeking greater clarity how we all shall live in justice by our values.

The man—who, no matter how morally unworthy he's been, is moving to become better—is a good man,

Paul Thomas Jackson prepared the claims that paved the way for the homeless lawsuit against the City of Fresno that in 2008 settled for \$2.35 million. He is now the secretary of the Fresno Homeless Advocates and one of the moderators of its Facebook group ([fresnohomelessadvocates](https://www.facebook.com/fresnohomelessadvocates)).

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Some Questions about Fresno's Growth Plan

BY MATTHEW ARI JENDIAN, SIMON BIASSELL, JIM GRANT AND AKIKO MIYAKE-STONER

Been in Fresno long? Ever notice how the city has grown (mostly northward) and what has happened in the wake of that growth (mostly neglect and urban decay of the older parts of Fresno)?

Unchecked outward growth has led to significant negative impacts in the heart of Fresno. Physical decay, blight, vacant lots, fires and crumbling infrastructure in our urban core are blatant, visual examples of those impacts, while residents are also facing unseen impacts of worsening air quality, overcrowding and increased poverty rates.

Where did it all begin?

In 1872, the City of Fresno was established, coinciding with a train depot at Tulare and H streets. East of the tracks was the city center where homesteaders resided, and west of the tracks was home to Chinese immigrants who settled there after the gold rush. The railroad marks the first east/west divide of Fresno and divide of race and class, demarcating West Fresno as the “center of vice.” Fresno became the county seat in 1874 and was incorporated in 1885.

Got plans?

Every city plans how it's going to grow, and Fresno's first General Plan in 1918 upheld the east/west divide of Fresno and established southeast Fresno as an “industrial area.” Due to the negative effects of the Great Depression, President Roosevelt initiated the New Deal and Congress created the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) in 1933 and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1934 to help refinance home mortgages currently in default to prevent foreclosure as well as expand homeownership.

HOLC examiners consulted with local bank loan officers, city officials, appraisers and realtors to create color-coded “Residential Security” maps of cities that categorized the riskiness of lending to households in different neighborhoods: green for the “Best,” blue for “Still Desirable,” yellow for “Definitely Declining” and red for “Hazardous,” further influencing the development of north Fresno under the guise of “economic development.”

By the 1950s, at the height of the Cold War, a former member of the Fresno County Board of Supervisors would refer to Highway 99 and the railroad tracks as “Fresno's Berlin Wall.”

In the decades that followed, city plans and zoning ordinances kept southwest Fresno isolated. City leaders concentrated wealth and development farther north, catering to its affluent white neighborhoods. There, the shopping malls, hospitals and college campuses were built, while southwest Fresno got slaughterhouses and meatpacking plants.

According to Richard Rothstein, author of *The Color of Law*, the geographic, economic and racial isolation of a city's black and brown residents is a pattern duplicated across the country thanks to government policies.

Today, some argue that Shaw Avenue or even Herndon Avenue has replaced the railroad tracks as the city's dividing line. White and wealthy above to the north; poor, black and Hispanic to the south. A 1970s-era city planning document referred to Shaw Avenue as Fresno's “Mason-Dixon Line.”

Doubling Down in the Wrong Direction

In 1973, when the City of Fresno was updating its General Plan, a 24-member General Plan Citizens Committee was established. The City's planning department developed four general plan alternatives, and the Citizens Committee developed Alternative 5: Growth focused on densification around Blackstone Avenue, which would increase access while containing development to the already urbanized areas.

“Subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), Alternatives 1 and 5 were concluded to have the best impact on the physical and social environments of the city.” Yet, despite a favorable environmental assessment and protest from the Citizens Committee, neighborhood council members and the general public, the City Council adopted Alternative 4 in favor of urban growth, which has led to “suburbanization,” “sprawl” and continued divestment from southwest and southeast Fresno, in favor of investment in north Fresno.

Not Again, Not on Our Watch

With some community organizing around development, the City of Fresno adopted a new General Plan in 2002, seeking to “reach a balance between the outward growth pressures and downtown revitalization. The plan directed 80% of growth inside of the city's existing boundaries and the remaining 20% of population growth would be accommodated into the two expansions of the urban boundary—North to accommodate the upscale Copper

River development and Southeast to a new town concept, that would (ultimately) be designed for higher densities and ‘green style’ living.”

More community organizing centered on development followed the adoption of the General Plan, including Fresno Works for Better Health, the Central Valley Air Quality Coalition, Faith in Community (PICO), the Fresno Housing Alliance and Concerned Citizens of West Fresno, among others, from 2003 to 2005.

Several more social justice organizations formed or increased their organizing regarding development from 2010 to 2013 and later in response to concerns about housing evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic, including Building Health Communities (Fresno BHC), the Fresno chapter of the ACLU, Communities for a New California, the Central Valley Partnership, Central California Legal Services and Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability.

In 2014, after a series of charettes gathering public input and community organizing, the Fresno City Council updated the General Plan to create “a balanced city with an appropriate proportion of its growth and reinvestment focused on the central core, Downtown, established neighborhoods, and along Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors.” The update also specified that “a successful and vibrant Downtown is necessary to attract investment needed for infill development and rehabilitation of established neighborhoods, which are priorities for the Plan.”

Although a community-supported General Plan was adopted, the civic muscle was not yet in place to ensure systematic implementation and hold City officials accountable.

With more recent additions of Fresno DRIVE and the Fresno Opportunity Corridors, the Fresno Community and Economic Development Partnership (Fresno CEDP) representing citizens across Fresno via 16 organizations (Jane Addams CDC, Better Blackstone Association, Chinatown Fresno, Downtown Fresno Partnership, El Dorado Park CDC, Every Neighborhood Partnership, Fresno Area Community Enterprises, Hidalgo CDC, Highway City CDC, Jackson CDC, Lowell CDC, Southeast Fresno Community & Economic Development, Saints Rest Community Economic Development Corporation, Southwest Fresno Economic Development, South Tower Community Land Trust and Tower Neighborhood Association), the Central Valley Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and the Greenfield Coalition, the civic muscle of Fresno is being developed and exercised as a countervailing force, altering the dynamics of power in the City of Fresno.

The Community Engagement to Ownership Spectrum, created by the Facilitating Power & Movement Strategy Center, visually captures the pathway toward greater racial, economic and environmental justice through the shift from community engagement to community ownership, referencing Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation, the International Association of Public Participation's Spectrum of Public Participation, and the work of grassroots organizing and advocacy groups working to hold local systems accountable to the public.

A New Clovis, Southeast of Fresno?

Before year's end, Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer's administration is requesting the Fresno City Council's approval of the transformation of nearly 9,000 unincorporated acres—16 times the size of the Copper River Project in northeast Fresno and seven times the size of Riverstone and Tesoro Viejo in Madera—southeast of Fresno into a new Clovis on Fancher Creek.

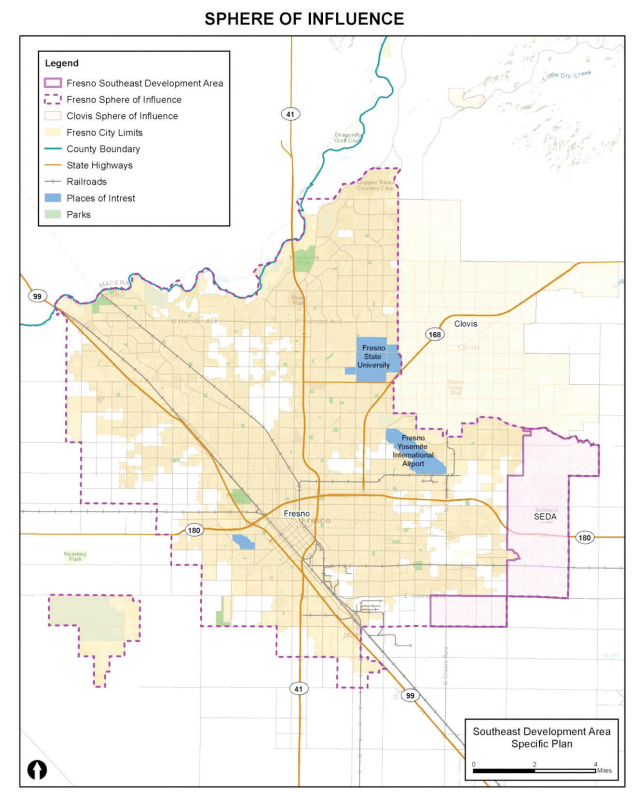
The project, known as the Southeast Development Area (SEDA), requires the City to annex the land, and it is expected to result in 45,000 homes housing 135,000 people on former farmland and rural homesteads.

For existing property owners in that area, annexation would result in higher property taxes and unplanned costs associated with requirements to connect with the City's water and sewer infrastructure. Annexed property owners will also feel a loss of autonomy as they would come across new zoning laws, building codes or other regulations they had not previously experienced.

The City of Fresno would have to borrow more than \$3 billion to advance the urban public infrastructure required to develop SEDA as proposed, which would inhibit the City's ability to invest in the existing parts of Fresno, which have already-existing infrastructure needs. SEDA would also require 16 new schools in the Sanger Unified School District, costing more than \$1 billion. Increasing developer fees to help cover this cost from \$4.75/square foot would be required, but that has not become part of the City's proposal.

The current iteration of SEDA is based on out-of-date population projections—overstating demand for the project by not reflecting dramatic reductions in future population growth projected by the California Department of Finance. California's statewide population is expected to plateau at its current level through 2060.

When the baseline data for the General Plan update in 2014 was being prepared, Fresno County was projected to have a population of 1.9 million in 2050. However, recent state projections suggest Fresno County will only grow at a rate of 0.2% annually to 1.095 million people by 2060, falling well short of making SEDA necessary to meet any housing or other



Map of the proposed SEDA development in southern Fresno

population growth related needs over the next four decades, all which now can easily be met within the existing city limits.

Of the 63,000 acres already within Fresno city limits, approximately 8,700 acres (14%) are vacant (undeveloped land) with the zoned capacity to hold more than 134,000 housing units.

In addition, the environmental impacts from SEDA include a 25% increase of the city's greenhouse gas footprint and a 600% increase in air pollution emissions in southeast Fresno, yet no mitigation fees have been incorporated into the City's plan. We do not yet know what impact this will have on public health because the City of Fresno did not investigate that in its environmental review.

What You Can Do

The Greenfield Coalition is a group of residents and leaders committed to revitalizing our urban core, preserving Fresno's agricultural land and green spaces, and advocating for responsible growth and urban planning. In August 2023, the Greenfield Coalition released an independent study by ECONorthwest to analyze the impacts of fringe development on the urban core.

The Fresno Urban Decay Analysis gives an overview of Fresno's history, defines “urban decay” and its measurement factors in the economic and social context of Fresno, and uses interactive data and historical mapping to show urban decay in five focus neighborhoods: Blackstone, Kings Canyon/Ventura, Hidalgo, Downtown and Southwest Fresno.

Fresno has a long history of supporting development and greenfield annexation on the edges of our city. For decades, city leaders have prioritized developer interests and greenlit subdivisions on the city's edges with shiny promises of new housing, safety and the American dream, but this unchecked outward growth has led to significant negative impacts in the heart of our city.

Matthew Ari Jendian, Ph.D., is a professor of sociology at Fresno State; Rev. Simon Biasell is the pastor of the Big Red Church; Jim Grant is a member of St. Paul Newman Catholic Center; and Rev. Akiko Miyake-Stoner is an ordained elder of the United Methodist Church.

Take Action

Join the Greenfield Coalition (greenfieldcoalition.org/), a group of residents and leaders committed to revitalizing the city of Fresno's urban core, and consider the following actions:

- Contact the Fresno Mayor's Office: fresno.gov/mayor/
- Contact your Fresno City Council Member: fresno.gov/citycouncil/
- Attend the following public meetings and add your voice to the conversation:
 - Dec. 6, 6 p.m.: The City of Fresno Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the SEDA (Southeast Development Area) draft specific plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Individual public comment of 2–3 minutes will be allowed. The Planning Commission will then make its recommendation to the Fresno City Council.
 - Dec. 14: The Greenfield Coalition has requested that the Fresno City Council meet at 6 p.m., with SEDA as the sole agenda item to allow for a public hearing. The City Council will decide on the SEDA plan/EIR.

Peace & Social Justice Calendar December 2023

Sponsored by the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

FRI 01 **Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueno 30th Anniversary Celebration**
5 p.m. Building indigenous power in California. Community celebration with speakers, Oaxaqueno food and traditional music. Big Fresno Fair Industrial Education Building, 1121 S. Chance Ave.

CineCulture: Adventures in the Land of Asha (Jules au pays d'Asha) 5:30 p.m. Peters Educational Center Auditorium, Fresno State. Discussants: Hany Ouichou (producer) and Gaby Jourdain (actress who plays Asha). Set in the 1940s, this beautiful film tells the story of Jules and his family who left Montreal and moved to live with Uncle Jovite, the mayor of a settler's village in northern Quebec. Jules is banned from school because of his rare skin disease. His dog Spark becomes his only friend. When he runs away into the wild forest, Jules has no choice but to venture out to find him. Along the way, he meets Asha, a mysterious First Nation girl who assures him that her mother could cure him. Will Asha's mom be able to treat Jules' ailment? Together, Jules and Asha undertake the difficult journey to the other side of the forest, which is not what they had imagined and where nature reveals itself, full of life and secrets. For more info, contact mhusain@csufresno.edu or visit cineculture.csufresno.edu/.

SAT 02 **Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin Valley** 9 a.m. Marie Callender's Restaurant, 1781 E. Shaw Ave. Presentation of the Kennedy Club Courage Award to Dez Martinez for her advocacy on behalf of the unhoused. For more info, contact 559-435-4043 or claval@comcast.net.

SUN 03 **The Americans and the Holocaust: A Traveling Exhibition** 2 p.m. Fresno County Central Library, 2420 Mariposa St. Survivor Stories. For more info, contact 559-600-7323 or visit fresnolibrary.org.

MON 04 **Democratic Women in Action** 6 p.m. 4193 W. Alluvial Ave., Sierra Sky Park. Holiday celebration. Drinks and appetizers and wonderful conversation. Donations for socks, scarves, hats and gloves for those in need are heartily accepted. For more info, call 559-325-0540.

TUE 05 **National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC)** 5:30 p.m. Los Amigos Restaurant, 5088 N. Blackstone Ave. Holiday celebration. For more info, contact 559-222-6212 or joanne@pbyoga.com.

KFCF 88.1 FM: Nuestro Foro 7 p.m. Radio show in Spanish hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

The Americans and the Holocaust: A Traveling Exhibition 7 p.m. Woodward Park Library, 944 E. Perrin Ave. Author talk: Dr. Bradley W. Hart, Ph.D., author of *Hitler's American Friends: The Third Reich's Supporters in the United States*. For more info, contact 559-600-7323 or visit fresnolibrary.org.

WED 06 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Stir It Up!** 3 p.m. *Community Alliance* radio show hosted by Daren Miller. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

Student Films: 1973 UFW Strike 5 p.m. Social Forum Hall 101, Fresno City College. The Chicano Youth Center, the Fresno City College Social Justice Center and History Club, and the Fresno State Department of Media, Communications and Journalism's Intro to Filmmaking class present 11 short films on the Historical Huelga General de 1973. Fifty years ago, thousands of farmworker men and women and students were forced to walk out of the fields after growers signed sweetheart contracts with the Teamsters union. Join us to listen to the voices of those who began the changes in the San Joaquin Valley that benefit many today.

Central Valley Matters Fundraiser 6 p.m. Via Zoom. Understanding the broken power structure in the Central Valley. Speakers: Dan O'Connell, author of *In the Struggle: Scholars and the Fight against Industrial Agribusiness in California*, and Janaki Anagha, director of community advocacy for the Community Water Center. For more info, contact centralvalleymatters@gmail.com.

The Americans and the Holocaust: A Traveling Exhibition 7 p.m. Via Zoom. Author talk: Dr. Bradley W. Hart, Ph.D., author of *Hitler's American Friends: The Third Reich's Supporters in the United States*. For more info, contact 559-600-7323 or visit fresnolibrary.org.

THU 07 **ArtHop Downtown/Tower District** 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Museums, studios, galleries and other venues open their exhibits free to the public. For more info, visit FACarthop on Facebook.

Fresno Folklore Society Musical Double Feature 7:30 p.m. University Presbyterian Church, 1776 E. Roberts Ave. Cerro Negro Flamenco Group and John Chookasian Armenian Folk Ensemble. \$20 advance and FFS members, \$25 at door. Advance tickets available fresnofolklore.net. For more info, contact 559-439-8807.

FRI 08 **Central Labor Council Holiday Party** 5 p.m. Factory 41 Building, 2721 Ventura Ave., Suite 102. The Fresno-Madera-Tulare-Kings Central Labor Council invites union members, staff, leadership and community allies. To register or for more info, contact 559-269-0165 or dsavory@myunionworks.com.

Community Alliance Fundraiser 6 p.m. SEIU 521, 5228 E. Pine Ave. For more info, contact 559-994-9390 or pamwhalen@comcast.net.

Stonewall Democratic Club 6:30 p.m. Holiday party. Collecting hygiene products and non-perishable food items for the Fresno EOC LGBTQ+ Resource Center. RSVP at bit.ly/FSD-Holiday-Party. For more info, contact 559-285-1641 or info@fresnostonewalldemocrats.org.

SAT 09 **LGBTQ+ Rights Are Human Rights** 9 a.m.-noon. Old Administration Building, Fresno City College. Commemorate Human Rights Day 2023. Sponsored by the Human Rights Coalition of the Central Valley.

Central Valley Leadership Round Table 10 a.m. Don Pepe's Taqueria, 1641 N St., Firebaugh. For more info, contact gamayer20@gmail.com.

Central Valley Progressive PAC 3:30 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact 559-978-4504 or simone.rhodes@seiu521.org.

MON 11 **Fresno County Democratic Women's Club** 11 a.m. Democratic Party HQ, 1033 U St. Holiday potluck. Charitable contributions requested for animal shelters. For more info, contact 559-435-4043 or claval@comcast.net.

Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA) 5 p.m. Via Zoom. Holiday party. For more info, contact swgamble@aol.com.

TUE 12 **Black American Political Association of California (BAPAC)** 6 p.m. Nielson Conference Center, 3110 W. Nielsen Ave. Jingle Mingle membership drive. For more info, contact 559-287-1308 or bapacfresno@gmail.com.

WED 13 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Nuestro Foro** 7 p.m. Radio show in Spanish hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

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

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) 7 p.m. Online/in person, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. For more info, contact 559-360-8054 or taca_03@ymail.com.

THU 14 **Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter** 7 p.m. Via Zoom. Speaker: Dr. Chad Hansen, a fire ecologist. Topic: Giant Sequoia Regeneration. Following the recent fires in the Sierra, Dr. Hansen presents scientific evidence refuting claims that Sequoias cannot regenerate in larger high-intensity fire patches, claims that are being used to justify destructive logging and artificial planting projects in Giant Sequoia groves. Learn about Giant Sequoia reproduction taking place now in previously burned local forest areas. Visit sierraclub.org/tehipite to register in advance to receive the Zoom link before the event.

SAT 16 **West Fresno Democratic Club** 9 a.m. Democratic Party HQ, 1033 U St. For more info, contact 559-930-4909 or ibedam@gmail.com.

MON 18 **California Latina Democrats-Fresno** 6:30 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact chaircalatinadems@gmail.com.

TUE 19 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Nuestro Foro** 7 p.m. Radio show in Spanish hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

WED 20 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Speaking Truth to Empire** 3 p.m. Hosted by Dan Yaseen. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

San Joaquin Valley Democratic Club 6:30 p.m. Denny's Restaurant, 1110 E. Shaw Ave. For more info, call 559-312-3925.

THU 21 **ArtHop Metropolitan/Fresno Metro Area** 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Museums, studios, galleries and other venues open their exhibits free to the public. For more info, visit FACarthop on Facebook.

Clovis Democratic Club 6 p.m. Holiday party. For details, contact 559-322-9740 or jenikren@gmail.com.

TUE 26 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Nuestro Foro** 7 p.m. Radio show in Spanish hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

WED 27 **KFCF 88.1 FM: Stir It Up!** 3 p.m. WILPF radio show hosted by Jean Hays. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

THU 28 **Peace Fresno** 6:30 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. In person/via Zoom. For more info, call 559-668-0591.

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Climate Change and Water

BY DEBAY TADESSE

A significant human and environmental crisis of the 21st century is thought to be climate change. Understanding climate change, sometimes known as global warming, is one of the most critical issues facing the federal government and all states.

The people and governments seem to be at a loss when the neglected issue of climate change is raised in public. Moreover, it has been argued that climate change leads to acute disputes, and it becomes imperative to understand the phenomenon properly. The term *climate change* thus refers to changes in the climate caused by human activity, especially the carbon dioxide that is emitted into the atmosphere from the combustion of fossil fuels. Energy production, which involves burning coal, oil or natural gas, is the principal cause of carbon dioxide emissions.

As part of the 2015 Paris Agreement, countries committed to limiting global warming to pre-industrial levels, ideally to far below 2°C and preferably to 1.5°C. The pre-industrial period was before the Industrial Revolution, which began in the 19th century.

The average global temperature of Earth has risen by at least 1.1° Celsius (1.9° Fahrenheit) since 1880, according to an ongoing temperature investigation conducted by scientists at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS). Since 1975, most of the warming has happened, with an approximate annual warming rate of 0.15–0.20°C. The number of catastrophic disasters will increase and even reach infeasibility if global warming continues unchecked.

The scientific team that the United Nations established to track and evaluate all worldwide research on climate change is known as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Every IPCC report focuses on different aspects of climate change.

The IPCC's sixth synthesis report, which is the most recent one, updates and gathers information from all the reports from its sixth assessment cycle. It covers the most recent climate science, the threats that climate change is already posing to humanity, and what steps we can take to reduce future temperature rises and the risks they pose to the planet as a whole. The recent report shows that low-carbon technological advancements have been encouraging.

Nations are pledging to cut their emissions more aggressively and are doing more to support local populations in adapting to the effects of climate change. In addition, more funds are being committed for all this effort. The issue is that these efforts are insufficient.

Scarcity of Water

In light of increased worry about heat waves, drought and flooding brought on

by climate change in several U.S. regions, many experts believe that the freshwater supply needed to meet diverse social demands is rapidly declining. Most of the remaining exploitable freshwater sources are now river basins shared by two or more states.

Water disputes could become more likely if these states are unable or unwilling to jointly develop and use their shared water resources sustainably and equitably. It is more challenging to manage cross-border rivers or bodies of water than those that are wholly or primarily contained within the borders of a single state.

It has been noted that more than 50% of the United States has recently experienced drought conditions, and it is predicted that 40 of the 50 states will face water shortages within the next 10 years, making this problem much worse and more urgent.

Water shortages will severely affect California, the South, the Midwest, the Southwest, the central Rocky Mountain states and the central and southern Great Plains. It's time to start considering our limited supply of water resources as 40 of the 50 states anticipate water problems.

Rainfall is being affected by climate change. There are specific seasonal changes in water patterns; for example, as temperatures rise, the snowmelt that feeds many rivers begins and ends sooner. This causes a water deficit in the summer. Even in areas of the nation where precipitation is expected to rise, primarily in its northern regions, there is a trend toward more strong concentrations of rainfall that are challenging to catch and utilize.

Several river basins, especially those in the Southwest, the southern Great Plains and Florida, are predicted to experience simultaneous dryness. California has already experienced some of the worst droughts in recorded history in the West. In addition, the environmental research organization Worldwatch warned that water scarcity is currently "the single biggest threat to global food security." There can be fierce competition to use more of the scarce water resources.

Sustainable Food Security

Water and food security are undoubtedly intertwined. A reliable water supply boosts agricultural output, but a lack of it can be a significant factor in droughts and food shortages. The absence of water management contributes to environmental deterioration, recurrent droughts and high food prices in the nation.

Concentrating on the development of available water is an essential strategic plan for combating the issue of repeated drought, high food prices and environmental degradation. The political and economic history of climate change in the United States is riddled with paradoxes and inconsistencies, where abundant natural resources can be more of a curse than a blessing and a significant source of conflict rather than collaboration.

Although definitions of food security help define its goals and guide policy decisions, it's equally important to consider the processes that result in the intended ends. All four aspects of food security—



Water and food security are interconnected. A reliable water supply boosts agricultural output, but a lack of it can be a significant factor in droughts and food shortages. Photo by Eduardo Stanley

availability, accessibility, use and stability of food systems—are impacted by climate change.

Climate change will also affect how food is produced and distributed and how purchasing power and market dynamics change. Its effects will be long term due to shifting precipitation and temperature patterns and short term due to more frequent and intense extreme weather events.

To date, no extensive integrated planning has been done to create statewide collaboration, and there is no comprehensive agreement on water usage in many states. Only in the Midwest are there a few agreements between some riparian states.

The water demand will rise as supply declines. The average daily water consumption in the United States is 80–100 gallons, with a projected daily use of more than 345 billion gallons.

Furthermore, environmental policy measures in the United States have mostly gone undefined. If not given the attention it deserves, the lack of cooperation among cities, states and the federal government will continue to be one of the primary sources of dispute and food crises. Therefore, it is the responsibility of those who make decisions to ensure that future generations will have access to reliable water.

Regional disputes are anticipated to increase as a result of rising water shortage unless a statewide water development strategy is considered a potential solution to conflict prevention and sustainable food production. Inter- or intra-state conflicts in our nation are incredibly destructive and could potentially result in unthinkable humanitarian catastrophes.

Most academics argue that disputes arise in cross-border river systems because of water constraints. Addressing the water issues could help resolve water-oriented conflicts in the country.

Legal, Policy and Institutional Challenges

The reaction of the federal government and the states to climate change remains inadequate, although it is one of the most

critical concerns facing the nation. However, early indications of a climate change regime have started to appear in recent years, although they are being hampered by several issues, such as member states' competing needs, which have limited the ability to adopt statewide climate change policies.

In addition, it was argued that investments should be made in areas that can lead to the fastest and most significant increases in productivity and competitiveness. The nation has sufficient core resources to carry out high-priority food security actions at the local, state and federal levels. Investment can generate the required momentum and capacity for absorption to leverage additional public and private external capital inflows into agriculture if it is adequately implemented and concentrated on strategic food security.

Conclusion

The nation is forced to undertake a paradigm shift in its response to the various challenges posed by climate change due to the critical connections between water, food security and the environment on one hand and development and cooperation on the other.

Without strong political will and authority at the highest levels of national leadership, backed by a climate of domestic stability in every state, multilateral collaboration over the shared waterways is not conceivable. These conditions, however, cannot be fully met without statewide cooperation regarding the shared common natural resource.

Interstate relations, domestic politics and the standard of living in the United States will all continue to suffer because of unresolved water disputes.

Dr. Debay Tadesse has a Ph.D. in African Studies specializing in public policy and development from Howard University in Washington, D.C., and an M.A. in African history and a B.A. in world history from Georgia State University in Atlanta. He currently teaches at Fresno City College and Fresno State.



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In Memory of David Harris

BY JOEL EIS

(Editor's note: David Harris is from Fresno and he went on to become a leader in the anti-draft movement during the Vietnam War. During that time, he was married to folk musician Joan Baez, who played a benefit concert in Fresno that helped fund the local draft resistance movement. Harris passed away on Feb. 6, 2023. Joel Eis knew David Harris and was an active participant during those antiwar years of the late 1960s and early 1970s.)

On Oct. 26, my wife Toni and I attended the memorial event for David Harris at Stanford University. The memorial was like the needed voice of an old friend in a difficult conversation.

There were perhaps 150-175 people at the Cecil H. Green library, where Harris's papers will be curated and stored. His last wife and his children were there. All spoke lovingly and profoundly about his life and his character.

Neil Reichline, from Harris's college days, spoke about his profound effect on our generation even as a college student. There were two profound taped readings from Harris's work by the actor Peter Coyote, who was not himself there.

Joan Baez was there but did not sit with his family or speak. Her presence was respectful but low key. I spoke with her about the fact that I had pictures of her and Harris from the old days during the Vietnam War at the Fresno Resistance compound on First Avenue if she wanted them. She demurred.

The event leaves me with many thoughts about how we have navigated the long reach from those days until now and our place in the world in the future. As I looked over the crowd, I realized that I had known Harris longer than anyone else in the room, and that I had shared with him the journey of coming to awareness of our place in the sweep of history every step of the way.

In his last years, Harris turned to the practice of Buddhism to find balance in the storm of entropy that seemed to be washing over our world and our own country. I had also begun to read Zen Buddhist material by Alan Watts and the Beats at the same age. It made me a Zen Marxist with a nonviolent direction.

As I sat in the sun-drenched room full of mostly silver-haired septuagenarians, I remember that all the people I had known who had joined the movement for civil rights and opposition to the Vietnam War did so in reaction to the bankruptcy of traditional religions. We were revolted and angered by the rotten foundation for American politics built on the twisted sentiments of commercialized Christianity, Judaism or nothing at all.

In the waning days of the war and as the civil rights battleground shifted to the courts and legislatures, many of us sought Eastern dogma to frame our need for something new, something positive—or at least neutral—to believe in. We got haircuts and new clothes, new slang and tried to find



David Harris and Joan Baez in San Jose, ca. 1971. Photo by Peter Maiden

a positive place in the world to build our karmic investment accounts.

We returned to graduate school and became teachers or artists. Some became medical practitioners or poverty lawyers. Many went to work for nonprofit NGOs. Others packed up their VW van with their "ol' lady" and toddlers, books, tools and guitars and went back to the land because it was a pure, simple idea they could actually exercise.

Some, like Harris, remade themselves as journalists or authors and tried to build a new world out of words. As we made successes of our lives in material terms, we invested in relatively benign corporations that did not use petroleum or make plastic or weapons or poison the world—or so we thought.

We sought to build a life that did not reek of the stench of greed, bloodshed and hypocrisy. Without naming it, we sought a oneness between our thoughts and actions. That was Harris's mantra before he even knew the word. I know this because I knew him from the age of 16.

And here we are today. The time between has seen a profound, almost unnamable tectonic shift in the world. Greed and short-sighted self-interest has festered and blossomed with a true vengeance against kindness-seen-as-weakness. It seems that the kind world we worked to

bring to birth has all been turned over into something that has truly lost its way.

The idea that what is best for my safety and peace of mind is for me to work to secure your safety and security in the same world is seen as woefully out of fashion. Forgive us the sin of not being in the mode. The world seems almost unrecognizable.

But Harris's memorial and the vibrant Sartori that was his life—and our lives from that generation—holds for all time one single simple lesson that transcends all faiths, all dogma, all evil exploitation. It remains within each of us to remake our lives as individuals and as a generation-in-time if we all can get clear on imagining the world we want together, roll up our sleeves and build what we imagine with our hearts.

Maybe we ought to put a moment of silence into the Pledge of Allegiance.

In solidarity, carry it on.

After a 35-year career teaching and doing professional theater with a slant toward progressive material, Joel Eis and his wife Toni now own and run a small used bookstore, the Rebound Bookstore (reboundbookstore.com), in San Rafael. The store serves as a progressive "cultural engine" for the community.

A Musical Homecoming

BY PETER MAIDEN

It was a homecoming for musician Javier Navarrette. He led a master class and played a concert at Fresno State on Oct. 30. He is a graduate of Roosevelt School of the Arts, class of 1990. Steve Alcalá, the director of the Roosevelt High School Latin Jazz Band when Navarrette was a student, was in the audience for the concert.

Navarrette is now a teacher, promoter and percussionist in the Bay Area, where he has made a name for himself performing and recording with John Santos, Bobi Céspedes, Jesús Díaz, Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir, and many others.

"I'm third-generation Central Valley Mexican-American," he said in a phone interview before the show, "born in the Central Valley in Fresno.

"My dad and his father came from Mendota. On my mom's side, they were all migrant farmworkers, who worked with Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers Union. I was raised with that."

Navarrette's mother studied medicine and healthcare at Fresno State and UC Berkeley. Her brother, Ismael Rodríguez, caught the tide of Latin rock music in the Bay Area in the 1970s and played professionally. He influenced Javier and his brother Raúl, who also went on to become a Latin musician, playing trombone in the New York scene.

During the pandemic, as soon as it was possible for musicians to perform outdoors, Navarrette put together an all-star group of musicians called Javier Navarrette and his Socially Distant Friends. They performed in the East Bay, playing "roots music," which is Navarrette's focus.

"I dedicated my work to the ancestors," he said, "and I feel deep inside that it was the ancestors that have opened the way for me to where I'm at now, dedicating music to the orishas...playing Latin jazz, playing rumba, playing



Javier Navarrette playing chékere at a performance at the Fresno State Concert Hall. Photo by Peter Maiden

charanga, playing cha-cha-cha, playing bomba, all of the roots of Afro-Caribbean music."

The orishas are the deities of the Afro-Cuban religion, a faith known as Santería. They are celebrated in music and song, sung in the Yoruba language of West and Central

Africa, which was spoken by many of the Africans who were brought to Cuba as slaves.

Navarrette was exposed to this tradition when he went to Cuba after graduating from high school, and he has been back several times, attending the Escuela Nacional del Arte (National School of the Arts).

Some of the most popular musicians in Cuba were his teachers, including musicians from Los Van Van and Irakere.

Navarrette is now teaching elementary school students in Oakland the basics of Afro-Cuban drumming.

Navarrette's mother came to the show at Fresno State, and he told the audience that "nothing I've done compares to this, to play for my mom." He dedicated to her a song for Yemaya, the female orisha who represents the ocean.

"For me to come back to Fresno and to play at Fresno State for all of my teachers, my family and friends," he says, "is the ultimate accomplishment in my life."

The concert opened with a segment performed by the Fresno State Jazz Ensemble, a big band that played standards and did a fine job of soloing. They were led by Dr. Otto Lee.

Next up was the Fresno State Jazz Orchestra, led by Richard Giddens, which took on more advanced charts. Then Navarrette, joined by Bay Area master violinist Anthony Blea, played a couple of Latin jazz tunes they had rehearsed with the orchestra. Navarrette, instead of grandstanding, played a largely supporting role. In a charming moment, he could be seen teaching the four-player trumpet section how to cha-cha-cha in place together while others soloed, in the manner of salsa musicians.

The evening closed with two duets between Navarrette and Blea. That part of the evening's program really stood out. Is it hard to imagine a duet between violin and congas? You had to be there. Blea plays like a whole string section on one instrument, and Navarrette's performance was deeply and strongly felt.

They left the audience wanting more.

Peter Maiden is the photo editor of the Community Alliance newspaper. Contact him at maidenfoto1@gmail.com.

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Alianza Comunitaria es una voz independiente para los trabajadores y grupos progresistas del Valle de San Joaquín. El objetivo de este periódico mensual es construir un poderoso movimiento progresista en apoyo a la justicia social, ambiental y económica; y también a los derechos de los inmigrantes y al de los trabajadores para lograr un salario justo. Buscamos exponer las injusticias políticas y sociales y conectar las diversas redes de activistas que trabajan en nuestra comunidad.

EDITOR

Eduardo Stanley
 editor@fresnoalliance.com

DIRECTOR EJECUTIVO

Mike Rhodes
 mikerhodes@fresnoalliance.com
 559-978-4502

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Peter Maiden
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PUBLICIDAD

I. smiley G. Calderón
 714-290-6651 (text)
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 (También hablo español)

FOTOGRAFÍA

Peter Maiden
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Tras la Pandemia, Personas de Color se Enfrentan a la Pérdida de sus Casas

Continúa de página 21

de hasta \$80,000 dólares por vivienda por un total de casi 650 millones de dólares repartidos hasta ahora.

Sin embargo, dado que se proyecta que el fondo único de mil millones de dólares se agotará en 2025, y probablemente antes, instó a los propietarios a aprovechar esta oportunidad.

A diferencia de los programas de ayuda de la Gran Recesión, éste “es una subvención que no hay que devolver”, explicó Franklin. “A menudo, cuando los propietarios oyen hablar de nuestro programa, dicen: ‘Conseguir \$80,000 dólares que no se tienen que devolver, es demasiado bueno para ser verdad, esto no es real’. Y es real. Ciertos grupos raciales se vieron más afectados económicamente debido a la pandemia, y un objetivo de este programa es conservar su riqueza generacional y proteger a estos compradores de vivienda por primera vez que tanto sacrificaron para conseguir un hogar para sus familias.”

Incluso si los compradores de vivienda no cumplen con los criterios del programa—“ingresos de bajos a moderados, tiene que ser su residencia principal, no pueden ser propietarios de otras viviendas en el estado”—, dijo que los propietarios pueden ponerse en contacto con CalHFA para solicitar asesores de vivienda o servicios jurídicos.

Deudas abusivas

Johanna Torres, coordinadora de programas de los Servicios legales rurales de California (CRLA, por sus siglas en inglés), explicó que, incluso cuando existen ayudas como la subvención hipotecaria, muchos servicios hipotecarios no informan a los propietarios sobre ellas, lo que deja a muchos vulnerables ante una deuda pendiente desconocida.

Su cliente, Saúl de la Cruz, compartió su experiencia con esta deuda en forma de hipoteca zombi.

Tras comprar una casa para su familia en Salinas justo antes de la Gran Recesión de 2007, la familia de la Cruz obtuvo dos préstamos hipotecarios. La segunda empresa dejó de ponerse en contacto con él durante la crisis. Entonces modificó la primera hipoteca, asumió que la segunda—por \$14.600 dólares—estaba incluida, y casi 15 años después recibió una solicitud del segundo prestamista para empezar a negociar con el fin de evitar la ejecución hipotecaria. Pidió prestado el dinero a familiares y amigos, y ahora lucha por mantener ambas hipotecas.

Aunque leyes como la Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (Ley de procedimientos de liquidación de bienes inmuebles) obligan a la mayoría de las compañías hipotecarias a facilitar extractos periódicos al comprador, añade Jaramillo. “Éste es un problema habitual que vemos. Estos prestamistas abusivos no facilitan a los prestatarios la información a la que deberían tener derecho para averiguar si realmente deben las cantidades que se les reclaman”.

El alivio hipotecario, clave para salvar a los propietarios de la crisis

A medida que las tasas de ejecución hipotecaria vuelven a niveles anteriores a la pandemia, subvenciones como California Mortgage



Aviso de ejecución hipotecaria, acción por la cual un comprador endeudado pierde su casa. Foto cortesía The Commons

Relief son fundamentales para proteger a las familias de la pérdida de su bien intergeneracional más valioso—el hogar familiar, afirmó Mary Day, abogada de HERA.

Su cliente, Danny Bishop, compartió su propia historia de cómo salvó su casa de Richmond de la ejecución hipotecaria provocada por la confusión burocrática y el deterioro de la salud familiar. Como la dueña anterior de la casa, su madre, comenzó a sufrir demencia en 2015, su hermano descuidó la propiedad, la cual comenzó a tener multas por un total final por encima de \$90,000 por violaciones de código y evasión de impuestos de propiedad.

Day, quien trabajaba en ese entonces con la ciudad de Richmond, dijo que los \$56,000 dólares adeudados por infracciones de código eran un error, cifra que fue reducida posteriormente a menos de \$30,000 dólares.

“Nunca me dijeron por qué me cobraban tanto”, dice Bishop. “Me decían que siguiera limpiando el patio trasero, que hacía un ‘buen trabajo’, y un día me cobraron decenas de miles”.

Esta falta de respuesta burocrática es habitual cuando se trata de los retos a los que se enfrentan los propietarios de viviendas que buscan ayuda.

“Cuanto mayor es la entidad, más se resisten a tratar situaciones individuales”, afirma Day. “A pesar de que el código tributario les otorga la facultad discrecional de conceder desgravaciones, después de seis meses nos dijeron que no lo harían”. Un error del municipio y esta sanción fiscal provocaron un efecto de bola de nieve en el que la familia se vió forzada a enfrentar la ejecución hipotecaria... y la burocracia fue lo que dificultó las cosas. California mortgage relief ha sido el salvador de la familia”.

Selen Ozturk es editora asociada de *Ethnic Media Services*.

El Lago Tulare Retrocede



Nuestro reportero Vic Bedoian tomó estas dos fotografías desde el mismo punto de vista en las afueras de Corcoran con cuatro meses de diferencia, una en julio y otra en noviembre de 2023, para comparar dónde se encuentra el lago Tulare. El agua ha disminuido sustancialmente, dejando al descubierto tierras de cultivo que ahora se están secando. La inundación de la zona ocupada anteriormente por el Lago Tule, al igual que el agobiante calor del verano, son fenómenos atribuidos por los especialistas al cambio climático

De Política y Cosas Peores

POR MIGUEL ÁNGEL BÁEZ

El debate, el intercambio de ideas, el no pensar necesariamente igual que los demás son cosas que personalmente valoro.

Pero no la aberración.

Eso es lo que ha venido sucediendo en Guerrero desde que el Huracán Otis tocó tierra, con políticos peor que aves de rapiña.

Y yo me sigo preguntando si el actual clima político que se vive en México es debido a la animadversión hacia el presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador por parte un sector de la población que luego la canalizan de forma equivocada a mi parecer.

Si bien no fue el primer político de izquierda en llegar a la presidencia, sí fue el primero en hacerlo sin la ayuda de los partidos tradicionales: PRI, PAN o PRD.

En tiempos cuando para aspirar a ser presidente de México era necesario primero ser del PRI. Solamente el conservador y derechista Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) logró entrar en la conversación, gracias a que Vicente Fox pudo capitalizar el hartazgo de los votantes mexicanos y ganó las elecciones en el 2000.

Sin embargo, lo único que cambió fue que por 18 años el PRI y el PAN compartieron la alternancia en el poder. Es decir, ahora en lugar de uno se sentaban dos a la mesa. Hasta que llegó López Obrador y MORENA, el partido que él fundó.

Con López Obrador como presidente, ciertos grupos de poder e influencia vieron amenazados sus "privilegios" debido a sus políticas de austeridad. Esto, aunado a declaraciones sobre ciertos temas así como a parte de sus políticas públicas, provocan cierta polarización en torno a él que a su vez provoca división en la población. Los que lo defienden de todo en un bando y los que lo atacan por todo en otro bando.

Pero llegar al extremo de poner las diferencias políticas y deseos de poder por encima de los intereses de un pueblo que fue golpeado por un desastre natural, no tiene justificación. Aun y cuando odies tanto a un político.

En este sentido creo que la política puede sacar lo mejor pero también lo peor de un individuo.

En el caso de Guerrero, el Huracán Otis de Categoría 5 no estaba pronosticado como tal, pues se preveía que sería solamente una tormenta tropical. Al final terminó ocasionando severos daños a la infraestructura guerrerense, varias personas fallecidas y otras desaparecidas.

Pero no solamente ocasionó un desastre de tal magnitud sino que además evidenció a varios políticos, algunos con candidatura oficial tanto del partido en el poder como de la oposición. De ambos lados aprovecharon la tragedia para campañas electorales y de relaciones públicas.

Muy rapaces se vieron algunos de ellos metiéndose a las cadenas humanas que forman los voluntarios para descargar y acarrear víveres de una forma más efectiva y menos demandante físicamente. Hacen como que ayudan para tomarse la foto, el videito "ayudando" para luego ponerlo en sus redes sociales. Más que ayudar estorban ¡Que poca madre! aprovechar la tragedia para fines electorales.

Así es como vimos a ambas candidatas a la presidencia de México, tanto Xóchitl Gálvez, del Frente Amplio por México, como Claudia Sheinbaum, de MORENA, haciendo acto de presencia, pero también el ridículo.

En un video que aparece en sus redes y que ella misma publicó, la candidata Gálvez es abordada por un voluntario, quien le pidió no hacer política con su acción. Y es que luego de hacer entrega de una despensa y realizar un llamado a la población para que asistiera a donar, quiso darse crédito por los voluntarios que llegaron a poner su granito de arena hasta que el ciudadano en mención la exhibió al pedirle no hacer política en medio de una situación como la que atraviesa el país y Guerrero principalmente.

Algo parecido sucedió con Sheinbaum, a quien se le vio participar en la cadena humana de voluntarios pasando cajas de mano en mano. Como si fuera indispensable su labor de ponerse a estorbar sólo para la foto. Las cajas, por cierto, parecían vacías. No me extrañaría que así fuera y que armaron todo sólo para grabarlo.

Y qué decir de la gente de Marcelo Ebrard, quien también le entró a eso de aventar cajas livianas, con artículos de "primera necesidad" como unas chanclas color azul. Claro que sí, más no podemos pedir a la inteligencia de estos líderes.

¿Qué habrá pasado por sus mentes o la de sus becarios para deducir que sería una buena idea repartir chanclas a los damnificados? Sobre todo porque las chanclas les serán muy útiles para moverse entre el lodo, vidrios de ventanas rotas, entre otras cosas.

Sabemos también que otras como la alcaldesa de Cuauhtémoc (importante municipio de Ciudad de México), Sandra Cuevas, en un ejercicio de "humildad" anunció que dejará



El presidente de México, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, durante su conferencia matutina, "La Mañanera". Comentaristas opositores a su gobierno lo criticaron sin sustento por supuestamente no informar a los residentes de Acapulco de la violencia del huracán "Otis" que dejó muerte y destrozos en ese puerto el pasado 26 de octubre. Foto cortesía de la Presidencia de México/The Commons

de comprarse ropa durante tres meses y lo ahorrado será para apoyar a la población de Guerrero afectada por el Huracán Otis.

"Voy a dejar de comprarme ropa tres meses, que saben que me encanta comprar ropa. Voy a dejar de comprar ropa para mandar con todo cariño cobijitas para los niños, voy a mandar sillas de ruedas a los adultos mayores y algunos regalos para niñas y niños que la están pasando mal", sostuvo en un mensaje publicado en sus redes sociales. Para no variar.

La prensa y las mentiras

Desde algunos medios intentaron culpar a López Obrador de los daños provocados por el huracán.

En una emisión días después del huracán del noticiero de Latinus, el conductor Carlos Loret de Mola dijo textual: "Tanto que habla de que él sólo piensa en el pueblo... pues el presidente no le avisó a su pueblo sobre lo que se les venía encima". Y luego dio una lista de todo lo que según él no hizo el presidente para prevenir a "su pueblo" sobre el huracán categoría 5.

Lo que no dice el comunicador es que, según los servicios meteorológicos, el pronóstico no era de un huracán categoría 5 porque ni ellos lo sabían. En principio era una tormenta y fue en las últimas horas que fue tomando fuerza hasta que tocó tierra.

Tan es así que en el propio portal de Latinus lo anunciaban como una tormenta tropical. Si hubiese sido negligencia o mala fe del mandatario, habría que concluir que los periodistas también se confabularon al no informar al pueblo guerrerense. ¿Qué acaso no es esa una labor que también tenemos los periodistas? No es sólo informar al pueblo sino dudar de lo que digan nuestros gobernantes.

¿Por qué Latinus, en este caso, no advirtió de la magnitud del huracán si su conductor estrella sabía lo que se les venía encima?

O mintió para dañar la imagen de su rival (el presidente) o le mintió a sus televidentes. ¿Cuál de las dos?

Soy un defensor de la libertad de expresión pero no de mentiras a nombre del periodismo. Creo en la responsabilidad social de los medios y que en casos como estos deben dejar la política y los intereses de lado e informar adecuadamente.

No se trata de aplaudir todo, sí de informar, reportear y reportar lo más balanceado, ético y profesionalmente posible.

Miguel Ángel Báez es un periodista del Valle Central nacido en México. Él se graduó de CSU Bakersfield y fue editor del periódico Noticiero Semanal, de Porterville.

Tras la Pandemia, Personas de Color se Enfrentan a la Pérdida de sus Casas

POR SELEN OZTURK

(Nota del Editor: la presente se publica con autorización de Ethnic Media Services, una agencia no lucrativa de noticias y servicios)

Personas de color, que son propietarias de casas en California, ya se enfrentan a muchas amenazas a su casa familiar. Ahora más que nunca se arriesgan a la ejecución hipotecaria o "foreclosure" cuando el alivio hipotecario de la era de la pandemia se agote antes de siquiera enterarse que existe.

En una conferencia de prensa celebrada el jueves 2 de noviembre y organizada conjuntamente por Ethnic Media Services y Housing and Economic Rights Advocates (HERA) (Defensores de los derechos económicos y de vivienda), abogados especializados en vivienda y expertos en hipotecas explicaron cómo los propietarios pueden conservar sus viviendas familiares frente a estas amenazas, mientras que personas de color, que son propietarios de vivienda, compartieron sus experiencias personales de lucha por preservar el patrimonio generacional.

Amenazas que enfrentan propietarios de vivienda

Joe Jaramillo, abogado principal de HERA, una organización estatal sin ánimo de lucro dedicada a la defensa y los servicios jurídicos en materia de vivienda, afirma que las principales amenazas a las que se enfrentan los propietarios vulnerables son "conservar la casa familiar cuando fallece un padre o un abuelo; financiar programas de Energía limpia evaluada en función de la propiedad (PACE, por sus siglas en inglés) que ponen en riesgo la vivienda del prestatario si no se pagan; y las segundas hipotecas "zombis" que acechan a los prestatarios con facturas inesperadas y amenazas de ejecución hipotecaria."

El fallecimiento de un familiar propietario de una vivienda supone una amenaza cuando no hay testamento ni fideicomiso, de modo que los seres queridos tienen que pasar por un arduo, largo y costoso tribunal testamentario para heredarla mientras los impuestos sobre la propiedad, el seguro y las hipotecas se acumulan con una responsabilidad poco clara de quién debe pagar. Jaramillo dijo que los hogares negros y latinos reportan consistentemente mayores riesgos de ejecución hipotecaria por este problema.

Añadió que PACE, que financia mejoras en el hogar de energía limpia como la solar con préstamos, que no requieren desembolso inicial, son cobrados mediante la adición de cuantiosas sumas a los impuestos a la propiedad; esto ha puesto a miles de propietarios de color de California en riesgo de ejecución hipotecaria en todo el estado.

"Suena bien en teoría", dijo Jaramillo, "pero muchos vendedores y contratistas apuntan a hogares de bajos ingresos y tergiversan los costos o instalan mejoras que no funcionan o no están conectadas, como los paneles solares."

Un tercer factor, continuó, son las hipotecas zombis: "segundos préstamos a menudo suscritos al mismo tiempo que una hipoteca de primer gravamen más grande, divididos para permitir a los prestatarios evitar grandes pagos iniciales y aplicar parte del segundo a la cuota inicial".

Antes del desplome inmobiliario de 2008, muchos préstamos depredadores a alto interés se comercializaban intensamente a propietarios de bajos ingresos con la seguridad de que el valor de sus viviendas no haría más que subir; tras el desplome, los prestamistas de segundas hipotecas zombis dejaron de facturar porque las viviendas valían menos que estas hipotecas, y los propietarios asumieron que el segundo préstamo se había donado, o que se enmendó con el primero o desapareció con la quiebra. Sin embargo, ahora que el valor de la vivienda ha vuelto a subir, los cobradores han vuelto con años de intereses y comisiones.

Se agotan las ayudas clave para los propietarios de viviendas

El California Mortgage Relief Program (Programa de alivio hipotecario de California) es la principal forma en que los propietarios de viviendas han podido superar estas amenazas, puntualizó Rebecca Franklin, presidenta de la Agencia de financiación de la vivienda de California (CalHFA).

Desde que se puso en marcha a nivel federal en diciembre de 2021, más de 23,000 californianos han conservado sus hogares gracias al programa, que ofrece subvenciones

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Béisbol Tras Alambres de Púas

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que hacer las maletas y vacunarse. Y antes de que nos diéramos cuenta, ya estábamos en el campamento”.

La familia Zenimura, al igual que otros estadounidenses de origen japonés, fue trasladada primero al Centro de Concentración de Fresno—en los terrenos de la feria de Fresno—y alojada en barracas construidas bloque tras bloque construidas apresuradamente.

Kenichi Zenimura, su esposa Kiyoko y sus dos hijos pronto se instalaron en su apartamento de una sola habitación. Aquí es donde el béisbol, el pasatiempo nacional de Estados Unidos, entra en escena.

Kerry Yo Nakagawa ha producido tres libros y una película sobre el béisbol Nisei. Reflexiona sobre cómo debió haberse sentido el impacto repentino de perderlo todo: “Siempre miro la logística que enfrentaron al vivir en un cuadrante, con una manta de cuerda colgada como privacidad en un edificio de 20 x 100 pies en ese calor abrasador.

“¿No preferiría estar jugando con mis compañeros de equipo o estar animando a mis jugadores o equipos favoritos en el campamento? El béisbol les trajo una sensación de normalidad a sus ‘vidas anormales’ y creó una atmósfera social y positiva”.

Muchos años después, recordó Harvey Zenimura, “lo primero en lo que pensaba mi padre era en divertirse. Allí construyó un campo de juego en el centro de reunión. Llevó a todos al campo con rastrillos, azadas y todo lo demás y construyó un campo de juego allí”.

Ese simple acto pronto se convirtió en algo más grande y profundo de lo que nadie podría imaginar. Pero claro, Kenichi Zenimura no era un hombre corriente.

Kenichi Zenimura es reconocido como un pionero del béisbol estadounidense. Se le honra como el “Decano del Diamante” y el “Padre del béisbol japonés-estadounidense”. Mucho se ha escrito sobre su ilustre historia como catalizador del béisbol japonés-estadounidense organizado en Fresno y en todo el Valle.

Nacido en Hiroshima, se crió en Hawaii, donde cultivó su amor por el béisbol. Kenichi se mudó a Fresno en 1920, se unió inmediatamente al Fresno Athletic Club y decidió formar equipos de béisbol japonés, organizando una liga de béisbol Nisei de 10 equipos.

Construyó el primero de sus campos de béisbol en el lado oeste de la ciudad. Organizó partidos contra otros equipos de pueblos pequeños a lo largo y ancho del Valle, equipos de la Liga Negra e incluso clubes profesionales de la Liga de la Costa del Pacífico. En 1927, su equipo de Fresno jugó en particular un partido de exhibición con un equipo impresionante de jugadores de Grandes Ligas que incluía a Babe Ruth y Lou Gehrig. Una famosa foto del equipo muestra a Kenichi de pie en el centro de la primera fila entre las dos imponentes leyendas.

A finales del verano de 1942, la familia Zenimura, junto con otros 13.000 estadounidenses de origen japonés de las ciudades del valle, fueron trasladadas a un campamento construido en el desierto del sur de Arizona, en la reserva india del río Gila. Era un desierto llano, polvoriento y cubierto de artemisa, caluroso en verano y frío en invierno.

Kenichi no perdió el tiempo. Sólo una valla de alambre de púas separaba el campamento del desierto abierto. Howard recordó: “Sólo tenían la cerca de alambre de púas. Entonces, podemos salir de la cerca de alambre de púas y hacer lo que queramos. Entonces, en este campo abierto, comenzamos a cavar la artemisa”.

Fueron audaces. Para construir un respaldo, quitaron dos postes de 4x4 de

la cerca perimetral del campamento y los cubrieron con un acolchado usado para evitar que el concreto se seque demasiado rápido. Y también se ayudaron de otros materiales encontrados que consideraron útiles.

El campo se completó con “cajas” para los jugadores y gradas para los aficionados. El perímetro exterior del campo de juego se hizo con hilo de ricino que se curvaba alrededor de las líneas de falta hechas de harina, sin tiza a la mano.

Nakagawa señala que todos participaron en el acto: “Las mujeres y las madres rompieron los colchones y fabricaron uniformes o almohadillas deslizantes para sus hijos y equipos”.

Harvey describió su búsqueda de la perfección: “Tienen estos guijarros. Algunas de esas piedras son bastante malas, bastante grandes. Y si una pelota golpea uno de esos guijarros, rebota sin control. Lo que solíamos hacer era raspar la capa superficial de la arena del desierto y protegerla. Y antes de que te des cuenta, lo revisas tantas veces y todo se vuelve perfecto”.

Una vez que se corrió la voz sobre la construcción de un campo de béisbol, otros se unieron: “Deberías ver a todos los muchachos que salieron y comenzaron a cavar. Limpiamos esa artemisa a unos 300 o 400 pies de distancia y luego obtuvimos una solicitud para que una excavadora viniera allí y simplemente nivelara eso”.

Esta empresa pareció complacer a los comandantes del campo de encarcelamiento, quienes probablemente pensaron que evitaría que muchas personas inteligentes e ingeniosas causaran problemas. Todo fue diseñado y distribuido con precisión, utilizando cualquier material que pudieran reunir o solicitar. Fue apodado “Campo Zenimura”. La base (home plate) de madera original se encuentra en el Salón de la Fama del Béisbol.

Pronto los juegos de béisbol se convirtieron en entretenimiento habitual en los campamentos y fueron enormemente populares. Miles de personas asistieron a los juegos, recordó Harvey: “Cuando vas a ver uno de estos juegos, está lleno de gente. No te imaginas cuánta gente hay en el juego de pelota. La tribuna se llenó, detrás, fuera del campo, por todos lados. Es asombroso.”

Pronto, Gila River tuvo juegos todo el tiempo. Los equipos compitieron con otros equipos dentro del campo y jugaron partidos en casa con equipos de otros campos de encarcelamiento.

Había dos campamentos en Gila: Butte, donde estaba Zenimura Field, y el Campamento Canal, más pequeño, a ocho kilómetros de distancia. Los estadounidenses de origen japonés de ciudades de California como Los Ángeles, Pasadena y Lodi vivieron allí y formaron sus propios equipos y ligas.

Los equipos de Gila incluso jugaron partidos fuera de casa en campamentos distantes. Howard Zenimura describió cómo lo lograron: “En cierto modo nos escapamos del campamento. Obtuvimos permiso, obtuvimos pases de la administración de Gila y había un camión que nos llevaría a Phoenix. Compramos nuestro boleto allí y luego nos trasladamos a Salt Lake City y luego a Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Y fuimos en turnos de dos o tres grupos para que no resultara realmente sospechoso donde había un montón de japoneses y que viera como que la gente estaba abandonando el campamento”.

“Los aficionados se vestían con sus mejores galas del domingo y lo llamaban ‘Día de la BBC’ (Loco por el béisbol), observa Nakagawa. “Imagínese viajar desde Gila River, Arizona, hasta Heart Mountain, Wyoming, para asistir a un torneo de béisbol. O un equipo de Amachee, Colorado, que viene a Gila River”.

Kenichi utilizó su perspicacia y sus contactos para mantener en movimiento este universo de equipos, ligas y juegos. Incluso reclutó jugadores de otros campos para que vinieran a Gila River. A través de su amistad con el dueño de la tienda de artículos deportivos Holman, de Fresno, Kenichi suministró a los equipos gorras, zapatos, pelotas, bates, guantes: todo lo

necesario para jugar a la pelota solicitando todo su equipo de un catálogo.

A pesar de todos los beneficios recreativos que el béisbol brindaba tanto a los jugadores como a los fanáticos, todavía existía la dura realidad de la vida diaria reglamentada en un campo de concentración.

Como recordó Harvey: “Tenían alrededor de 14 cuarteles. Y en un extremo tenían un comedor en el centro. Había un lavadero. Y luego, en ambos lados, una letrina y ducha para hombres y una letrina y ducha para mujeres. Y cada uno de estos cuarteles tenía cuatro departamentos”.

También se regularon otros aspectos de la vida: “Solíamos comer en lo que llaman un comedor. Como en el ejército. Todo el mundo, a una hora determinada, desayunaba, almorzaba y cenaba. Y luego, en cuanto a ropa, suministros o qué, creo que mis padres recibían \$16 al mes, algo así, porque mi papá iba a la granja y hacía algunas labores agrícolas”.

Junto con los juegos de béisbol, el entretenimiento—como películas y bailes semanales—alivió un poco los rigores de la vida en el campamento.

Después de la guerra, la familia Zenimura, como muchas otras, regresó para reconstruir su vida en Fresno. Pero Nakagawa señala que, aunque los estadounidenses de origen japonés que regresaron se esforzaron por seguir adelante con sus vidas, quedaba una amargura residual: “Estoy seguro de que perder su hogar, su negocio, su rancho, su educación, sus libertades civiles, su constitución y su dignidad fue humillante para las comunidades japonesas estadounidenses”. especialmente cuando controlaban el 48% de los cultivos comerciales en California, Oregón y Washington.

“El ochenta por ciento de la pesca y las fábricas de conservas estaban controladas por familias japonesas estadounidenses. Los mayores no pudieron empezar de nuevo después de perderlo todo”.

Kenichi continuó con el béisbol, jugando hasta los 55 años. También estuvo profundamente involucrado en la promoción del béisbol juvenil y en llevar equipos a visitar Japón. A lo largo de todos sus años jugando, entrenando y organizando béisbol, Kenichi alentó la diversidad, la hermandad y la compasión internacionales.

Howard y Harvey, todavía adolescentes, terminaron la escuela secundaria y luego pasaron a ser estrellas en Fresno State. Ambos hermanos continuaron en el béisbol profesional en Japón, jugando para Hiroshima Carp durante varios años antes de regresar a Fresno para continuar con sus vidas.

Para muchos otros niños japoneses-estadounidenses, centrarse tan intensamente en jugar béisbol durante tres o más años los hizo buenos. Muy muy buenos. Cuando volvieron a jugar para equipos de la escuela secundaria, sus destacados niveles de calidad forjaron equipos campeones.

El béisbol japonés-estadounidense y su papel durante los años de encarcelamiento resuena incluso ahora, como señala Nakagawa: “A lo largo de las muchas épocas

de la preguerra, durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, la posguerra y los jugadores de hoy, el béisbol siempre ha proporcionado la chispa curativa de la diplomacia cuando era necesario.

“Los jugadores de hoy nunca enfrentaron una prohibición debido a ninguna ley de Jim Crow, y espero que se den cuenta de que están sobre los hombros de los padrinos ancestrales de estos jugadores modernos en el juego de hoy”.

(Nota del autor: quiero agradecer a las personas que ayudaron a crear este artículo. A mediados de la década de 1990, mi amiga y colega de radio, Kathy McAnally, produjo un documental para NPR, Baseball Behind Barbed Wire, para el cual entrevisté a Harvey y Howard Zenimura. También consulté los sitios web del Nisei Baseball Research Project y del Baseball Hall of Fame. Para información más detallada sobre el béisbol Nisei, recomiendo los trabajos de Kerry Yo Nakagawa: Japanese American Baseball in California: A History y Diamonds in the Rough: The Legacy of Japanese-American Baseball. También produjo un largometraje titulado American Pastime).

Vic Bedoian es un periodista independiente de radio y prensa que trabaja en temas de justicia ambiental y recursos naturales en el Valle de San Joaquín. Contáctelo en vicbedoian@gmail.com.

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México Elegirá Una Mujer Presidente en 2024

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Así, Isabel Perón asumió la presidencia de Argentina en 1974. Nicaragua eligió a Violeta Barrios Torres de Chamorro en 1990. Beatriz Merino se convirtió en la primera mujer primera ministra de Perú en 2003. Chile eligió a Michelle Bachelet como presidenta en 2006; ejerció hasta 2010 y nuevamente desde 2014 hasta 2018. Costa Rica eligió a Laura Chinchilla en 2010. Dilma Rousseff se convirtió en la primera mujer presidenta de Brasil en 2011, aunque fue posteriormente sometida a juicio político y destituida de su cargo.

No es la primera vez que una mujer se postula para la presidencia de México. En el pasado ha habido seis candidatas.

Pero es la primera vez que una mujer probablemente gane en México. Una reciente encuesta le da a Sheinbaum una ventaja de 18 puntos sobre Gálvez, que es su rival más cercana.

Una reciente encuesta de 1.620 participantes mexicanos realizada por el periódico El Financiero entre el 19 y el 28 de octubre mostró que Sheinbaum lidera con un 46% de la intención de voto frente a Gálvez con un 28%. Un tercer candidato presidencial, el gobernador del estado de Nuevo León Samuel García, del partido de centroizquierda Movimiento Ciudadano (MC), tiene el 8% de la intención de voto. El 18% restante no tiene preferencia.

Campo de Concentración de la II Guerra Mundial une a Asiáticos y Latinos

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desde instalaciones en el lago Tule, Santa Fe y otros lugares. Estaban retenidos bajo una orden de guerra que los consideraba enemigos potenciales.

“La retórica como la del expresidente conduce a esto”, dijo Oda, refiriéndose al lenguaje antimusulmán y antiinmigrante utilizado por Donald Trump, principal candidato republicano a la presidencia en 2024. “La retórica importa”.

En Crystal City, activistas latinos que alguna vez lucharon exitosamente en las décadas de 1960 y 1970, como parte de La Raza Unida, contra las prácticas locales de discriminación con huelgas y manifestaciones, acompañaron a los visitantes que venían de varios estados.

“Podemos luchar juntos contra la oleada reaccionaria blanca”, dijo Manuel Garza, un ex activista juvenil local que ahora es director de campo del Proyecto Educativo de Registro de Votantes del Suroeste.

“Se trata de compartir nuestro conocimiento, capacitar a la gente para que trabaje en temas de supresión de votantes. La gente de color está siendo perseguida en este momento. Podemos construir coaliciones con la comunidad asiática. Podemos ser otro país”.

No puede suceder sin una educación sobre historia como la del campo de concentración de Texas, dijo el vicepresidente de la junta escolar de la ciudad, Cruz Mata, pero “no está en los libros; debemos hacerlo parte del plan de estudios porque la historia se repite.”

Podría decirse que la operación de secuestro de Estados Unidos en tiempos de guerra, que incluyó a personas de ascendencia japonesa, alemana e italiana tomadas por la fuerza de Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Bolivia y otros países, podría haber desaparecido de la memoria excepto por el trabajo de algunos sobre la “Peregrinación a Ciudad de Cristal,” como Grace Shimizu, cuyo padre y tío fueron encarcelados aquí.

Shimizu dirige proyectos para preservar las historias orales de los cautivos y exigir reparación. Los latinoamericanos japoneses fueron excluidos de la Ley de Libertades Civiles de 1988 que reconocía el daño causado a los estadounidenses de origen japonés.

O como Bekki Shibayama, quien guió el caso de los hermanos Shibayama cautivos de Lima, incluido su difunto padre Art, ante la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH), que tiene el mandato de proteger los derechos humanos en las Américas. En 2020, la CIDH afirmó la obligación del gobierno estadounidense de brindar reparación “material y moral” a los denunciantes. Ni la administración Trump ni la de Biden han cumplido.

“Yo iba a la escuela secundaria Crystal City en la década de 1960, y nadie nos dijo nunca que estábamos en el sitio de un antiguo campo de concentración”, dijo Severita Lara,

El actual presidente, López Obrador, no puede buscar la reelección. Según la ley mexicana, los presidentes sólo pueden ejercer un solo mandato, de una duración de seis años.

López Obrador literalmente pasó el bastón de mando a Sheinbaum en una ceremonia.

Tiene un doctorado en ingeniería ambiental, una maestría en ingeniería energética y una licenciatura en física.

En repetidas ocasiones, el presidente López Obrador ha atacado a Gálvez, tildándola de “débil”, “títere” y “al servicio de la oligarquía”.

La respuesta de Gálvez ante los ataques fue: “No recurriremos a la ofensa, al insulto, a la descalificación. México necesita un presidente que respete a todos”.

Por su parte, Gálvez es ingeniera informática de formación e hija de padre indígena y madre mestiza. Antes de ser candidata, se desempeñó como encargada de asuntos indígenas durante el sexenio del expresidente Vicente Fox.

Es probable que la carrera presidencial se vuelva más competitiva en los próximos meses. Es inspirador ver que es probable que México elija a una mujer presidenta.

Lamentablemente, esto no sucederá en un futuro próximo en Estados Unidos.

Teresa Puente ha dedicado su carrera a informar sobre inmigración y cuestiones latinas en los Estados Unidos y también ha informado extensamente desde México. Puente también es profesora asistente en la Universidad Estatal de California en Long Beach, enseña ética y reportajes de noticias, comunicación en redes sociales y producción y reportajes de revistas bilingües. Sus alumnos publican la revista en español Dig En Español, la primera revista de este tipo en Long Beach.

quien una vez encabezó huelgas estudiantiles masivas hasta que la junta escolar aceptó las demandas para detener la discriminación contra los estudiantes mexicoamericanos—como prohibirles hablar español. Posteriormente, Lara se convirtió en alcaldesa de la ciudad.

“Su lucha y la nuestra es la misma”, dijo el ex profesor de historia Rubén Salazar, quien había publicado fotografías del campamento alrededor del vestíbulo de la escuela. Salazar también forma parte de la junta directiva del Comité de Peregrinación de Crystal City, que organizó el viaje de cuatro días.

Los japoneses comenzaron a migrar a Perú a principios del siglo XX con contratos de trabajo rural, recogiendo algodón o caucho, pero eventualmente adquirieron sus propios negocios y formaron una comunidad próspera de más de 30.000 personas. Sus hijos, con nombres españoles, hablaban español y crecían como católicos.

Pero Perú, de donde procedían la mayoría de los reclusos de Crystal City, se negó a aceptar a sus ciudadanos de regreso después de la guerra. Las autoridades estadounidenses habían confiscado sus pasaportes y certificados de nacimiento, por lo que se convirtieron en “extranjeros indocumentados” cuando el campo cerró. Muchos fueron a trabajar a Seabrook Farms en Nueva Jersey por 0.57 dólares la hora en una especie de servidumbre por contrato durante años hasta que pudieron conseguir la liberación formal.

“Estamos conectados de muchas maneras”, dijo Kazumu Naganuma de San Francisco, refiriéndose a los mexicoamericanos de Crystal City. Naganuma, cuya familia de nueve personas fue traída desde Callao, Perú, diseñó un monumento inaugurado en el antiguo campamento, recordando a dos niñas de 10 años que se ahogaron accidentalmente en la piscina que los reclusos habían construido para aliviarse del sol de Texas.

“El racismo todavía está aquí”, dijo. “Ahora lo están haciendo delante de nuestras caras”.

Mientras el viento seco soplabla sobre los terrenos llanos donde alguna vez estuvo el campo de concentración, la jueza del tribunal del condado de Zavala, Cindy Martínez-Rivera, dijo que la experiencia de los sobrevivientes “nos recuerda una época de erosión de las libertades civiles, la importancia de la tolerancia y la esperanza por un tiempo. cuando esos monumentos no son necesarios”.

Los jóvenes dijeron que “vinieron a aprender” de sus mayores, como la enfermera partera Keriann Uno, de 30 años, que había llegado en avión desde Ketchikan, Alaska. El tío abuelo de Uno, George Kumemaro Uno, que vivía en el campo, nunca fue acusado de ningún delito y retenido por el gobierno hasta 1947, mucho después de que terminara la guerra.

Keriann Uno dijo que mientras crecía tenía “una perspectiva externa”, y solo escuchaba “fragmentos” de su propia historia, lo que le generaba un sentimiento de “fragmentación”. A veces, las familias se sentían avergonzadas al admitir el encarcelamiento.

“Quería escuchar nuestras historias y las de mi familia para entenderlas”, dijo. “Creo que ha comenzado un proceso de sanación”.

Mary Jo McConahay es autora del libro The Tango War: The Struggle for the Hearts, Minds and Riches of Latin America during World War II.

Béisbol Tras Alambres de Púas

POR VIC BEDOIAN

Es una fecha que vivirá en la infamia: 19 de febrero de 1942. El presidente Franklin D. Roosevelt firmó entonces la Orden Ejecutiva 9066. Trastornó las vidas de más de 120.000 estadounidenses de origen japonés, encarcelándolos en campos de concentración durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. La mayoría de ellos perdieron sus granjas, negocios y posesiones.

Pero, irónicamente, los campos brindaron una oportunidad para que los internados crearan algo hermoso a pesar de sus terribles circunstancias, se resistieron a entregarse a las circunstancias y brillaron. Esa oportunidad fue el béisbol.

Harvey Zenimura tenía 13 años y vivía en Fresno con su familia cuando sucedió: “No tenía ganas de saber qué era Japón o qué y por qué me pusieron en un campamento. Pero la orden dice que todos los japoneses de la Costa Oeste deben entrar en el campo. Así que fui uno de los desafortunados en entrar”.

Su hermano Howard tenía 14 años en ese momento: “Recibimos la notificación de la orden ejecutiva y fue difícil ir a la escuela al día siguiente. Todo el mundo tuvo que prepararse para ir al campamento, y todo el mundo tuvo



Fans Nisei en el campo de juego del campamento Gila River camp. Foto cortesía de Kerry Nakagawa

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ALIANZA COMUNITARIA

LA VOZ DEL MOVIMIENTO PROGRESISTA DESDE 1996

México Elegirá Una Mujer Presidente en 2024

POR TERESA PUENTE

(Nota del Editor: el presente artículo se publica por cortesía de Caló News)

El próximo año, México hará historia y elegirá por primera vez a una mujer como su presidenta.

Morena, el partido gobernante, nominó a Claudia Sheinbaum como su candidata presidencial, y lo mismo sucedió con Xóchitl Gálvez por parte del Frente Amplio por México, una coalición del Partido Acción Nacional, Partido Revolucionario Institucional y Partido de la Revolución Democrática.

Sheinbaum, de 61 años, es la exalcaldesa de la Ciudad de México y desde hace muchos años una aliada política del presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador. Es científica y académica. Ha prometido continuar las políticas de López Obrador en el plano del bienestar social y se compromete a mantener un mayor control estatal tanto del sector económico como del energético.

Por su parte, Gálvez es una ex senadora del partido conservador PAN, que comparte el frente con los ya mencionados PRI y PRD. Está a favor de las empresas y los empresarios y quiere fomentar una mayor inversión privada en México.

Ambas candidatas han hecho recientes paradas de campaña en Los Ángeles para buscar votos y ayuda. Desde 2006, los mexicanos que viven en el extranjero pueden votar en las elecciones presidenciales mexicanas con algunas condiciones.



Claudia Sheinbaum, candidata de MORENA, encabeza las preferencias del electorado mexicano según varias encuestas. Foto tomada en 2020, cortesía de la Secretaria de Cultura de la Ciudad de México

El INE, Instituto Nacional Electoral, es el organismo autónomo encargado de las elecciones en México. Se estima que 12 millones de mexicanos viven en el exterior y el 97% vive en Estados Unidos. De ellos, en las elecciones presidenciales de 2018, alrededor de 1,5 millones de mexicanos tenían las credenciales necesarias para votar en el extranjero. Unos 180.000 se registraron para votar y finalmente alrededor de 98.000 efectivamente votaron. Entonces sólo se permitía el voto por correo.

Más mexicanos en Estados Unidos podrían votar en junio de 2024, ya que se les permitirá votar en persona tanto en los consulados mexicanos en todo Estados Unidos, así como por medio del internet o por correo. Además, una reforma constitucional podría permitir también a descendientes de

ciudadanos mexicanos el derecho a solicitar la ciudadanía, lo que podría conllevar un aumento en el número de votantes.

Para votar se requiere ser ciudadano mexicano y portar una credencial para votar válida en un consulado mexicano. Además, se les requiere registrarse para votar antes del 20 de febrero a través de votoextranjero.mx o llamando gratis al INETEL (866) 986-8306 desde Estados Unidos

“Los mexicanos que viven en California y en todo Estados Unidos, tienen un lugar fundamental en la economía de México y en la estadounidense. Y queremos que esto se reconozca”, dijo Sheinbaum, según informes periodísticos.

Muchos otros países del mundo, incluso en América Latina, han tenido mujeres presidentas o primeras ministras.

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ENCARCELAMIENTO DE JAPONESES

Campo de Concentración de la II Guerra Mundial une a Asiáticos y Latinos

POR MARY JO MCCONAHAY

Madres y abuelas abrazaban a sus niños en los trenes que circulaban por esta zona seca del sur de Texas, sin saber qué les esperaba al final de la línea. Eran peruanos de ascendencia japonesa, secuestrados y traídos a Estados Unidos en un programa secreto de la Segunda Guerra Mundial como cebo comercial para los estadounidenses atrapados detrás de las líneas japonesas.

Recientemente, los sobrevivientes de la operación del Departamento de Estado llamada Pasajes Silenciosos regresaron a los terrenos de este antiguo campo de concentración a sólo 35 millas de la frontera con México. Habían venido a exigir justicia (reparaciones o una disculpa o ambas) para conmemorar la historia y denunciar la xenofobia que continúa afectando a esta región fronteriza y a los asiático-estadounidenses.

El grupo, que incluía a descendientes de los encarcelados, encontró aliados que podrían haber sido inesperados hace 75 años: activistas latinos y autoridades gubernamentales locales, algunos de los cuales habían ayudado a lanzar el movimiento de derechos civiles latino/chicano de los años 1960 y 1970.

“¿Qué puede impedir que esto vuelva a suceder?” preguntó Larry Oda, presidente nacional de la Liga de Ciudadanos Japonés-Americanos, mientras contemplaba la solitaria extensión donde hasta 4.000 cautivos vivían en cuarteles (algunos durante más de cinco años) construidos originalmente para trabajadores agrícolas migrantes mexicanos. La tierra



El padre peruano de Grace Shimizu estuvo recluso en el campo de concentración de Crystal City. Foto de Mary Jo McConahay

era hogar de escorpiones y hormigas rojas que picaban. Guardias armados, a menudo a caballo, patrullaban.

Oda nació en el campamento cuando sus padres, al igual que otros ciudadanos estadounidenses de ascendencia japonesa, fueron trasladados para unirse a los peruanos

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